



Parent Handbook
Thomson House School

THOMSON HOUSE SCHOOL

Dear Parents/Carers,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to Thomson House School.

I hope you will find this Parent Handbook helpful for the forthcoming academic year. It contains key information on term dates, dress code, daily procedures, etc. You may also look for similarly important information on our website www.thomsonhouseschool.org and our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). You will be provided with a parent log in for the VLE once your child starts at school.

In addition, the Thomson House School Bulletin and Friends of Thomson House (FOTH) newsletters will be sent out to families weekly on Fridays. They include important diary dates and school/staff/pupil news and information.

I am sure your child will thrive at Thomson House. We work hard to ensure that children are happy, having fun and learning – with your help THS children will develop into confident, resilient, curious and empathetic young people. I look forward to working with you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Letch". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined.

Mrs Amanda Letch
Head Teacher

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THE ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

Balancing tradition and innovation, Thomson House aims to cultivate the habits of excellence and wellbeing, so that its pupils may flourish, achieve academic success and lead fulfilling lives. To achieve this, Thomson House anchors its curriculum on fostering three fundamental qualities: curiosity, kindness and courage.

Curiosity

Thomson House aims to kindle the spark of curiosity in its pupils. Our teachers are passionate about learning and they are first-class professionals. They will foster inquisitiveness and empower our pupils with the skills to explore the world around them. With rigorous foundations in English, Mathematics and Science, our pupils will be disciplined and creative thinkers and confident communicators. Thomson House pupils aim to excel in all areas of school life.

Kindness

Thomson House passionately believes that its pupils' wellbeing is inextricably linked to that of their communities. Therefore, it aims to promote an ethos of kindness and community service throughout the school: Thomson House is dedicated to a green agenda - including a walk to school programme, promotion of healthy eating, recycling and sustainability and using bikes and scooters. Through charitable fund-raising we support those less fortunate than ourselves. The Richmond Award Scheme, only available at Thomson House, encourages children to support their community in school and out of school.

Courage

Thomson House believes that courage is a fundamental quality in empowering pupils to flourish. Our pupils are confident and resilient, with an utter belief in the power of effort. They have the courage to seize opportunities, to fail and pick themselves up. To foster this, we will build a culture of high expectations, offer three hours a week for Physical Education, an extensive enrichment programme, a first class Wellbeing Programme and place a strong emphasis on public performance.

STAFFING

Head Teacher: Mrs Amanda Letch, amanda.letch@thomsonhouseschool.org

Deputy Head Teacher: Mr Sam Birnage, sam.birnage@thomsonhouseschool.org

Head of Middle School: Miss Victoria Amor,
victoria.amor@thomsonhouseschool.org

Head of Lower School: Mrs Jackie Sanders,
jackie.sanders@thomsonhouseschool.org

Head of Inclusion: Mrs Hannah Hannington,
hannah.hannington@thomsonhouseschool.org

Upper School - Year 4 Teaching Team

Teachers:

Ms Kate Street, kate.street@thomsonhouseschool.org

Mr Chris Shipp, Chris.Shipp@thomsonhouseschool.org

Assistant teachers:

Mrs Eram Sheikh, Eram.sheikh@thomsonhouseschool.org

Mrs Monica Dimitroff, Monica.Dimitroff@thomsonhouseschool.org

SEND Teacher (Inclusion): Mrs Hanne Winkler,
hanne.winkler@thomsonhouseschool.org

Music Teacher: Mrs Isabel Saunders,
isabel.saunders@thomsonhouseschool.org

PE Teacher: Mrs Dawn Cheetham, dawn.cheetham@thomsonhouseschool.org

Support Staff

School Business Manager: Mrs Cathy Tilley,
cathy.tilley@thomsonhouseschool.org

School Office Manager: Miss Vicky Mitchell,
vicky.mitchell@thomsonhouseschool.org

Admin Assistant: Mrs Susan Holmes,
susan.holmes@thomsonhouseschool.org

Admin Assistant: Mrs Anna Feldmar,
anna.feldmar@thomsonhouseschool.org

TERM DATES

Autumn Term 2017

Autumn Term 2017 starts on Wednesday 6th September and ends on Friday 15th December.

Half-term is from Friday 20th October to Monday 30th October, inclusive.

Spring Term 2018

Spring term starts on Wednesday 3rd January 2018 and ends on Thursday 29th March 2018.

Half Term is from Monday 12th February 2018 to Friday 16th February 2018.

Summer Term 2018

Summer Term 2018 starts on Monday 16th April 2018 and ends on Thursday 12th July 2018.

