

Thomas Estley Community College

Positive & Negative Choices Policy

Approved/reviewed by	
TECC Local Governing Committee 23.06.26 v3	
Date of next review	June 2027
Publication:	Website - statutory

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations.

Version	Date	Updated by	Summary of changes
V1	June 2024	Cathy Cornelius	
V2	June 2025	Cathy Cornelius	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arbor references added. • Consequences details added. On call and removal from lessons information added.
V3	June 2026	Cathy Cornelius	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of C issued for failure to complete homework page 8 • New escalation procedures • Removal of Tier 4 information • Page 10 – added ‘...maybe taken to reflection OR placed within a lesson within the department • New paragraph added – Oakfield Short Stay – page 14 • Reasonable Force – updated to Restrictive Interventions, including use of reasonable force, April 2026 • New date added to Searching, screening and confiscation in schools.

At Thomas Estley, we believe in Building Leadership and Character Together as a Community of Courage and Commitment to Success. Our positive and negative choices (behaviour and rewards) policy aims to develop our young people by rewarding positive character and leadership choices and maintaining high expectations around them.

Maintaining High Expectations at Thomas Estley

We believe that the highest standards of attitude and conduct, maintained in an environment where all are valued as individuals, are crucial to ensuring that all students fulfil their academic potential and become happy, confident members of their communities.

At Thomas Estley, success is encouraged through the positive reinforcement of good conduct choices through praise. It is our responsibility to promote respect, kindness, courage, perseverance, and resilience through challenge, encouragement, recognition, incentives, and rewards that are appropriate to the age and academic stage of each individual student.

This policy aims to promote the positive in each individual student but also recognises the need for consequences where conduct falls below the standards we expect.

There are two strands to our College approach to ensuring students make and grow their ability to make **POSITIVE CHOICES**:

1. **Respecting ourselves and others** By encouraging **respect** for themselves, adults, one another and the fabric of the college, and by insisting on **punctuality, uniform and equipment**, this college aims to be an environment in which students feel part of a positive, safe community where they are fully prepared to learn together.
2. **Protecting our learning and the learning of others** -Thomas Estley Community College is committed to maintaining the right of students to learn and teachers to teach. When students make positive choices around learning, they are awarded points for courage, perseverance, respect, kindness and resilience. This gives students the opportunity to take responsibility for and make choices to correct their own conduct within an incremental sanction system. In extreme cases of poor behaviour as outlined below, the student may be removed from the classroom without recourse to this incremental approach and may face a more serious sanction.

SEND and Equality

At Thomas Estley, it is our intention and duty to ensure that the needs of all students with SEND are met, and where necessary, reasonable adjustments are made. This is true in every aspect of our work.

Students will not be subject to a sanction because of choices which solely are from either a failure to meet a student's special needs or to make reasonable adjustments that could have prevented that behaviour occurring. However, sanctions can still be applied to students with special educational needs were warranted by their behavioural choices and where their needs have not directly caused the poor behavioural choices.

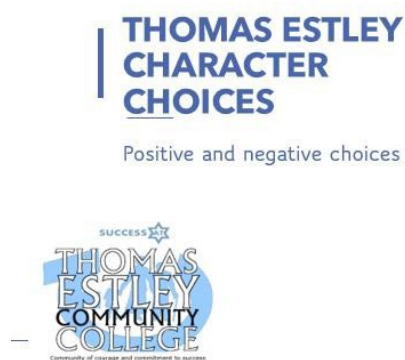
Where the conduct of a student with SEND is found to have breached our expectations, and where appropriate support has been in place, the investigation of the incident and sanction following it will take due notice of the needs of that student. Reasonable adjustments may be made to the usual processes and sanctions as appropriate, as determined by the needs of the individual student.

There may be occasions when students who receive in class support are required by an adult to temporarily leave the classroom. This may be for a range of different reasons and arise as a result of a professional judgement made by the class teacher or the teaching assistant. It should be explained clearly to the student what the purpose of this request is and that it is not necessarily an indication of disruptive behaviour by the student concerned.

