



## STUDENT BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

(Revised in line with latest DfE guidance - 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools' January 2016)

***All members of our community are given equal opportunities in line with the Single Equality Duty.***

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**St Thomas More Academy is a Catholic school, and as such we attempt to follow the example of Jesus Christ in our work, worship and relationships.**

Our aims are:

- to be a prayerful community based on Christian values, notably Love, Justice, Peace, Truth and Tolerance, and to encourage individuals in their commitment to these ideals.
- to provide a secure, welcoming and ordered environment in which individuals learn to value and respect both themselves and others.
- to give individuals the opportunities to develop their full potential as human beings, and to encourage and challenge them to do so.
- to encourage everyone to strive to do their best and to strive for the highest standards in all areas of activity.
- to help children grow into confident, open, resourceful young people with a sense of responsibility and of service.

## **Introduction**

The governors of St. Thomas More Roman Catholic Academy wish to maintain the highest standards of behaviour in the school. The governors wish all parents and carers to know that they expect the Headteacher and staff to maintain a caring, respectful atmosphere where the students can feel happy, secure and valued and as a result can work to the best of their ability. In achieving this end the governors also seek the support of parents and carers for the Headteacher and staff. Statements about how this policy is adhered to can be found in departmental handbooks and staff guidelines to which reference should be made.

St Thomas More Academy is a Catholic learning community. As a Catholic community we have a responsibility to promote and develop in our treatment of people, those values that lie at the heart of the Gospel message. Staff should demonstrate their own adherence to the underlying Christian values of the school by the way they promote good behaviour and in their responses to students. In exercising their authority staff should be honest, fair and just. Good working relationships are seen as fundamental to the creation of a positive and progressive atmosphere in the school. Staff exercise authority over pupils in the conduct of classes and in the maintenance of good order and safety around the school generally. This allows students to accept responsibility for what they have done and to improve their behaviour and so grow in self-discipline and maturity. More serious or persistent breaches of discipline, including disruptive behaviour in lessons, will be referred to the Head of Year/ Head of Department, or to the Senior Staff who have overall responsibility for discipline in the school, and parents will be informed. Parents are asked to support the disciplinary arrangements of the school.

While recognising the spirit of Christ's challenge to forgive "not seven times but seventy-seven times", we also clearly state our expectation that our students must take seriously their responsibility to allow and encourage others to learn and develop – both inside and outside the classroom. Staff may condemn or criticise a student's behaviour but they must never condemn or criticise the student. Such a restorative approach recognises that the school is a community and its members have a responsibility to each other. Following a more serious incident students will complete a 'reflections on behaviour' work sheet (appendix 1) with the support of pastoral staff.

## **Aims**

The aims of this policy are to:

- (i) promote Gospel values and the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- (ii) enable the Head Teacher to carry out their responsibilities of maintaining order and good discipline;
- (iii) foster mutual respect and prepare learners for the adult world.
- (iv) explain the standard of behaviour expected of students at St. Thomas More and how that standard will be achieved, the school rules, rewards for good behaviour and any disciplinary consequences for breaking the rules.
- (v) create consistency of expectations and consequences.
- (vi) ensure that, so far as possible, every student in the school is able to benefit from and make his/her full contribution to the life of the school, consistent always with the needs of the school community.

We want our policy to:

- Create a safe learning environment
- Encourage, recognise and reward
- Give clarity of expectation to staff and students
- Give a clear understanding of staff roles

### **Context**

The proprietors of Academies have a duty under paragraph 7 of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. They must ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of students. The governing body is responsible for setting general principles that inform this behaviour policy and it has consulted with the Headteacher, school staff, parent governors and students when developing these principles. Teachers have statutory authority to discipline students whose behaviour is unacceptable, who break the school rules or who fail to follow a reasonable instruction (Section 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006). DfE guidance, 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools' (2016), has been taken into consideration when producing this policy. It outlines that:

- Teachers have power to discipline students for misbehaviour which occurs in school and, in some circumstances, outside of school.
- The power to discipline also applies to all paid staff with responsibility for students, such as teaching assistants.
- Headteachers, proprietors and governing bodies must ensure they have a strong behaviour policy to support staff in managing behaviour, including the use of rewards and sanctions.

