



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 app (Search for Thomson House School on the App store or GooglePlay). You will find the app very useful – it is our primary source of communication with parents.

In addition, the Thomson House School Bulletin and Friends of Thomson House (FOTH) newsletters will be sent to families every week on a Friday. It is very important that you read this regularly as it includes 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 cursive script that reads "Amanda Letch". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

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 Teachers:

Miss Vicky Amor, victoria.amor@thomsonhouseschool.org

Mrs Jackie Sanders, jackie.sanders@thomsonhouseschool.org

Mrs Hannah Hannington, hannah.hannington@thomsonhouseschool.org

Year 5 Teaching Team

Teachers:

Ms Katie Parkes, katie.parkes@thomsonhouseschool.org

Mr Chris Shipp, chris.shipp@thomsonhouseschool.org

Assistant Teachers:

Mrs Eram Sheikh, eram.sheikh@thomsonhouseschool.org

Mrs Galina Agarwal, galina.agarwal@thomsonhouseschool.org

Year 4 Teaching Team

Teachers:

Ms Kate Street, kate.street@thomsonhouseschool.org

Mrs Charlotte Garner, charlotte.garner@thomsonhouseschool.org

Assistant teachers:

Mrs Monica Dimitroff, Monica.Dimitroff@thomsonhouseschool.org

Graduate Trainee Teacher:

Mr Phil Johnson, phil.johnson@thomsonhouseschool.org

IT Technician / Teacher: Ms Estefania Gaspar,
estefania.gaspar@thomsonhouseschool.org

SEND Teacher: 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 Rebecca Richards,
rebecca.richards@thomsonhouseschool.org

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

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

Premises Manager: Mr Jeremy Light, jeremy.light@thomsonhouseschool.org

Part-time Caretaker: Mr Alex Oloyu, alex.loyu@thomsonhouseschool.org

TERM DATES

Autumn Term 2018

Autumn Term 2018 starts on Wednesday 5th September and ends on Tuesday 18th December.

Half-term is from Friday 19th October to Monday 29th October, inclusive.

Spring Term 2019

Spring term starts on Monday 7th January 2019 and ends on Friday 5th April 2019.

Half Term is from Monday 18th February 2019 to Friday 22nd February 2019.

Summer Term 2019

Summer Term 2019 starts on Tuesday 23rd April 2019 and ends on Friday 12th July 2019.

Half Term is from Monday 27th May 2019 to Monday 3rd June 2019 (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, or use public transport to get their children to and from school each day.

For Upper School, the doors on the corner of Howgate Road/Vernon Road will **open at 8.20am**. The children will be greeted at the door by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Parents are asked to leave their child at this point for the child to enter the school 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 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, both doors on Howgate Road will **open just before 4pm**. Parents will then enter the school hall at the corner doors, collect their child/ren and exit via the doors further down Howgate Road. 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 from their normal arrangement, please let the office staff/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.

UNCOLLECTED CHILDREN POLICY

If for any reason children remain uncollected after the end of the school day, they will be taken to the school office. Office staff will attempt to contact parents, followed by the emergency contact numbers held for that child. If office staff cannot establish contact parents, they will hold the child until 6.00pm, at which point they will call alternative provision, usually social services.

WALKING TO SCHOOL POLICY

Parents and children are expected to walk, cycle, or take public transport to and from school. The school has no car parking facilities and for the sake of our neighbours we actively discourage parents from parking in nearby roads. We expect you to sign and abide by our pledge to walk to school which all parents receive. By signing it you will be indicating your support to our commitment to sustainable travel. Only children in Year 6 are allowed, with parental permission, to walk to school independently.

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR A NEW SCHOOL

If you are new to Thomson House School, please take a moment to read the following advice - a new school is an exciting but also a daunting event. Preparation will help your child feel safe, secure and ready to take on any 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 / app 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 did you enjoy about school today?
- 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.

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 /app which outlines the systems in place for promoting good behaviour, anti-bullying and exclusions.

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

UNIFORM

Uniform for Upper School pupils

From Year 4, children will wear a tie and pale blue shirt. There is an optional blazer that can also be worn. All branded uniform is available through John Lewis. Non-logo items can be bought in any of the major supermarkets.



Autumn/Spring	Summer
Grey trousers or Navy Skirt	<p>Grey shorts may be worn instead of trousers. Blue/white checked summer dress.</p>
Pale blue collared shirt	
Navy blue / gold stripe tie from John Lewis	
V-neck navy jumper or cardigan or slipover with the Thomson House lion emblem from John Lewis	
	
Navy blue or grey socks or tights	
Black school shoes (NOT Trainers)	
Navy storm coat with Thomson House logo at John Lewis or any navy blue jacket/coat of choosing.	
	

PE kit

The PE kit comprises a Thomson House navy sweatshirt with lion logo, navy blue tracksuit bottoms or navy PE shorts, sky-blue polo shirt with lion logo and navy or white trainers will also be needed.



Lower School (YR/Y1) are expected to come into school already in PE kit on PE days. Other year groups will be expected to change into their PE kit at school.



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



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 logo hats for winter and summer.