All rewards and consequences are associated with our five Thomas Estley key character traits

Respect, Kindness, Courage, Resilience and Perseverance.

‘The Thomas Estley Way’ REWARDING POSITIVE CHOICES



The purpose of this policy is to set a framework for rewards within which the academic, sporting, social, cultural and the personal achievements of students can be recognised, rewarded, celebrated and recorded.

‘Carrots are better than sticks, smiles achieve far more than scowls; rewards succeed where punishments fail.’

Thomas Estley believes in rewarding effort, recognising achievements and encouraging students to aspire to meet and exceed our expectations. Rewards are a very powerful tool for staff to use. A student whose achievements are recognised is more likely to make a positive impact with the college community.

The function of the reward system is to encourage all students to aspire to high standards in everything they do. It is vital we celebrate, at every opportunity, the successes, progress and

improvements of all students. Assemblies, weekly and termly recognition processes, as well as Bronze Silver and Gold certificates, communications home and subject department awards embody our celebration and rewards. The College Newsletter, face book page and college displays also recognise and celebrates individual and team successes and achievements.

Students who gain a lot of positive choice points will move through the positive colour layers. They will be awarded bronze silver gold and platinum certificates when they reach those thresholds. Certificates will be issued at the end of each half term with platinum issued termly. Parents can access positive choice notifications through Arbor, our online reporting system.

Students will be recognised for their achievements, for example, in the following ways:

- Early access into lunch
- Free cookie at lunch time
- Principals' Character and Leadership Awards
- Pizza with the Principal – Gold Winners
- Platinum winners – Cakes and Chat with the Principal
- Departmental Achievements – Postcards
- 100% attendance awards – Tutor time weekly lottery
- Weekly 100% attendance – early lunch pass
- Annual award ceremonies

Each week we will also recognise students with the highest number of positive choice points for that week - students will meet with the Principal and will be allowed early access into lunch and a free cookie. This gesture shows students that we appreciate their day to day efforts. Parents will also be notified and if permissions allow we will celebrate this through social media.

'Thomas Estley Way' positive choice data is monitored each week and this information is shared with tutors and year leads.

Students with the highest number of rewards, in each year group, are recognised at the end of each half term and their success is shared with the Principal. Parents will be informed of their child's achievement by email.

Students are also rewarded for 'going above and beyond' in areas beyond the classroom, for example organising a community or college event or representing the college in a performance or competitive activity. The courage which they display in taking up leadership opportunities within the college is celebrated as part of our whole college focus on Building Leadership and Character Together so that students can succeed in their lives after college.



Trait	Positive choices look like
Kindness	I help those around me. I care for my community.
Respect	I follow rules and expectations. I am ready to learn and work. I am polite and positive.
Courage	I always have a go. I choose leadership opportunities. I perform and compete in public arenas.
Perseverance	I complete my work to a high standard. I study and revise diligently. I don't give up.
Resilience	When things are tough, I keep trying. I work hard to overcome barriers.

Choices and Consequences

Negative Choices

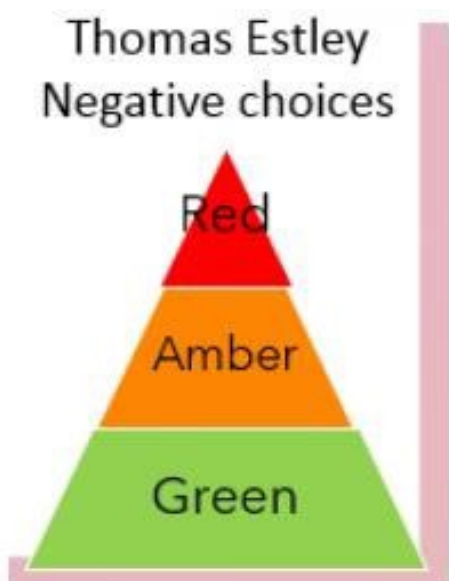
Staff at Thomas Estley are encouraged through their induction programmes and CPD training to demonstrate high standards of behaviour management in classrooms. We expect all staff to adopt a positive, non-confrontational and trauma informed approach when de-escalating situations. Staff are trained in de-escalation techniques and are encouraged to use their own strategies to challenge poor attitudes, only using the C (Choices and Consequences) system when proactive approaches fail and a student demonstrates behaviour that distracts from our core purpose of learning.

