Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
Policy for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

Mission Statement

‘To educate young people to meet the challenges of life courageously, to use their talents to the full and to live the values of Christ’s Gospel’

This policy is applied to all students, whether day, boarding or EYFS

Introduction

Thornton College is a mainstream non-selective Catholic school for girls up to Year 13 with a nursery for both girls and boys. The school makes provision for students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD). This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the identification and management of students with special educational needs at Thornton College. It is intended to provide a consistent framework ensuring that all students have their needs met, allowing them to work towards their full potential. The school’s Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) policy takes account of the Code of Practice 0-25 (2014) (SEND Code 2015) and for Early Years 0-5 (January 2015) plus subsequent revisions and the Equality Act (2010). Thornton College does not come under the umbrella of maintained schools but embraces the philosophy and guidance of the ‘Every Child Matters’ white paper (2003) and follows any procedures outlined by Local Authorities with regard to students in its care who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health and Care Plan.

Every child is a unique gift from God, with his or her own unique gifts. At Thornton College we aim to enable students to develop their gifts and talents to the full in a community where students can develop confidence, self-esteem and tolerance and where they will feel valued and respected.

We, as a school, recognise that there is a broad spectrum of ability and differing educational needs and talents. All students may have special needs at different times and therefore a wide variety of strategies is used to meet these needs as they arise. We believe that meeting the special educational needs of individual students is not a peripheral or external activity but the responsibility of each teacher and therefore teaching strategies need to be responsive to the needs of individuals.

SEND Statement

We make provision for students with SEND. Teachers and Key Workers in the Nursery identify who requires additional support, working alongside the Special Educational Needs & Disability Coordinator and in consultation with parents. Opportunities for learning within the curriculum are differentiated and targeted towards the area of need for each individual. Additional support and interventions are provided in order to ensure students make progress. Teachers and Key Workers constantly monitor and review the student’s programme, adapting activities so that the whole curriculum policy is available to all.

All staff follow our policies for SEND and Inclusion.

Aims

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To be reviewed September 20
The aims of the special educational needs and disability policy and practice in our school are:

- To value each student as an individual. Age, gender, race or individual needs will not constrain any educational entitlement.
- To recognise that some students have difficulties which call for special educational provision ‘in addition to and different from’ that provided within the differentiated curriculum.
- To make reasonable adjustments for those with a disability by taking action to increase access to the curriculum and environment.
- To ensure a high level of staff expertise to meet student need, through on-going professional development.
- To encourage parents and guardians as partners in the learning process for their students.
- To work in a cooperative partnership with Local Authorities and other outside agencies.
- To provide all the students in our school with a broad, balanced and relevant education.
- To stimulate enjoyment in learning at all levels and to encourage the child to become an independent learner.
- To place special emphasis on developing self-discipline, and encouraging high standards of behaviour and courtesy, as well as involving the students in a number of responsible roles.
- To promote and maintain a happy, secure and sensitive environment with firm moral structure where independence, respect for others and the development and maintenance of self-esteem is integral.

Overview

The school employs a full time SENDCO known as the Head of Learning Development, and a team of Learning Support Assistants. The Nursery Manager, is the Early Years’ Coordinator.

There is a dedicated room (Q1) where students may be withdrawn for small group and individual work, although support of students with learning needs usually takes place within the classroom with programmes of work planned to enable all students to make progress and experience success.

Students within the school have access to a wide range of activities and the school ethos is based on the belief that every student has something to offer, whether it be academic, sporting, artistic, dramatic or musical ability. The school strives to develop an inclusive curriculum with appropriate teaching methods and learning environments.

Thornton College promotes equal opportunities and students have full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education with access to all subjects within the curriculum using a range of groupings and differentiation strategies. However, in some circumstances, a student may be withdrawn from a subject either on the advice of an educational psychologist or to provide a more appropriate alternative curriculum based upon the needs and aptitude of the individual. This process will always involve consultation with the student, parents and staff and may involve working in partnership with outside agencies.

