

THORNTON

IN PICTURES

“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”

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

WE BELIEVE THAT A HAPPY CHILD IS A SUCCESSFUL CHILD...

We pride ourselves in ensuring that outstanding pastoral care and our core values of respect and tolerance of others sit alongside excellent teaching both inside and outside the classroom. Thornton is a dynamic, vibrant environment where we value academic success and co-curricular achievement equally.

Students are encouraged to embrace the unexpected and to become resilient, self-reliant young people determined to excel in whatever they do and destined to make a positive contribution to the society in which they live. Small class sizes provide a kind and supportive community where students are encouraged to develop a love of learning.

At Thornton academic results are always a delight and we are proud of consistently impressive performances. This is only possible within an environment where every child matters as an individual and teaching is of the highest quality.

We hope this book will give you an insight into what life at Thornton would be like for your child. A warm welcome awaits.





“THE THORNTON WAY”

- it isn't said, it's a feeling. The calm, the sense of learning with a purpose. The care we show to one another. It is the warmth that sets us apart.





“A HAPPY CHILD
IS A SUCCESSFUL
CHILD”



Students learn best when they are in an environment where they feel at ease and they are happy.

Everything we do at Thornton focuses on the happiness and welfare of the children in our care. Of course, we can claim academic excellence: we are one of the top performing non-selective schools in the UK, but few schools can match the feeling of community and happiness.







“BRINGING
LESSONS
ALIVE”





Bringing lessons alive is important to our success as teachers.

Working on projects, like this combined History and Art venture, allows pupils to study a topic in greater depth and ensures that lessons are challenging and diverse - appealing to all types of learner. In this case we were looking at the First World War. Creating our own carpet of poppies to lay in the church gave us all time to reflect on what we had been discussing and re-enacting in the classroom.

Opposite: Making mathematics fun in the playground.



History lessons are legendary in every way! One of our preferred ways to teach historical events is through re-enactment and groups are often seen adorned in robes or holding props in The Red Hall (a perfect historical setting). In these photos, the Black Death - a fascinating area of the History curriculum - is brought alive by home-made pustules, plague masks and demonstrations by plague doctors!





A VERY 'CREATIVE CURRICULUM'

Girls in Years 1 to 4 learn about the world in which we live through a topic based programme called 'Creative Curriculum'. On two afternoons a week, out come the creative minds of the teachers and the students to learn more about a wide variety of topics such as The Romans, Inventors, The Egyptians, Celebrations to name but a few. Embracing IT, Art, History and Geography this very hands-on approach to learning enables all girls of every ability to access information at a level which stretches and challenges them in an exciting way. The girls just love these lessons - so do the staff!



What could taste better than an apple crumble made from apples you picked and peeled yourself?



NEVER A DULL MOMENT!

A 'volcanic' Geography lesson where girls acted out the steps associated with an eruption to the tune of Kung Foo Fighting! Greater demands from the curriculum may well have seen the erosion of play and fun from many classrooms but this isn't true of the experience of Thornton girls. It is important to us that they *want* to learn.

“SELF RESPECT
& TOLERANCE OF
DIFFERENCE”



The ethos encompassing Christian values of self-respect and tolerance of difference, means that everyone is equal here. Equal doesn't have to mean the same - it means equally important.

We are a Catholic school, and we are proud of this, but we welcome all in and learn from each other. It is important to have a community of all Christian denominations, members with different faiths and with no faith. We have to know and love one another as people. You cannot have a prejudice against those you understand and love.

With privilege comes responsibility, and service to others outside our immediate community is part and parcel of school life. We encourage all to live their lives by showing compassion, patience, understanding, forgiveness, humility and kindness. This makes Thornton a very happy school to which to belong.



“CREATING
A SENSE OF
WONDER”





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By creating a sense of wonder we can make your child's introduction to learning so exciting.

Our team of professional nursery staff ensure that every child is immersed in learning experiences that challenge their thinking and ignite a love of exploration and learning. Woodland walks, cookery, ballet, French, library time and a host of other regular pursuits enhance the play and craft activities and excite their young minds.



