



If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact 94654317 or thomastown.west.ps@education.vic.gov.au

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain Thomastown West Primary School's commitment to making sure every member of our school community, regardless of their background or personal attributes, is treated with respect and dignity. This policy should be read alongside the following Department of Education and Training policies:

- [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students](#)
- For staff, the [Respectful Workplaces](#) policies (including [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#), [Sexual Harassment](#) and [Workplace Bullying](#)) as these whole of Department policies apply to all staff at Thomastown West Primary School.
- The new [Child Safe Standards](#) (July 2022) ensure Aboriginal children and young people feel safe.

POLICY

Definitions

Cultural safety: includes being provided with a safe, nurturing and positive environment where Aboriginal children:

- feel comfortable being themselves
- feel comfortable expressing their culture, including their spiritual and belief systems
- are supported by carers who respect their Aboriginality and encourage their sense of self and identity.

Personal attribute: a personal characteristic that is protected by State or Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation. These include: race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious belief or activity, political belief or activity, age, intersex status, physical features, pregnancy, carer and parental status, breastfeeding, marital or relationship status, lawful sexual activity, employment activity, industrial activity, expunged homosexual conviction or personal association with anyone who is identified with reference to any protected attribute.

Direct discrimination: unfavourable treatment because of a person's protected attribute.

Indirect discrimination: imposing an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice that disadvantages a person or group of people with a protected attribute.

Sexual harassment: unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature towards another person which could reasonably be expected to make that other person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. It may be physical, verbal, visual or written.



Thomastown West Inclusion and Diversity Policy 2022 - 2026

Disability harassment: an action taken in relation to the person's disability that is reasonably likely, in all the circumstances, to humiliate, offend, intimidate or distress the person.

Vilification: conduct that incites hatred towards or revulsion or severe ridicule of a person or group of people on the basis of their race or religion.

Victimisation: subjecting a person or threatening to subject them to detrimental treatment because they (or their associate) have made an allegation of discrimination or harassment on the basis of a protected attribute (or asserted their rights under relevant policies or law).

Inclusion and diversity

Thomastown West Primary School strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff.

At Thomastown West Primary School, we want every child to achieve their full potential and we know that parents share this goal. 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 safety, wellbeing and inclusion are key factors in a child's sense of belonging and are preconditions for every child achieving their full potential.

Benefits of cultural safety

Being able to express their culture makes Aboriginal children stronger and safer. Aboriginal children and young people who don't feel safe being themselves and expressing their individuality may be less willing to report abuse.

Providing safe environments for children has positive, lifelong impacts that cannot be underestimated, and cultural safety is a key dimension of safety for Aboriginal children.

Key elements of cultural safety

Understand identity

Identifying as Aboriginal is one part of a child or young person's identity. Like everyone, Aboriginal people have different life experiences and characteristics. Schools must recognise that each person is unique with their own characteristics, strengths and challenges.

Respect culture

Culture and identity are linked. By supporting Aboriginal children to feel strong in their identity schools also help them enjoy their cultural rights.

Australia's colonial history has caused significant trauma and hurt that individuals, families and communities still feel today. However, Aboriginal communities have a long history of resilience and growth in the face of adversity and trauma. Schools should show respect for the deep resilience of Victorian Aboriginal communities.



Thomastown West Inclusion and Diversity Policy 2022 - 2026

Eliminate racism and abuse

Making your school culturally safe means taking the specific action needed to keep Aboriginal children and young people safe from abuse and harm.

Schools need to address all forms of racism and consider attitudes and practices that are a barrier to providing a culturally safe environment and to address all forms of racism.

Thomastown West Primary School is committed to creating a school community where all members of our school community are welcomed, accepted and treated equitably and with respect regardless of their backgrounds or personal attributes such as race, language, religious beliefs, gender identity, disability or sexual orientation so that they can participate, achieve and thrive at school.