We recognise the importance of early identification and assessment of students with special educational needs and aim to address special needs as soon as concerns are raised so that learning experiences are appropriate to a student’s current needs. We recognise that good practice can help prevent some special educational needs arising and can minimise others.

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We recognise that responsibility for SEND is a whole school issue and lies collectively with all staff, supported by the SENDCO and senior Management Team.

We believe that parents and carers have a crucial role to play in supporting their student’s education. We aim to work in close partnership with parents and carers, valuing their opinions and contributions and supporting them in their child’s learning and development.

Parents are alerted to any concerns teachers have about their child’s learning, behaviour or progress with the opportunity for regular discussions and meetings between parents, class and subject teachers and the Head of Learning Development (SENDCO).

**Definition of Special Educational Needs or Disability**

At Thornton College we use the definition for Special Educational Needs and for disability from the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2014, p.6). This states that ‘a child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.’

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

(a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of students of the same age in mainstream schools

(b) have a disability which prevents or hinders the child from making use of the educational facilities of a kind provided for students of the same age in mainstream schools

**Special educational provision** is ‘educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for students of their age.’

A person has a disability if he/she “has a ‘physical or mental impairment” which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.” (Equality Act and Schools, 2010)

A child has a learning need if s/he cannot achieve her/his full potential without some additional provision being made. Students must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language of their home or medium of communication is different from the language in which they will be taught.

Students with special educational needs will have an identified need in one or more of the following four areas:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional & mental health needs
- Sensory and/or physical needs

The SEND Code of Practice requires all staff to be fully aware of the procedures for identifying and

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making provision for students with special educational needs under the guidance of the Head of Learning Development.

Students under the category ‘SEND Support’ will receive a graduated approach to intervention and their progress will be regularly reviewed. For students with more complex needs, a request will be made for the student to be assessed by the Local Authority for an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Whole School Approach

‘Provision for students with special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole. In addition to the governing body, the Head Teacher of Thornton College, the Head of Learning Development and all other members of staff have important day to day responsibilities. All teachers are teachers of students with special educational needs. Teaching such students is therefore a whole school responsibility.’ (SEND Code of Practice 2001)

Thornton College aims to provide a whole school approach to special educational needs and to embed inclusive practice across the school. The school develops teachers’ skills and strategies for meeting the needs of students with SEND and additional needs through continued professional development with the focus on excellent classroom teaching as a preventative measure and initiatives which promote good practice and raise attainment for students with SEND.

All new members of staff receive an induction session on working with students with SEND and there is continuing staff development. Teachers are encouraged and supported to keep abreast of new teaching theory and methods and how to implement these appropriately. The school looks for ways to help teachers remove barriers to learning with the Head of Learning Development providing advice, guidance and support.

Regular monitoring and testing of all students ensure that staff are aware of SEND students’ current levels of achievement and progress.

Role of the Head of Learning Development (SENDCO)

SEND arrangements are coordinated by the Head of Learning Development whose role includes:

- overseeing the day to day operation of the school’s SEND policy
- co-ordinating provision for students with SEND
- advising on the graduated response to SEND
- advising on the deployment of resources to meet students’ needs effectively
- liaising with parents of students with SEND
- liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent and voluntary bodies
- liaising with the Designated Teacher where a looked after student has SEND
- liaising with the potential next providers of education to ensure a student and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- liaising with parents of students with SEND
- working with the Head Teacher of Thornton College and governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- ensuring that suitable examination and other assessment arrangements are made for students who have difficulties and that suitable resources are available

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• ensuring that SEND records are kept up to date
• contributing to and promoting in-service training of staff both in-house and external
• carrying out observations and assessments of individual students to help support and provide for them
• liaising with and advising TAs/LSAs, managing these where appropriate, offering specialist advice and support so that they can apply targets and make provision for identified students
• co-ordinating 1:1 and group learning support, and where appropriate, delivering this
• tracking student’s progress using IEPs and other records
• maintaining the school’s SEND register
• keeping the Head Teacher of Thornton College informed about provision, training needs, students’ needs and changes to statutory requirements
• managing the Learning Support team

