

St Thomas the Apostle

Parent Protocols Policy

“A Catholic education is a partnership between school communities and parents, where parents are recognized as the first and lifelong educators of their children”.

Executive Director of Catholic Education Stephen Elder.

St Thomas the Apostle School is owned and operated by the Catholic Church, and teaches children in a Christian faith based educational setting. As a school, we believe in and aim to uphold, the principles of social and natural justice, mutual respect and cooperation, respect for privacy, open and honest communication, quality education, access and equity, accountability and working in partnership with others.

St Thomas Primary School considers all staff, teachers, students, parents, clergy and volunteers as members of the school community, and expects the entire community to uphold and abide by this policy. This policy also applies to all visitors and contractors entering the school grounds.

Aim

This policy aims to ensure all members of the school community, maintain positive and respectful relationships in all manner of dealings with each other. Fostering relationships between home, school and members of our community, gives our children and students a better chance of success. Effective student learning is a core value of the school, which is critical in supporting and maintaining respectful relationships.

Expected Behaviours

As a school community, we expect that all members will uphold a high standard of behaviour that is consistent with the principles of the school and church, and provide positive role modelling to the students, including:

Respect

We will treat others fairly and objectively, by working to build and maintain an environment of trust and mutual respect.

Integrity

We will act honestly, responsibly and in a trustworthy manner in everything we do. This includes being honest, open and transparent in all matters, using authority responsibly.

Leadership

We will demonstrate leadership by guiding, directing and influencing, whilst actively upholding the school's values. We will strive to positively influence, inspire and empower others, and build a cohesive, respectful and supportive community.

Accountability

We will be accountable for our actions and accept responsibility for our decisions.

Impartiality

We will demonstrate impartiality in all decisions, providing advice on merit and without bias, favouritism or self-interest.

Human Rights

We will respect, support and promote the human rights as stated in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, support community diversity, and aim to make best use of people's backgrounds, skills, talents and perspectives, to ensure fairness and respect for all.

Dealing with Students & Children

As adults in the community, we have a responsibility to protect, nurture and support children at all times. Adults are often perceived by children to occupy a position of authority in regard to them, and it is our responsibility to not take advantage of this relationship. As adults in the community, we should:

- Not make negative comments about teaching staff that undermine trust and confidence
- Seek appropriate avenues to resolve issues and concerns
- Not approach a student or child directly about an issue or concern, unless immediate intervention is required to protect the child from unacceptable behaviours or a risk to their safety. If this occurs, please speak to a member of staff about the incident immediately
- Not make unwelcome or unwanted physical contact with a child or student
- Actively support the school's Student Welfare and Behaviour Management Policy
If the actions of a member of our School community are of an unacceptable standard, a formal request will be made by the School to discuss the issue and further actions may be taken.

Protocols for St Thomas Parents when at the school

- Any classroom teaching issues – first point of call is the classroom teacher
- Parents are not to approach other students or families regarding issues at school
- Parents are required to exit the school by 8.50am and may enter from 3.15pm unless in the role as classroom helper or SCA duty
- Please show respect and patience when in your cars dropping off and picking up your children.
- Gates opened at 8:35am and 3.15pm
- Gates closed at 9:00am and 3:45pm
- Please use appropriate entrances and exits from your child's classroom. Classrooms are not to be used as thoroughfares to other parts of the school.

Protocols for Parents when communicating with Teachers at St Thomas the Apostle

- Appointment times to be made by email, phone call, contacting the office or in person
- When making an appointment, provide a brief statement describing what the meeting regards and a mutual time for the meeting will be negotiated
- Staff will acknowledge email within 24 hours or their next working day and emails will be responded to between 8.30am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday

- All dialogue to be respectful at all times
- Older classes use their school diary for communication

Protocols for St Thomas Teachers when communicating with Parents

- Inform parents of availability times through level letter each term
- School notes go home on Thursday
- Level letter each term to go home outlining the programs
- Inform parents of classroom communication
- School diaries monitored where appropriate
- School App and website to contain level information
- For major concerns, either Principal or Deputy to be present and minutes taken

Protocols for Parent Helpers when they are at St Thomas

- Classroom helpers respect confidentiality of students they are working with
- Mobile phones to be turned off when helping
- Pre-schoolers are not part of the program
 - Parents are there at the discretion of the teachers, not necessarily to work with their own child
 - Parents will demonstrate a positive example to all pupils who might be present, in such matters as common courtesy, polite/appropriate language
 - If there are any concerns while helping, address these with the classroom teacher.

Ratified by Parish Education Board 13. 3.2018