

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY **(Previously the Student Code of Conduct)**

GENERAL STATEMENT

Thomastown West Primary School aims for excellence in education, joy in learning and preparation for the future, through a broad range of quality programs within a caring, safe, inspiring learning environment. We value diversity, achievement and the development of the whole person, both as an individual and as part of the community.

RATIONALE

The Thomastown West Primary School community is committed to the provision of a safe, stimulating and engaging learning environment. Student well being is of primary concern. Our goal is to ensure that students attend school regularly, participate in engaging programs and are encouraged to adopt positive behaviours.

The Thomastown West Primary School community is diverse and this diversity is valued. People of all cultures, religions and abilities are respected and encouraged to participate, to their fullest capacity, as students, parents/carers, staff members and volunteers, in the daily life of the school. Every person in our community has special talents and knowledge to share with others and we welcome the contributions of every person.

School Values and Vision

The vision of the school community is Together Working on Pathways to Success (TWPS), encompasses a commitment to excellence in education. Our school and wider community are committed to developing Literacy, Numeracy, Curiosity and Social Adaptability in all our children so that they may meet the challenges of an ever changing world.

We provide a dynamic learning environment that engages students to achieve their personal best by extending and supporting them in their endeavours. We provide programs to allow students to become effective and productive members of a multicultural and technologically advancing local and global community. We will further improve engagement and wellbeing of all students by explicitly planning for greater levels of curriculum innovation, student independence and interdependence and development of flexible, physical learning environments.

Our school values of, respect, responsibility, resilience, empathy and striving to be our best drive our teaching and learning while scaffolding our school wide positive behaviour system.

Our school recognises the strong link between home and school. This partnership is encouraged and valued. We aim to be a family friendly school that focuses on the whole child.

We endeavour to ensure that our students are engaged, caring, confident and responsible. Thomastown West Primary School is a place where students and staff strive for success and have a genuine desire to learn. It is our mission to provide a challenging yet supportive environment where students develop independent skills that equip them to become lifelong learners. In accordance with the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic), Thomastown West Primary School will provide a secular education and will not promote any particular religious practice, denomination or sect and is open to adherents of any philosophy, religion or faith.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The school will collaboratively develop and implement a fair and respectful whole-school engagement and behaviour management approach.
- The school's curriculum will include pro-social values and behaviour to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement.
- The school will provide an innovative and stimulating curriculum that challenges students whilst providing them with the individual scaffolding and support they require.
- The school will promote active student participation and provide students with a sense of ownership of their environment.
- The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners.
- The school will establish wellbeing and educational support for vulnerable students and monitor and evaluate progress.
- The school will have processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support.

- The school will build strong links with the local community to gain access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators who can provide expertise and experience that can build the capacity of our school and our teachers to respond to the needs of the students.

IMPLEMENTATION

To realise our vision, our school has in place a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in the school. We recognise that some students, as a group or as individuals may need extra social, emotional or educational support to flourish at school, and so we will put in place strategies to identify these students and provide them with the support they need.

The School works collaboratively with students and parents/ carers to establish fair and respectful behaviour policies and practices, based on the school's values, expected social competencies and positive peer relationships. There are also intervention strategies in place to address inappropriate behaviours which can negatively impact on the learning environment of the self and others.

The universal (whole-school), targeted (group-specific) and individual engagement strategies used by Thomastown West Primary School are:

Universal strategies	Targeted strategies	Individual strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our school will develop a School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Program for all members of the school community in consultation with students, staff and parents/carers, and these will be taught to all students and shared with their families • Our school will deliver a broad curriculum including explicitly teaching social competencies as part of the SWPBS. • Our teachers will adopt a range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students • Our school will regularly acknowledge examples of positive behaviour and student achievement, both informally in classroom settings and more formally in events such as assemblies and via a School Reward System. • Students will have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations both through the Student Representative Council and other more informal mechanisms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School wellbeing staff will undertake health promotion and social skill development in response to needs identified by classroom teachers or other school staff during the school year. • Teaching staff will apply a trauma-informed approach (using Calmer Classrooms: A Guide to Working with Traumatized Children, and similar resources) to working with students who have experienced trauma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies to support attendance and engagement of individual students include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meet with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school ○ Establish a Student Support Group. ○ Develop a Behaviour Support Plan ○ Consider if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up. ○ Refer to internal support services eg Student Wellbeing Coordinator or Student Support Services ○ Refer to external support services including ChildFirst, , Community Agencies

Identifying Students in Need of Extra Support

Thomastown West Primary School will utilise the following tools and information to identify at risk students.

