

St Thomas The Apostle Primary School	Updated: 21. 03. 2016	
Student Wellbeing Policy	Next Review: 21. 03. 2019	

Student Wellbeing Policy

Introduction

At St. Thomas the Apostle we believe that all members of the school community have the right to feel secure, be a part of a safe working and learning environment. Everyone is responsible to each other for fostering a sense of community and care of others and their property. We recognise that using Restorative Practices is conducive to effective learning and positive behaviours. To this end, we focus strongly on our five school values: Respect, Responsibility, Honesty, Doing Your Best and Fair Go.

We aim to create an environment that promotes and builds positive relationships and attitudes between teachers, students, and parents. We endeavour to meet individual needs in order to foster the whole child's development, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically and academically.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

- To encourage all in the school community to support and implement procedures outlined in the Student Welfare Policy
- To set parameters for acceptable behaviour and ensure these are clearly defined
- To modify undesirable behaviour through positive reinforcement and intervention strategies
- To support students to become responsible for their own behaviour
- To further develop students' understanding of their behaviours
- To build mutual respect between parent, teacher and student
- To provide open and honest feedback on behaviour
- To ensure that issues are followed through in a fair, just and restorative manner
- To encourage children to reach their full potential
- To listen to others' ideas and respect others' point of view.

Scope

This policy applies to all full and part time staff members, casual relief teachers, contractors and others engaged by the school to conduct work.

Types of Student Wellbeing Support

Student wellbeing at St Thomas the Apostle is supported by:

- Seasons
- Peer Mediation
- School Counsellor
- Student Representative Council
- School Captains and Vice Captains
- House Captains
- Student Leadership Team
- Buddies
- Intervention programs
- Lunch-time clubs and programs based on student's interests (e.g., chess, choir, cooking and science)
- Active After School Community program
- "You Can Do It" and Circle Time
- Individual Learning Plans (I.L.P.)
- Parent Support Group (P.S.G.)
- Student participation in reporting process (goals/self evaluation)

St Thomas The Apostle Primary School	Updated: 21. 03. 2016	
Student Wellbeing Policy	Next Review: 21. 03. 2019	

Promoting Social Success programs

Responsibilities of the School Community

We are all responsible to act in accordance with the Restorative Practices approach, as well as:-

Responsibilities of Teachers:

- To educate the children and parents in their care
- To act in a professional manner
- To remain current of best practice in education
- To value and respect students as individual people
- To model and encourage appropriate behaviour through the establishment of class rules/expectations
- To provide honest feedback to parents
- To be prepared, organised and focused to teach effectively
- To listen and consult with parents
- To abide by school programs, policies and practices
- To create and maintain a positive learning environment
- To receive ongoing Professional Development

Responsibilities of students:

- To comply with the school rules
- To treat each other fairly and justly
- To respect the property of others and the school
- To take responsibility for their own learning
- To endeavour to give their best consistently
- To accept fair decisions
- To support each other

Responsibilities of Parents:

- To support school policies and practices
- To inform the school of the child's needs, i.e., anything that will affect the child's learning
- To uphold confidential issues concerning children other than their own whilst in the school
- To model and encourage appropriate behaviour
- To adequately prepare their child for the school day
- To respect and support the school staff

Rights of the School Community

Rights of Teachers:

- To be recognised as a professional
- To receive the support from the school community
- To teach in a safe environment that is conducive to effective learning
- To have access to adequate resources and facilities for effective teaching
- To receive support from colleagues
- To have the support of the school administration
- To be given sufficient planning and preparation time
- To access professional development

Rights of Students:

St Thomas The Apostle Primary School	Updated: 21. 03. 2016	
Student Wellbeing Policy	Next Review: 21. 03. 2019	

- To feel happy, safe, secure, accepted, valued and acknowledged as an individual
- To be treated justly
- To learn
- To be listened to and supported (Student Voice)
- To be free to make informed choices (Student Voice)
- To be informed of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour and the consequences of their actions

Rights of Parents:

- To know that their children are in a safe environment
- To be regularly informed about the progress of their child's learning
- To be listened to and acknowledged
- To be kept informed of school policy
- To gain appropriate access to school support services