Where to buy

The uniform is a combination of Thomson House branded items available at John Lewis and non-logo items which can be bought at any of the major supermarkets. All logo uniform can be purchased online from John Lewis.

<https://www.johnlewis.com/search?search-term=Thomson+House+School+uniform>

Help with Paying for School Uniform

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 occasional second hand uniform sales, run by FOTH (Friends of Thomson House).

Free School Meals

Any family on benefits, income support or earning less than £16,000pa will be entitled to free school meals and accompanying funding. If you think you may be eligible, please ask at the school office. There are many **benefits for your child** if you are eligible for free school meals – see the website for further details.

Jewellery, Hair and Make-Up

Children are not to wear any jewellery to school, except for plain stud earrings. 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 and nail varnish is not permitted.

Lost Property

All uniform items should be **clearly named**. Any lost items, including sports kit, 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 to claim. Any unclaimed items will be sold.

Care of Property

All items of uniform **must be labelled with your 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/mobile phones etc.) unless being used for learning.

If money 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/watches etc.

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

Mobiles and other electronic devices

Children are **not to bring mobiles** or any other personal electronic devices into school.

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 School Office if your child is vegetarian, kosher, halal, has a food allergy or has any other dietary requirements.

All children are expected to eat lunches provided by the school. Year 3 upwards will be required to pay for school lunches, unless they claim Free School Meals.

THS Curriculum

Thomson House School prides itself on having a broad and rounded curriculum.

Parents can find details of each year group's curriculum on the school website.

In addition, at the start of each school year the class teachers host a curriculum evening which explains the learning journey of the year ahead.

THS Enrichment Fund to enrich the curriculum

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 through workshops, visitors and theme weeks above and beyond the basic curriculum offer. The termly theme weeks are when the whole school is off-curriculum and a variety of engaging and exciting experiences are used to motivate and inspire children's curiosity around their 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 impact 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.**

THS Extra-curricular clubs

A further way in which we enrich the curriculum is through our offer of extra-curricular 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 out on the THS App for you to help your child to choose. We ask you to book promptly to avoid disappointment as clubs have limited spaces.

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.

School website / THS App

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 the information they need on the THS app.

Absence from school

It is essential for your child to be in school punctually every day. If your child is unwell please let us know as early as possible by using the absence form on the app or by calling / emailing the School Office (admin@thomsonhouseschool.org) If we have not heard from you by 9am we will call you to verify any 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 up to date contact details 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 office 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 the end of school.

Wraparound Care

Our wraparound care is provided through Energy-Kidz. They provide care from 7.30am – 8.20am and again from 4.00pm - 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.

Safeguarding

At Thomson House School 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 PSHE, on how to keep themselves safe, both in and out of school. 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, mental and physical health, drugs, alcohol and tobacco education.

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 / app.

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

Communication between parents and school

Thomson House prides itself on its open-door policy and encourages strong links between staff and parents. 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 one of the Deputy Head Teachers. 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 a Deputy Head Teacher.

The school produces a weekly Bulletin on Fridays containing details of forthcoming events, staff news and any general information regarding the school. It can also be found on the app. Most letters and notices are sent home to parents via email or put on the app.

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

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.

Parents are emailed termly a Target Tracker report showing which statements of learning their child has mastered, achieved or is working towards. However, communication between teachers and parents will be ongoing throughout the year, and we encourage informal communication at drop-off and pick-up.

Assemblies

Monday	Upper School assembly, wellbeing themes, 8.40-9.00am
Tuesday	Year group assembly, at chosen point in school day
Wednesday	Singing Assembly
Thursday	Upper School assembly
Friday	Whole school assembly, celebration of success, 8.45am - 9.15am. Parents are warmly invited to join this assembly.

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; English; Maths; Special Educational Needs & Disabilities; Safeguarding; Early Years Foundation Stage) 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 or Senior Leadership Team.

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!

Medical matters

On joining the school, parents must 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 remain in class, requires rest or needs to go home. Parents will be called 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 – the monitoring of the expiry dates are the responsibility of the parents. All inhalers are kept in the school office

If any pupil is found to have head lice, parents will be 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

All Upper School pupils are required to bring in a healthy snack for mid-morning break time. Please note the school is a nut-free environment. All break-time snacks should consist of fruit and vegetables. Cakes and biscuits for fund-raising sales and birthdays must **not contain any nuts or nut ingredients**.

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 in Upper School, 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.

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.

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 etc).

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.

On joining the school, parents will complete a form which notifies us of your wishes with regards to the use of photos/video clips.

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. If the person is someone new to the staff please provide them and the office with a password which they can give 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 assembly place, where a register will be taken. Fire notices/exit routes are posted up in classrooms.

Lock Down Procedures

In the event of a major incident, the school may be required to follow lock down procedures to ensure the safety of all pupils and staff. If the school is in lock down mode at the start or end of the day, parents will be informed via the THS app, via email and via text.

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.

On joining the school parents will complete a consent form which gives your consent for your child to attend all of the trips provided. You will need to notify the school office if you do not want your child to attend a particular trip. 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.