

# St Thomas More VC Academy



## Charging Policy

## **Mission Statement**

**“Love God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength and love your neighbour as you love yourself.”**  
**(Mark 12:30-31)**

St Thomas More RC Primary School exists to help parents and carers educate children spiritually, morally, physically and academically as well as possible.

We aim to be a truly Christian community, where our relationships are built on encouragement, concern, respect, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Our religious life is rooted in the faith, practice and moral teaching of the Roman Catholic Church.

Each person in our community is specially valued and has an important part to play in making sure that we live out our mission.

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum, with the exception of individual or small-group music tuition.

## **2 Aims**

- 2.1 St Thomas More is an inclusive school guided by the Gospel values that are expressed in our school aims and Directors' ethos statement. These aims promote inclusive education in its widest sense in all areas of school life.
- 2.1 The school policy on charging for activities will aim to ensure that no child is excluded from an activity because of the inability or unwillingness to pay on the part of the parent/carer.
- 2.3 The Directors state that no profit is made on any trips or residential visits unless otherwise stated and best value is always sought to keep costs as low as possible.
- 2.4 Those activities for which a charge may be made are governed by the Education Reform Act 1988 and laid down in the DFE Circular 2/89.
- 2.5 Education wholly or mainly within school hours (not including break times) will be provided free of charge.
- 2.6 Charges for these are reviewed annually by Directors. Parents for whom this would cause difficulty are asked to see the Head of School to discuss alternative payment methods or reduced payments. No child is excluded from these activities if they do not make a contribution.
- 2.7 If a particular activity is limited to a specific number of pupils, the inclusion of pupils must not make reference to the ability or willingness to pay on behalf of the parent. A charge may be made for activities which take place partly or wholly outside school hours. Out of school activities will be organised to supplement and support formal learning in curriculum areas and to provide further experiences to enable pupils to develop their full potential.

## **3 Voluntary Contributions**

- 3.1 When organising school visits to enrich the curriculum and the educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost. All contributions are voluntary. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel a trip. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.
- 3.2 If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. Sometimes the school pays additional costs in order to support the visit. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded. The school provides this information on request.

3.3 The following is a list of additional activities, organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents. These activities are known as 'optional extras'. This list is not exhaustive:

- visits to museums;
- sporting activities which require transport expenses;
- outdoor adventure activities;
- visits to or by a theatre company;
- school visits abroad;
- musical events; and
- scientific or environmental visits.

#### **4 Residential Visits**

4.1 If the school organises a residential visit in school time, or mainly in school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, we do not make any charge for the education. However, we do make a charge to cover the costs of board and lodging. Voluntary contributions will be asked for towards the cost of transport. Parents who receive some state benefits are entitled to reduced levels of payment (please speak to the Head of School to establish the reduced rate).

#### **5 Music Tuition**

5.1 All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this.

5.2 There is a charge for individual or small-group music tuition, since this is an additional curriculum activity and not part of the National Curriculum. These individual or small group lessons are taught by peripatetic music teachers. We make a £45 charge per term for these lessons, but parents in receipt of some state benefits may be exempt from payment upon application to Directors. We give parents information about additional music tuition at the start of each academic year.

#### **6 Swimming**

6.1 The school organises swimming lessons for all children in Key Stage 2. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We therefore make no charge for this activity. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place and we ask parents for their written permission for their child to take part.

#### **7 Damage / Loss to Property / Vandalism**

7.1 A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) and vandalism where the cost has been charged to the school. The charge will be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Head of School may decide.

## **8 Sports Coaching**

- 8.1 The school occasionally offers additional coaching after school. A qualified coach, who is not a member of the school staff, runs and organises these sessions. A small charge may be made for these sessions, which would be publicised to parents in advance of the sessions starting.

## **9 Statutory Remissions Entitlement.**

- 9.1 A charge may not be made for the cost of board and lodging if a parent is entitled to statutory remissions – normally if the child is entitled to free school meals.
- 9.2 Section 200 of the Education Act 2002 requires that children whose parents are in receipt of the following payments are entitled to free lunch entitlement:
- Income Support
  - income-based Jobseekers Allowance
  - income-related Employment and Support Allowance
  - support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
  - the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
  - Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
  - Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
  - Universal Credit
- 9.3 The regulations were amended in April 2005 to entitle claimants of State Pension Credit to free board and lodging on residential visits (so long as the claimant is receiving the guarantee credit part of the State Pension Credit).