Procedures for the Reinforcement of Appropriate Behaviour

Some of the procedures that teachers apply for appropriate behaviour are:

- Stickers
- Awards
- Points
- Free time
- Praise
- A special activity
- Verbal recognition
- Specific feedback relative to You Can Do It and our Social Emotional Learning (SEL) 5 competencies focus
- Acknowledge appropriate behaviour, not focus only on inappropriate behaviour
- A note/phone call to parents

At a whole school level:

Gold Awards

To be given by teachers to students who 'astound' you. That is, they make you go "WOW" or "AHA". They may have been an exceptional example of our school values or have reached a given target that has been worked towards a period of time (e.g., for reaching 10 stars in your classroom reward system).

Students that have received 5 Gold Awards are eligible for a PIN which is presented at the office and recognised at Whole School Assembly.

Students that have received 5 Pins are eligible for a GOLD PIN which is presented at the office and recognised at Whole School Assembly.

Principal Awards

Students are recognised for setting out to achieve a classroom focus, demonstrating effort towards accomplishing a personal goal, or demonstrating our school values/You Can Do It keys consistently. For example, students who always say 'thank you' and show good manners, as opposed to giving a Gold Award each time.

Star in the Yard

Students are given a 'star' for displaying our school values outside the classroom setting or following a whole school focus presented by school captains at assembly. The recipient of a 'star' gives it to a peer mediator on duty who records the reason and puts it in the 'Star on the Yard' box. Each fortnight, the school captains discuss and select two recipients who have, in their opinion, been the strongest examples of the school values and/or

St Thomas The Apostle Primary School	Updated: 21. 03. 2016	
Student Wellbeing Policy	Next Review: 21. 03. 2019	

school focus. These two students are presented with the “Star in the Yard” award at assembly.

Other awards that are currently given across the school are: Environmental Award, Discovery Centre Award, a whole class meditation award and a ‘single person award’ for meditating.

- Praise
- Verbal recognition
- Awards for recognising display of values
- Recognition of achievement in newsletter

Classroom Rules

Each class will negotiate a set of classroom rules that directly reflect the school rules and values. Examples of these rules could include:

- Follow instructions the first time
- Listen to others
- Respect others
- Respect the property of others
- Put hand up to speak
- Use appropriate language
- We keep our hands and feet to ourselves
- When working, speak quietly

Procedures for Managing Student Behaviour in Classrooms

OUR SCHOOL RULES

RESPECT EACH OTHER

FOLLOW DIRECTIONS

HANDS OFF! FEET OFF!

BE POSITIVE –NO PUT DOWNS

BE SAFE – PLAY SAFE!

1. Teachers will provide verbal reminders to students to reinforce or remind the student of the school rule that is being broken
2. As is deemed necessary by the teacher, a formal warning will be applied to the student
3. A further occurrence will incur timeout within the class for approximately 5 minutes (or deemed necessary for the behaviour)
4. If behaviour continues, student to be exited to another class

TIME AWAY or TIME IN (reflection) (not to be referred to as a ‘TIMEOUT or ‘EXIT’)

This time must be used to reflect on current behaviour and how the student will make a positive impact on returning to the class

THINKING ABOUT MY BEHAVIOUR

(See Appendix for ‘Thinking about my Behaviour’ proforma)

Students are required to complete a ‘Thinking about my behaviour’ sheet as deemed by the teacher. The reflection on their behaviour continues in dialogue with the teacher. The student then takes it home to be further discussed with parents/guardians. The form is then signed and returned to school. The teacher keeps the form as a record of behaviour and of the agreed future action/s.

St Thomas The Apostle Primary School	Updated: 21. 03. 2016	
Student Wellbeing Policy	Next Review: 21. 03. 2019	

If a student is required to complete three 'Thinking about my Behaviour' sheets in a term, parents will be contacted to take part in a formal conference with their teacher and a member of School Leadership.

SPECIALIST TEACHERS

The same procedures will apply for specialist teachers

SPECIAL NEEDS

At times, alteration to this procedure will be applied for those students with identified special needs. Special needs refers to those students who have individual strategies for behavioural management developed through the Student Support Group. These procedures would apply to both inside and outside behaviour.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Students read and sign a contract at the beginning of each year in which they agree to abide by the rules relating to the safe use of technology at school.