### **Our Code of Conduct/ Core Principles**

- All members of the school community are expected to treat each other with respect and dignity.
- Children have a right to attend school in safety and to learn without disruption.
- Teachers have a right to work in an environment that allows them to use their skills to the full for the benefit of all their students. The quality of learning, teaching and behaviour are inseparable issues and are the responsibility of all staff
- Students being disrespectful should never be tolerated; students should show respect to staff at all times and in turn, staff should be sensitive to the needs of students. Staff and students should be courteous and respectful at all times.
- Rewards can be more effective than punishment in motivating students. Good behaviour and achievement should be rewarded.
- Any behaviour which is anti-social, destructive, or disruptive or is in any way contrary to the ethos and authority of the school will be sanctioned to a degree relative to the seriousness of the behaviour.
- Discipline should be constructive in nature and staff attitudes must be consistent.
- Parental engagement is crucial and the support of parents is essential for the maintenance of good behaviour.
- Students with behavioural issues will be supported through the pastoral system, the Ambrose Centre and Padua.

- The School acknowledges its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, in respect of safeguarding and in respect of students with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities.
- No one must ever wilfully damage property or equipment belonging to school or other members of the school community. Students and staff will endeavour to keep the school litter free at all times.
- The highest standards of punctuality and attendance are expected from everyone.
- All students from Year 7 through to Year 11 must wear school uniform as set out in the school's Uniform Policy.
- Each student and his/her parent/carer are expected to sign a home school agreement when they join the school. (See Appendix 2)

### **Classroom Behaviour**

Promoting positive behaviour and full attendance enables high standards of teaching and learning to be achieved. A well-designed and relevant curriculum helps develop and maintain positive behaviour and full attendance. Students learn more effectively when the curriculum is differentiated and teaching styles and approaches accommodate individual learning styles and preferences.

### **Principles**

- Staff use the most appropriate method of teaching, which draws on students' experiences and values their contributions.
- Students are received into a classroom where high standards are expected and routines are clear and established.
- Explicit and regular praise should be used for all types of achievement.
- Staff are to assist with good order and movement at lesson changes and help on corridors and at entrances, where possible.

The PSE curriculum will be used to teach and promote the social, emotional and behavioural skills necessary for adulthood. All curriculum areas will provide opportunities to develop and teach these skills so that, through positive behaviour and full attendance, all students can learn and make progress.

### **Expected classroom behaviour:**

- Arrive on time and enter room in a sensible fashion.
- Come to lessons properly equipped (pen, pencil, eraser and ruler) and with a positive attitude.
- Remove outside coats and ensure uniform meets the required expectation.
- Mobile phones must be switched off and not visible.
- Listen to and follow teacher instructions.
- Treat others, their work and equipment with respect.
- Be polite and helpful to staff and other students.

- Actively engage and contribute to the learning taking place, both as an individual and as part of a group, to ensure the learning of all.
- Always work to the best of your ability.
- Complete homework on time and to the best of your ability.
- Students should not be allowed to leave a lesson without a note (e.g. learning mentor appointment) and only for very good reason. Going to the toilet during lessons should be an exceptional circumstance and staff must record on SIMS if a student goes to the toilet and the time they left the room. Students must wear their blazer when leaving the classroom to go to the toilet.

**Using Class Charts to acknowledge and praise positive behaviour and challenge behaviour that falls below the expectations of St Thomas More R C Academy.**

It is expected that all staff will record students' behaviour and achievements through Class Charts. It is important that this information is shared with students and parents on a regular basis to ensure its value in promoting positive behaviour attitudes in the classroom, this will be done during registration and via assemblies, parents' evenings, reports and departmental reward systems.

**Expected behaviour at break, lunchtimes and between lessons:**

Students are expected to behave sensibly and with consideration for others when moving to and from class. Students should conduct themselves in an orderly fashion in corridors, stairwells, the dining hall and wet weather areas. Behaviour which is not acceptable on corridors and stairways includes: making unnecessary noise, running, pushing - particularly in spaces which are obviously already overcrowded.

Students are not allowed:

- in the buildings at lunchtime unless they specifically need to see a teacher or use the toilet. Students are allowed to stay in the dining hall unless there is pressure for seats at lunchtime. In the event of bad weather the staff on duty will declare it a "wet break/lunch" and students will be allowed in the Main Hall/Dance Studio or another designated area and be supervised. Students are not allowed in the Dance Studio or Main Hall under any other circumstances.
- to sit or "cut through" the carpeted/red chair area near to the Main Hall – this is a staff/visitor area only.
- to use the main entrance to the school
- to use the Sixth Form gate in the morning unless they are in Year 12 or 13
- to "cut-through" the school car park
- to consume food or drink outside of the Dining Hall - any student doing so should be referred to their relevant Head of Year

Students must follow the one way system that operates in school at all times.

**Fire Alarm Misuse** - Malicious activation of fire alarms is a criminal offence and can endanger others as well as disrupt the school. They will be treated very seriously. Students who maliciously set off the fire alarm will be dealt with severely and receive a sanction, which is likely to be either an internal or fixed term exclusion.