We also uphold the fresh start principle. Consequences from previous lessons should not be brought to a new lesson (subject to appropriate sanctions having been satisfactorily served). Students start each lesson with a clean slate, where staff are encouraged to carry out restorative conversations where appropriate; our 'WARM' approach supports this process. Restorative Approaches have been shown to develop people's social and emotional competencies, such as increased empathy, improved self-discipline and more responsible decision-making. These benefits contribute to pupils' personal, social and moral development.

Students are encouraged to understand the seriousness and impact of disrupting their own and others' learning.

Our C system (consequences to protect learning) is built on the premise that disruptive behaviour in the classroom has Consequences but that a student can make Choices for themselves to preserve their entitlement to remain in the learning environment.

Negative choices data will be monitored weekly. When a student is receiving increased number of negative choices points they will proceed to AMBER and RED monitoring levels as shown below. Students at RED monitoring level will be subject to a behaviour contract and parents invited in for a meeting to discuss how we can work collaboratively to bring about improvements.



Trait	Negative choices look like
Kindness	My actions or words cause harm to others. My choices harm my community.
Respect	I don't follow rules and expectations. I am often not ready to learn or work. I answer back / I am not polite.
Perseverance	I don't complete work in class. I don't bring kit or equipment. I don't do my homework.

Verbal Warning

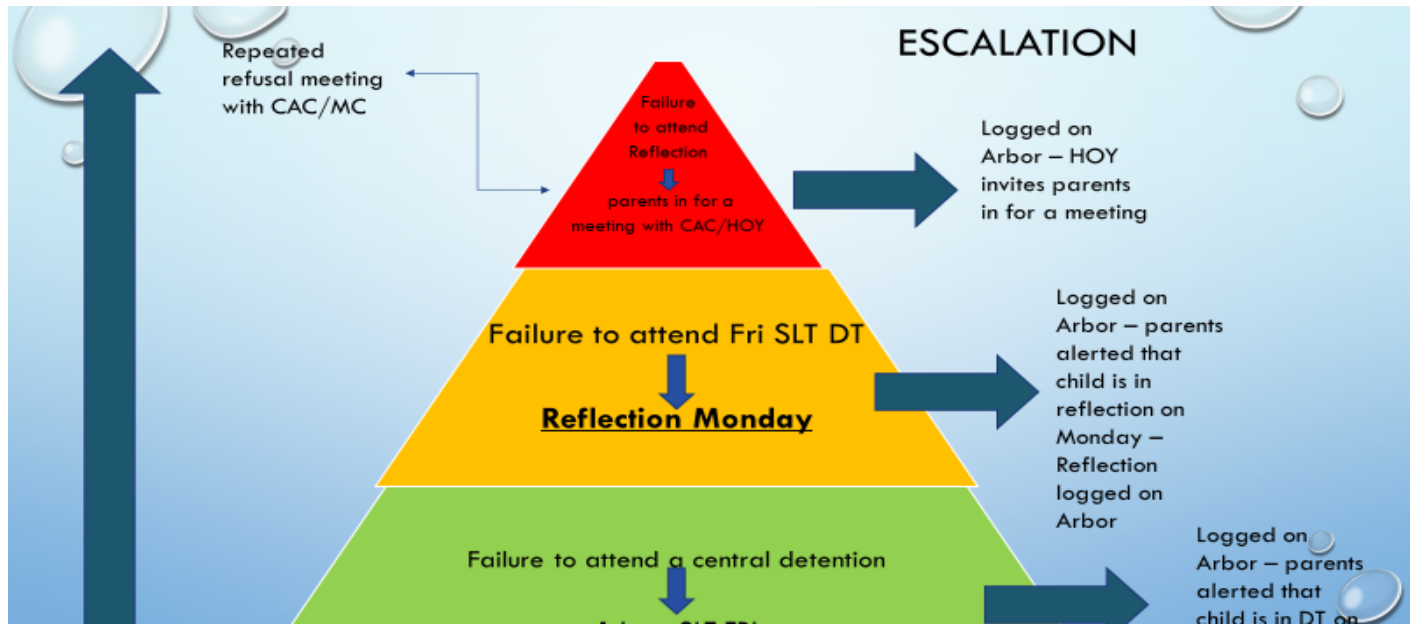
Where a student's conduct is having a negative impact on their own learning or that of others, they will receive ONE verbal warnings during a lesson. Where practicable, and particularly with students in key stage 3 or with SEND, a visual cue may be used or a personal explanation to ensure clarity. **It is hoped that students will self-correct their behaviour at this stage to avoid escalation.**