**Role of the Nursery Manager (SENCO (EYFS))**

• To work with parents, carers and other professionals in gathering and sharing information in order to build positive partnerships ensuring students feel included, valued and supported.
• To implement systems for identifying, observing and supporting students in Early Years. To record and collate information for all students with SEND in the EYFS setting.
• To oversee the system of planning, implementing, monitoring and reviewing of EHC assessments and plans.
• To identify at the ‘Two Year Progress Check’ any areas where the child’s progress is less than expected or there is an identified special educational need or disability. To discuss with the child’s parents and/or carer how to support the child.
• To ensure that parents are informed at all stages of assessment, planning, provision and review of their student’s education and that their insights inform action taken by the setting.
• To ensure that the annual review of the Equality of Opportunities Policy is shared with parents and staff.
• To advise and support key people on the planning of additional support. To identify training needs for all members of staff, promoting inclusive practice.
• To liaise with providers and professionals involved with students with special educational needs/disabilities and their families, including transfer arrangements to other settings and schools.
• To regularly attend termly local SEND Network Group meetings. To disseminate and share information and advice to all staff.
• To seek information, advice and training from the Early Years and Childcare improvement Team. To regularly attend termly EYFS Network Group meetings and early Years SENCO Liaison Groups offered by the Local Authority. To disseminate and share information and advice to all staff.

**Role of the Head of Year 12 and Head of Year 13**

To ensure students with additional needs/SEND can be supported at KS5 through:
• Ensuring access to KS curriculums through differentiated teaching
• Ensuring appropriate testing and support is put into place for each student with additional needs
• Ensuring the opportunity for both in-class and out of class support
• Access to vocational programmes at KS5 and the possibility of college links and work experience
• Access to on-line learning
• One to one or group sessions with specialist outside agencies if required

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• Advice about access to more detailed and specialist assessment
• Part-time timetables for behavioural or medical needs.

Role of the teachers

• Teachers will provide high quality teaching, differentiated for individual students.
• Teachers are required to make regular assessments of progress for all students, identifying students making less than expected progress.
• Where a student is making less than satisfactory progress, teachers will, in conjunction with the SENCO, make a clear analysis of the student’s needs taking into account the student’s and parent’s views and, if relevant, advice from external agencies.
• Teachers will direct the support from learning support assistants.
• Teachers will liaise with parents of identified students.
• Where a student is identified as having SEND, teachers will continue to provide high quality teaching, differentiated for individual students and will keep records of progress whilst taking account of IEPs/IPPPs, SENCO guidance and reviews.
• Teachers will contribute to the setting of specific targets for IEPs/IPPPs/EHCs and contribute to the assess, plan, do and review nature of any SEND targets set.

Role of the Head Teacher of Thornton College

• To ensure that the Head of Learning Development has sufficient time to carry out both teaching and administrative roles
• To liaise with the Head of Learning Development regularly with regard to individual students, the effectiveness of current policy and practice and strategic decisions concerning SEND
• To discuss staff training needs with Head of Learning Development and arrange sharing of good practice.

Working with Parents

All staff will work in partnership with parents and carers, involving them in decision making and taking into account their knowledge and wishes. The Head of Learning Support will discuss plans relating to SEND pupils and ensure parents are regularly informed and that information is clear and easily accessible.

Identification of students with Special Educational Needs

Thornton College operates a procedure of early identification, assessment and intervention for students who have SEND to ensure that students who have difficulties with learning receive the help they need as soon as possible. The code sets out four broad areas of need that students fall into but ‘the purpose of identification is to work out what action the school needs to take, not to fit a pupil into a category.’ Students may have areas of needs in more than one area, alongside strengths which also need to be considered.

Identifying those students who have special educational needs and/or requiring learning support is conducted from several possible inputs:
• Concerns are raised by parents/carers, teachers, external agencies or from the student’s previous school regarding a student’s level of progress or inclusion.
• Screening tests and initial assessments such as CATs results or standardised reading and spelling tests indicate a gap in knowledge or level of skills.
• Teacher assessments and whole school tracking of attainment outcomes show a lack of expected level of progress and the child is not responding to steps taken by the class/subject teacher.
• Observation and/or assessment of the student indicates that the student has additional needs in one or more of the four broad areas of need: Communication and interaction, Cognition and learning, Social, mental and emotional health, Sensory/Physical.
• Teaching staff can use the SEND referral at any time should they have concerns about a student in their care.