**Smoking** – Smoking (which includes the use of e-cigarettes) is forbidden by law in any part of the school. Students are not to smoke at any time when they are in school uniform or on a school trip, fixture or event. Anyone doing so will be dealt with severely and receive a sanction, which is likely to be either an internal or fixed term exclusion.

### **Behaviour out of school**

St Thomas More is committed to ensuring our students act as positive ambassadors. The School therefore expects students to behave well out of school, on journeys to and from school and school events, and to other venues for school activities, and on school trips. Students' behaviour should be orderly and respectful of the people and environment around them.

#### **Incidents off-site:**

Under Section 90 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the School has the right to exercise discipline beyond the school premises. This includes misbehaviour:

- on activities arranged by the school such as work experience, educational and sporting events
- on the way to and from school (including on the buses).
- when wearing the school uniform in a public place.
- which could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school.
- poses a threat to another student or member of the public.
- which could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

The school may investigate instances of poor behaviour out of school and may impose sanctions, including exclusion, against those who have brought the name of the school into disrepute. Students are expected to wear their uniform correctly on the journey to and from school. When staff have direct control of students out of school (eg. at a sports fixture, school visit or trip, in proximity to the school gate, at local bus stops), they have the same powers as when in school.

When dealing with students outside the school gates but in **reasonable proximity** to the school, staff may instruct a student to return to school to deal with disciplinary matters. Failure to do so will itself be seen as a serious disciplinary offence.

### **Bullying**

The School has a separate Policy on Bullying which is available on the website. St Thomas More R C Academy is committed to ensuring that every student is treated with respect and dignity and will take action to prevent or redress instances of bullying or discrimination. The school believes that people should not be discriminated against or bullied because of their race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, or because they have special or additional needs.

## **Mobile Technology**

While not banned from school, **i-pods and mobile phones** must be used sensibly and responsibly. **They should not be visible (including headphones) and should not be used whenever students are in the building**, except for the Dining Hall at social time. If students are listening to their i-pod in social time and it is too loud, staff should ask them to turn it down or off. If a staff member observes it in use during a lesson or during registration/assembly it will be confiscated and kept in the school safe until the end of the school day when it can be collected from the Headteacher. Parents will be informed of their child falling short of the expectation via letter on the first occasion and if the behaviour is repeated students will be placed in Padua. Students and parents will be frequently reminded of the schools approach to mobile devices throughout the year in assemblies, newsletters etc. The camera or video facility on mobiles must never be used in school. Any inappropriate use of mobile technology such as face-time, viewing or accessing inappropriate material, photographing or videoing other students/staff will be dealt with severely and may well result in a fixed term exclusion.

I-watches are not to be worn in school. They are a banned item and will be confiscated if a student is found to be wearing one.

## **Loss and damage**

The school will not accept legal responsibility for loss, theft, damage to property whilst on school premises. It is suggested that parents cover clothing and property on their household insurance

## **Rewards**

The positive behaviour approach we adopt is based on praise and reward. Teachers should use praise many more times (in a lesson, on playground duty, in a day) than they use consequences. Staff will recognise good conduct and achievements in many different ways. They include:

## **Coffee with the Head**

On a monthly basis students who are making exceptional progress or who have contributed significantly to the extra curricular life of the school will be invited to have coffee with the Headteacher in his office to celebrate their achievement. Nominations are put forward by relevant Heads of Year based on staff feedback throughout the year.

## **All Stars**

During the final assembly of each term, as a year group, we celebrate the achievement of students in particular subjects. Each subject will have nominated a number of students for their end of term award, with the winners being announced during the assembly (one boy and one girl for each subject). As well as the 'all stars', students with a 100% attendance record will also receive a certificate and a prize and the Head of Year will present a £10 gift voucher to their overall student of the term (again one boy and one girl)

**Positive letters and postcards home** e.g. Letters home for students who achieve all 1s for effort on Interim Reports or Final Reports and letters home for students who achieve 75% 1s and the rest 2s on Interim Reports or Final Reports

**Year group termly prize for the form with the best attendance and a gift voucher for any student achieving 100% attendance across 5 years.**

### **Positive referrals to Head of Department / Head of Year/ Form Tutor through Class Charts**

As well as regular rewards for achievement the following events also take place:

- Year 7 Ceremony of Welcome
- Year 11 – End of Year Liturgy and Leavers Assembly
- Year 13 Leavers Liturgy and Celebration
- Year 13 Prom
- Celebration of Achievement Evening (Years 11, 12 & 13).
- Sports Presentations

### **Sanctions**

Sanctions are more likely to promote positive behaviour if the students see them as fair. Staff should be clear, therefore, that they:

- are punishing the behaviour not the student.
- impose sanctions fairly and consistently .
- use sanctions to help the student and others to learn from mistakes and recognise how they can improve their behaviour.
- attempt to link the concept of sanctions to the concept of choice, so that the students see the connection between their own behaviour and its impact on themselves and others and so increasingly take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- avoid whole group sanctions that punish the innocent as well as the guilty.
- never issue a sanction which is humiliating or degrading.

