



THOMASTOWN
PRIMARY SCHOOL

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STUDENT WELLBEING & ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact us on (03) 5633 1566.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- a. Our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students;
- b. Expectations for positive student behaviour;
- c. Support available to students and families;
- d. Our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Thomastown Primary School is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

Scope

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

Contents

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
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1. School profile

At Thomastown Primary School, we are proud to provide a safe, inclusive and high-quality learning environment where every child is known, supported and encouraged to thrive. With enrolments at 170, our school offers a close-knit, community feel where strong relationships are at the heart of everything we do. While our enrolment numbers may shift slightly over time, this smaller setting allows us to provide personalised support and truly get to know every learner.

Our community is wonderfully diverse, with approximately 28 languages spoken across our families. This cultural richness is something we celebrate every day, and it plays an important role in shaping an inclusive and engaging curriculum. Many of our students speak a language other than English at home, and we take pride in supporting them to build strong skills in both their home language and English.

Students at Thomastown Primary benefit from a broad and engaging curriculum, including specialist programs in STEM, Vietnamese, Visual Arts and Physical Education. These programs provide opportunities for students to explore their interests, develop creativity, build confidence, and stay active and healthy.

We understand that every family's journey is different. We work closely with our community to support engagement in learning, while also responding to changing needs. As our community continues to evolve, we remain focused on ensuring all students have access to the resources, opportunities and support they need to succeed.

2. School values

Thomastown Primary School has three values: Effort, Respect and Responsibility. These values are aligned with our commitment to School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) and promote health, wellbeing and social inclusion for every member of the School community.

3. Wellbeing and Engagement strategies

Thomastown Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

A summary of the targeted engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

- High and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- Prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- Creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive
- Welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- Analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- Teachers at Thomastown Primary School use a gradual release instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons

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- Teachers at Thomastown Primary School adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse needs and strengths of our students
- Our school's values are incorporated into our curriculum. They are explicitly taught and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- Carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling, including Year 6 to 7, Kinder to Prep and all year levels across the school
- Positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents via Compass and Class Dojo
- Monitor student attendance and implement attendance policy at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- Students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions to enact student voice. An example of this is SWPBS leaders meetings. Students are regularly encouraged to speak with their teachers, Students regularly contribute to decisions around their learning and are empowered by doing so.
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- Measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment.
- Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education with IEPs, cultural plans and support from allied health, VACCA and other community organisations. Our learning environment appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
- Our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school
- All students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#) including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- Students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy on [Students with Disability](#), such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans
- Staff apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- Students enrolled under the Department's international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](#)

Additional resources include:

- [Student Support Groups](#)
- [Individual Education Plans](#)

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- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Behaviour Support Plans](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)

as well as to other Department programs and services such as:

- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Mental health toolkit](#)
- [headspace](#)
- [Navigator](#)
- [LOOKOUT](#)

Thomastown Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- Building positive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- Meeting with students and their family to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- Developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- Considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up;
- Referring the student to:
 - School-based wellbeing supports,
 - Student Support Services,
 - Appropriate external supports including youth and family services, other allied health professionals, Orange Door, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst.

Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:

- Being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing
- Collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student
- Monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Plans in collaboration with the student and their family;
- engaging with our regional Koorie Education Support Officers
- Running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - With a disability,
 - In Out of Home Care,
 - With other complex needs that require ongoing support

4. Identifying students in need of support

Thomastown Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support, and

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enhance student wellbeing. Thomastown Primary School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- Personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled;
- Attendance records;
- Academic performance;
- Observations by staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation;
- Attendance, detention and suspension data;
- Engagement with families;
- Self-referrals or referrals from peers.

5. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity.

Students have the right to:

- Participate fully in their education;
- Feel safe, secure and happy at school;
- Learn in a positive and welcoming environment where they belong

Students have the responsibility to:

- Participate fully in their educational program;
- Display positive behaviours that demonstrate effort, respect and responsibility
- Respect the right of others to learn.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Values - Effort, Respect and Responsibility. Student behaviour will be responded to consistently with Thomastown Primary School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Thomastown Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff via Compass and if necessary via telephone.

Disciplinary measures may be used, as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies, to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard once the safety of themselves and others has been ensured.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- Warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate;

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- Teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour;
- Withdrawal of privileges;
- Referral to the Principal
- Restorative practices;
- Behaviour reviews and intervention meetings;
- Suspension;
- Expulsion.

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Corporal punishment is prohibited by law and will not be used in any circumstance at our school.

7. Engaging with families

Thomastown Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. We believe that we are partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

- Ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- Maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff
- Providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- Involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- Involving families in school decision making
- Coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- Including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

Thomastown Primary School will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- Student survey data
- Incident data

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- School reports
- Parent survey
- Case management
- CASES21

We will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

- [Suspension process](#)
- [Expulsions - Decision](#)

Further information and resources

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values

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Policy review and approval

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| Policy last reviewed | Feb 2026 |
| Consultation | School Council, Staff, Parents |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | Feb 2027 |