



## **Admissions Policy**

## 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’***

The Catholic character and ethos of Thornton College, Convent of Jesus and Mary, lies at the heart of our existence as a school.

### Aims of this Policy

- To ensure compliance with the school’s charitable purpose as a Roman Catholic Foundation and girls’ school.
- To set selection criteria and procedures that are consistent with this charitable purpose and fair to applicants.
- To identify applicants whose needs can be met by the school and who will benefit from the ethos and standards set by the school community.
- To ensure our admissions process provides equal access and opportunity to the curriculum in line with the School’s Accessibility Policy.

### Selection

Admission preconditions:

- The applicant and her parents / guardians are in sympathy with the Roman Catholic ethos of the school and aware of the religious practices including Masses, compulsory R.E. lessons and assemblies, which take place in the school. (Applicants of all Christian denominations and from other faiths are welcomed at Thornton College. We recognise that our students come from many different faith traditions. We enable students to reflect on their own faith and to develop a deeper understanding and respect for other faiths.)
- The applicant’s learning needs can be met within the classroom.
- Meeting the applicant’s needs will not be detrimental to the learning of the applicant and/or other students in the group
- The applicant has a successful day visit / overnight stay, where possible. If the applicant is an international student or if the school is closed due to school holidays or following guidance from Government a visit may not be possible. In this situation, the school will provide a virtual online tour, (if requested) and application process.
- The present school reports and references indicate satisfactory attitudes and conduct on the part of the applicant.
- Fees (if applicable) at the present school have been paid.
- Parents / guardians agree that they and their daughter will abide by all school rules and the school’s strict dress code.

- Parents need to discuss any special needs or disabilities with the Admissions team in order to support their experience of the Admissions process and to ensure that the school can meet the appropriate needs of the student. This is in line with the School's Accessibility Policy which can be provided on request. If any special needs or learning requirements have not been shared by prospective families during the admissions process (registration form and meeting with the Head Teacher), the school reserves the right to reverse any admission decision if the school is unable to meet the student's needs.
- If the school assesses, within the admissions process or at any point in the student's education, that despite reasonable accommodation a student is unable to benefit sufficiently from the educational opportunities offered, the school may have to recommend that the student find a more suitable education setting to meet their needs.
- It is a condition of your child joining the School that you complete and submit to the School a Medical Form in respect of your child, prior to your child starting the school.
- Thornton College is committed to single-sex education for girls. Admissions to Thornton College is based on the prospective student's legal sex as recorded on their birth certificate. Further details of the approach Thornton College will take in different situations are set out below:
  - Applications from students who are legally female but who identify as trans or non-binary will be carefully considered on a case-by-case basis. Single-sex schools present a particular context for transgender students. There may be cultural challenges involved in a trans student who does not identify as a girl attending a school which deliberately tailors its ethos and educational approach to cater specifically for girls.
  - Thornton College is able to operate a single-sex admissions policy, without breaching the Equality Act 2010 on the basis of an exemption relating to biological sex. Thornton College believes that an admissions policy based on gender identity rather than the legal sex recorded on a student's birth certificate would jeopardise the status of Thornton College as a single-sex school under the act. For this reason, Thornton College does not accept applications from students who are legally male. We will, however, continue to monitor the legal interpretation of this exemption.

### **External Sixth Form entry requirements**

- Advanced level work is demanding and requires a great deal of commitment and individual study. Students need to be aware that a strong performance at GCSE is advisable to start an A level course in order to cope with the difficulty and volume of work. In accordance with the Thornton College ethos, however, academic ability will not be the only part of the selection process. Entry requirements for each subject will be detailed accordingly as a guideline (usually a grade 6 in the subject studied).
- External applicants must be formally registered to be included in the process.
- External applicants should submit a registration form for Sixth Form entry. All candidates will then be invited for an interview with the Headteacher / Head of Sixth

Form.

**The preference factors in order of priority are:**

- The applicant is a practising Roman Catholic and/or has attended a Roman Catholic preparatory or primary school.
- There is a sibling in the school.
- The applicant would benefit from the education offered by Thornton College.
- The applicant's mother is a former student of Thornton College.

The applicant's race, nationality or ethnic or national origin, area of residence or socio-economic group will not be taken into account in the assessment of a student for admission.

Treating every student as an individual is important to us, and we welcome students with physical disabilities, provided that our site meets their individual needs.

We advise parents / guardians of students with physical disabilities, to discuss their daughter's requirements with the Headteacher before she comes for a day visit, so that we can make adequate provision for her. Parents / guardians should provide a copy of a medical report to support their request, for example, for large print material or other special arrangements.

**The offer of a place from Reception to Year 13**

The parents / guardians of each applicant will be informed within two weeks of their Head Teacher interview whether a place is being offered or not. The school will not be obliged to state its reasons for failing to admit an applicant. Once offered a place at Thornton College, it is assumed that the student will remain at the college until the end of Year 13, with an automatic transition into sixth form studies post GCSE. Existing Year 11 students will submit an option block form in Year 11 indicating their preferred subject choices. Individual meetings will be held with the Headteacher / Head of Sixth Form. External applications for entry into Thornton College at Sixth Form, will be conditional on satisfactory performance at GCSE and a supporting reference from the present school, which may include satisfactory predicted grades. Candidates applying for Sixth Form entry will be informed whether they have been offered a place following an interview.

For Sixth Form options choices, access depends on satisfactory performance at GCSE. Staff at Thornton advise students of their suitability for any subject choice, particularly those which are new introductions to the student at A Level such as Economics, Government & Politics and Psychology. The Sixth Form team will work closely with each student to ensure that the pathway they follow at Thornton College (A levels, BTEC, mixture of both) is accessible to the student and suitable for the career that they wish to follow.

**Waiting Lists**

- If no places are available, parents / guardians may, if they wish, place their daughter's name on the waiting list for the school.

- The school cannot guarantee when a place may become available.
- The waiting list is determined according to the Governing Body's priority of admission criteria.
- In the event of an application being received for a student who has a higher priority, as determined by the admissions criteria, this applicant will be placed on the waiting list, above those with a lower priority.

#### **Appeals against a decision to refuse admission**

- If an application for admission is unsuccessful, parents have the right of appeal. Such appeals against non-admission will be heard by a Governors' Appeals Panel.
- Parents who intend to make an appeal against the Headteacher's decision to refuse admission must submit a notice of appeal within 21 days of receiving the refusal letter to:

The Clerk to the Governors  
Admission Appeal  
Thornton College  
Convent of Jesus and Mary  
Thornton  
Milton Keynes  
MK17 0HJ

**Normally, appeal hearings will be held within six weeks of the closing date for receiving the notice of appeal.**

#### **Admissions Register (for school use)**

- On taking up a place at the school, an entry is made in the Admissions Register.
- The Admissions Register is held in both paper (the paper copy is not handwritten) and electronic format.
- The person responsible for the administration of the Admissions Register is The Admissions Manager.
- The following items are recorded in the register
  - Full Name
  - Gender
  - Name and address of all parents/guardian with an indication of the parent/guardian with whom the student normally resides
  - Date of Birth

- Date of Admission / Readmission
  - Name and address of previous school
  - Whether the student is a day or boarding student
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- Copies of the Admissions Register are held at the school for a minimum of 3 years
  - The Admissions Register allows for the inclusion / deletion from the register and is done in line with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
  - The Admissions Register is printed from the electronic format once a month and backed up once a month.