The School will consider the imposing of sanctions on an individual case basis, will always act lawfully, reasonably and proportionately and will draw from a range of strategies including:

#### **Verbal reprimands/warnings**

#### **Temporary relocation/removal**

#### **Referral to Head of Department**

#### **Behaviour Monitoring Reports**

Reports are designed to monitor attitude, behaviour and a student's ability to conform to all standards expected in both academic and pastoral areas. The aim of the report is to support students by monitoring their progress on a daily basis. Targets will be set by the Form Tutor (Green), the Head of Year (Amber) or Senior Pastoral Staff (Red). Staff members will be required

to comment and give a grade to indicate whether the student meets these targets at the end of each lesson.

Students must have their report signed by their Form Tutor/ Head of Year/Assistant Headteacher (depending on level) at the beginning of each day, break and lunch time. Failure to do so will result in further action being taken. Parents/ Carers are expected to review and discuss the report with their son/ daughter each day and sign to indicate they have done so. If a student is placed on Red or Amber report and the report is successful after at least 2 weeks then they will drop down to a report the level below for another 2 week period (amber or green).

If a student continues to receive unsatisfactory comments on red report they must be referred to the Deputy Headteacher. If a student's behaviour does not improve, parents will be invited to an interview with the Head of Year and in many instances the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) and Deputy Headteacher.

**Departmental Behaviour Monitoring Reports** - a Head of Department should place a student on departmental report if they have been referred twice or more within a two week period and the report should operate for a minimum of two weeks. Students must receive satisfactory reports for all lessons during the period of the report; failure to do so must result in further sanctions imposed or a referral to the Head of Year detailing issues and sanctions already imposed.

### **Detentions**

If necessary any student in Year 7 to 13 can be placed on a break or lunchtime detention (note that if a detention is served on a lunchtime the student MUST be given an adequate amount of time to still get their lunch and go to the toilet).

In accordance with DfE guidelines (Behaviour and Discipline in Schools January 2016) all schools have the authority to issue same day, after school detentions. At St Thomas More R C Academy students and parents will normally be given 24 hours notice if a detention is issued.

### **Focus groups**

Established to closely monitor the work rate and attitude of student's who are considered by teaching staff and the pastoral team to be falling short of school expectations or underachieving. Staff provide feedback on a student's progress every half term. These comments are then discussed with the student (and parents if deemed necessary). A letter is sent home to parents informing them of progress made and new targets. Teaching staff are emailed with regards any action taken.

### **Confiscation of property**

The School reserves its right to confiscate, retain or dispose of a student's property (i.e. an item which poses a threat to others/an item which poses a threat to good order for learning/an item against the School's uniform rules/an item which poses a health or safety threat/illegal items). Records of confiscated items will be kept and items will be stored safely and returned to the

student and or parent as appropriate – normally at the end of the school day. However, illegal items will be handed over to the police.

## Searching students

School staff can search students with their consent for any item. The Head Teacher and authorised staff (Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral), Head of Year, Assistant Head of Year) have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may have a prohibited item. Prohibited items are items identified as such in current DfE guidance. ['Screening, searching and confiscation – Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies' DfE 2014]

At present the "prohibited items" are:

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- e-cigarettes
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage the property of any person [including the pupil].

The Headteacher and authorised staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for these "prohibited items". If the student refuses to co-operate with a search without consent for "prohibited items" they may be referred to the police and/or an appropriate sanction in line with the school's behaviour policy can be applied. A second staff member must be present at all times when such a search is conducted and the searchers should be of the same gender as the student whenever possible. Mobile devices can be searched by the Headteacher and authorised staff if content is thought to be inappropriate.

A search must be limited in extent to:

- the removal of and search of outer clothing only i.e. any clothing worn otherwise than wholly next to the skin or immediately over underwear e.g. coat or blazer.
- a student's possessions i.e. goods over which he or she has or appears to have control including bags.
- A search may be conducted on the school site or elsewhere when the student is under the lawful control of the school.
- Safety must be paramount and if the degree of danger/threat posed by a search is unacceptable to a member of staff, then the police should be called.

