

# STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

## PURPOSE

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

Tecoma 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

Tecoma Primary School is situated in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges on Melbourne's Outer-Eastern fringe, central to the township of Tecoma. The school opened as a part time school with Menzies Creek, in a two room shack called "The Pines". The name of the school changed from Upper Ferntree Gully, to Upwey, then Belgrave and finally Tecoma in 1961. Since its opening, Tecoma Primary has established a proud history of providing high quality education to students that are drawn predominantly from Tecoma, Belgrave and Upwey.

Tecoma Primary School is an integral part of the community and has developed and maintains an excellent reputation. It strongly emphasises the importance of a close home-school partnership. This emphasis is reflected in the day-to-day involvement of parents in school activities and participation in decision-making. Families are generally very supportive of the school and each other. A genuine feeling of community spirit surrounds the school, with school facilities often being used after hours by other community groups.

The school has a current enrolment of 446 students. The projected enrolment for 2022 is 445.

Tecoma Primary School is classified as a Like School Group 1, that is, there is a low proportion of Languages Other Than English (LOTE) speakers at home and a low proportion of parents in receipt of EMA payments.

At present we have four PSD (Program for Students with Disabilities) students identified and funded. A total of three Integration Aides support these students. We run our Reading Room Program and, at present, due to Remote Learning in 2020 and 2021, our Literacy & Numeracy tutoring Initiatives, which cater for the students identified as experiencing difficulty with their learning. Individual Education Plans are established for selected students across all levels, for students working above and below their expected level.

Following a strong Transition Program from preschool, the school offers a comprehensive and sequential curriculum based on the Victorian Curriculum which is used to plan student learning programs, assess student progress and report to parents.

The Victorian Curriculum Foundation–10 (F–10) sets out what every student should learn during their first eleven years of schooling. The curriculum is the common set of knowledge and skills required by students for life-long learning, social development and active and informed citizenship.

The Victorian Curriculum F–10 incorporates the Australian Curriculum and reflects Victorian priorities and standards.

The design of the Victorian Curriculum F–10 is set out below:

Learning areas	Capabilities
<p><b>The Arts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dance</li> <li>• Drama</li> <li>• Media Arts</li> <li>• Music</li> <li>• Visual Arts</li> <li>• Visual Communication Design</li> </ul> <p><b>English</b></p> <p><b>Health and Physical Education</b></p> <p><b>The Humanities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civics and Citizenship</li> <li>• Economics and Business</li> <li>• Geography</li> <li>• History</li> </ul> <p><b>Languages</b></p> <p><b>Mathematics</b></p> <p><b>Science</b></p> <p><b>Technologies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and Technologies</li> <li>• Digital Technologies</li> </ul>	<p><b>Critical and Creative Thinking</b></p> <p><b>Ethical</b></p> <p><b>Intercultural</b></p> <p><b>Personal and Social</b></p>

The school is student and curriculum focused. It strives for and encourages maximum achievement in all areas of teaching and learning and student wellbeing. Specialist programs include Physical Education, Visual Arts, Performing Arts (Music), Science and LOTE (Japanese). Acknowledging the diversity of learning styles, interests and talents, the school provides a wide range of enrichment opportunities including:

- Swimming, sporting clinics, interschool sports
- 3 - 6 camping program
- Year 2 sleepover
- Instrumental programs
- Choir
- Whole School Production (every second year)
- Year 6 Leadership Program
- Kinder – Year 4, Prep-Year 5 Buddies,
- Grade 6 Advanced Presentation Skills
- Curriculum based incursions/excursions
- Special Community events
- Junior and Senior Code Club
- Aerobics
- Out of School Hours Care program.

Digital Technologies are integrated into classroom practice via a school wide network and the use of tablets, notebooks and chromebooks, with a ratio of 1 computer/device for every 1.2 students. We also have interactive white boards or televisions in every classroom.

