



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’

GENERAL

Thornton College is an independent School for girls from ages 3 to 19. Deciding on the right School for your child is very important, and we believe that a personal visit is invaluable. We very much hope that you and your child will visit Thornton College. We usually hold a number of open events, one in the autumn term and one in the spring term, which give a general introduction to the School and we hold Meet the Head mornings throughout the year. Details are published on our website. We are also very happy to welcome prospective parents and their children at other times. Please contact the School’s admission team, on 01280 812610 option 3 or email admissions@thorntoncollege.com to arrange a visit. If it is not possible to hold open events or arrange School visits because of circumstances beyond the School’s control, then the School publishes on its website the alternative arrangements in place.

THE ENTRY PROCEDURE

Thornton College is a non-selective School. The admissions process is set to identify students who are able to benefit from our balanced and well-rounded education and to make a positive contribution towards the life of the School.

The usual points of entry for the Prep School are from three years of age/EYFS, and at seven years of age/Year 3. The usual points of entry for the Senior School and Sixth Form are from 11+/Year 7, 13+/Year 9 and 16+/Year 12. The School may also have occasional places at other ages and at different points of the year. Please contact the admissions team for details.

It is recommended that applicants for admission register by the year preceding the desired year of admission to secure a place at the School. The School’s Registration Form is available from the admissions team.

The offer of a place in EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage)

We are legally bound to meet the requirements of the Ofsted regulations and the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework published by the Department of Education. The Independent Schools Inspectorate is approved to inspect Early Years registered settings in independent schools on behalf of Ofsted.

Applicants can be admitted from the age of 3 years old, and this will be dependent on a successful taster morning at the School, followed by an interview with the applicant, the applicant’s parents and the Headteacher.

The Pre-Reception class is available 8am – 6pm Monday to Friday (term time only), and Eligible Working parent funding is accepted for 30 hours. During funding sessions there will be an additional charge of £70 per term, per day to cover consumables; to include a hot lunch. We require students to attend a minimum of three mornings per week as part of our efforts to ensure all girls are Reception ready by the September.

EQUAL TREATMENT

Thornton College is committed to equal treatment for all and it welcomes applications from candidates with a diverse range of backgrounds as this enriches our community. We are mindful of our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 during the Admissions Process.

INFORMATION SHARING

We require parents to inform the School at the outset of the application process about any needs which their child may have or any other significant matters which the School should reasonably be aware of because, for example, it would necessitate tailored provision and/or would materially impact on their child's attendance at School and/or ability to engage in day-to-day School life. The School may wish to discuss these matters with the parents and/or require some further information.

Parents must ensure that information provided is accurate, complete and not misleading and relevant details and information (or changes to them) are shared in a timely and transparent manner.

A failure to disclose relevant information and/or the provision of inaccurate, incomplete or misleading information may - in some cases - lead to the withdrawal of an offer or termination of the School's Parent Contract.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Thornton College does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. The School welcomes students with disabilities and/or special educational needs, provided we can reasonably offer them any support that they require and cater for any additional needs and that our site can accommodate them. We aim to ensure that all our students, including those with disabilities and/or special educational needs, are provided with a safe and inclusive environment in which to learn.

Our policy is to apply our admission criteria to all potential students. We require parents of children with special educational needs, disabilities or allergies (suspected and diagnosed) to discuss their child's needs with the School at the outset of the admissions process so that we can consider and make – to the extent reasonable – appropriate provision for them.

Parents are required to provide with the Registration Form full details of all relevant information about their child, including any reports (including any educational psychologist reports, medical reports or assessments or other relevant expert third party reports), materials or information about their child's needs (educational, health or otherwise), and this may include any final or draft EHC needs assessments (or applications for a needs assessment) or final or draft EHC Plans (or applications for an EHC Plan). This is so that the School can assess their child's needs and consult with parents about any adjustments which can reasonably be made and so that the School can ensure, for example, that their child will be able to meaningfully access the education offered and that we are able to ensure their health and safety, and the health and safety of others. This information should be provided prior to the admissions assessment process.

Where parents of a prospective pupil feel their child requires adjustments (in respect of the admissions process and/or with regards to education at School and participation in School

life in the event they are offered and take up a place at the School), parents should raise these with the School at the outset and the School may – depending on the circumstances - require some further information from parents or request further assessments in respect of the needs identified and will discuss with parents (and their child's medical advisers, if appropriate) the adjustments proposed and whether they can reasonably be made for the child if they were to become a pupil at the School.

There may be circumstances in which we are not able to offer a place for reasons relating to a child's special educational needs and/or disability. For example, if, despite reasonable adjustments (in the case of disability), we feel that a prospective pupil is not going to be able to meaningfully access the education offered, or that their health and safety or those of other students or staff may be put at risk, or where the School cannot reasonably accommodate the adjustments required or reasonably provide the nature or level of the support required.

Sometimes, the situation of students with disabilities and/or special educational needs changes between an offer of a place being made and the pupil starting at the School. The School requires parents to be pro-active in updating the School as to any changes which mean that the information provided during the application process is out of date or incomplete. In the vast majority of cases, this will not affect a pupil's place at the School. However, the School may, in exceptional circumstances, need to reconsider the offer of a place if a pupil's circumstances change materially. It is in the pupil's interests that any such decision is made as early as possible to avoid any disruption to their education, so parents are urged to be forthcoming and transparent in their communications with the School about any material change to their child's circumstances.

