



Respect & Empathy for all.

**21 School Rd
Swan Reach Vic 3903
Principal: Mr. Andrew Kenyon
Ph: (03) 5156 4287
Mobile: 0474 220 890**

Principal approved	April 2027
3-4-year review	

Dog in School Policy (Monty)

Swan Reach Primary School Statement

At Swan Reach Primary School we believe that all our students should learn in an environment that:

- Offers an extensive engaging learning program for all students
- Ensures that all students become literate and numerate to enable them to fully participate in the workforce and society
- Provides the opportunity for students to develop and extend their cultural, artistic and sporting achievements
- Develops responsible, caring community members
- Prepares students to be technologically literate global citizens

Introduction

- The aim of this project is to improve wellbeing for students. This will be achieved through improving socialising skills and self-awareness skills that are a part of the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies.
- These competencies are linked to Victorian Curriculum standards and it is expected that all teachers cover these learning outcomes and are able to assess them, as per expectations related to the entire Victorian Curriculum.
- One class will be the target group for this project to begin with, and as the action progresses it will be implemented more broadly across the school.
- The objectives of this project are to improve teaching and learning practices related to SEL competencies, and to gather evidence to show improvement in student outcomes within a particular cohort of the school. If this project is successful we expect to see student knowledge and understanding to be clearly reflected in the data.

Overview

This is a pilot program in place relating directly to student wellbeing. This policy governs the program, ensuring that the program maximises its full potential.

Advantages of a Therapy Monty in schools

Therapy dog's are being used to support children with social and emotional learning needs, which in turn can assist with literacy development.

Research into the effects of therapy dog's in schools is showing a range of benefits including:

- increase in school attendance

- gains in confidence
- decreases in learner anxiety behaviours resulting in improved learning outcomes, such as increases in reading and writing levels
- positive changes towards learning and improved motivation, and
- enhanced relationships with peers and teachers due to experiencing trust and unconditional love from a therapy Monty. This in turn helps students learn how to express their feelings and enter into more trusting relationships.

About the Monty

Monty is a 12-month-old Golden Retriever. He has been part of the school community since he was 6 months old.

Monty has been an incredible asset to the classroom calming all students to a point where daily learning is noticeably more settled.

Monty has additionally assisted students in entering school for the day who were displaying signs of distress and calmed children who have been hurt or upset in the schoolyard. Monty has a natural ability to neutralise and distract students who may be feeling upset for a variety of reasons. Several students in the classroom have greatly developed and matured whilst Monty has been developing.

Monty is in training, as a Therapy Monty, through *Playful Paws* (Meg).

Daily management of Monty

- Not allowed in school if unwell
- Be up to date with all vaccinations, worming and grooming
- Will not be taken off the site without Julie Irvine
- Will have a safe area inside the front office

Student expectations

- Will be reminded of appropriate behaviours around Monty with each contact
- Will always be reminded to respect Monty and remain calm around him at all times
- Be gentle and not make sudden movements or attempts to physically contact to Monty
- Not to stare into Monty's eyes
- Not to put their face near Monty
- Always approach Monty in a calm slow manner
- Do not disturb Monty while eating, drinking or sleeping
- Never to feed Monty
- Continue beneficial learning into Monty's development
- Demonstrate collaboration of Monty's role with the whole school community, including; staff, parents, students, family members
- Monty's pack to be carried by Monty's monitors containing; excrement bags, rubber gloves and hand sanitiser
- Will abide by the rule 'we don't hurt Monty' Health and Safety
- All persons should always wash their hands after handling Monty
- Any Monty excrement to be cleaned and disposed of appropriately by Julie Irvine or Monty's monitors
- Where possible - External gates to the school to remained closed at all times while Monty is on site