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“WE CALL
IT UPSTAIRS”



It's the camaraderie...

the opportunity to have not one but two families (the real one and us!); to be able to play tennis until lights out and to enjoy a pool party (on a school night!); to have staff on-hand to give both pastoral and academic support, encouragement and advice; to live with peers from other countries and cultures whose different points of view about the world develop tolerance and a deeper understanding of society which, together, make a boarding experience so special.

The Manor House and grounds at Thornton are a second home. In many schools, students will walk or be bussed back to separate boarding houses. At Thornton, we do things differently - the girls actually go upstairs to bed! This means that, until bedtime, all the school's facilities are available including the dance studio, sports hall, tennis courts, swimming pool, music practice rooms, the art room, library and kitchen! When you board there is no end to the day and no end to the opportunities.





The girls have to interact with one-another, face-to-face. Not only via iPads and social media but in person. They have real friends, friends they can engage with, share great times with and with whom they learn to get along better.



IT HAS A MAGICAL FEEL
FRIENDSHIPS MADE
DO LAST A LIFETIME &



“TEACHING
EXCELLENCE
BEGINS IN THE
CLASSROOM...”





This is a school with inspirational teaching and a supporting and caring learning environment, where children are encouraged to take risks, feel that they can make mistakes and learn to experience the thrill of success.

Teachers are passionate about their subjects. Scholarly habits, independent thinking and discussion are central to the students' learning experience. A love of learning doesn't end for the students or the teachers and all strive for academic excellence. We are an independent school which allows us the freedom to take teaching way beyond the constraints of the national curriculum. It allows teachers to share their enthusiasm and teach topics in far greater depth.





THE SCHOOL HAS A **STRONG WORK ETHIC**. MY DAUGHTER WORKS HARD AND SHE SEEMS TO ENJOY IT! SHE KNOWS WHAT IS EXPECTED OF HER AND THE TEACHERS KNOW HOW TO GET **THE BEST FROM HER**.

YEAR 8 PARENT







Photography and Politics to Psychology, we offer a comprehensive range of GCSE, A level and Vocational options. Thornton is about the individual and we endeavour to enable every student to follow the path of their choice - matching their talents with what they enjoy.

“...BUT IT
DOESN'T
END THERE”

