

# 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, where student participation is encouraged and valued, 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.

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2. School values, philosophy and vision
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## 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 400 students. The projected enrolment for 2025 is 370.

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 4 students who receive Disability Inclusion funding. A total of four Integration Aides support these students. We run our Reading Room Program and, our Tutor Learning Initiatives Program, 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, and Student Support Group (SSG) meetings, also take place for selected students.

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), **Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) which is an approach for learning content (Science) through an additional language (Japanese), thus teaching both the subject and the language.** 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 notebooks and chromebooks, with a ratio of 1 computer/device for every 1.2 students. We also have **interactive SMART 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, and The Resilience Project there is a whole school focus on Social and Emotional Learning through a variety of programs (Bounce Back, Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships, The Zones of Regulation, etc.), and our School Wide Positive Behaviours Program, which embeds 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 **Bullying Prevention Policy and our Digital Learning (Internet, Social Media and Digital Devices) 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.

## **SCHOOL VALUES, PHILOSOPHY AND VISION**

Tecoma 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 by our core values of Respect, Resilience, Creativity and Personal Best at every opportunity. These 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 as well as through our School Wide Positive Behaviour Supports (SWPBS) focus.

At Tecoma Primary School our vision is 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.

*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. Wellbeing and Engagement strategies**

Tecoma Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behavior, and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognize the importance of student friendships and peers support in helping children and students feel safe and less isolated. We acknowledge that some students many need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

A summary of the Universal (whole school), targeted and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

#### Universal

- 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 and the embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- 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
  - The Resilience Project's – GEM (Gratitude, Empathy, Mindfulness)
  - Zones of Regulation
  - Student Led Class Meetings (Voice)
  - Term Reflections with Students for Planning Days (Agency)
  - Student Lead Leadership

- Individual Rewards (Values Pencils) Token Rewards, which lead to Whole School Rewards (such as School Disco's, Crazy Hair Day, Fun Day, Sausage Sizzle, Loud Shirt Day, etc, all chosen by SAT)
- Class 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, excursions and camps, Reading Room Helpers, School Council and sub-committees, Parent Network 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, class Circle Time, etc. 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)
- Whole School Leadership Program
- Buddy Program (Year 4-kinder), (Year 5 – Preps), (Year 6 -Year 1)
- 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

- Employing a Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader (MHWL) as part of the Mental Health in Primary Schools (MHIPS) initiative. This qualified teacher will use their intimate knowledge of the in-classroom experiences as a teacher and understanding of the school context to assist teachers with input into the development, implementation and evaluation of processes, curriculum content and teaching practices to support and promote mental health and wellbeing.
- employing a Social Worker, as part of the National Student Wellbeing Program (NSWP) who will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers, parents or other school staff each year.
- 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
- Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and are connected 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
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on [LGBTIQ Student Support \[insert any specific measures at your school to support LGBTIQ+ students\]](#)
- all students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#) including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy on [Students with Disability](#), such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans
- staff applying a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- 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 Student Support Services Key Contact who can provide professional support (Psychologist, Speech Therapist or Social Worker), if needed
- External providers (Occupational Therapists, Speech, tutor) for student through NDIS funding or paid privately by parents.

## Individual

- *Student Support Groups*
- *Individual Education Plans*
- *Behaviour - Students*
- *Behaviour Support Plans*
- *Student Support Services*

as well as to other Department programs and services such as:

- *Program for Students with Disabilities/Disability Inclusion*
- *Mental health toolkit*
- *headspace*
- *Navigator*
- **LOOKOUT**

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 Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
- 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, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst
  - Re-engagement programs such as Navigator.

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 Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
  - with a disability
  - in Out of Home Care
  - 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, racism, 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. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our *Complaints Policy*.

## **6. Student behavioural expectations and management**

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values.

Violence, bullying and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this policy. Bullying behaviour will be managed in accordance 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 policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. 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 support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension and expulsion and restrictive interventions 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 by law and will not be used under any circumstances at our school.

## **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 on COMPASS
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Tecoma Primary School will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

## COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in an annual reference in the school newsletter
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- 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

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

**POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

<i>This policy has a mandatory review cycle of 1-2 years</i>	<i>This policy was approved by school council on <b>19<sup>th</sup> November, 2024</b> and is scheduled for review in <b>August 2026</b>.</i>
<i>Reviewed and approved by all members of School Council</i>	<i>Di Double, Stuart McLean, Lisa Hoskins-Faul, Travis Cochrane, Lisa Dell, Chelsey Robins, Kelly Sullivan, Phil Darbyshire.</i>
<i>Approved by</i>	<i><b>Principal</b> – Rohan Thompson <b>School Council President</b> – Lisa Dell</i>
<i><b>It is mandatory for consultation of this Policy. After review by the Education Subcommittee and School Council it will be shared with our wider school community via the School Newsletter (November 2024) for consultation.</b></i>	