



## Thomastown West Student Inclusion and Diversity Policy 2024 - 2028

Thomastown West Primary School 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. 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 inclusion and community diversity are key factors in a child's sense of belonging and are preconditions for every child achieving their full potential.



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Thomastown West Primary School on 03 9465 4317 or [thomastown.west.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto: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. Thomastown West Primary School strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff. For staff, this policy should be read alongside the Department of Education and Training's [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 our school.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all students at Thomastown West Primary School.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy.

### DEFINITION

*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.



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*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.

*Disability harassment:* humiliating comments or actions about a person's disability.

*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 was established in 1971 and is located approximately 20 kilometres north of the CBD. This school had a total of 316 students enrolled at this school in 2020. The school is the hub for a diverse multicultural community with over 40 nationalities represented. 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% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

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 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 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 will:

- Actively nurture and promote a culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity
- 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, graduation and special events) on the same basis as their peers
- acknowledge and respond to the diverse needs, identities and strengths of all students
- encourage empathy and fairness towards others
- challenge stereotypes that promote prejudicial and biased behaviours and practices
- contribute to positive learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for students



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- respond to complaints and allegations appropriately and ensure that students are not victimised.

We believe the following programs reflect our commitment to diversity and inclusion:

- Student Support Groups (SSGs)
- Individual Education Plans
- Behaviour Support Plans
- Safety Plans
- Getting ready to Learn Plans
- Programs for Students with Disabilities
- Language Support Program
- Intervention/Tutoring support
- Student EAL support groups
- Lunchtime TWPS Hub Activities such as Koorie Club, Gardening Club, Cooking Club, Chess Club
- Multi-cultural Day and lunches
- New Arrivals Program
- English as an Additional Language
- Refugee Education Program
- Wellbeing Programs funded by DE Mental Health Fund and/or School Focused Youth Service Co-Ordinator from Uniting
- Social Skills Groups
- Friendship Groups
- Keeping Calm Program
- NAIDOC Week
- Harmony Day
- R U OK Day

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 Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion* 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.

As indicated in these aforementioned policies, students that are involved in bullying or harassing others on the basis of their personal attributes will be supported to understand the impact of their behaviour. Restorative Practices will be used to build empathy and promote tolerance and inclusion.



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### 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 may consult through Student Support Group processes and in other less formal ways. 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 Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy* or contact the Assistant Principal on 94654317 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
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

### RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Please see other relevant policies, which are located on our school website:

<https://www.thomwestps.vic.edu.au/page/101/Reports-for-the-School-Community>

- *Thomastown West Primary School Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy*
- *Thomastown West Primary School Bullying Prevention Policy*
- *Thomastown West Primary School Differentiation and Individual Education Plan Policy*

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.



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

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

### EVALUATION

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the Thomastown West Primary School four year policy review cycle.

<b>Date Implemented</b>	2016; 2020; 2024
<b>Author</b>	Principal Assistant Principal
<b>Approved By</b>	School Council
<b>Date Reviewed</b>	October 2016; September 2020, July 2024
<b>Responsible for Review</b>	Assistant Principal Principal
<b>Review Date</b>	10/08/2028
<b>References</b>	Victorian Government Schools Policy Advisory Guide