Half Term is from Monday 28th May 2018 to Monday 4th June 2018
(Inclusive)

THE SCHOOL DAY

| | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| 8.20am | Hall doors open for arrival |
| 8.30am | Registration / morning school begins |
| 12.00 – 1.30pm | Lunch for Upper School |
| 4.00pm | Home time |

ARRIVING AND LEAVING

In line with Thomson House School's aim to be a green school, parents are asked to walk, cycle, scooter or use public transport to get their children to and from school each day.

For children in Upper School, the doors to the school hall on Howgate Road will **open at 8.20am**. The children will be greeted at the doors by the Deputy Head Teacher/a member of the Teaching Team. Parents are asked to leave their child at the doors for the child to enter the school hall independently. Please be punctual because if your child comes in late he or she may feel flustered and may miss important information about the day's activities. We are keen to instil values such as punctuality and good manners from day one. Children will come in through the hall and go straight to their classroom.

All school doors will be closed by 8.30am.

If late, please bring your child to the office by using the entrance to the school on Vernon Road where they will be registered and sent to their classroom. Their late arrival will be noted in the child's attendance record.

At the end of the day, doors on Howgate Road will **open at 4pm**. Parents will then enter the school hall and collect their children. We ask children to shake hands with their teachers, make eye contact and say goodbye. Again, please be punctual as children can become anxious when parents arrive late.

If children are to be collected by a different adult than their normal arrangement, please let a member of the teaching team know in advance and avoid making changes during the day if possible. If this is unavoidable, please call or email the school office in good time. There is also a diary in the school office where you can write down the details ahead of time.

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR A NEW SCHOOL

The start of a new school is an exciting but also quite daunting time. Preparation will help your child feel safe, secure and ready to take on new challenges.

Here are a few tips to prepare your child for a new school:

- Be open with them about the change, show them the school website and encourage them to ask questions;
- Be positive about the changes but listen to their concerns and tell them that all the adults will help them if they are unsure or worried;
- Encourage your child to talk to other children and play with them during playtime and lunch time;
- Ask them what they enjoyed about school at the end of each day;
- Help them build resilience if they take time to settle. Explain this is normal and they need to look for the positives and be persistent;
- Tell them to talk to their teacher or a friend if they are finding it difficult to settle in.

Parents will be kept fully informed of how their child is progressing, but we will find it useful to receive feedback from home, so that if there are any concerns they may be quickly resolved.

UNIFORM

Uniform for Year 4 upwards



From Year 4, boys and girls will wear a tie and pale blue shirt. There is an optional blazer that can also be worn. Please contact the school office for information about how to buy the blazer.



Boys

| Autumn/Spring | Summer |
|---|---|
| Grey trousers | As for Autumn/Spring terms, but with grey shorts instead of trousers. |
| V-neck navy jumper or cardigan or slipover with the Thomson House lion emblem at John Lewis | |
| | |
| Navy blue socks | |
| Black shoes | |
| Navy storm coat with Thomson House lion emblem at John Lewis or any navy blue jacket/coat of choosing (optional). | |

Girls

| Autumn/Spring | Summer |
|---|---|
| Navy Skirt | Girls can wear the blue and white checked summer dress. |
| V-neck navy jumper with Thomson House lion emblem at John Lewis | |
|  | |
| Navy blue or white socks | |
| Navy or grey tights | |
| Black shoes | |
| Navy storm coat with Thomson House lion emblem at John Lewis or any navy blue jacket/coat of choosing (optional), | |
|  | |

PE kit

A unisex PE kit comprising a Thomson House navy sweatshirt with lion logo, navy blue tracksuit bottoms or navy PE shorts, sky-blue polo and navy or white trainers will also be needed. Parents will receive the class timetable with PE days at the beginning of September.



Middle School (Yr 2) and upwards will be expected to change into their PE kit at school.



There is also a PE bag which can be used for both PE and swimming. It can also be used when the children go on school trips to carry their packed lunch.



Other parts of the school uniform

Bags



Middle School (Yr2) upwards should have a school backpack.

Shoes

Please make sure your child has proper black school shoes – trainers, boots and ballet shoes are not acceptable for young children's feet on a daily basis.

Hats

There are optional hats for winter and summer.



Where to buy

The uniform is a combination of Thomson House branded items available at John Lewis only. You can see some samples at the Kingston branch. All uniform is purchased online from John Lewis.

[John Lewis](#)

Non branded items are available from most high-street stockists (John Lewis, Primark, Tesco, Marks and Spencer).