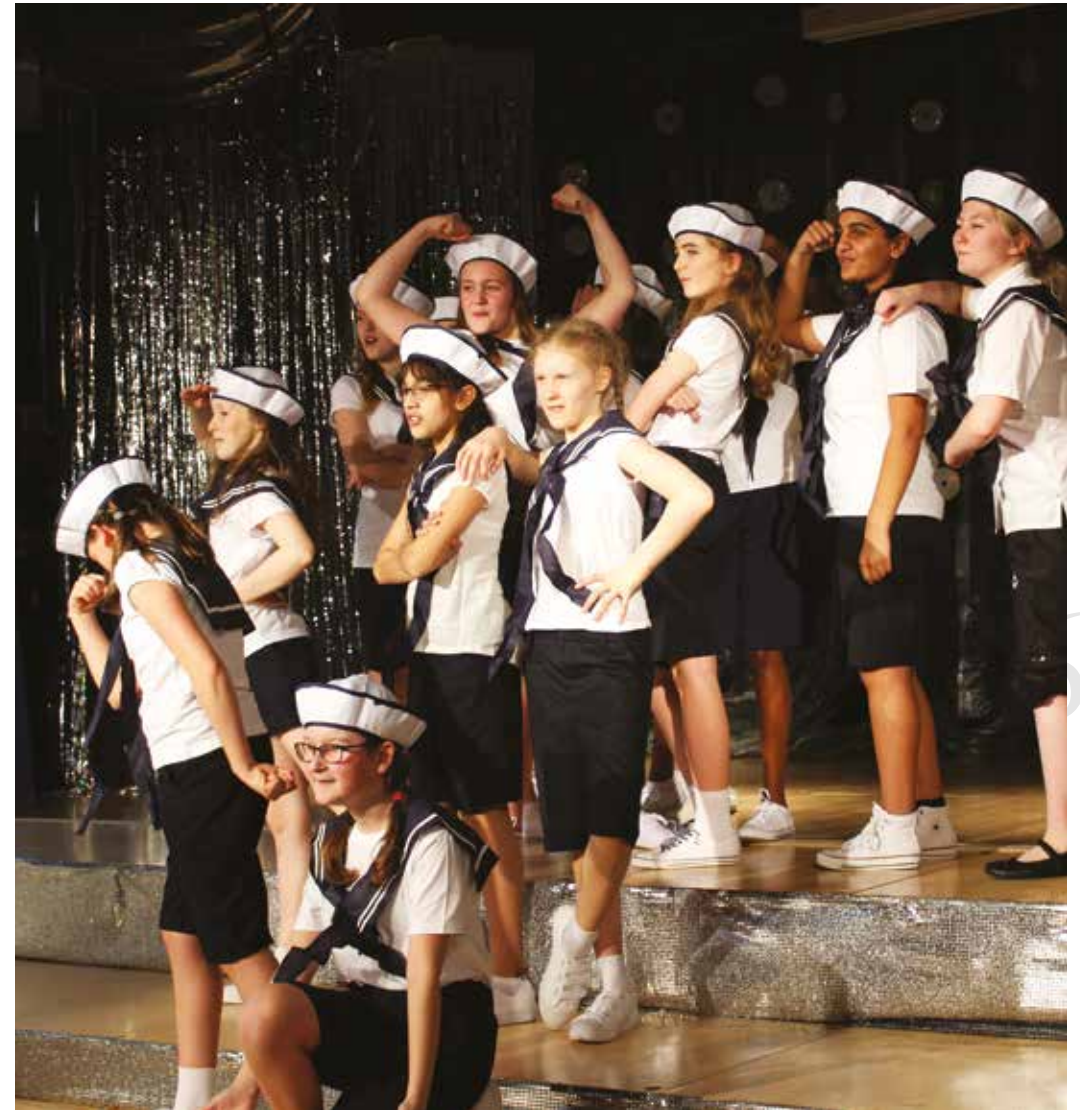




There are so many opportunities in which to join in. This wider experience allows the students to discover where they excel and unearth talents and skills they had never imagined.

Regular clubs and societies are enhanced by our creative and performing arts events, musicals and drama productions and the numerous charity activities held throughout the year. We are developing leadership skills, resilience and commitment every day, but the DofE expeditions and World Challenge expeditions really put these to the test. At Thornton it's about meeting challenges with confidence. We don't allow students to avoid challenges - we support these and let them encounter for themselves the sweet sense of triumph over adversity.





Music at Thornton offers an enriching environment in which all young musicians can develop and thrive. With an impressive number of musical initiatives and co-curricular activities on offer, it is no surprise that we have gained regular awards and accolades at the Milton Keynes Music Festival and are invited to perform with professional choirs. The Department enjoys a fine reputation and offers a wide range of instrumental lessons, with over half of students learning at least one instrument. Consequently, school concerts are varied, ranging from chamber music to full orchestral performances - we even have a gospel choir!



OUR IMMEDIATE CLASSROOM IS A 25 ACRE SITE

Our beautiful learning environment provides endless opportunities to make theoretical concepts real and relevant, whether it is using a clinometer to measure the height of the church or our tallest tree, bringing trigonometry to life or exploring nature through the seasons and watching an insect's life-cycle take place before our very eyes. These are just a few of the benefits of having this amazing resource on our doorstep.

“JUST THE 25 ACRES”

Mr Brunton looks after every tree, shrub, flower and blade of grass (both real and astro!) on the school's twenty-five acre estate. This includes the orchard, the walled garden, the woodland, the playing fields and grass-based sports facilities.

Come rain or shine he is planting, weeding, trimming, mowing and nurturing. He lets the teachers know when the apples are ready for scrumping (the students collect them personally for their cookery lessons), when the bluebells are starting to show and has also been known to craft wonderful log houses for the woodland creatures - creating perfect bug hunting territory.