'C' – Consequences

When the student continues to make negative choices during the lesson, or is late to school or lesson a 'C' Consequence will be issued. This will be logged on Arbor for students and parents to see.

When a student accumulates 5 C's, one centralised after-school detention will be issued. After school detentions are scheduled on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 3.00-3.30pm. Parents and students will be notified via Arbor when a detention is scheduled. If a student fails to attend the after-school detention, a detention with a member of the senior leadership team will be scheduled

for Friday of that week. Failure to attend this will result in a day of reflection the following week.
Please see below our escalation procedures:



Where a student still chooses to continue with their disruptive behaviour or there is a serious negative choice related to kindness or respect, there are three further options depending on the specific circumstances.

A structured conversation with the class teacher - A conversation will be held with the student and the member of staff. Students will return to their lesson following this conversation.

C3 Removal to a classroom within the department. This is not optional for students. Students will be escorted to the classroom

C3 Removal to the 'Reflect for Success' zone – **this will be for more escalated incidents – for example, verbal, aggressive or dangerous behaviour**

If a student fails to correct behaviors, the member of staff may request a removal from the lesson – please note that this is a last resort when all de-escalation strategies have been deployed to correct any negative choices.

If a student is removed from a lesson, parents will be notified through Arbor, and they will have the opportunity to contact the class teacher for further details if they wish.

Students will be expected to complete one hour after school for centralised detention for removals from a lesson.

If students are removed to the 'Reflect for Success' zone due to a significant incident, students will be required to spend a day in the zone the following day to reflect on their negative choices

Failure to attend will result in a Friday SLT detention.

Teachers are reminded that the implications of removing a student from lessons are significant and a removal from lesson should only be issued as a last resort and when other efforts to encourage a student to change their behaviour have been unsuccessful, except for in exceptional circumstances when there has been serious mis-behaviour.

Serious Incidents

While C sanctions are designed to promote a graduated response to disruptive behaviour and empower students to make good choices and protect their own and others' learning there may be instances where it is inappropriate to work through from the 'C' system. These might include, but are not limited to, the use of foul, abusive or aggressive language or actions, bullying, racist, sexist or homophobic language, serious health and safety breaches in practical subjects, intentional damage of others or school property. In such situations teachers may immediately escalate to removing the student from the lesson.

Escalation Procedure

In most cases a one-off sanction will prove to be sufficient deterrent to repeated poor behaviour. However, where students fail to respond to these usual routines an escalation process is in place. This consists of a series of notifications to parents, additional sanctions for students and meetings in school with parents. Through this graduated response it is hoped that students will recognise the imperative to change their behaviour, parents will be kept informed and included and the school will be able to maintain a positive learning environment for all students.

Bullying

Thomas Estley is firmly committed to ensuring that all students are able to attend school free from the fear of bullying. Our Anti Bullying Policy clearly determines the sanctions that are applied where bullying is identified.