Tecoma Primary School provides a balanced and inclusive curriculum, meeting children's academic, social and emotional needs and levels of development.

We focus on monitoring student attendance and as a consequence during the year have continued to implement a variety of positive strategies to encourage regular student attendance such as, 'It's Not Okay to Be Away', Punctuality Award, Principal's attendance BBQ, etc.

Through the umbrella of the KidsMatter framework, with a focus on Social and Emotional Learning through a variety of programs (Bounce Back, Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships, and The Zones of Regulation), and embedding our school values, we continue to focus on developing an emotionally resilient, welcoming, inclusive and safe school environment. We are committed to addressing bullying, including Cyberbullying (as addressed in our school's *Anti-bullying (including Cyberbullying) and Anti-Harassment Policy*).

## **2. School values, philosophy and vision**

At Tecoma Primary School our mission is to ensure that each family's association with our school is a rich and rewarding one and that families take away many relationships and happy memories from their time here.

At Tecoma Primary School we have a Child Safety Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children. This has been put into place to ensure appropriate behaviours with children are enforced in the school, to help protect children from abuse.

At Tecoma Primary School we have a commitment to zero tolerance of child abuse. Staff at our school have a responsibility to respond to the safety, care and welfare of students, in all school environments and outside of school hours. This is a commitment which is led by our School Council, School Leadership team, all staff and is shared openly and transparently with all members of our school community.

Tecoma Primary School prides itself on providing a caring and stimulating learning environment for all children. Developing the whole child is a major school focus; preparing our students to take their place successfully in further education and adult life; providing each child with the foundations for a confident future.

This is reflected in the vision and values statement we developed in 2008.

## **VISION**

At Tecoma Primary School we strive to create a responsive, cooperative, innovative teaching and learning environment. We aim for development of the whole person as a committed life-long learner, who embraces self-development, achievement and contributes to their community.

## **VALUES**

Our School Values are Respect, Resilience, Creativity and Personal Best. These school values are woven through our classrooms and our learning, and we celebrate students' achievements through the values they demonstrate with their Student of the Week awards. Tecoma Primary School provides a broad curriculum that ensures opportunities and successes for all children. Our school has a reputation for its positive, caring environment which promotes and celebrates endeavour and the pursuit of excellence. We promote excellence in learning by providing quality programs that challenge and interest all students. Tecoma fosters the development of self-esteem, confidence, independence and co-operative skills.

*The complete Statement of Values and School Philosophy is available on our school website: [www.tecomaps.vic.edu.au](http://www.tecomaps.vic.edu.au)*

### **3. Engagement strategies**

At Tecoma Primary School our positive school culture is predicated on student engagement being the basis for learning. To support this, our leadership team is actively engaged in developing classroom practice to ensure that our pedagogy and curriculum engages all students. Effective teaching, inclusive and engaging curriculum and respectful relationships between staff, students and parents, is promoted through regular whole staff professional development and professional learning teams that encourage innovative pedagogy developed using the Victorian Teaching and Learning Model, which incorporates:

- the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)
- the Practice Principles
- the High Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS)
- the Pedagogical Model.

Our school has a number of initiatives and programs which provide opportunities that contribute to the school effectively engaging students in their learning. Engagement strategies focus on personalised learning and the use of technology.

#### Universal

We have a number of **Universal** (school wide) engagement strategies that create safe, inclusive, empowering environments that foster an enthusiasm for learning and support student wellbeing which are in place to ensure students remain enthusiastic about learning. These include:

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents/carers
- prioritising positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing

