



# Inclusion and Diversity Policy (Includes Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment)

HONESTY EMPATHY RESPECT



## Help for non-English speakers.

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Thomastown Meadows Primary School on (03) 9466 1810.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain Thomastown Meadows 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 Meadows Primary School.

## POLICY

### Definitions

*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.

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

Our school grounds are located on the land of the Aboriginal people of the Wurundjeri Willum clan, and we are surrounded by a supportive community. Thomastown Meadows Primary School has developed close ties to local community stakeholders and enjoys support from our local shops and community services.

Our school is culturally and linguistically diverse with 90% of families having a language background other than English (LBOTE), with the largest LBOTE groups being Arabic, Vietnamese and Macedonian. As a high proportion of our students are from diverse backgrounds where English is not the main language spoken at home, they are supported with the English as an Additional Language Curriculum. TMPS has a 2% representation from the Koorie community. We are proud of our diversity and inclusive school community.

Thomastown Meadows 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 Meadows 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 Meadows 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 Meadows Primary School 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, athletics day, access to playgrounds and inclusive spaces, whole school events, excursions, incursions, camps, and graduation 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.
- respond to complaints and allegations appropriately and ensure that students are not victimised.

Our commitment to diversity is evident in the specific programs and initiatives that we implement school wide. At our school we promote inclusion and diversity through:

- student wellbeing check ins during weekly PLCs.
- integrated units of work with a focus on cultural diversity and Indigenous cultures.
- displaying both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags.

- displaying acknowledgement to country and starting all school community events, gatherings and meetings with an acknowledgement to country.
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader supporting staff and students.
- school chaplain.
- wellbeing lunch clubs.
- Lego club.
- breakfast club program.
- support within an indoor wellness centre.
- wellness dog (training for staff through dogs connect)
- trauma informed approaches founded on Derry Street Education Model.
- art therapy groups.
- resilience groups.
- regular brain breaks for de-escalation.
- adjustments and modifications to ensure all students can access learning and activities.
- cocreating individual goals using an IEP.
- student leadership opportunities in various areas of the school e.g., breakfast club leaders, sustainability leaders, school captains, house captains, wellness dog leaders.
- whole school events to mark important dates on the calendar e.g., harmony day, Reconciliation week, NAIDOC week, Refugee week, special lunch days.

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 Meadows 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.

Students that are involved in bullying or harassing others based on their personal attributes will be supported to understand the impact of their behaviour.

### **Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities**

Thomastown Meadows 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 Wellbeing and Engagement* policy further information.

## **COMMUNICATION**

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

## RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Links to other policies at our school e.g., Student Wellbeing and Engagement, Statement of Values and Bullying Prevention policies can be found on our school's website <https://www.thomastownmeadows.vic.edu.au/policies>

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](#)
- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	June 2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2027
Responsibility	Assistant Principal