



Thomastown Meadows Primary School

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

HONESTY EMPATHY RESPECT

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- expectations for positive student behaviour
- support available to students and families
- our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Thomastown Meadows 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.

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 Meadows Primary School opened in 1980 and is located in a residential populated area. A high proportion of our students are from diverse backgrounds where English is not spoken at home. Thomastown Meadows Primary School is a dynamic school promoting integrity, lifelong learning and the attainment of excellence. We are committed to providing our students with the highest quality education through the recognition of individual learning styles, effective communication, team work, continuous improvement and the development of a sense of belonging.

The core purpose of our school and our ongoing commitment is to ensure we provide our students with a safe and challenging environment that engages and stimulates them to

become lifelong learners with the academic, social and personal skills needed to become productive members of a dynamic, global society.

The school values are: Honesty, Empathy & Respect which were launched with fidelity and commitment as a whole school community in 2018. These values are at the centre of all our expectations. The values are evident in all areas of the school. We have worked hard to change the culture of the school to ensure this. We utilise a Rights and Responsibilities approach to behaviour management supported by using various resources and by implementing the School Wide Positive Behaviours Framework. The units of work delivered each term have a consistent link to social, emotional and personal learning to ensure ongoing growth for each individual student and we encourage a positive growth mindset to ensure students see themselves as successful learners.

2 School values, philosophy and vision

Thomastown Meadows Primary School's Statement of Values and School Philosophy is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of **Honesty Empathy Respect** at every opportunity.

At Thomastown Meadows Primary School we believe:

- Children learn best in a positive, caring and stimulating environment where their efforts and achievements are acknowledged, valued and encouraged.
- That the best way to encourage good behaviour is to model, recognize and acknowledge this behaviour.

Our school vision is to provide students with experiences, skills and knowledge to become efficient communicators and life-long learners who will grow into emotionally resilient and responsible citizens.

3 Engagement strategies

Thomastown Meadows 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.

Whole of school strategies

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive
- welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- teachers at Thomastown Meadows Primary School use a common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Thomastown Meadows Primary School 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 that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling

- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through programs such as: buddy programs, peers support programs
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Bully Stoppers
 - Bounce back
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)

Specific strategies

- early identification of vulnerable students and those at risk of disengaging from school
- social skills programs, anger management programs, grief counselling, canine comprehension, Circus program and other support programs are provided as necessary
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

Individual strategies

(student specific strategies that may be considered and applied on a case by case basis)

- Student Support Groups
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Escalation charts
- Functional behaviour plans
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to orange door and or Headspace

Thomastown Meadows Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- Building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- Ongoing professional learning as relevant to support the student and the family including NCCD and DET behavioural support website.
- developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- Considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom environment, provision of inclusive furniture and spaces.
- referring the student to:
 - school based wellbeing supports
 - Student Support Services
 - appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, Foundation House, CAHMS child and adolescent mental health services or Orange door

Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:

- 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 in collaboration with the student and their family
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4 Identifying students in need of support

Thomastown Meadows Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Support Group SSG plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies that help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing.

Thomastown Meadows Primary School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled
- attendance records
- academic performance
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, social connectedness and motivation
- attendance, time-out and suspension data
- engagement with families

5 Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a 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 expectations of members of our community.

Each classroom will develop its own classroom rights and responsibilities and consequences in accordance with the school core values. These will be developed during the 'Start Up' program at the beginning of the school year. There will an emphasis on the communal aspect of the rights and responsibilities and the 'Respectful Relationships' program.

Students have the right to:

- participate fully in their education
- feel safe, secure and happy at school
- learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- respect the right of others to learn.

Students who may 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 the school leadership team.

6 Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Thomastown Meadows Primary School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Thomastown Meadows 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 action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Disciplinary measures 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.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Professional Learning Team Administration Executive officer
- using restorative practices
- behaviour reviews through meetings with parents
- 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.

7 Engaging with families

Thomastown Meadows Primary School values 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
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

8 Evaluation

Thomastown Meadows 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
- incidents data
- school reports

- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21
- SOCS

Related policies and resources

The following policies and resources relate to this area of the school's operation:

- The Statement of Values and School Philosophy policy
- The Bullying Prevention policy
- Child Safe Standards and resources

Policy review

Policy written updated	School Council approved	Review date	Responsibility
15 August 2019	18/02/2021	August 2022	Administration Executive