He is the head (and only) gardener!

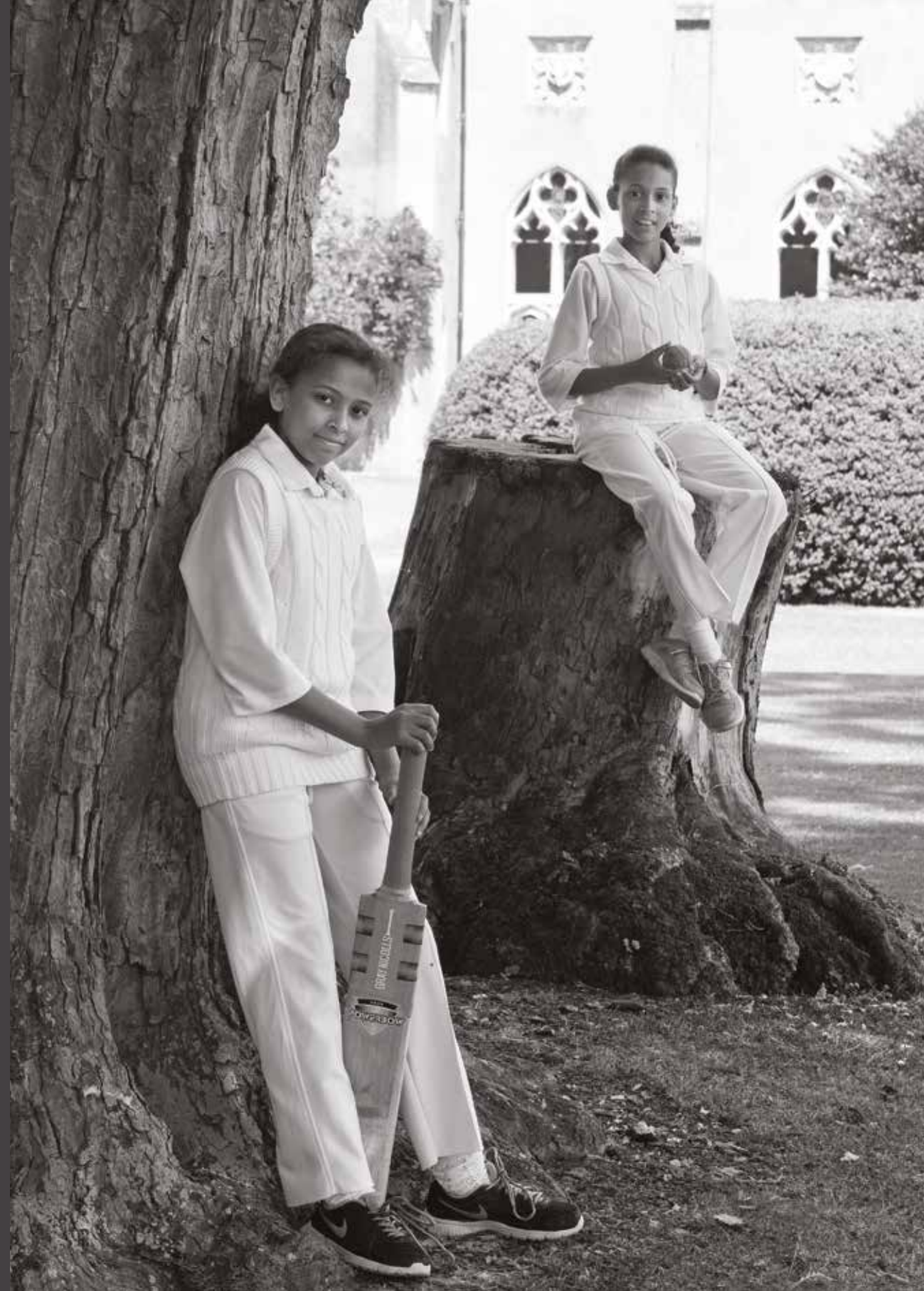
Pictured: Mr Brunton outside Rose Cottage.



