



Thomastown West Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy 2022 - 2024

Thomastown West Primary School's motto is **Together Working on Pathways to Success**. At Thomastown West Primary School we want every child to achieve their full potential and we know that parents share this goal. Thomastown West 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.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure 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 is available to students and families
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

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
6. Student behavioural expectations
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

POLICY

1. School Profile

Thomastown West Primary School was established in 1971 and is located approximately 20 kilometres north of the CBD. The school site is adjacent to Thomastown Secondary College and the schools share some sports facilities and a joint car park. We have over 40 nationalities represented in our school community, including 5% indigenous. The Student Family Occupation Index has varied between 0.77 and 0.80. Our current enrolment is 268 students.

The school staff is currently 39, some are part-time. Staff include Principal class, a Leading Teacher, a Learning Specialist and classroom teachers. The non-teaching staff includes Office staff and Integration Aides. Our Out of School Hours program is outsourced to OSHClub. Our school curriculum has a major focus on Literacy and Numeracy. Each day 2 hours of Literacy is taught and 5 hours of numeracy every week. Our specialist subjects include STEM, Auslan, Performing Arts, Visual Arts and Physical Education.



Thomastown West Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy 2022 - 2024

For students who require extra assistance, we offer programs such as a Phonological Awareness Program and Literacy Support. We have EAL support for students where English is their additional language and who need some assistance. A major feature of the Prep program is Oral Language

We also have specialised music programs such as instrumental lessons, choir and a school band. In 2012 we moved into our new facilities which offer the opportunity for flexible learning spaces and 21st Century Learning.

In 2014 a Community Hub was established with community partners: Whittlesea Community Connections, The Smith Family and Reservoir and Preston Adult Community Education (PRACE). The purpose of the Hub is to support the needs of families and students in the Thomastown Community.

In 2015 Thomastown West was a lead school in the Linking Learning Project. The Linking Learning Project was designed for all Early Years Education Settings to intervene early in a child's development to provide the best opportunities for children and their families while at school.

During the last six years, Thomastown West has invested a significant amount of time and resources into developing the School-Wide Positive Behaviour framework at our school. We are also a Respectful Relationships Partner School and have previously partnered with Our Watch.

To further improve student learning, engagement and attendance, in 2021 Thomastown West Primary School:

- ✓ partnered with Berry Street and VACCA in the Side By Side initiative and has participated in four Curriculum Days of Berry Street Educational Model (BSEM) professional learning,
- ✓ became a pilot school for the Mental Health in Primary Schools initiative and a Mental Health in Primary Schools coordinator was appointed,
- ✓ completed the Refugee Education Support Program (RESP) with Foundation House and the Centre of Multicultural Youth (CMY) and now offers parent engagement programs each term.

The Thomastown West community is committed to creating and maintaining a positive, safe and supportive environment. By upholding our values (Respect, Responsibility, Resilience, Empathy and we Striving to be our Best) we encourage every child to reach their academic potential and social growth in an inclusive and innovative learning environment.

Our school motto is **Together Working on Pathways to Success (TWPS)**. We strongly believe education is a partnership between teachers, families and the wider community. We work together to ensure all students experience success.

2. School values, philosophy, and vision

Thomastown West Primary School's Values, Vision and School Philosophy are integral to all we do and are the foundation of our school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of respect, resilience, empathy, responsibility and to strive to do their best, at every opportunity.

Thomastown West Primary School's vision is to create and maintain a positive, safe and supportive environment. By upholding our values, we encourage every child to reach their academic potential and social growth in an inclusive and innovative learning environment.



Values

- **Resilient:** Resilience is what helps you to cope and get through hard times. Sometimes it makes you even stronger than you were before. It means we bounce back after difficult times.
- **Responsible:** Being responsible means, you do the things you are expected to do and accept the consequences (results) of your actions. It means you do what is right.
- **Empathetic:** Empathy is the ability to understand how someone else is feeling or to understand the situation they are in. It means 'putting yourself in someone else's shoes.'
- **Respectful:** Respect is thinking and acting in a positive way about yourself and others. It means you behave in a way that shows you care about the feelings and wellbeing of other people.
- **We will strive to do our best:** Striving to be your best is the ability to keep working towards a goal, overcoming challenges and sticking with it even when it's hard. It means believing in your heart that you can make choices you are proud of, and always trying your best.

