

# BUSH KINDER DOG AWARENESS POLICY

Mandatory – Quality Area 2



## PURPOSE

This policy aims to clearly define:

- Procedures for dealing with dogs off leads that may enter the Bush Kinder space at Yarran Dheran Reserve.
- Guidelines for dealing with an angry or threatening dog and/or a dog in attack mode
- The appropriate medical response to dog bites
- A framework for the appropriate education and training of staff, parents and children on how to live safely with dogs

## POLICY STATEMENT

### 1. VALUES

Rangeview Pre-School is committed to:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment for children and staff participating in the Bush Kinder program
- Being respectful of the community space that the bush kinder site offers, including an awareness of dogs being walked off-lead in the area
- Facilitating appropriate communication and education to staff and parents to minimise the risk of injury from a dog bite to children and staff during Bush Kinder sessions

### 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Persons with Management and Control, Nominated Supervisor, Persons in Day to day Charge, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs, excursions and activities of Rangeview Pre-School.

### 3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

#### Background

Rangeview Pre-School's Bush Kinder Program is conducted within Yarran Dheran Reserve – dogs are permitted to enter the Reserve with their owners, however they must remain on a lead at all times. Unfortunately, there may be times where a dog is present in the park and is not sufficiently secured; the Bush Kinder staff will be required to implement appropriate safety and awareness procedures. It is important that children, staff and parents are aware of the recommended behaviour around dogs and that appropriate communication and training is undertaken to minimise the risk of dog attack injury.

#### Legislation

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007

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The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: <http://www.legislation.gov.au>

## 4. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

## 5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

### Sources

- Better Health Channel Website: Child Safety 'Children and Animals'
- Victorian Department of Environment and Primary Industries 'Living Safely with Dogs' Education Program

### Service policies

- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy
- Administration of First Aid Policy
- Excursions, Incursions and Special Events Policy
- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Curriculum Development Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Interactions with Children Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Sun Protection Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy
- Water Safety Policy
- Bush Kinder Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
- Bush Kinder Extreme Weather Policy
- Bush Kinder Emergency Evacuation Policy
- Bush Kinder Identification and Visibility Policy
- Bush Kinder Protective Clothing Policy
- Bush Kinder Snake Awareness Policy

## PROCEDURES

**Safe behaviour around dogs:** The following rules are recommended by the Department of Environment and Primary Industries 'Living Safely with Dogs' program and reinforced by the Victorian Governments Better Health Channel Website:

- Always supervise children and dogs
- If you are unable to supervise even for a short time, separate children from dogs

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- Never approach a strange dog
- When approaching a dog, always:
  - Ask the permission of the owner
  - Always let the dog smell the back of your hand first
  - Pat dogs gently and calmly from the collar to the tail
  - Do not pat a dog on its head
- Stand still if a dog approaches (don't make direct eye contact, keep hands in fists by your side with thumb on the inside)
- Never intervene between dogs that are fighting
- Never disturb a dog that is eating or sleeping

## **The Approved Provider, The Nominated Supervisor and Persons in Day-to-Day Charge are responsible for:**

- Implementing a 'Living Safely with Dogs' education session for each 4-year old kinder group and staff. Particular attention in the session is given to recognising the warning signs given by dogs, the correct way to approach a dog and what to do if approached by an aggressive dog.
- Ensuring parents receive the 'Living Safely with Dogs' information
- Encouraging parents, through this policy, to practice safe dog behaviours at home and to teach children on an ongoing basis how to behave around dogs to minimise the risk of dog bites
- Supplying a First Aid Kit on site at Antonio Park at all times to administer first aid in response to dog bites or for any other necessary purpose
- Ensuring staff are appropriately educated on procedures in the event of an aggressive or threatening dog at the bush kinder site and in the event of a dog attack
- Following all procedures as set out in the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy (including notice of notifiable incidents, appropriate record keeping in the event of an incident, maintaining first aid kits etc)
- Bringing any relevant issues to attention of the Committee and/or Whitehorse Council in a timely manner

## **Educators are responsible for:**

- Continually educating children on the appropriate behaviours around dogs, including recognising warning signs, the correct way to approach a dog, and what to do if approached by an aggressive dog
- Administering first aid in the event of a dog attack
- Following correct procedures in the event of a dog attack
- Ensuring any incidents are reported in the log
- Ensuring children wash their hands if they touch a dog
- Carrying out the following specific procedures in the event of one of the following incidents occurring:
  - (1) *if a dog off-lead enters the Bush Kinder site*
    - (a) remind children to stand still and not touch or encourage the dog or make any sudden movements
    - (b) locate the owner if possible and encourage the owner to move the dog away from the Bush Kinder site and put the dog on a lead
  - (2) *if an aggressive and threatening dog enters the Bush Kinder site*

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- (a) remind children to keep quiet and still, look down (no eye-contact with dog), and keep arms by sides with hands in fists with thumbs on the inside
  - (b) encourage children to keep calm and not run
  - (c) wait until the dog leaves the area before resuming activities
  - (d) locate the owner if possible and encourage the owner to put the dog on a lead and move the dog away from the Bush Kinder site
- (3) *if a dog attacks a child*
- (a) staff will follow current first aid practice. This practice will be informed as per up-to-date Level 2 First Aid Training
  - (b) staff are to follow procedures as detailed in the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy, including contacting parents, calling an ambulance, logging incidents etc

- Reminding parents/guardians of the policy content as required

## **Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

- Practicing safe dog behaviours at home and outside of the kinder
- Reading information provided from the 'Living Safely with Dogs' program
- Teaching children on an ongoing basis how to behave around dogs to minimise the risk of dog bites
- Collecting their child as soon as possible when notified of an incident or medical emergency involving their child (such as a dog bite)
- Ensuring that any dog brought to the Bush Kinder site is on a lead at all times
- Reading and familiarising themselves with this policy
- Bringing any relevant issues to the attention of both Kinder staff and the committee

**Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.**

## **EVALUATION**

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, Rangeview Pre-School will:

- Seek feedback regarding this policy and its implementation with parents/guardians of children participating in the Bush Kinder program. This can be facilitated through discussions, surveys, email, Storypark and the Pre-School newsletter
- Ask staff to share their experiences and observations in relation to the effectiveness of this policy
- Review the first aid procedures following an incident to determine their effectiveness
- Review the policy and Pre-School practices to ensure they are compliant with any new legislation, research or best practice procedures
- Revisit the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or earlier if required
- Notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to the policy or its procedures (Regulation 172 of the National Regulations) unless a shorter period is necessary due to a perceived or actual risk

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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## Attachment 1: Antonio Park (Bush Kinder) Map

### AUTHORISATION

The policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Rangeview Pre-School on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

### REVIEW

DATE	NEXT REVIEW DATE (2 YEARLY)
19 Sep 2022	19 Apr 2023
9 Jun 2023	9 June 2025

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## ATTACHMENT 1

### Yarran Dheran Reserve Map

#### Map of Yarran Dheran Reserve – site of Rangeview Pre-School's Bush Kinder

