



THOMSON HOUSE SCHOOL

Thomson House School

SEND Questions & Answers for Parents

Agreed by: Education Committee

Date: February 2017

Review Cycle: Annual

Next Review Date: February 2018

If you require a copy of this document in large print, Braille or audio format, please contact the School Business Manager

Thomson House School – SEND Q & A for Parents

Thomson House School is fully committed to serving the needs of all children in our community. No pupil will be refused admission to school on the basis of his or her special educational need. We will not discriminate against disabled children or children with educational difficulties, and we will take all reasonable steps to provide fully effective educational provision. Indeed, all THS children will learn to respect difference and diversity and will benefit from being members of such a community.

This document is intended to give you information regarding the ways in which we ensure we support all of our pupils, including those with SEND, in order that they can realise their full potential. It may not list every skill, resource and technique we employ in order to achieve this as these are continually developed and used to modify our provision to meet the changing requirements for individual pupils. We have designed this in a question and answer format to make it more readable and user friendly.

Other useful documents such as our SEND Information Report and the Richmond Borough Local Offer are available on the school website. If you would like any further information about what we offer here at Thomson House School then please do not hesitate to contact us directly.

1. Who are the best people to talk to at Thomson House School about my child's difficulties with learning, special educational needs or disability?

- Talk to your child's class teacher about your concerns.
- It is likely that the class teacher will have discussed your concerns with the school SENDCo, Mrs Hannah Hannington. You may wish to arrange a meeting with the SENDCo. You can email her (hannah.hannington@thomsonhouseschool.org) or arrange a meeting with her via the School Office Manager, Ms Vicky Mitchell.
- If you continue to have concerns arrange to discuss these with Mrs Amanda Letch, the Head Teacher.

2. What types of support may be suitable and available for my child?

This really depends upon the nature of your child's needs and difficulties with learning. But our education provisions will match the needs of the four broad areas of need as defined in the SEND Code of Practice 2015;

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, emotional and mental health

- Sensory and/or physical needs

At Thomson House School we have a 3 tiered approach to supporting a child's learning.

Universal – this is the quality first teaching which your child will receive from her/his class teacher and may include some very minor adaptations to match learning needs.

At Thomson House School, all children have access to our creative, challenging and balanced curriculum, which is taught in small size classes (26 maximum). Teachers will provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils. Lessons will be planned incorporating activities for a range of different learning styles (Visual, Audio, and Kinaesthetic). Teachers will set targets for all children which are reviewed on a regular half termly basis.

Targeted – For those children who are deemed not to be making sufficient progress in their learning, it may be appropriate to consider making additional short term special educational provision to remove or reduce any obstacles to your child's learning. This takes the form of a graduated four part approach of a) assessing your child's needs, b) planning the most effective and appropriate intervention, c) providing this intervention and d) reviewing the impact on your child's progress towards individual learning outcomes.

Support can include one to one work with our SEND Teacher; small group work with an Assistant Teacher; small group work with our SENDCo (qualified teacher); targeted small step learning in class or specific intervention programmes.

Specific targeted one to one or small group interventions may be run outside the classroom. These will be limited to a number a weeks to minimise disruption to the regular curriculum. You will be kept informed of your child's progress towards their targets.

To give you an example - different types of interventions have included Dough Disco (fine motor skills); primary language learning (speech and language/listening and attention); maths/English support; Jump Ahead (fine and gross motor skills); Right from the Start (writing skills); social skills.

Specialist – it may be necessary to seek specialist advice and regular long term support from a specialist professional outside the school in order to plan for the best possible learning outcomes for your child. This may include educational psychology, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, sensory advisory teachers and the child development service. The school may need to prioritise referrals to these services. However, for a very small number of pupils access to these specialists may be through an Education, Health and Care Plan.