WE INSPIRE THEM TO A POINT WHERE WE
CAN STAND BACK & WATCH THEM EXCEL



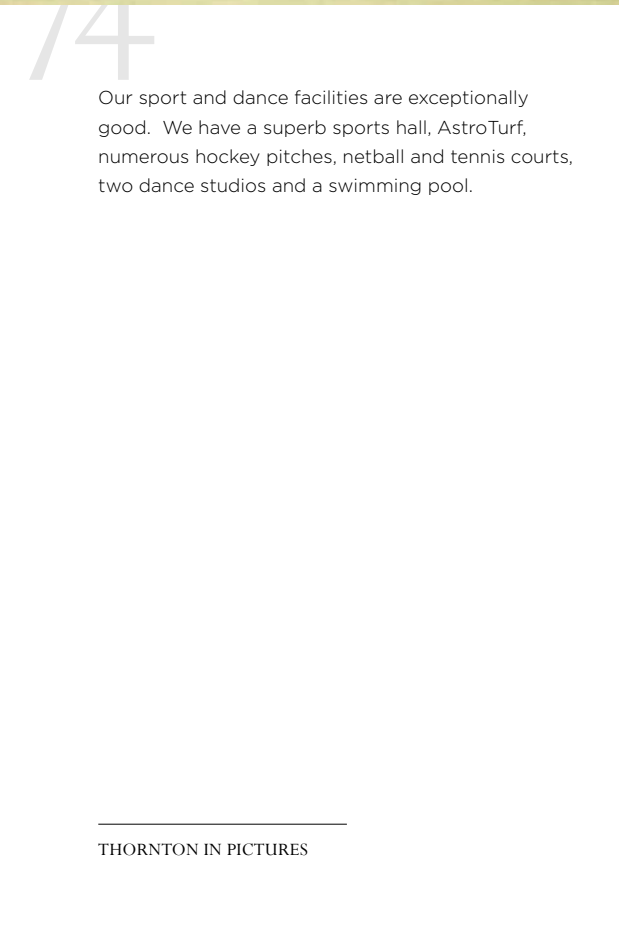
“HEALTHY BODY,
HEALTHY MIND”





There is sport for all.

Our young and experienced team of Games staff train and compete themselves in a wide variety of sports, passing their passion on to their students. Your daughter will be encouraged to participate in team and individual sports, representing her school and/or her House. We field as many teams as we can in competitive sport to provide girls with a wide range of abilities every possible opportunity to compete.



Our sport and dance facilities are exceptionally good. We have a superb sports hall, AstroTurf, numerous hockey pitches, netball and tennis courts, two dance studios and a swimming pool.

Mother Lourdes departs with
pupils on an excursion ca. 1928.



“EDUCATIONAL
EXCELLENCE
SINCE 1917”



In the beginning the school prepared girls, mostly daughters of the landed gentry, for matriculation, many going on to London and Oxbridge universities.

The Sisters of Jesus and Mary were the only staff. They taught, they cooked, they cleaned and they cared for the girls with the mission of the Religious Order's Foundress, St. Claudine Thévenet, 'to be as mothers to the children' central to all they did. As the number of Sisters declined, the recruitment of lay staff (not part of a religious order) increased. Members of the Sisters of Jesus and Mary are still very much involved in the Governance of the school but few teach.

The school occupies the former Manor House of Thornton. The Manor dates back to the 11th Century and is mentioned in the Domesday Book, but most of the House still in use today is part of a mid 14th Century development. Three families, Cavendish, Ingleton and Tyrell predominantly owned the Manor prior to the Sisters' purchase in 1917. It is these families which give their names to our school Houses.

The School has expanded significantly and each decade has seen major developments. Most recently, in 2010 the award winning Science and Preparatory Classroom block was opened. The Performing Arts Suite was completed in 2008 and the Pre-Preparatory department was built in 2002. A brand new Sixth Form opened in 2016.



DESIGN: WWW.MERCERDESIGN.CO.UK



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