In summary these include, but are not limited to, detention, suspension, an alternative school day, internal fixed term and/or permanent exclusion. Restorative conversations are attempted wherever possible to restore relationships moving forward, and parents are involved and communicated with so that we can work collaboratively to avoid future occurrences. A full copy of the policy is available on the college website or by contacting the school directly.

Smoking/Vaping

Thomas Estley has a strict no smoking/vaping policy. Any student reported to be smoking/vaping on, or near, the school site will result in the following sanctions.

- Students found to be smoking/vaping on site will complete a full day in the reflection area the following day. Parents will also be informed

- Students who are found smoking/vaping near school site in school uniform will complete an after-school detention the following day for one hour.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Our school has zero tolerance to any harmful sexual behaviour involving students and acknowledges that it could be happening at Thomas Estley Community College. We are proactive in assessing prevalence, responding to incidents and challenging behaviours, involving external agencies when required. Schools have a statutory duty to safeguard the children in their setting, and we work together to foster an environment that creates healthy relationships for children. Where necessary and according to advice and regulation, this may include a referral to the police and the local authority safeguarding team.

Mobile Phone/Air Pods/Headphones/earphones

In order to build a culture of high expectations and to safeguard all members of the school community, students and their parents are required to support and uphold the Thomas Estley Policy in relation to mobile phones and digital devices.

We owe it to our children to do what we can to remove distractions and enable them to be fully present and engaged in the classroom. We also owe it to our pupils to keep them safe at school. Nationally, one in five pupils have experienced bullying online. By removing mobile phones from the school day, we can create a safe space where pupils are protected from the risks and dangers associated with social media and cyber-bullying, as well as the peer pressure and possible stigma associated with owning what are often expensive devices.

Failure to adhere to these expectations will result in the following consequences:

- For the first breach of this policy, the device will be confiscated and placed in an envelope in reception ready to be collected at the end of the school day by the student. A one-hour SLT after school detention will be scheduled for your child.
- For a second breach of this policy, the device will be confiscated and placed in an envelope in reception ready to be collected by the end of the school day by the parent. Parent required to come to school for a meeting
- For a third breach of this policy, Further sanctions applied. Parents will be required to attend a meeting in school and students will be required to hand their phones in at the start of each day.

Smartwatches

Students will be permitted to wear a Smartwatch providing that notifications are switched off so that messages and phone calls cannot be sent or received during the school day. If students breach these conditions, the sanctions above will apply.

Malicious Allegations against Staff

Where an investigation proves that an allegation by a student against a member of staff is unfounded and/or malicious, sanctions will be imposed considering the individual circumstances of the allegation. These may include, but are not limited to, detention, internal, fixed term or permanent exclusion.

Recording of Incidents

All incidents that result in a C, on call conversation or removal are the responsibility of the class teacher and must be recorded on the online student information system. Negative choice data is monitored each week.

Where patterns are identified for individual students, parents may be asked to attend school for a meeting.

Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for behaviour in their own classrooms. They should seek to create positive professional relationships with individual students and classes. Good lesson planning should, where necessary, include planning for behaviour management. We recognise that all teachers from time to time will benefit from advice and training regarding behaviour management, and class teachers are encouraged to make use of support of the pastoral team and the teaching and learning lead when necessary.

The certainty of a sanction is more effective in changing young people's behaviour than the severity. Class teachers must ensure that when a C has been issued, restorative conversation takes place as appropriate.

Where disruptive behaviour, even at a low level, is repeated, teachers are encouraged to contact parents and where possible to meet with them, supported where appropriate by the Head of department and/or year lead.

Heads of Department

Heads of department should monitor the C (consequences) and removals issued in the department on a three-weekly basis and where necessary take appropriate action to support students and groups to improve their behaviour within their department. This may be done in conjunction with a year lead or SLT in line management meetings. Reports will be generated and shared with middle leaders to aid analysis and planning.

They should also be able to offer advice and guidance to colleagues to enable them to manage behaviour effectively in their own department and, where required, to support restorative interventions.