Prohibited or forbidden items found as a consequence of a search may be confiscated, retained, disposed of or destroyed in line with current DfE guidance [Screening, searching and confiscation; Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies, 2014].

## **Padua**

In many instances internal exclusion is more appropriate than a fixed-period exclusion. If a student is on internal exclusion, it will be for a limited period only (as defined by the School) and appropriate work will be set. The School will ensure that students are kept in isolation no longer than is necessary and that their time spent there will be used constructively. Parents will be contacted by the Head of Year or, if not possible, Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) if their child is referred to Padua. If a student is absent for a day when due to be in Padua time will be extended until all targets are met. Students will be given the opportunity to complete a reflections exercise with a member of pastoral staff, allowing them time to discuss their behaviour and hopefully learn from their mistake.

## **Exclusion**

St Thomas More Academy includes exclusion (both fixed-term and permanent) among its disciplinary sanctions. We aim to keep exclusion rates to a minimum. Exclusion is used only as a last resort for serious infringements of discipline. The school is conscious of the dilution effect of too many exclusions. Although we accept that a zero rate for exclusions is unlikely in a large secondary school, our aim is to create an atmosphere of prevention which should lead to fewer exclusions year by year. Creative and co-operative ventures involving staff, students, parents and outside agencies have been successful in preventing permanent exclusion for a number of students. These efforts will be continued.

Parents will be informed of the fixed-term exclusion firstly by telephone wherever possible and then this will be followed up in writing. Work will be provided for the student to complete at home. A fixed term exclusion should be followed by a parental meeting with senior pastoral staff before staged re-integration is allowed. At this meeting, expectations will be made clear about the student's future conduct and students will be placed on red report for a minimum of a week on their return to allow their behaviour to be monitored.

**A fixed term exclusion** - Behaviour which may result in a fixed term exclusion include, but are not limited to, incidents such as:

- Physical assault against another student or member of staff
- Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against student or member of staff
- Persistent misbehaviour
- refusal to accept school authority
- serious and malicious accusations against a member of staff
- serious misuse of ICT facilities
- Bullying
- Racist or homophobic abuse
- Inappropriate use of mobile technology
- Sexual misconduct
- Possession of banned items
- Damage to school property

- Selling goods to other students
- Theft
- Bringing the school into disrepute

(note – if a student is excluded from school for more than 5 days they will receive full-time education at an alternative education setting from the sixth day)

**Permanent exclusion** - Permanent exclusion will most likely be used for serious one off incidents such as:

- Serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or adult;
- Sexual abuse or assault;
- Supplying or use of an illegal drug;
- Carrying an offensive weapon

or as a result of repeated misbehaviour which is not being addressed by other sanctions.

St Thomas More R C Academy follows current statutory guidance (Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England: Statutory guidance for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion. DfE September 2017) for exclusion.

### **Attendance**

The link between attainment, behaviour and attendance is very clear, and it is the responsibility of both the School and Parents/Carers to ensure that our students attend every day in order to maximise their learning opportunities. Schools and Local Authorities strive to promote good attendance and reduce absence and ensure every student has access to full-time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.

St Thomas More R C Academy will follow the guidance on completion of attendance registers outlined in DfE guidelines and appropriate codes will be entered for all students.

If a child is ill or unable to attend school, Parents/Carers should contact the school on the first day of absence, by telephone (0191 2588354) and give the reason for absence and an indication when the student can be expected back in school. If the school accepts the reason for absence the appropriate authorised absence code will be recorded. Parents should also send a note covering the absence when their child returns to school (as required by the Department of Education regulations) and this should be given to the form tutor.

Parents need to advise the School of any medical appointments which are unavoidable in school time before the absence can be authorised. They must inform the relevant Head of Year in writing prior to any planned medical appointment.

Unauthorised absence is where the School is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence or no reasons have been given.

Where attendance is causing concern, the School will challenge patterns of absence. Parents may offer a reason for a child's absence but it is the Headteacher's decision as to whether the reason is acceptable.

If a reason for absence cannot be established at the start of the school session, then it will be marked as an "N" - no reason given.

The School Attendance Clerks will contact any parents who have failed to notify the school of their child's absence for obvious safeguarding reasons and to establish a reason for absence. The School expects but at the same time appreciates parent's efforts to notify the school of any absence before 8:55. If no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time the N code will be replaced with code "O". Form Tutors are expected to challenge students with regards to notes to explain absence.

Unexplained absences will be followed up by the relevant Head of Year and if necessary senior pastoral staff. If in any situation the School is not satisfied about the explanation for absence it will remain unauthorised and we will ask the parent for more information. If, after further investigation any doubt remains in respect of the explanation offered, then the absence will be marked as code "O" unauthorised.