A School Uniform Fund, provided on the basis of means assessment (linked to Free School Meals eligibility), will also be available for families. Please contact us about this if you'd like to find out more. There are also second hand uniform sales, run by FOTH (Friends of Thomson House).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Absence from school

It is essential for your child to be in school promptly every day. If your child is unwell with a temperature, vomiting or diarrhoea or has a contagious condition (other than a cough or cold), please let us know as early as possible that day after 8am by calling the School Office or emailing the office (admin@thomsonhouseschool.org). If we have not heard from you by 9am we will call you to verify their absence. This is in the interests of the safeguarding of all children.

If your child becomes unwell during the school day we will call you to collect them and take them home. We cannot look after sick children at school so please ensure we have a contactable person on our records for this eventuality (medical and emergency forms should be filled in by each family).

There is **zero tolerance** at Thomson House for any other reason for absence. **Holidays should not be taken during school term time.** Requests for holidays during term time will **not** be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. Please see our 'Absence From School' policy on our website for further details.

Should a pupil need to leave school before the end of the day to attend an appointment etc. the parents or carers must notify the school in writing – this can be via email or hard copy. The school will respond with confirmation. As far as possible, appointments should be taken outside of school hours, as it is disruptive for children to leave before finishing time.

Wraparound Care

Our wraparound care is provided through Energy-Kidz. They provide care from 7.30am – 6.15pm.

You can book a place for your child on the Energy-kidz website (www.energykidz.com). The cost is on the website. In the mornings, children can be provided with breakfast. In the evenings, children are provided with a snack and will have access to art & crafts activities, games and outdoor activities.

THS Enrichment Fund

The school runs an Enrichment Fund into which parents are asked to donate a regular sum of money. The fund is spent on enriching the curriculum above and beyond the basic curriculum offer.

THS has termly theme weeks when the whole school is off-curriculum and a variety of workshops and visitors are brought into school to engage, motivate and inspire children's learning.

In addition we have other events such as the annual pantomime, theatre groups, West End Musical workshops, farms in school, ducklings hatching, authors, scientists, artists, musicians, sportsmen and women – all have an impact on the children's excitement about learning and provide eye opening opportunities for our pupils!

We ask that parents donate on a regular basis, if they are financially able to do so.

Safeguarding

At Thomson House we take the safety of our children extremely seriously. All staff are trained in safeguarding procedures annually and the children have regular lessons, as part of the well-being programme, on how to keep themselves safe both in and out of school.

In the event of serious safeguarding concerns, the school has the right to contact, with or without parents' consent, SPA (Single Point of Access) at the London Borough of Richmond. SPA may involve other agencies in these discussions. The school will keep parents informed, where appropriate, however please remember that the school will follow guidance given by SPA and the other agencies. All parents are invited to read the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on our website and on the VLE.

As part of the curriculum, the children are all taught road safety rules and safety around the level crossing and Mortlake station. In PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic education) children will be taught about positive relationships, sex, drugs, alcohol and tobacco education.

We expect that ALL parents and children will follow the school's safety messages.

Assemblies

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Monday | Upper School assembly, wellbeing themes, 8.40-9.00am |
| Tuesday | Class assembly at chosen point in school day |
| Wednesday | Singing Assembly |
| Thursday | Upper School Assembly, 3.30 – 3.55pm |
| Friday | Whole school assembly, celebration of success, 8.40am - 9.10am in the Scout Hall. Parents are warmly invited to join this assembly. |

Behaviour

At Thomson House we expect everybody in our community to treat one another with respect and courtesy at all times. You will find a copy of our Behaviour Management Policy on our website which outlines the systems in place for promoting good behaviour, anti-bullying and exclusions.

If you have concerns about another child please inform your class teacher and allow the school to deal with it rather than dealing with it yourself.

Birthday Celebrations

Please let your child's teacher know, in advance, if you are sending birthday 'treats' in to school for sharing. The school has a strict no-nuts policy. You may wish to consider donating books to the school library to celebrate birthdays.

Car parking

The school has no car parking facilities. Parents and children are encouraged to walk, scoot, cycle, or take public transport. We expect you to sign and abide by our pledge which all new parents receive. By signing it you will be indicating your support to our commitment to sustainable travel.

Care of Property

All items of uniform **must be labelled** with the child's name.

Pupils must accept their share of responsibility in keeping classrooms tidy.

Bags and coats should be left neatly in areas provided. Personal items should **not** be brought into school (especially toys/trading cards etc.) unless being used for learning.

Reception pupils will not require cash. If this is exceptionally required, e.g. for a fund-raising cake stall, parents and pupils will be informed in advance.