Form Tutors

Form Tutors should encourage positive behaviour amongst their tutees. From day 1, tutors should be aware via the online information system of those students within their form who are experiencing difficulty in managing their behaviour, and should take swift action to mentor, contact home, and if appropriate, signpost to further support. The tutor will issue and monitor tutor reports as appropriate and maintain communication with parents/carers.

The Pastoral Team/Year Leads

The Pastoral Team will monitor all negative choice incidents across the College on a weekly basis. They will identify individual students/groups whose behaviour requires support and intervention at a level above that provided by the Form Tutor and will set up and lead programmes that enable students to improve their behaviour. This will involve liaison and coordination of outside agencies, links with departments, SENCOs and contact with parents. They will be responsible for conducting and monitoring behaviour of students in their year group each week.

Students may also be placed onto year lead report if their conduct in lessons remains a concern over a two-week period.

If conduct continues to deteriorate this will escalate to students reporting to a member to the senior leadership team. At this stage a student may be allocated a keyworker, normally within the Senior Leadership Team, who will monitor behaviour on a daily basis.

Parents and Carers

Effective partnership between school, parent/carer and student is essential in supporting positive choices. Parents/carers are asked to support the school's promotion of high standards and discuss matters reported to them at home with their son or daughter. Where necessary they will be asked to attend meetings to discuss behaviour and to be proactive in contacting school if they have concerns of their own.

Further Consequences, Internal, Fixed Term Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions

It is expected that the 'C' system will be sufficient for dealing with the majority of incidents of poor behaviour. Where this is deemed not to be the case the school reserves the right to issue more significant sanctions. These may include after school, internal suspension (removal from lessons in school to work alone), fixed term suspension (a period of time spent away from the school – students will be required to attend an after school detention for one hour on the day of their return), an adjusted alternative school day – later start/finish, off site direction to another school for a period of time, referrals to Oakfield Short stay school or in the most serious incidents

Permanent Exclusion (removal from the school roll).

For all such sanctions parents will receive written notification of the sanction. In all such cases a full investigation will be carried out and evidence gathered. Students who are subjected to more than two suspensions will be placed onto a Post Suspension action plan – a plan of intervention/targets will be set with students to ensure no further suspensions from school. Students who repeatedly fail to meet our expectations or make a serious behaviour choice resulting in a suspension will not normally be allowed to access the end of year reward trips.

Oakfield Short Stay School

This partnership aims to provide alternative solutions to Permanent Exclusion from school. These alternatives may include advice, information and guidance (AIG) support or an allocated mentor to work directly with the student. Where the behaviour of a student continues to decline, a referral to Oakfield Short Stay will be made, providing we have parental consent to plan next steps for the student.

Searching Students and Confiscation

Under powers laid down in the Education Act 2006 and following advice in Screening, Searching and Confiscation, DfE July 2023 staff may search a pupil if:

They have the student's consent for any item.

Without consent if they have reason to suspect that a pupil may have in their possession:

Knives or other weapons

Alcohol

Drugs

Stolen items

Tobacco or cigarette papers

Fireworks

Pornography

Any article that the staff member reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or

To cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of any person including the pupil.

In normal circumstances searches will be conducted in the presence of two staff, at least one of whom will be of the same gender as the pupil to be searched.

Restrictive Interventions, including the use of reasonable force, April 2026

Thomas Estley places great value on developing positive relationships between students and with staff. As such our Behaviour Policy is built on the principles of equality, justice and a de-escalating

approach to behaviour management. All staff receive regular refresher training in aspects of Behaviour Management.

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain circumstances:

To prevent or stop a student from:

- Causing injury to self or others
- Committing a criminal offence
- Damaging property
- Causing disorder among students at school, whether during a lesson or otherwise

Head teachers and staff authorised by the head teacher can use such force as is reasonable when searching a pupil without consent for prohibited items except where the search is for an item banned by the school rules.” Searching, screening and confiscation in school, July 2023

This policy is linked to and should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Anti-Bullying
Special Educational Needs
Child Protection
E-safety
Equality

June 2026