It is important to note that it is for parents to satisfy the School as to the validity of absence, and an email, written note or telephone call in respect of a child's absence does not of itself oblige the School to accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for the absence.

As it is the Headteacher's decision, an absence can be marked as unauthorised if the School has doubts about the authenticity of absences attributed to medical reasons. It is for parents to satisfy the School as to the validity of absence and to provide medical evidence to support the absence if requested. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

It is expected that in all cases of absence students will catch up with work missed at the earliest opportunity. The School will make arrangements to re-integrate students who have been absent for extended periods through the Ambrose Centre and with the support of Learning Mentors.

If a pattern of poor attendance develops the Head of Year will liaise with parents/carers in an effort to improve attendance. As DfE aim for a 95% attendance record a staged response will be initiated by the School if attendance falls below this level. Initially a letter will be sent to all parents/carers indicating concern. Other strategies will include setting attendance targets with students and meetings in school with parents/students. If there is no improvement a referral will be made to the Local Authority.

If attendance falls below 90% students will fall into the government's Persistent Absentee category regardless of the reasons for absence but if absences are unauthorised the Local Authority may use enforcement powers.

### **Leave of Absence during Term Time**

Leave of absence during term time may only be granted by the School. As from 1st September 2013, the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 amended

Regulation 7 to prohibit a School from granting leave of absence to a student, except where an advance application has been made by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides, and the School considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

A Parent/Carer must write a letter to the Headteacher requesting leave of absence prior to any proposed absence. Please note: Holidays are not classed as exceptional circumstances. The Parent/Carer will be notified of the Head Teacher's decision by letter.

A student who takes 10 days holiday during an academic year can only attain 94.7% attendance.

A pupil who takes 10 days holiday in each academic year could lose the equivalent of 22 weeks (almost 6 months) during their formal school career.

### **Local Authority**

Where the School is unable to secure an improvement in attendance through informal means the matter will be referred to the Local Authority Attendance Team for a period of monitoring. The student's parents/carers will be contacted to ensure a resolution to the issue and secure the student's regular attendance. If there is no improvement in attendance Local Authority enforcement powers may be used. It should always be remembered that ultimately the Local Authority can issue a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecute parents for failing in their duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly if the student's absences are marked unauthorised.

### **The Impact of Parental Support**

Parents/carers can do a great deal to support the regular and punctual attendance of their children. To help their children parents/carers can:

- Take an active interest in their child's school life and work and progress.
- Ensure that their child only misses school for reasons which are unavoidable or justified, such as illness.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day.
- Always notify the School if they are concerned that their child may be reluctant to go to school.
- Avoid booking family holidays during term-time.
- Ensure that their child completes his homework and goes to bed at an appropriate time.
- Attend, where possible, parents' evenings and other School events.
- Regularly check parent mail messages and letters sent from the School.

### **Punctuality**

#### **Registration**

1. The school day begins at 8:55. Form Tutors must take the register once they have prayed with their form and record any student arriving late for registration with 'L' and must also record on SIMS the number of minutes they are late.

2. Students who are late for school more than twice in two weeks should be put on report by their form tutor.
3. Form tutors will give break/lunchtime detentions (whichever is convenient for them due to the split timetable) in which students will make up the time they were late.

If a student continues to arrive late for school he/she should be referred to the relevant Head of Year.

### **After Registration**

1. Students must sign in at the Pastoral Office if they are late to the point that they have missed registration. Failure to do so will result in a further sanction being given.
2. Attendance clerks must record any student arriving late for school after registration with 'U' and must also record on SIMS the number of minutes they are late.

Heads of Year will review and monitor punctuality daily and are responsible for issuing lunchtime detentions for those students that have missed registration – if possible on the same day they are late. Persistent lateness will be dealt with by Head of Year who will speak with parents in order to improve the situation.

If a student's punctuality does not improve with this level of intervention students they will be referred to Assistant Head (Pastoral) who will issue a letter to parents and liaise with the Home Liaison Officer re further action.

### **Uniform**

St Thomas More R C Academy has a clear Uniform Policy (see appendix 3). The uniform helps to create a positive working atmosphere and it levels out the differences which can be found between students in a non-uniform situation. We expect that the uniform policy will be adhered to apart from in exceptional circumstances which are agreed with the School.

A high standard of personal appearance is expected and anyone arriving at school in non-uniform clothing/footwear may expect a sanction in line with the Behaviour Policy.