Parents are encouraged to raise any concerns relating to their child’s learning with the child’s class teacher/subject teacher or form tutor. Concerns may also be raised with the Head of Learning Development who attends all Parents’ Evenings or can be contacted directly.

SEND Register

The names of students who have been identified as having a special educational need or disability are entered into the school data base - isams. In addition, students identified as making less than expected progress may be included. This information is shared with parents and remains confidential. The register is updated on a termly basis and all changes updated on isams.

On isams staff can find a summary of students’ learning difficulties, to enable them to maintain and update their records. Coloured stars against the Pupil profiles flag up the stage of intervention. (Blue – Monitoring, Grey – support, Yellow – More Complex Needs).

A learning support student file is maintained on all those with an individual education plan, EHC plan or Individual pupil profile plan. This information is kept securely in the Learning Support Office. Records may include assessments and reports both in and out of school, any conversations or meetings with parents and all correspondence or other relevant information.

All records will be maintained in a way that is confidential and secure, in accordance with Data Protection Legislation.

Support for students with SEND

A graduated response for learning difficulties and special educational needs is in place and support is targeted wherever it is most needed at any one time. When a student has been identified as having special educational needs, the curriculum and learning environment will be further adapted by the class/subject teacher to enable students to access the curriculum more easily. These adaptations may include strategies suggested by the Head of Learning Development and/or external specialists. Students may also be provided with specialised resources and/or additional adult help within the classroom. Intervention activities/programmes may also be put in place outside the classroom.
Students with a disability will be provided with reasonable adjustments (such as auxiliary aids and in class support) to overcome any disadvantage experienced in school and to increase their access to the curriculum.

Action relating to SEND support will follow a four part cycle following the ‘assess, plan, do and review’ model in line with The Code of Practice. Decisions and actions are consequently revisited, revised and refined in order to understand individual pupil’s needs and what supports them to make the best progress.

Individual Education plans (IEPs) in the Junior School or Individual Pupil Profile Plans (IPPP’s) in the Senior School are drawn up for students receiving a higher level of SEND support. Students must be central to all decision making and pupils are encouraged to take an active role in drawing up personal targets, identifying their learning styles, discussing useful strategies and learning aids and evaluating progress. They are encouraged to actively identify what is important to them at each stage of education and to look ahead to the future.

Thornton College works in partnership with parents and targets are regularly discussed with parents by the class teacher and/or Head of Learning Development and targets are reviewed at least twice yearly. A copy of all IEPs and IPPPs is kept on the school data base with hard copies available in the Learning Support files and in the student files.

If progress rates remain inadequate, advice may be sought from external agencies regarding strategies to best meet the specific needs of a student. This will only be undertaken with parental permission and may include referral to Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Health and Social Services, Child and Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Special Educational Needs and Disability Support Services.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

Thornton College embraces a whole school ethos that emphasises mental health and wellbeing with all pupils treating each other with understanding and respect in a supportive and nurturing environment. As part of our Emotional Wellbeing programme for all students, we have a wellbeing service working alongside our pastoral team, offering a confidential 1-1 service. Concerns from staff about a student’s emotional wellbeing are communicated to the relevant Head of Year and / or DSL who will talk with parents and students about the support that is available. The Assistant Head in charge of Safeguarding (and DSL) oversees all SEMH needs and liaises with the SENCO.

Examination Access Arrangements

Some students will be able to access support and/or adjustments for formal exams such as GCSE’s and ‘A’ levels through applying for Exam Access Arrangements from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). Access assessments and arrangements will be carried out by the Head of Learning Development, who holds the appropriate and approved qualification.

Evidence of need is collected and collated throughout KS3, 4 and 5, with formal testing and submission of an application early in KS4/5. Students can be referred for support or exam access arrangements by teaching staff for consideration by the SEND department using the SEND referral form.