- engaging in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships
  - KidsMatter (Bounceback)
  - Restorative Practices
  - Zones of Regulation
  - Student Led Class Meetings (Voice)
  - Term Reflections with Students for Planning Days (Agency)
  - Student Led Leadership
  - Bully Stoppers
  - Circle Time,
  - Lunchtime activities led by staff and by the Student Leaders and
  - Out of Hours School Care.
- welcoming all parents/carers and encouraging a home-school relationship where we are working together as partners in each child's learning. The school provides multiple opportunities for proactively engaging parents/carers and the wider community to be involved in the school's programs such as Classroom Helpers Course, Reading Room Helpers, School Council and sub-committees, Parent Network Committee and the Parent Opinion Survey
- 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 Tecoma Primary School using an instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction is taking place, to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Tecoma Primary school adopting a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students, following the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- always referring to our school's Statement of Values, which 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. Positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- student voice being encouraged and developed throughout the school, which provides opportunities for students to influence change within the school community
- a range of opportunities for students to be involved and feel connected to the community such as KidsMatter whole school events, whole school musical Productions, interschool sport, community art displays, Choir and Aerobics, etc.
- development of intensive literacy and numeracy improvement strategies (reflected in our Annual Implementation Plan) which are implemented as part of the school improvement agenda and in response to the changing demographics
- carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- encouraging students to achieve full attendance to maximise their ability to learn and our teachers' ability to teach effectively.
- students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Action Team (SAT) and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students being encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns. We are proud to have an 'open door' policy where students and staff are partners in learning
- creating opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through Whole School Production, athletics, music programs, special activity days (such as KidsMatter Day, Footy Day, Japanese Day, etc.) and the whole school Leadership Program

- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peer support programs
- an embedded Professional Development culture which gives high priority to ensure strategies and approaches are adopted and implemented.

For those students who require extra support, or when problems arise **Targeted** (population specific) strategies that meet the varied needs of vulnerable cohorts, including prevention and intervention strategies and **Individual** (student specific) engagement strategies, for students at risk, in relation to consistent attendance or when positive behaviours are not demonstrated, are in place. These include:

### Targeted

- each Learning Level having a Leader, a teacher who is responsible for the staff and students in that area, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and acts as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- connecting all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- ensuring all students in Out of Home Care are appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Education Plan and are referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- allocating wellbeing and health staff who 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
- staff applying a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- early intervention to identify/respond to student needs for social and emotional support.
- recognising and responding to the diverse needs of our students through the Program for Students with Disabilities support program
- personalised adaption of current pedagogical knowledge and thinking to engage students in meaningful learning experiences
- promoting to parents the importance of ensuring their children attend school each day to maximise their ability to learn and our teachers' ability to teach effectively
- DET SSSO's – a School Psychologist and Speech Therapist who work with students
- A private Psychologist, accessible to students via a Mental Health Plan
- External providers (Occupational Therapists, Speech, tutor) for student through NDIS funding or paid privately by parents.

### Individual

- Student Support Groups, see:  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>
- Individual Learning Plans and Behaviour Support Plans
- The Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) program
- referral to the Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to ChildFirst
- working with Lookout, for students living Out of Home

Tecoma 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
- developing an Individual Education Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- referring the student to:
  - school-based wellbeing supports
  - Student Support Services (SSSO's)
  - appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst
  - re-engagement programs such as Navigator (for students from 12-17 years old).

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 students:
  - with a diagnosed disability
  - in Out of Home Care
  - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

#### **4. Identifying students in need of support**

Tecoma Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The school Leadership and Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Tecoma 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, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- attendance, detention 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 rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

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 and management**

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 Tecoma Primary School's Bullying Prevention policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Tecoma 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.

Our school considers, explores and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour, before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

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 Year Level Coordinator
- Restorative Practices
- detentions
- behaviour reviews
- suspension



- expulsion

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

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Tecoma Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

### **7. Engaging with families**

Tecoma 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
- seek feedback, via surveys and questionnaires, from parents and the wider school community
- 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, via School Council and the Parent Network
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

### **8. Evaluation**

Tecoma 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, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

## COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in the staff annual USB
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request.

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

- [Suspension process](#)
- [Expulsions - Decision](#)

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safe Standards.

## REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on **23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2021** and is scheduled for review in **August 2023**.