



## Dogs on School Grounds

The Ministry of Education requires that schools adhere to the National Administration Guidelines (NAGs). NAG 5 states that each Board of Trustees is required to provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students.

To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the Marshland School community within the school grounds in regards to dogs, the Board of Trustees has provided clear guidelines below intended to minimise the risk of accident or injury to people within the school grounds.

Marshland School recognises that dogs are an important part of life for many Marshland School families and are often included in activities such as walking children to and from school. The school appreciates this inclusion and values the place the dog has within a family.

It also acknowledges however that some children and people can find contact with dogs stressful, and even frightening.

Parents who bring dogs on to school grounds do so on the understanding that their dog has no issues around children, does not suffer from anxiety, has never displayed any aggression towards children, and that the owner believes the dog is fully trustworthy in a school environment.

Owners bringing a dog onto the school grounds must follow the guidelines below:

### Guidelines

- All dogs must be on a leash that keeps the dog close to the adult.
- At no time should a dog be left unattended.
- Dog's leashes need to be held by **adults only**.
- No dogs are allowed on or near the barked adventure playgrounds as children have to feel free to be able to play away from dogs.
- No dogs accompanying children to and from school are allowed **inside any school buildings** unless by invitation for educational purposes
- Dogs should be kept away from all entrances and come no further than the poles in front of the entrances to the Learning Hubs
- Owners are responsible to remove any excrement left by their dog on the school grounds and failure to do so will mean the dog will no longer be allowed in the school grounds and/or reported to Christchurch City Council.
- Dogs are not to be allowed to drink from the school water fountains.

- If the dog is considered by the council or any other authority to be a breed that needs muzzling, we would prefer it does not to come to school, however, if it does, it must be muzzled on school property.

Children are highly likely to come into contact with dogs in Christchurch as there are so many dog owners. To this end, Marshland School is committed to teaching children appropriate behaviour when approaching dogs so that they have a positive experience interacting with the animals, and in order to reduce the risk of accident or injury. As such Marshland School will include a whole school dog safety lesson during the year.

### **Stray** dogs

Any stray dog at school will be reported to dog control and taken away so there is no danger to our students.

### **At the beginning of what goes out to parents and whānau there could be a statement like this:**

Dear Parents and Whānau

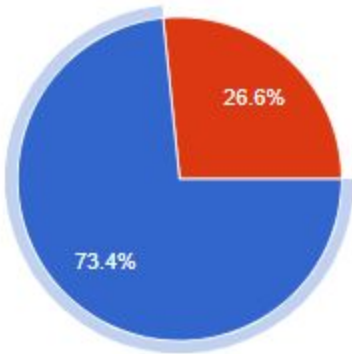
Thank you to all of you who responded to our Dogs on School Grounds survey over the last few weeks. From the number of respondents, this is obviously a topic that resonated with you. As you can see below, the majority (73.4%) of you are fine with dogs being brought on to the school grounds, so long as the school guidelines are adhered to. 26.6% of you however strongly disagree with bringing dogs to school, and many had valid reasons behind this view.

To be effective, a Board of Trustees must put aside their own views, and take all views into consideration, in terms of what is best for all our children. Bearing in mind that Christchurch is full of dog lovers, children are going to come across dogs on a daily basis outside of school. Educating children about safety around dogs is key to keeping them safe. As a result, the board has made some changes to its original guidelines and believes that these changes will minimise any risk factors.

Survey Results:

Question

169 responses



- I am fine with dogs coming on to the school grounds so long as the school policy is adhered to
- I disagree with people bringing dogs on to the school grounds