Please be aware that Thomson House School cannot accept responsibility for the loss or damage of any sums of money or valuables, including mobile phones/iPods etc.

Pupils may not take other people's property without their expressed consent.

Communication between parents and school

Thomson House prides itself on its open-door policy and encourages strong links between staff and parents. A successful learner is a child who is supported in their learning at home as well as at school.

If parents have any concerns about their child at school, they should first speak to the Class Teacher. Informal meetings can usually take place at the end of the school day, but occasionally, due to time constraints and other commitments, it may be necessary to make an appointment.

If parents feel the concern has not been adequately dealt with by the class teacher, then do please ask to see the Deputy Head Teacher.

The Head Teacher is always available (appointments can be made via the office) should you wish to speak directly, although for matters relating to your child, the Class Teacher should be the first point of contact followed by the Deputy Head Teacher.

For administrative matters, the School Office (Office Manager) is the main contact.

The school produces a weekly Bulletin on Fridays containing details of forthcoming events, staff news and any general information regarding the school. It is sent out at the end of the week. It can also be found on the VLE and the website. Most letters and notices are sent home to parents via email. We endeavour to keep paper consumption to a minimum.

Parents are asked to notify the School Office immediately in writing of any change of address, email address or telephone number.

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

Thomson House School has a virtual learning environment which is used by all the key stakeholders in the providing of information and communication – staff; parents; pupils and Governors. Different areas of the VLE are accessible by these different groups. Parents and pupils have log ins which are provided by the school and enable the teaching team and office staff to communicate with the parent and pupil body in a paper-free manner. For example, weekly newsletters from the teacher are posted on the VLE, as is homework, photos of school trips, requests from teachers, information about the week/term ahead. It is vital the parents regularly use the VLE and make it their first port of call for information finding.

School website

Certain information is available on the website. However, please remember that as the website is in the public domain, the information is generic. Parents will find all they need on the VLE.

ParentPay

The school uses a payment system which avoids cash being held in the office. ParentPay allows parents to pay for lunches, school trips, swimming and extra-curricular clubs. You will be provided with a log in for these purposes.

Parents' Evenings

A Parents' evening for each year group is held twice every school year, during the Autumn and Spring terms. You will receive dates of Parents' Evenings in the Bulletin.

At the end of each term we host an open morning/afternoon where parents are invited in to see the children's books, displays and a range of work from the year.

Reports to Parents

Parents will receive one written report at the end of the school year. However, communication between teachers and parents will be ongoing throughout the year, and we encourage informal communication at drop-off and pick-up.

Parents are emailed termly a Target Tracker report showing which statements of learning their child has mastered, achieved or is working towards.

Governing Body

Thomson House School has a Governing Body which is responsible for the strategic development of the school. The Governing Body meets four times throughout the school year. Many Governors link to specific areas of the curriculum (e.g. PE; Literacy; Numeracy; Special Educational Needs; Safeguarding; Early Years) and visit the school regularly for monitoring purposes. The Chair of Governors, Nicolas Tiffou, is available for parents to contact if they feel the school has not dealt with any issue appropriately. Nicolas can be contacted via the School Office.

Parent Governors

The Governing Board of Thomson House includes two parent governors. The parent Governors are elected by the parent body. They can be contacted via the School Office. Parent Governors hold regular 'surgeries' which are open to any parent who wishes to raise any issues or concerns.

FOTH (Friends of Thomson House)

FOTH (Friends of Thomson House) is a voluntary body aiming to engage in activities that support the local community and raise funding for the school as well as external charities. It does not involve itself in curriculum or class issues which should be dealt with directly by individual parents with Class Teachers, Heads of Phase or the Head Teacher.

Further information will be provided at the first FOTH meeting shortly following the start of term. A date will be circulated to parents.

We encourage parents to support FOTH events by joining the committee, organising and attending events. It's a great way to make new friends and find out more about Thomson House School life!

Free School Meals

Please fill in the enclosed form in your pack and return to your Class Teacher or the School Office if you think you may be eligible. Any family on income support or earning less than £16,000pa will be entitled to free school meals and accompanying benefits.

Jewellery, Hair and Make-Up

Children are not to wear any jewellery to school, but girls are permitted to wear plain stud earrings. Boys are not permitted to wear jewellery of any sort.

Hair must not be extreme in style or length, including patterned shavings.

Hair must be a natural colour and only plain blue, functional hair accessories are allowed.

Make-up is not permitted.