(See Appendix A)

Philosophy

The TWPS community is committed to creating and maintaining a positive, safe and supportive environment. By upholding our values, we encourage every child to reach their academic potential and social growth in an inclusive and innovative learning environment.

Vision

TWPS's vision and school motto is Together Working on Pathways to Success (TWPS), which 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 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.

3. Engagement Strategies

Thomastown West 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.

At Thomastown West Primary School we are a School Wide Positive Behaviour Program school. When planning our engagement strategies, we use the School Wide Positive Behaviour Response to Intervention triangle. (See Appendix B). A summary of the whole-school, targeted (need specific) and individual engagement strategies used by TWPS are included on the following pages.

Whole School (Tier 1)

- *Our school has 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 delivers a broad curriculum including explicitly teaching social competencies as part of the SWPBS.*
- *We have an hour a week dedicated to Student Engagement and Wellbeing based on the School Wide Positive Behaviours Model*
- *Our teachers adopt a range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students. PAT SEWI completed by all students.*
- *TWPS have high and consistent expectations of all staff, students, parents and carers.*
- *TWPS prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing*
- *We have created a school culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive. Including the use of 'Circle Time' within classrooms to build connectivity and support students.*
- *TWPS is welcoming of all parents/carers and we are responsive to them as partners in learning. We have connected parents to our school wide reward system.*
- *We annually analyse and respond to a range of school data including attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data.*
- *We deliver a broad curriculum, including a range of specialists, to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations.*
- *We target Professional Learning to help support teachers in SEWI*
- *We engage in whole school professional learning about Refugee Education Support Program*
- *Teachers at TWPS are developing an agreed on TWPS instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons*
- *Teachers at TWPS adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching.*
- *Our school's Statement of Values are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community. Our school wide inside/outside Behaviour Support Charts and SWPBS Matrix are used throughout the school to ensure consistency and expectations.*
- *TWPS have carefully planned transition programs for Prep, 6-7 and intra-school transition to support students moving into different stages of their schooling*
- *We monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level, including through the 2020 developed Attendance Response Process and Under 80% Attendance program*
- *All students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through Student Agency, Student Voice, Student Leadership Group and the Student Representative Council. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Wellbeing team, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.*
- *We have fortnightly Buddy Classes that take place to support school wide relationships, building connections throughout the different year levels.*
- *TWPS creates opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school concerts, athletics, and music programs.*
- *Students are encouraged to self-refer to a trusted adult at TWPS such as a teacher, Wellbeing team member, Assistant Principal or Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We are proud to have an 'open door' policy where students and staff are partners in learning*

- We engage in School Wide Positive Behaviour Support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Bully Stoppers
 - Safe Schools
 - programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
 - opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- All staff apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- TWPS School wide reward system to support and encourage positive behaviour and set high expectations.
- 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 our TWPS Dojo Reward system

Targeted (Tier 2)

Individual (Tier 3)

- Each year group has an Area Team Leader, a teacher who, with the support of the classroom teacher is responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- We connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- All students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- Wellbeing and health staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
- Students will be supported by the TWPS Wellbeing Team
- 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 Traumatised Children, and similar resources) to working with students who have experienced trauma.
- Students behaviour/concerns are all logged onto Compass and students will attend MIR club to address behaviours

- Parent/teacher/Student/Family Student Support Groups
- Individual Education Plan
- Behaviour Support Plan
- Safety Plan
- Modified lunch and recess program
- Modified Attendance Plan
- Return to School Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- Referrals to Student Welfare Team and Student Support Services
- Referral to CYHMS
- Lookout Centre
- Referral to Whittlesea Student Services
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
- Referral to relevant support services:
 - Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or Child First (Orange Door)



4. Identifying students in need of support

Thomastown West Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing Team and Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion Curriculum Team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Thomastown West Primary School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social, behavioural or academic support:

- personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled
- attendance records
- academic performance
- progress on Individual Education Plans
- observations by school staff such as personal hygiene, appearance, whether bringing food to eat, changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation and referrals based on this information
- Data records:
 - Attendance, including under 80% attendance record
 - Behaviour Support Logs on Compass
 - Make it Right Club attendance
 - Suspension data
 - Parent correspondence data
- engagement with families and referrals based on this information
- self-referrals or referrals from peers
- contact from external agencies such as DHHS and VACCA
- observations from school partners such as OSH Club, The Thomastown West Community Hub

5. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have the 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. Our school's Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

- feel comfortable and safe
- work and learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings, beliefs and concerns

Students have the responsibility to:

- make the right choices
- take personal responsibility for their words and actions
- encourage others to do the right thing
- behave in accordance with the TWPS School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support Matrix and (See Appendix C) Inside and Outside Behaviour Support Charts. (See appendix D)



Students who have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of either the Wellbeing Team or School Leadership Team.

Inclusion Strategies

Thomastown West Primary School is an inclusive school that understands, respects, welcomes, celebrates and honours the diversity of children, families and staff. Diversity comes in many different forms, for example culture, language, religion, lifestyle, family arrangements and circumstances, abilities and disabilities. Thomastown West Primary School recognises that respecting diversity is important in creating a sense of belonging. The different backgrounds of the children, families and staff enrich our school's character and identity. Thomastown West Primary School believes schools that are responsive to individual differences and respect diversity benefit everyone and help to build an inclusive environment. Every person, every child, needs to feel that their sense of self and their identity is valued in some way by the people and environments that surround them. In Victoria, mandatory child safe standards have been introduced to help protect children from abuse in organisations. In complying with the standards, organisations must promote the cultural safety of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Like other aspects of child safety, creating and maintaining an organisation in which the cultural safety of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds is kept safe requires effort. Steps to ensure cultural safety include sharing knowledge, raising awareness, developing understanding that leads to cultural sensitivity and finally, cultural competence. This ongoing and dynamic process leads to sustainable philosophies and values within an organisation that promotes cultural safety for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and benefits all children, families, staff and managers.

Cultural Safety

Thomastown Primary School promotes the cultural safety of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds by:

- ensuring our organisation clearly demonstrates a zero tolerance of discrimination
- ensuring our policy and procedures specifically address cultural inclusion, sensitivity and competency
- providing training and development on cultural sensitivity and competency
- being respectful, inclusive and welcoming of families from a range of backgrounds
- asking children and families about their culture and cultural support needs
- recognising occasions which are important to different cultures and dietary requirements
- ensuring the physical environment reflects a positive and welcoming approach to diverse cultures, through decoration and artwork
- supporting environments of cultural resilience within the all communities
- employing staff that are representative of the diversity of your local community
- employing staff who display cultural sensitivity and cultural competency
- actively seeking out and talking to families about how they would like to be involved
- asking families about their preferred format for the provision of information, including translation or interpreting into community languages and audio-visual formats
- ensuring complaint and grievance processes are easily understood and provided in culturally relevant and sensitive ways.

Safety of Children with a Disability

Thomastown West Primary School keeps children with a disability safe by:

- ensuring our school has a child safe culture in which abuse and harm is not tolerated and diversity is welcomed
- pre-empting unsafe situations via our risk assessment processes
- ensuring we have sound recruitment and screening processes in place for staff and volunteers.
- ensuring our code of conduct for staff and volunteers clearly outlines boundaries about staff and volunteer interaction with children with a disability, including personal care assistance
- having a robust complaint process, encourage feedback and be responsive if problems arise
- empowering children with a disability by assisting them to build their self-esteem and confidence
- teaching children about their bodies and their safety, including online activities (sex and relationships education).
- enabling and facilitating independence with dressing and toileting and personal care where possible
- communicating directly with children with a disability about how safe they feel
- being inclusive and collaborative with families
- raising awareness about abuse and ways to seek help. Ensuring children with a disability know who they can go to if they feel unsafe or have a concern or complaint – ensuring these processes take into account the child's developmental level and communication requirements.
- ensuring vigilance in organisational procedures to identify indicators or warning signs, if children have communication difficulties.
- listening to children, no matter how they communicate their thoughts, views and concerns.

Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and the School Wide Positive Behaviour Matrix (see Appendix C).

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Thomastown West Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary processes taken by teachers and other school staff. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with *Thomastown West Primary School's Anti-Bullying Policy*.

Behavioural interventions 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.

At Thomastown West Primary School these behavioural interventions and consequences are captured in our Inside and Outside Behaviour Charts. Please refer to Appendix D. These posters are consistently and visibly displayed throughout the school and in every classroom.



As captured in the Inside Outside Behaviour charts measures that may be applied include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving seats in the room or moving to another classroom
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Wellbeing Team
- restorative conversations
- development of Behaviour Support Plans
- attendance at Make it Right Club
- modified lunch or recess timetables
- suspension
- expulsion

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

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx>

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

Engaging with families

At Thomastown West Primary School we understand that we are partners in students learning. We value 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 aim to be 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, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- 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
- 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 Improvement Plan or Return to School Plan in collaboration with the student and their family
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - students who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
 - in Out of Home Care
 - students who are supported by a Behaviour Support Plan
 - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

Preventative Strategies



- **Respectful Relationships**

At Thomastown West Primary School we understand the importance of establishing respectful relationships with our students, peers and the wider community, therefore TWPS integrates Respectful Relationships into all curricular and extracurricular activities.

- **Social and Emotional Learning**

Social and Emotional lessons take place in our weekly SWPBS hour from P-6 and successfully teach our children how to build healthy relationships, be resilient and confident, as well as being a contributing factor to our positive climate for learning at TWPS.

- **Bounce Back**

Inclusive planning for SEWI is linked to the Bounce Back program in grades 3-6 at Thomastown West Primary School. It is a wellbeing and resilience class-based program for children and young people from Kindergarten to Middle School. Bounce Back! offers practical strategies to help children and young people function well at school and in life. It promotes positive mental health, wellbeing and resilience for students and teachers plus safe and supportive class and school learning environments.

- **Buddy System**

Thomastown West Primary School also has an effective buddy system which promotes friendship and support between older and younger peers through regular collaboration, which also fosters a sense of whole-school community. The key characteristic of this buddy system is the participation of older students in positive, supportive, regular structured and facilitated one-on-one relationships with younger students. Our buddy system creates feelings of connectedness that enable both older and younger 'buddies' to bond more closely with their school within a psychologically safe environment, thereby increasing the likelihood of more positive school behaviour and less bullying or unacceptable behaviour.

- **eSmart Schools**

Thomastown West is an eSmart school. The Alannah and Madeline Foundation developed eSmart, which "aims to make Cybersafety a normal part of every young person's life by equipping them to use technologies in ways that protect them from the associated risks" (esmitschools.com.au). The initiative is designed to reduce cyberbullying and bullying and to positively engage students (by illustrating that expected behavioural norms still exist within our new technological landscape).

Respectful Relationships

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- TWPS Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safe Standards
- <https://www.thomwestps.vic.edu.au/articles/15>

EVALUATION

Thomastown West 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 including Attitudes to School Survey
- Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion Committee Team surveys



Thomastown West Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy 2022 - 2024

- Compass Behaviour Support Log data
- school reports
- parent surveys
- case management
- CASES21
- DET SOCS

This policy was last updated in December 2020 and is scheduled for review in December 2022.

Date Implemented	2016; 2020; 2022
Author	Principal Assistant Principal TWPS Wellbeing Team
Approved By	School Council
Date Reviewed	October 2016; September 2020, June 2022
Responsible for Review	Assistant Principal
Review Date	10/06/2024
References	Victorian Government Schools Policy Advisory Guide

Appendix A

[School Values Poster](#)

Appendix B

[School-Wide Positive Behaviour Response to Intervention Triangle](#)

Appendix C

[School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Matrix](#)

Appendix D

[Inside /Outside Behaviour Support Chart](#)