Procedures for Managing Student Behaviour on the Playground

OUR SCHOOL RULES

RESPECT EACH OTHER

FOLLOW DIRECTIONS

HANDS OFF! FEET OFF!

BE POSITIVE –NO PUT DOWNS

BE SAFE – PLAY SAFE!

The teacher on yard needs to assist with the resolution of the conflict with the students that occurs at lunch and/or recess times instead of referring the problem to the student's classroom teacher.

Peer Mediators deal with low level problems between students using the restorative practice affective questions.

BEFORE SCHOOL

- Students gather in playground area immediately after dropping off bag
- No 'kicking' ball games before school
- Students are not allowed on the playground equipment
- Students should not be arriving before 8:30am

OVAL TIMES

- Oval times alternate between Junior and Middle/Senior classes

The following rules should be monitored in order to maintain a safe playground environment:

FOOD

- Any food eaten outside must be eaten whilst sitting on the seats around the Playground. Only food without a wrapper is to be taken outside.
- No Lollipops on yard or at school
- No sharing of food
- Only water in drink bottles

SAFE PLAY/MOVEMENT

- No running undercover
- No Walking in gardens
- No Children in Classrooms unless supervised

St Thomas The Apostle Primary School	Updated: 21. 03. 2016	
Student Wellbeing Policy	Next Review: 21. 03. 2019	

- No climbing trees
- No playing with sticks
- No tackling
- No wrestling or play fighting

GYMNASIUM RULES

- Students must participate safely in sporting activities
- Students must be wearing runners
- Students must not wear school shoes, socks or bare feet
- No hitting or kicking games
- Students are not to enter the Sports store room

RESPONSIBILITY OF TEACHER ON YARD DUTY

Teachers should be:

- vigilant at all times while on Yard duty
- roaming around the entire designated area
- enforcing all rules and consequences
- monitoring the toilet blocks

Restorative Practice

Restorative Practices is a whole school approach to promoting resilience and aims to contribute to the building of positive relationships in school communities. It is focused on helping young people become aware of the impact of their behaviour on others through personal accountability and learning from a conflict situation. An important component of restorative practices is the focus on restoring relationships after harm has been done.

Education in schools is largely about relationships, which can often develop into conflicts which require resolution, forgiveness and healing. Restorative practices help students learn from their mistakes and reconcile and resolve problems with others.

Circle Time

Circle time is a preventative approach by supporting students in developing their Social and Emotional Learning. In all levels of the school Circle Time sessions must be taken once a week for a minimum of 40 minutes.

Restorative Practice is the link between care and support for our students and discipline procedures. Student wellbeing is integral to teaching and learning.

At St Thomas' each classroom teacher conducts weekly planned 'Circle Time' activities. Circle Time activities are designed to increase the Five Competencies of Social and Emotional Learning: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making and building positive relationships to ensure students feel safe and connected to their class and school.

The Principles of Restorative Practice

- Foster awareness in the student of how others have been affected.
- Avoid lecturing. This often results in the student reacting defensively. It distracts from noticing other people's feelings.
- Involve the student actively. Rather than simply punishing the student, a restorative intervention encourages the student to speak. They face and listen to those who have been affected by their inappropriate behaviour. They help decide how to repair the harm and make a commitment to this.
- Accept ambiguity. Often fault is unclear and people can agree to accept the ambiguous situation.
- Separate the deed from the doer. We recognise a student's worth, his/her virtues and accomplishments while disapproving of his/her inappropriate behaviour.

St Thomas The Apostle Primary School	Updated: 21. 03. 2016	
Student Wellbeing Policy	Next Review: 21. 03. 2019	

- See all inappropriate behaviour as an opportunity for learning. Incidents can be used constructively to build understanding, empathy and a sense of community.

Behaviour Management using Restorative Practice

In Restorative schools the community works together to set goals and methods to achieve them. When relationships are harmed the focus is on helping students become aware of the impact of their behaviour on others through personal accountability and learning from the incident. An important component of restorative practice is the focus on restoring relationships after harm has been done inclusive of minor and major incidents. If the incident is minor in nature, the teacher will engage the student/s in restorative dialogue to come to an agreement on the restorative action that should take place.