In the event your child has an EHC needs assessment or EHCP (whether at the application stage, draft or final form) it is important that these (and the applicable supporting documentation, e.g. educational psychologist reports or other expert assessments) are shared promptly with the School and that the School is kept up to date with respect to any relevant decisions of the Local Authority or changes in provision.

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Thornton College is looking for well-rounded students with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word, with interests that stretch beyond the confines of the academic curriculum. The School has strong traditions in music, drama, art, debating, community activities and sport. There are many co-curricular activities, all of which are important in developing a well-balanced, confident individual.

No specific preparation for our baseline assessment is needed; all candidates start on an equal footing, with identical opportunities to display their academic aptitude.

Assessment for Early Years is based on observing informal play in small groups.

All other candidates for entry Year 1 to Year 12 entry sit a baseline assessment involving verbal reasoning, non-verbal reasoning, spatial and quantitative questions, which are designed for their age group.

Our offer of places into Year 12 is conditional upon a candidate achieving grades that are suitable for the course they propose to take at Sixth Form. Decisions are made on an individual basis, and families should contact the Head of Sixth Form for further information.

All candidates are interviewed by our Headteacher as part of our assessment process for each age group.

References will be sought from the Head of a candidate's current School as part of the assessment process.

SIBLING POLICY

Most siblings join us at Thornton College. However, admission is not automatic and there may be occasions where the School judges that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Thornton College offers a variety of scholarships each year for excellence in:

1. Academic subjects
2. Drama
3. Music
4. Sport

A scholarship may be withdrawn in accordance with the terms upon which such award is made or in accordance with the School's Parent Contract.

Purpose of Scholarships

Scholarships are designed to reward excellence and to celebrate exceptional talent. In recognition of this achievement, the scholar is offered a reduction in the fees throughout their time at Thornton College. Parents are asked to indicate on the Registration Form whether they are interested in applying for a scholarship. Details of the arrangements will be sent to all who express an interest.

We encourage parents of scholars who anticipate that they will experience difficulty in meeting the balance of the tuition fees to apply (at the same as registration of their child) for one of the School's Means Tested Awards described below.

Academic Scholarships

Candidates who apply for academic scholarships are selected from the most outstanding performers in the baseline assessment.

Scholarships are held for the duration of a pupil's time at the School, provided their conduct is satisfactory. Further scholarships are available, and candidates are encouraged to apply for entry to Year 12/Sixth Form.

All candidates will be interviewed by the Headteacher in addition to sitting the baseline assessment which involves verbal reasoning, non-verbal reasoning, quantitative and spatial questions.

Music Scholarships

Music scholarships are awarded to outstanding musicians who play any instrument or sing with exceptional ability. Candidates must obtain a specialist reference from their current head of music in addition to a reference from their current Head. They will be required to perform two short pieces on two instruments, together with aural and practical tests. There will also be interviews with the Director of Music. They will be expected to demonstrate enthusiasm for and commitment to music and will be expected to make a contribution to the musical life of the school throughout their time at the School.

Music scholarships will only be awarded to students who have passed the School's entrance assessment.

Sports Scholarships

Sports scholarships are awarded to outstanding, all-round students who have achieved a high level of competence in two or more sports. They will be assessed and interviewed by the Director of Sport and will be expected to demonstrate qualities of leadership and team play of a very high order. Candidates will be required to provide a specialist reference from their current director of sport. They will be expected to make a contribution to the sporting life of the School throughout their time at the School.

Sports scholarships will only be awarded to students who have passed the School's entrance assessment.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Any applicant for a place at the School, including those who apply for a Means Tested Award and overseas applicants, may at the discretion of the School be required to provide additional financial information and/or undergo checks to confirm that they are able to pay the School's fees (or any percentage of the fees still payable if an award or scholarship is granted). A small number of Means Tested Awards may be available each year, dependent on applicants, for scholars who are unable to meet the demand of school fees.

OVERSEAS APPLICANTS

We welcome overseas students, who can study at Thornton College as a termly boarder provided that they have the legal right to enter, live and study in the UK and they have a relative or Educational Guardian living in the UK, more details of which are contained in the [Guardianship Policy](#).

FLUENCY IN ENGLISH

In order to cope with the academic and social demands of Thornton College, we advise that students are proficient English speakers. The level of English required will be dependent on the year group and curriculum demands. Tuition in English as an Additional Language (EAL) can be arranged at the parent's expense.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Thornton College welcomes applications from prospective students of all faiths and of no faith.

Although Thornton College has Catholic roots, the School does not select for entry on the basis of religious belief, and it offers the opportunity for Christians, Jews, Hindus, Muslims etc to practise their own faiths.

However, parents should be aware that there is compulsory Whole School Mass each term and that all students are expected to attend.

SCHOOL'S TERMS & CONDITIONS (PARENT CONTRACT)

The terms upon which the School educates each pupil are set out in the School's Parent Contract which will be made available to parents as part of the admissions process.

COMPLAINTS

The School's Complaints Procedure is on the School's website and can be sent to prospective parents on request. The Complaints Procedure is not available for use by prospective parents.

RECORDS AND REVIEW

Applicants' details will be held on file with due regard to data protection legislation. Please see the School's Privacy Notice for further information about how the School collects, uses and processes personal data.

The School will not hold the personal data of you or your child for longer than is necessary for a lawful purpose and in accordance with GDPR Policy and our Privacy Notice Policy.