Thomastown West Primary School acknowledges and celebrates the diversity of backgrounds and experiences in our school community and we will not tolerate behaviours, language or practices that label, stereotype or demean others. At Thomastown West Primary School we value the human rights of every student and we take our obligations under anti-discrimination laws and the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities seriously.

Thomastown West Primary School encourage and actively support a child's or student's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights in the following ways:

- Actively nurture and promote a culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity
- Equip staff, students, volunteers and the school community to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and students
- Adopt measures to ensure racism is identified, confronted and not tolerated
- Address any instances of racism within the school environment with appropriate consequences
- Ensure that students are not discriminated against (directly or indirectly) and where necessary, are reasonably accommodated to participate in their education and school activities (e.g. schools sports, concerts, on the same basis as their peers)
- Acknowledge and respond to the diverse needs, identities and strengths of all students
- Actively support participation and inclusion in the school by Aboriginal children, students and their families
- Encourage empathy and fairness towards others.
- Ensuring school policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment, as well as meeting the needs of Aboriginal children, students and their families
- Challenge stereotypes that promote prejudicial and biased behaviours and practices
- Contribute to positive learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for students
- Respond to complaints and allegations appropriately and ensure that students are not victimised.
- Endorse school policies detailing the strategies and actions the school will take.



Thomastown West Inclusion and Diversity Policy 2022 - 2026

Bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals or groups because of their personal attributes will not be tolerated at Thomastown West Primary School. We will take appropriate measures, consistent with our *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* and *Bullying* policies to respond to students who demonstrate these behaviours at our school.

Students who may have experienced or witnessed this type of behaviour are encouraged to speak up and to let their teachers, parents or carers know about those behaviours to ensure that inappropriate behaviour can be addressed.

Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities

Thomastown West Primary School also understands that it has a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate students with disabilities. A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist students with disabilities to participate in their education on the same basis as their peers. Reasonable adjustments will be made for students with disabilities in consultation with the student, their parents or carers, their teachers and if appropriate, their treating practitioners. Our school consults through Student Support Group processes, via Compass and at times utilises Class Dojo. For more information about support available for students with disabilities and communicating with us in relation to a student's disability, please refer to our school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* policy or contact the Assistant Principal for further information.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Discussed at student forums
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

This Inclusion and Diversity Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related school policies, procedures, and codes. These include our:

- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Digital Learning Policy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Visitors Policy
- Volunteers Policy



Thomastown West Inclusion and Diversity Policy 2022 - 2026

Related Department of Education and Training policies

- [Bullying Prevention and Response Policy](#)
- [Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes](#)
- [Complaints Policy](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management Policy](#)
- [Digital Learning in Schools Policy](#)
- [Family Violence Support](#)
- [Protecting Children: Reporting Obligations Policy](#)
- [Policy and Guidelines for Recruitment in Schools](#)
- [Reportable Conduct Policy](#)
- [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)
- [Supervision of Students Policy](#)
- [Visitors in Schools Policy](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools Policy](#)
- [Working with Children and other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)
- <https://www.thomwestps.vic.edu.au/articles/15>

Other related documents

- [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- [Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Recording your actions: Responding to suspected child abuse – A template for Victorian schools](#)

For staff, please see the Department's [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy](#), [Sexual Harassment Policy](#) and [Workplace Bullying Policy](#) which apply to all staff working at our school.

Other relevant Department policies and resources on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library are:

- [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [Koorie Education](#)
- [Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture](#)
- [Safe Schools](#)
- [Supports and Services](#)
- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)



Thomastown West Inclusion and Diversity Policy 2022 - 2026

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

EVALUATION

To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every two years. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community.

Date Implemented	2022
Author	Principal Assistant Principal Student Wellbeing Team
Approved By	TWPS Principal Sandi Young
Date Created	June 2022
Responsible for Review	Principal
Review Date	20/05/2024
References	Victorian Government Schools Policy Advisory Guide