

TARNEIT SENIOR COLLEGE

Student voice school of the year finalist 2022

School size: 950 students

School type: government, years 10 - 12

Student voice and agency has been an intermittent part of Tarneit Senior College's (TSC) journey over the past few years but became more central to their operations in 2021.

Students at TSC are included in school decision making and work in partnership with teachers to support learning.

Students included in decision making

Twice-a-term 'Meet the Leaders' sessions, where a group of students meet with the principal team to discuss key issues relating to teaching and learning, wellbeing and engagement, and general operations. Discussions are robust, honest, and mature, with students involved in decisions like:

- the curriculum for Tarneit Time (pastoral care program)
- the introduction of new online platform
- the redesign of the school diary
- the design of the year 12 jackets
- solutions to environmental issues like recycling access for students on site

The Student Voice Team, TSC's Student Representative Team, reviews the annual Student Opinion Survey data and works with the school leadership team to identify areas for improvement.

The Student Voice Team is empowered to address the identified improvement areas through student led initiatives. For example, in response to concerns around student engagement and wellbeing the Student Voice Team developed a proposal for a free dress day to celebrate the end of semester. TSC had never had a free dress day and after the students presented the proposal to school council, it was approved.

The Student Voice Team has also been instrumental in proposing that students be part of teacher interview panels and a trial of this has been approved.

Student-teacher partnerships

Student Panels are run where a small group of students from all year levels give their perspectives, experience, and advice to teaching staff about different facets of their learning at school.

PIVOT surveys are used in every class to enable students to give feedback to their teachers. Teachers use this feedback to make targeted improvements to their classroom practice, and students are re-surveyed at the end of the cycle.

After students raised the issue of potentially triggering or sensitive topics taught as part of senior curriculum, they worked together with teachers and the wellbeing team to develop Sensitivity Guidelines for teachers to keep in mind when discussing such topics in class. The school is currently working on turning this into a short professional development module for teachers.