**ANIMALS IN SCHOOL POLICY**

It is necessary to have clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the management of potential health and safety issues that arise as a result of the presence of animals in schools.

**AIM**

Procedures to address the presence of unauthorised animals on school premises must be implemented in all schools for the health and safety of students, staff and visitors. This includes:

- limiting the risk of unauthorised animals entering school premises,
- managing stray animals and wildlife on school grounds,
- considering particular student, staff and visitor needs and medical conditions prior to allowing animals on school grounds for educational and/or social activities.

Animals may only be brought to school

- with the prior approval of the principal or their delegate.
- Service animals used by people with disabilities are exempt from this requirement.

All staff, students and visitors must adhere to the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act when handling animals.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Principals**

- Principals are responsible for implementing appropriate procedures to limit the presence of unauthorised animals on school premises. This includes reasonable measures to ensure the health and safety of students, staff and visitors and where appropriate, having animal/s removed e.g. by contacting the relevant council or wildlife authority.
- In high risk areas school procedures should provide for students to be educated about personal health and safety on school premises, particularly relating to the presence of animals.
- Principals must ensure that the school community is aware that animals may only be brought to school with the prior approval of the principal or their nominated delegate.
- Service animals used by people with disabilities are exempt from this requirement; however principals must manage the presence of service animals to ensure the ongoing health and safety of students, staff and visitors.
- Principals are also responsible for determining, in consultation with the school community, defined animal - free areas within the school when this action is considered appropriate.
- In implementing the requirements of this policy principals should, where possible, without compromising on health and safety requirements, seek to accommodate cultural beliefs within the school community.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Animal:** means a live member of any vertebrate species including an amphibian, bird, mammal (other than a human being) or reptile. Also includes live fish in captivity or dependent on a person for food.