- Personal information gathered upon enrolment
- Attendance rates
- Academic performance, particularly in literacy and numeracy assessments
- Behaviour observed by classroom teachers
- Engagement with student families

Behavioural expectations

Shared behaviour expectations for students, parents/carers and school staff:

	Students	Parents/Carers	Principals/Teachers & Staff
Engagement (participation in the classroom and other school activities)	Demonstrate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparedness to engage in and take full advantage of the school program • effort to do their very best • self-discipline to ensure a cooperative learning environment and model the school values • team work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote positive outcomes by valuing the importance of education and liaising with the school on their child's progress/needs • Monitor their child's school involvement and progress and communicate with the school when necessary • Are informed and supportive of school programs and actively participate in school events/parent groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school will comply with its duty of care obligations and have a responsibility to provide an educational environment that can effectively engage all students • The school will provide appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to have input into their learning and experience success
Attendance	All students are expected to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attend and be punctual for all timetabled classes every day that the school is open to students • be prepared to participate fully in lessons • bring a note from their parents/carers explaining any absence/lateness 	Parents/Carers are expected to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that their child's enrolment details are correct • ensure their child attends regularly • advise the school as soon as possible when a child is absent • account for all student absences • support their child's learning during absences and work with the school to reintegrate students after prolonged absences 	In accordance with legislation released March 1, 2014 the school will: In accordance with DET procedures the school will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proactively promote regular attendance • mark rolls accurately • follow up on any unexplained absences promptly and consistently • identify trends via data analysis • report attendance data in the school's Annual Report • support students whose attendance is problematic by developing 'Return to School' plans and working with families to implement individual strategies

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Behaviour	<p>Students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • model the schools core values of respect, responsibility, resilience, empathy and striving to be their best. • never physically or verbally abuse others. • take responsibility for their behaviour and its impact on others • follow all reasonable requests of staff. • respect the rights of others to learn. No student has the right to impact on the learning of others. • respect the property of others. • comply with the school's policies and work with teachers and parents in developing strategies to improve outcomes. 	<p>Parents/Carers are expected to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have high expectations of their child's behaviour and an understanding of the schools behavioural expectations. • communicate with the school regarding their child's circumstances. • cooperate with the school by assisting in the development and enforcement of strategies to address individual needs. 	<p>The school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deliver an inclusive and comprehensive curriculum which promotes positive behaviours and emphasises the well-being of every child. • employ whole school and classroom practices to establish a climate in which appropriate behaviour is the norm for all students and focus on the implementation of preventative and early intervention strategies to deal with attendance and behavioural issues. • consistently apply SWPBS expectations through a shared collegiate understanding and only exclude students in extreme circumstances. • recognise that for some students additional support may be needed in the form of staged responses and is committed to working with families to reintegrate students after exclusion.
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School actions

Responding to challenging behaviour

Where a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, we will institute a staged response, as outlined in the Department of Education and Training Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance. See appendix 1

Discipline

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to challenging behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to address the range of factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- Restorative approach (eg repairing damage caused)
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Withdrawal from class activities for a specified period. Where appropriate, parents/carers will be informed of such withdrawals
- Detention
- Suspension (in-school and out of school)
- Expulsion

Corporal Punishment is prohibited in all Victorian schools. Corporal punishment must NOT be used at the School under any circumstances.

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be applied when the grounds for suspension and expulsion set out in the Engagement and Inclusion Guidance have been met.

Suspension and expulsion can only be approved by the principal and our school will follow the processes for applying these disciplinary measures set out in the Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance.

Engaging with families

The School values parent / carer input into its operations and curriculum offerings and seeks feedback through the Parent Opinion survey, and from parent representatives on School Council. The School Council provides financial assistance and encouragement to the Parents' Association in our efforts to build a sense of community.

The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. It provides an environment that welcomes all parents/carers and is responsive to them as partners in learning.

The school will create successful partnerships with parents/carers and families by:

- ensuring all parents/carers are aware of the school's Student Engagement Policy
- conducting effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications
- providing volunteer opportunities to enable parents/carers and students to contribute
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families as participants in school decision-making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families, students and the school
- involving families in Student Support Groups

EVALUATION

Data will be collected regarding frequency and types of wellbeing issues, so as to measure the success or otherwise of school-based strategies and approaches.

Some of sources of data used are:

- the Attitudes to School Survey data
- school level report data
- parent survey data
- data from case management work with students
- data extracted from software such as CASES21 or SOCS
- Attendance data

REFERENCES

[School Policy & Advisory Guide: Student Engagement Policy Requirements and Development](#)

[School Policy & Advisory Guide: Student Engagement Student Support Groups](#)

[School Policy & Advisory Guide: Student Engagement Suspensions](#)

[School Policy & Advisory Guide: Student Engagement Expulsions](#)

Review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed as part of Concord School's three year policy review cycle.

APPENDIX 1

Staged response checklist for student behaviour issues

Stage 1: Promoting positive behaviour and preventing behavioural issues
Suggested strategies
Define and teach school-wide expectations for all.
Establish whole school positive behaviour programs.
Establish consistent school-wide processes to identify and support students at risk of disengagement from learning.

Stage 2: Responding to individual students exhibiting challenging behaviour
Suggested strategies
Assess the behaviour and its functions, influences, and triggers (include student, parents and school wellbeing staff as appropriate).
Develop Behaviour Support Plan and/or Individual Education Plan (involve parent or carer)
Consider if any environmental changes need to be made.
Teach replacement behaviors.
Engage Student Support Services and/or community services to undertake assessments and/or provide specialist support
Establish a student support group
Implement appropriate disciplinary measures that are proportionate to problem behaviours
Consider out-of-school behaviour management options such as Student Development Centres (if available)