## **10 Voluntary Contributions for Visits**

- 10.1 The school may ask for voluntary contributions towards the cost of any visit. However, for those that take place mainly National Curriculum or part of statutory religious education, the contribution must be genuinely voluntary and the pupils whose parents do not make such a contribution must not be discriminated against.
- 10.2 Where there is a shortfall of funding from voluntary contributions, then alternative funding must be found (e.g. core budget), or the activity must be cancelled.
- 10.3 Whilst pressure should not be brought to bear on parents, it is acceptable to underline the importance and value of such education visits and to encourage voluntary contribution support, if appropriate.

## **11 After School Club / Breakfast Club Charges**

- 11.1 A childcare charge of £1.20 per session is made for Breakfast Club, which opens at 8am. Parents/Carers are requested to complete booking forms for this provision and children MUST be signed in Parents/Carers.

- 11.2 Charges for After School Club are made in accordance with the current list of charges as stated in the Out of School Club booklet. The cost of the after school club is as follows:

3pm to 3:30pm	First ½ hour	£1.00
3pm to 4pm	1 hour	£2.50
3pm to 4:30pm	1½ hours	£3.75
3pm to 5pm	2 hours	£5.00
3pm to 5:30pm	2½ hours	£6.25
3pm to 6pm	3 hours	£7.50

The charges are designed to cover costs only.

## **12 Community Lettings**

- 12.1 The school premises can be made available to organisations which may or may not be involved with the work of the school.
- 12.2 Only the Head of School can authorise permission for the use of the school premises following consultation with the Directors.
- 12.3 Costs incurred as a result of community lettings can no longer be claimed by the school from the Hull City Council Community Use Funding budget (funding ceased 13 April 2015).
- 12.4 Charges for community lettings are made as per the “Schedule of Charges for Community Use” which is issued by the office on application. Agreed charges:

<b>Facility</b>	<b><u>Rate</u></b>	
School Hall	£13.25 per hour	Mon - Fri
External Football pitch	£13.85 per hour	Mon - Fri
	£14.95 per hour	Sat
	£14.95 per hour	Sun

- 12.5 The school and Local Authority will not be liable for any loss or damage to the hirer or their property or any person or persons admitted to the premises by the hirer.
- 12.6 It is mandatory that hirers have public liability insurance and this is a condition of booking for any hirer who charges participants for the activity.
- 12.7 No smoking is allowed on the school site.

### **13 Freedom of Information Act**

- 13.1 In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 the school will re-charge photocopying costs for information requested at 5p per Black and White copy or 12p per Colour copy (plus postage, if applicable) at the current rate of the date of request.

### **14 Staff Use of the Phone**

- 14.1 Staff are allowed to make personal calls to local numbers free. Personal phone calls to mobile numbers, long distance or international numbers are not permitted unless in exceptional circumstances, when recompense for calls should be made via the school office.

### **15 Staff Use of the Photocopier**

- 15.1 Staff are permitted to use the photocopier for reproducing copies to support children's learning in accordance to copyright laws. However, they are asked to consider the following points:

- is there a need to copy the sheet for every child or could they share one between two; and
- is there a need to use a colour copy (this is much more expensive).

- 15.2 Staff may make copies for personal use only by prior consent from the Head of School and agree to recompense the school at a rate of 5p per Black and White copy or 12p per Colour copy.

### **16 Enhanced checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

- 16.1 Although there is no charge for a DBS for volunteers, the school is charged a £10.00 administration fee per application by DBS Disclosure Service Ltd (T/A Disclosure Services) who process our DBS applications online. A voluntary contribution from the volunteer towards the cost of this would be appreciated by the school.

### **17 School Transport**

- 17.1 Following the withdrawal of the free Local Authority Home to School Transport service in September 2014, a charge of £1 per single journey is charged for those using the private bus transport service.
- 17.2 Parents are charged for each journey made based on the daily bus registers. Parents can view their current balance on ParentPay or enquiring at the school office. Discounts for siblings are available.
- 17.3 Parents who are experiencing any difficulty in paying for bus transport are asked to see the Head of School to discuss alternative payments methods or reduced payments.

## **18 School Meals**

- 18.1 All children in Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2 will receive free school meals as part of the Universal Income Free School Meals government funding programme.
- 18.2 Free school meals will also continue to be available to pupils whose parents receive certain benefits and who are registered to receive one. Application forms are available from the school office or alternatively applications can be made online at <http://www.hullcc.gov.uk>.
- 18.3 School meals cost £1 per day for children in Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 and should be paid for in advance. Payments for dinners can be made online at [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com) or I cash to the school office.
- 18.4 Text reminders are regularly sent to help remind parents/carers when payment has not been received.

## **19 Monitoring and Review**

- 19.1 This policy is monitored by the Directors and will be reviewed annually or earlier if necessary.