Uniform lists and rules on uniform and appearance are detailed in the Uniform Policy. This information is made available to students and parents on the school website and in the Student Diaries. Depending on circumstances (previous track record, the age and maturity of the student), students who arrive in school wearing incorrect uniform are either to be warned and disciplined, or sent home immediately to change into correct uniform and return to school.

Students must be challenged by all members of staff, particularly Form Tutors during registration, if they fail to comply with uniform regulations (including length of skirts/make-up/appropriate footwear/jewellery) and sanctions imposed on repeated offenders. Form Tutors are expected to give a student a first warning and issue them with a note for that day. If repeated they are to be sent to the relevant Head of Year (i.e. failing to comply for a second consecutive day or for persistent failure to comply).

### **Hair, jewellery, nails and make-up**

Severe haircuts including stepped, extremely close-cut styles (anything shorter than grade 2), undercut, shaved in line/tramlines, any pattern shaved into the hair or dyed to unnatural colours/multi-colours are forbidden. Parents will be contacted by phone by the relevant Head of Year if a student's haircut is deemed inappropriate or extreme. If the problem can be rectified (e.g. hair dye) it must be done so as soon as possible. Students will not be allowed to circulate with their peers at break and lunchtimes until the hair grows/is corrected to meet the standard the School expects (staff will ensure that a student in this position will still be able to purchase and eat their lunch and go to the toilet).

If such a mistake is repeated in the same academic year a sanction such as Padua will be imposed.

The St Thomas More R C Academy Uniform Policy makes it clear that the only jewellery students should be wearing for school is a watch and a pair of ear studs. False nails and nail polish are forbidden and so too is make up for girls in Years 7, 8 & 9. Girls in Year 10 and above are allowed to wear discreet make up but will be asked to remove make up at the discretion of pastoral staff if it is regarded to be excessive.

### **Use of reasonable force/restraint**

There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain or use reasonable force to prevent students committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, or damaging property, and to maintain good order and discipline in the classroom. All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. 'Reasonable' means using no more force than is needed, and reasonable adjustments must be made when dealing with disabled pupils or pupils with special educational needs. When a member of staff has restrained a student, s/he must make a written incident report to the Head Teacher the same day. A central record of such incidents will be kept.

### **Malicious allegations against school staff**

Any student found to have made a malicious accusation against school staff will have committed a serious offence and will be excluded from school. Depending on the seriousness of the accusation the Head Teacher may impose serious sanctions including possibly fixed-term or permanent exclusion.

## **ADDITIONAL SIXTH FORM GUIDELINES**

### **Expectations**

- Attendance post 16 is critical to success. At St Thomas More students are expected to have an attendance of 95% and above across the school year. Students are given 2 attendance marks per day – one during registration and one in the afternoon.
- Attendance is expected in all lessons including General RE, PSE and Enrichment.
- Students who fall below the target attendance of 95% will have their parents/carers informed in writing.
- If a student is absent it is essential that the school is informed on that morning, preferably by a parent.

- All students are expected to attend registration. If however, for an unforeseeable reason a student misses registration, they must sign the late sheet in the Sixth Form Office. If this is before 10am they are classed as late but in attendance. Punctuality checks are carried out frequently during the year.
- All work deadlines set by Teachers will be met and work will be completed to a high standard.
- Private study time will be used effectively, by using the Sixth Form Library to complete work set.
- There is a shared responsibility with others in the Sixth Form for good conduct in school and for careful upkeep of Sixth Form areas including the Sixth Form Library and Common Room.
- There is no parking in the school car park as this is for staff use only. Excellent conduct, including car parking, is expected in the school neighbourhood

### **Leaving the Premises During the School Day**

In consideration of the age and maturity of students in Year 12 and Year 13 permission is granted for students to leave the premises during the school day, subject to the following conditions:

- Students may not leave the premises during their timetabled lessons.
- In the event of a member of staff being absent, students are still expected to attend their timetabled lesson. They must ensure that they receive their registration mark for this lesson. Students should work in the classroom allocated to this lesson; they are NOT permitted to leave the premises.

### **Student Learning Agreement**

Each student signs a Student Learning agreement at the start of each year in Sixth Form.

## **APPENDIX**

## Appendix 1

**St Thomas More R C Academy**



### **Student Reflections**

**Name:**

**Year Group:**

**Date:**

In your own words what happened? *Without blaming anyone else who was involved.*

How much of the incident were you involved in?

Why do you think the incident happened?

What do you think are the possible consequences of this behaviour both now and in the future?

Who do you think has been affected by your behaviour?

What is the view of your parents/carers?

How could the trouble have been prevented?

How could you avoid a similar incident again?

