

# St Thomas the Apostle School - Fees and Charges Policy



St Thomas the Apostle School is a school which operates with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and is owned, operated and governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS), where formation and education are based on the principles of Catholic doctrine, and where the teachers are outstanding in true doctrine and uprightness of life.

## 1. Delegation to Set and Vary Fees

- 1.1 The Principal has delegated power to set and vary fees of St Thomas the Apostle School.

## 2. Setting School Fees, Levies and Ad Hoc

- 2.1 St Thomas the Apostle School's procedure for setting school fees, levies and ad hoc charges recognises the significant contribution that St Thomas the Apostle School makes to the cost of education through the generation of private income that includes the payment of fees by families.
- 2.2 St Thomas the Apostle School sets and varies fees, levies and ad hoc according to criteria that represent a thorough and transparent assessment of the internal and external factors influencing costs and the families' ability to pay.
- 2.3 FFPOS are not funded by Australian or State recurrent grant funding. FFPOS student fees should set at local student fees, plus Australian and State government funding amounts and other overhead cost relating to FFPOS.
- 2.4 Fees for FFPOS must not be subsidised by recurrent grant or private income received for/from local students.
- 2.5 St Thomas the Apostle School fees and levies are accessible in a variety of ways, including the School website at [www.stblackburn.catholic.edu.au](http://www.stblackburn.catholic.edu.au).
- 2.6 St Thomas the Apostle School communication/strategy plan makes provision for the development and review of strategies for the dissemination of information about its fees and levies. This information is communicated generally via the School Newsletter and to individual families regarding their own specific situation.

## 3. Advice to Families, Invoicing and Collection of Fees and Levies

- 3.1 St Thomas the Apostle School invoicing cycle and invoicing throughout the school year is as follows:  
Term Four – Invoicing and payment of Curriculum Levies for the following year  
Terms One, Two and Three – 100% of the fees and any other levies charged to the account, payable in full by the end of Term Three.
- 3.2 St Thomas the Apostle School is responsible for its own debt collection throughout the school year.
- 3.3 St Thomas the Apostle School will make every effort to help families understand their obligation to pay fees and levies.
- 3.4 St Thomas the Apostle School will discuss payment of school fees and levies, and establish a payment method with families at the time of student enrolment.
- 3.5 The preferred method of payment is direct debit, established as part of student enrolment prior to commencing at the school.
- 3.6 Recovery of unpaid fees, particularly if recovery involves legal action, will be approached humanely and sensitively to protect the student as much as possible from the public embarrassment that could arise.
- 3.7 All collection approaches to families will be based on appropriate pastoral procedures.

- 3.8 A judgment by the Principal as to whether families are unable to pay because of their financial situation will err on the side of leniency.

#### **4. Fee Remissions and Concessions**

- 4.1 St Thomas the Apostle School will provide fee remissions/concessions to families in need, including students who hold an HCC.
- 4.2 The MACS Board has delegated the power to provide fee remissions and/or concessions (as applicable) to the Principal of St Thomas the Apostle School.
- 4.3 Refer to the St Thomas the Apostle School Primary School Concessional School Fees Policy for further information.

### **Procedures**

#### **1. Setting and Varying Schools Fees, levies and ad hoc charges**

- 1.1 School fees and levies will be reviewed and set annually, in sufficient time to advise School families of the following year's fees and levies
- 1.2 When setting School fees and levies, the Principal will consider recurrent fees and levies to assist in meeting the operating expenses of the School, and capital fees to assist in the purchase of assets and/or repayment of loans for capital purposes.
- 1.3 Where the school accepts enrolment of FFPOS, separate fees and levies will be set for FFPOS.

#### **2. Billing Fees, Levies and Fee Concessions/Remissions**

- 2.1 Fee and levy billing and application of fee concessions/remissions are processed wholly within the School's accounting system, in accordance with the School's billing cycle.  
Term Four – Invoicing and payment of Curriculum Levies for the following year  
Terms One, Two and Three – 100% of the fees and any other levies charged to the account, payable in full by the end of Term Three.
- 2.2 Fees and levies are billed in full for all students, with any fee concessions or remissions applied to the full fee or levy charged.
- 2.3 St Thomas the Apostle School follows the procedures detailed in the St Thomas the Apostle School Primary School Concessional Fee Policy to determine appropriate fee concessions or remissions.

#### **3. Collection of Fees, Levies and Ad Hoc Charges**

- 3.1 The Principal of St Thomas the Apostle School will establish a payment method with families at the time of student enrolment.
- 3.2 The preferred method of payment of school fees, levies and charges is direct debit, established at the time of student enrolment.
- 3.3 Where payment is made in cash, or on request, the School will issue a School accounting system generated receipt.
- 3.4 St Thomas the Apostle School will issue periodic statements (at least once per term) to families, to assist with fee collection.
- 3.5 If a family fails to keep up with their payment commitment, the Principal will bring the matter to their attention promptly and seek resolution. Debt recovery process may need to be initiated, including follow up phone calls, letters and formal debt recovery.
- 3.6 St Thomas the Apostle School will follow up debt recovery in a sensitive, discreet and confidential manner. Parents/guardians will be invited to discuss the matter with the Principal.
- 3.7 Whilst no child will be denied access to a Catholic education due to genuine financial hardship, when families decide on a Catholic school for their children they knowingly take on additional financial responsibilities associated with school fees, which must be honoured in accordance with normal commercial practices.