Minor Incidents may include:

- Disagreements
- mild 'accidental' inappropriate language
- name calling/playing out of bounds
- conflicts causing slight distress
- disruption of learning.

Any on-going minor incident behaviours rise to a mid-level and should be addressed more formally. Students must be given time to analyse their behaviour and complete the 'My Behaviour' proforma followed up with a discussion involving those deemed necessary.

For major incidents students are to be sent to the School Office for follow up with Principal, Deputy or Student Services Co-ordinator. A restorative approach may involve calling a community conference at a later time that may comprise of the Principal, Deputy or Student Services Co-ordinator, the teacher involved, students and their parents.

Major incidents may include:

- endangering other's safety
- misuse of property
- Defiance
- leaving the school grounds
- deliberate physical or verbal aggression
- inappropriate communication with others
- continuous exclusions
- bullying (repeated action that causes harm to another individual).

The Restorative Practice Process includes:

- Discussions with the supervising teacher and students involved in an incident and any other bystanders to the incident.
- Directing discussions using 'affective' questions that focus on the specific behaviours or incidents without blame. These questions are adapted to suit the age of the students and their behaviour.

Restorative Practice Dialogue

These questions are on display in the playground and each teacher has a copy attached to their 'bum bags'.

What happened?

What were you thinking at the time?

What have you thought about since?

Who has been affected by what you did?

St Thomas The Apostle Primary School	Updated: 21. 03. 2016	
Student Wellbeing Policy	Next Review: 21. 03. 2019	

In what way have they been affected?
 What do you need to do to make things right?

What did you think when you realised what happened?
 What impact has this incident had on you and others?
 What has been the hardest thing for you?
 What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

Definition of a Serious Offence

Conforming to the Education Act 1958 (Education Regulations 1988), the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria proposes that a serious offence should be defined as activities or behaviour of a student which:

- Seriously undermines the ethos of the Catholic school
- Consistently and deliberately fails to comply with any lawful order of a principal or teacher
- Is offensive, or dangerous, to the physical or emotional health of any staff member or any student
- Consistently and deliberately interferes with the educational opportunities of other students.

At St Thomas the Apostle school when considering if an act is a serious offence, the above policy guidelines stated in the Education Act 1958, (Education Regulations 1988) will be applied.

Suspension

If the School Community Support Group considers suspension to be the most appropriate action, the following matters need to be considered:

- The legal and pastoral responsibilities of the parent(s) during the time of the proposed suspension
- The school's responsibility for providing learning material
- On the return, of the student to school, arrangements for monitoring his/her subsequent progress
- The process of settling back into the school environment, and how this is to be facilitated
- The school's responsibility for reviewing and evaluating its own policies and procedures in the light of the experience.

*Ref. Pastoral Care of Students in Catholic Schools
 Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Policy 1: 14*

Civil and Diocesan Requirements

Suspension (CECV Policy 1993)

The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria declares that suspension of a student from the school is a serious disciplinary measure and should only be used when other disciplinary measures have not produced a satisfactory outcome. A student shall not be suspended for a period of time greater than nine school days in any one school year.

Expulsion (Bishops' Statement)

We, the Archbishop of Melbourne and Bishops of Ballarat, Sale and Sandhurst consider expulsion of students in Catholic schools and colleges to be a severe form of sanction, to be used only in most serious circumstances. If, after appropriate processes, a school authority deems a student be transferred for his/her good, such a transfer should be negotiated according to the processes laid down by the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria.

If however, in most serious circumstances, such processes fail; the prior approval of the Director of Catholic Education of the diocese must be sought before a student is dismissed.

Corporal Punishment (CECV Policy)

The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria declares that corporal punishment is inappropriate within the

St Thomas The Apostle Primary School	Updated: 21. 03. 2016	
Student Wellbeing Policy	Next Review: 21. 03. 2019	

Catholic school and must not be used.

This declaration is in total accord with the Education Act 1958 (Education Regulations 1988 section 5.5).