How can things be put right? What would you like to happen next?

What kind of support do you think you might need? (Who or what do you think could help you?)

How do you feel now?

## Appendix 2

**St. Thomas More RC Academy expects each parent/guardian in a spirit of partnership to make the following commitments: -**

- support the staff and governors in working with the Catholic community to promote my child's spiritual development
- make sure that my child attends school unless he is unable to do so and provide a written explanation for any absences
- ensure my child arrives at school on time, in full school uniform and properly equipped
- encourage my child to have a positive attitude towards learning and to comply with the school's Behaviour Policy
- stress the importance of following staff instructions and accepting the authority of the school
- encourage and support my child in the completion of homework and sign his/her diary once a week
- attend Parents' Evenings to discuss my child's progress or any specially arranged appointment concerning the progress of my child
- inform the school of anything which might affect my child's work or behaviour and of any change of address, telephone number or emergency contacts

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Form: \_\_\_\_\_

**St. Thomas More RC Academy expects each pupil in a spirit of partnership to make the following commitments: -**

- follow the spirit of the St Thomas More's Code of Conduct by showing
  - a Christian attitude
  - Courtesy and Consideration to everyone I meet
  - Commitment in everything I do
- follow staff instructions and accept the authority of the school
- attend school regularly arranging all appointments (holidays etc.) outside school hours wherever possible
- arrive in time for school and for all lessons
- work hard and behave well in all lessons and in all areas of the school
- complete homework on time and to the best of my ability
- wear full school uniform and bring all the equipment I need each day
- respect the property of others
- keep the school and its surrounding area free from litter and graffiti by respecting school buildings, grounds and equipment
- act respectfully and sensibly on my journeys to and from school, in a manner that reflects credit on myself, my family and my school

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix 3

#### St Thomas More R C Academy

### SCHOOL UNIFORM

<u>BOYS</u>	<u>GIRLS</u>
White school shirt <b>Mid-grey traditional, tailored school trousers</b> School tie (available only from school) School blazer (available from Emblematic) School jumper – <b>optional</b> (available only from school) Plain <b>black traditional</b> school shoes (not trainers, boots or sportswear.)	White school shirt <b>School Kilt or mid – grey traditional tailored school trousers</b> School tie (available only from school) School blazer (available from Emblematic) School jumper – <b>optional</b> (available only from school) Plain white socks, black opaque tights Plain <b>black traditional</b> school shoes (not trainers, boots or sportswear)

### P E UNIFORM

<u>BOYS</u>	<u>GIRLS</u>
Plain white polo shirt with logo Black, plain tracksuit bottoms or black shorts Black rugby shirt with logo Maroon socks Football boots Trainers (shoes <b>not</b> boots)	Plain white polo shirt with logo Plain black tracksuit bottoms, plain black leggings or black shorts Black rugby shirt with logo Maroon socks Trainers (shoes <b>not</b> boots)

#### Important points about Uniform and Appearance

1. The jumper and tie are **available only** from school.
2. The colour for trousers is **mid-grey**. **Skirts should be of a respectable length (no more than 2 inches above the knee)**
3. The Blazer and PE uniform are available at **Emblematic, Unit 26, North Tyne Industrial Estate, Benton, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE12 9SZ** or on line from Emblematic on **www.emblematic.co.uk**
4. If students choose to wear an outer garment on top of their blazer in colder or wet weather It should be noted that **denim, leather, hooded tops, leisurewear and sportswear e.g.**

**tracksuit tops should not be worn.**

- 5 We expect students to avoid extremes of fashion in uniform and appearance, **particularly with regard to hairstyle**. For example coloured hair and extremely short cut or shaven heads (including lines shaved in) are not acceptable (guidance: hair cut with clippers on a setting lower than a 2 is not acceptable); large or brightly coloured hair bands and other hair adornments should not be worn.

Students should not wear make-up in Years 7 – 9 but students in Years 10 – 11 are allowed to wear **discreet** make-up. No jewellery is allowed, except for a watch and **one pair of ear studs only** and students should not have facial piercings. False nails or nail varnish should not be worn by any student.

**The examples above are not an exhaustive list and the school may give clarity regarding other aspects of uniform and appearance as becomes necessary.**

- 6 Students are responsible for their own personal property in school. Occasionally items do go missing, this is often due to forgetfulness or carelessness. Problems will be kept to a minimum if:
- clothing and other items are marked with the owner's name
  - valuable items or equipment are not brought to school
  - students only bring to school amounts of money needed for the day.
- 7 Blazers should be worn coming to school and going home from school

*Unfortunately we are not able to accept liability for items of personal property in school.*