Lost Property

All items brought to school should be clearly named. To collect any lost items, including sports kit, please check first with your Class Teacher. At the end of each week, uncollected items will be put into the Lost Property box which can be found just inside the entrance door on Howgate Road. At the end of each half-term, unnamed property is put on display for parents/pupils to claim.

Any items which remain unclaimed for one term, will be given to charity.

Lunch

All children will have a cooked school lunch where they are supervised. A hot meal is provided and a vegetarian alternative is on the menu.

We expect children to know how to use a knife and fork and how to sit at a table.

Please inform the Class Teacher and the School Office if your child is vegetarian, kosher, halal, has a food allergy or any other dietary requirements.

All children are expected to eat lunches provided by the school. These will be provided free of charge in line with the government Universal Infant Free School Meals Policy for YR-Y2. Parents in Year 3 upwards will be required to pay for school lunches, unless they claim Free School Meals benefit.

Extra-curricular enrichment clubs

Children love to take part in a variety of different clubs during their time at Thomson House. Each child is encouraged to do two weekly clubs each term. A club's list will be put on the VLE/ParentPay for you to help your child to choose from. We ask you to book promptly to avoid disappointment as clubs have limited spaces.

Medical matters

On joining the school, parents are requested to complete a medical form for their child/children. It is essential that parents inform the school, in writing, if any of these details change. If a pupil feels unwell, they should let their Class Teacher know, who will assess the situation and make a decision whether the child is well enough to return to class, requires rest or needs to go home. Parents will be telephoned if their child has to be collected. No pupil should contact home requesting to be collected: this decision will always be made by a member of staff.

A written record is made of all pupils sent home for illness.

It is essential that all pupils who suffer from asthma have two inhalers: one to be kept in the School Office and the other to be kept with the pupil at all times.

If any pupil is found to have head lice, parents will be telephoned and asked to collect their child from school to treat the head lice at home. We are happy to discuss methods of treatment with parents.

Nuts!

Please note the school is a nut-free environment. All food, break-time snacks, cakes and biscuits for fund-raising sales and birthdays must not contain any nuts or nut ingredients.

Photographs / Video Recordings/Social Media

Images of the school, pupils and staff may not be circulated or posted in the public domain (e.g. by email, on social networking sites e.g. Facebook, on YouTube etcetera).

The school has its own Facebook page on which photos and videos are posted. Please ensure there is no tagging of children's names on social media.

Pupils are made aware of their responsibilities in this regard through the e-safety curriculum.

From time to time the school will use un-named photos of pupils for *bona fide* promotional purposes e.g. newsletters, prospectus, etc. Likewise, photos, video clips, children's work will be published on our school website. You will find in your pack a form which will allow you to notify the school of your wishes with regards to the use of photos/video clips or for your child's name to appear on our website.

Mobiles and other electronic devices

Children are requested not to bring mobiles or any other personal electronic devices (I-pads, I-pods etc.) into school.

Security

For security reasons, the doors to the school building are locked during the school day. At the beginning and end of the school day, staff will monitor the entrance and exit of children and visitors. If you wish to enter the school during the school day please do so via the main front door on Vernon Road. Please inform your class teacher or email the school if someone new will be collecting your child from school. There is a diary in the School Office which you should use to notify the school that there is a change to who will be collecting your child. If the person is someone new to the staff please write down the name of the person and a password they should provide when asked for it.

Fire Alarm Procedure

In the event of a suspected fire emergency, the alarm will sound and pupils will be led quickly and in silence to designated places to gather, where a register will be taken. Fire notices/exit routes are posted up in classrooms.

Snacks / Water

In Upper School children are asked to bring in a healthy snack of fruit or raw vegetables. If you would like your child to continue to receive milk once they turn five, then you need to visit the Coolmilk website and register your child. <http://www.coolmilk.com/> There are also water fountains in the school. Water is essential for children to maintain their hydration throughout the day and has been proven to aid brain function. Your child may bring a small bottle of water to school in a named bottle or flask. This can stay at school for the week and be topped up at our drinking water stations. It must go home at the end of the week to be washed or replaced.

Trips and Educational Visits

Pupils have the opportunity to take part in several educational trips or visits each year. Parents will be given information regarding these trips (including the cost if applicable) well in advance. For most trips there is a small charge which is a voluntary contribution. Please be aware that although this contribution is voluntary, if parents do not pay the trip may be at risk of being cancelled.

In your pack you will find a consent form which you should complete and return. This notifies us that you give your consent to attend all of the trips that are provided. You will need to notify the Class Teacher or the School office if you do not want your child to attend. A full and detailed risk assessment is carried out prior to any visit. The school's policy regarding Educational Visits is available on the website.