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Beach Kinder Dog Awareness Policy

Quality Area 2 - Children's Health and Safety

Purpose

This policy aims to clearly define:

- Procedures for dealing with dogs off leads that may enter the Beach Kinder space
- 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 children, staff, parents/guardians and children on how to live safely with dogs

1. Values

Hampton Community Kindergarten Inc. is committed to:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment for children and Educators participating in the Beach Kinder program
- Being respectful of the community space that the Beach kinder site offer
- Facilitating appropriate communication and education to educators, parents and guardians to minimise the risk of injury of a dog bite to children and educators during Beach kinder

2. Scope

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators and parents/guardians with an enrolled child, or who wish to enrol a child at Hampton Community Kindergarten Inc.

3. Background and legislation

Hampton Community Kindergarten's Beach Kinder program is conducted on a community beach, which allows dogs to be walked off leads. It is important that children, staff and parents/guardians are aware of the recommended behaviour around dogs and that appropriate communication and training is undertaken to minimise the risk of dog attack injury.

Relevant legislation may include but is not limited to:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Education and Care Services National Law 2010
- National Quality Standard

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007

4. Definitions

Safe behaviour around dogs: The following rules are recommended by the Department of Primary Industry's 'Living Safely With Dogs' program and reinforced by the Victorian Government's Better Health Channel Website:

- Always supervise children and dogs
- If you are unable to supervise, even for a short time, separate children from dogs
- Never approach a strange dog
- When approaching dogs, ALWAYS:
 - ASK the permission of the owner
 - Always allow the dog to 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, hands in fists by your side with thumbs on the inside)
- Never intervene between dogs that are fighting
- Never disturb a dog that is eating or sleeping

5. Sources And Related Kindergarten Policies

Better Health Channel Website: Child Safety 'Children & Animals' Victorian Department of Primary Industry's 'Living Safely With Dogs' Education Program

Kindergarten policies

- Delivery & Collection of Children (main kindergarten policy)
- Excursions & Service Events Policy (main kindergarten policy)
- Beach Kinder Protective Clothing Policy (Beach Kinder Specific)
- Beach Kinder Extreme Weather Policy (Beach Kinder Specific)
- Beach Kinder Identification and Visibility Policy (Beach Kinder Specific)
- Beach Kinder Emergency Evacuation Policy (Beach Kinder Specific)
- Beach Kinder Snake Awareness Policy (Beach Kinder Specific)
- Occupational Health & Safety Policy (main kindergarten policy)
- Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy (main kindergarten policy)
- Inclusion & Equity Policy (main kindergarten policy)
- Sun Protection Policy (main kindergarten policy)
- Water Safety Policy (main kindergarten policy)
- Supervision of Children Policy (main kindergarten policy)
- Nutrition, Oral Health & Active Play Policy (main kindergarten policy)
- Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy (main kindergarten policy)

Procedures

General

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- Supplying a First Aid Kit on site at Beach Kinder to administer first aid in response to dog bites or for any other purpose.
- 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 risk of dog bites.
- Ensuring educators are appropriately educated on procedures in the event of an aggressive or threatening dog at the beach kinder site and in the event of a dog attack.
- Following all procedures as set out in the Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy (including notice of notifiable incidents, appropriate record keeping in the event of an incident, maintain first aid kit etc)

Educators are responsible for:

- Running a 'Living Safely With Dogs' education session for each four year old kinder group, parents and educators. 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.
- 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.
- Follow procedures in the event of a dog in attack mode.
- Ensuring incidents are reported in log.
- Ensuring children wash hands if they touch a dog.
- Carrying out the following specific procedures in the event of one of the following incidents occurring:
 - *If a dog off a lead enters the Beach Kinder site*
 - Remind children to stand still and not to touch or encourage the dog or make any sudden movements
 - Locate the owner if possible and encourage the owner to move the dog away the Beach kinder site and put the dog on a lead
 - *If an aggressive and threatening dog enters the Beach Kinder Site*
 - Remind children to keep quiet and still, look down (no eye-contact with dog), and put arms by sides with hands in fists with thumbs on the inside
 - Encourage children to keep calm and not run
 - Wait until the dog leaves the area before resuming activities
 - Locate the owner if possible and encourage the owner to put the dog on a lead and move the dog away from the Beach kinder site
 - *If a dog attacks a child*
 - Educators will follow current first aid practice. This practice will be informed by up to date Level 2 First Aid Training
 - Educators are to follow procedures as set out in Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy, including contacting parent/guardian, calling ambulance, logging incidents etc

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Practicing safe dog behaviours at home and outside of the kinder.
- Teaching children on an ongoing basis how to behave around dogs to minimise risk of dog bites.
- If possible, attend the 'Living Safely With Dogs' education session for parents.
- Collecting their child as soon as possible when notified of an incident or medical emergency involving their child (such as a dog bite).
- Reading and being familiar with the policy.
- Bringing relevant issues to the attention of both staff and committee.

Evaluation

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- Seek feedback regarding this policy and its implementation with parents/guardians of children participating in the Beach Kinder program. This can be facilitated through discussions and the annual service survey.
- Ask educators to share their experiences and observations in relation to the effectiveness of this policy.
- Regularly review the policy and service practices to ensure they are compliant with any new legislation, research or best practice procedures.

Authorisation

The Approved Provider of Hampton Community Kindergarten Inc. adopted this policy on:

1 April 2026