3. What is an EHC Plan and who can request one for my child?

The purpose of an EHC Plan is to make special education provision to meet the special educational needs of a child or young person, to secure improved outcomes for him/her across education, health and social care and, as he/her gets older, prepare for adulthood. An EHC Plan will contain;

- the views and aspirations of you and your child,
- a full description of his/her special educational needs and any health and social care needs,
- establish outcomes for your child's progress,
- specify the provision required and how education, health and social care will work together to meet your child's needs and support the achievement of the agreed outcomes

You, your child (where appropriate and aged 16 and over) and/or the school, usually the SENDCo or Head Teacher, can request that the local authority conduct an assessment of your child's needs. This may lead to an EHC Plan.

4. How will the school let me know if they have any concerns about my child's learning in school?

- Your child's class teacher may initially speak to you at the beginning or the end of a normal school day and arrange a further time to discuss the concerns.
- The class/form teacher may also talk to you about any issues at a parent/teacher consultation meeting.
- The SENDCo may contact you and arrange a meeting to discuss your child's difficulties with learning and any possible support strategies the school might be considering.

5. How will the school consider my views and those of my child with regard to her/his difficulties with learning, special educational needs or disabilities?

- At Thomson House School school we believe it is very important for parents/carers to be involved in all areas of their child's learning and we actively encourage discussions. We believe, where appropriate, that it is essential to understand your child's views on any difficulties they may experience with their learning.
- You will be able to share your views and discuss your child's progress at regular meetings with the class/form teacher and others.

- If your child has an identified special educational need and/or disability you will be invited to a termly meeting with the class/form teacher and SENDCo to discuss current progress, support strategies being used and expected outcomes.
- If your child has an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) you and your child will be able to share your views at the Annual Review.

6. How are the teachers in school helped to work with children with an SEND and what training do they have?

- At Thomson House School we believe that your child's learning needs will first be met through the high quality teaching delivered by her/his class teacher.
- The SENDCo's job is to support the class teacher in planning for children with SEND.
- The school has a training plan for all staff to improve the teaching and learning of children including those with SEND. This includes whole school training on SEND issues.
- We regularly review the school training schedule and professional development for all teaching and support staff to ensure there is the appropriate expertise to support children with special educational needs. We might employ external agencies to deliver some training on specific issues such as ASD and Speech and language difficulties.
- Individual teachers and support staff will attend training courses run by outside agencies that are relevant to the needs of specific children in their class e.g TEACCH, Numicon.
- The school is able to access training programmes from different organisations including *Achieving for Children Workforce Development*.

7. Who are the other people providing services to children with an SEN in this school?

The school may also commission services from specialist groups run by outside agencies e.g Speech and Language therapy OR Occupational therapy groups. These services might come to deliver staff training, work with a whole class or a specific group which has been identified by the class teacher/SENDCo as needing some extra specialist support. Last year we commissioned services from Richmond Community NHS Trust Speech Therapists to deliver staff training on Speech and Language Development for young children, as well as to work with a small group of children on developing Attention and Listening skills.

8. How will the teaching be adapted for my child with SEND?

- At Thomson House School we believe that your child's learning needs will first be met through the high quality teaching delivered by her/his class teacher.

- We carefully plan our curriculum to match the age, ability and needs of all children.
- The class teacher will adapt lesson planning and teaching to match your child's special educational needs and/or disability.
- It may be appropriate to adopt different strategies or resources and adapt outcomes to meet your child's learning needs.
- A specialist SEND teacher or Assistant Teacher may work with your child 1:1 out of class for short periods of time to support their needs.
- Additional specialist advice is sought when appropriate and, when necessary, accessibility aids and technology may be used to support your child's learning.
- Thomson House School regularly reviews its Accessibility Plan to ensure that all children have the fullest access to the curriculum and the school site as possible.
- Class Teachers plan lessons according to the specific needs of children.

9. How will you support my child to reach his/her learning outcomes?

- The class teacher and other staff working with your child ensure that your child receives appropriate teaching and support in order to reach these goals. The learning plan, strategies and progress will be reviewed half termly.
- External agencies and specialists may also review your child's progress and adapt their planning accordingly.

10. How will you help me to support my child's learning?

- There may be suggested strategies or activities for you to do at home to support your child's learning.
- We sometimes run parent/carer workshops in school to help you understand the strategies used in school. In addition, we may be able to offer you individual training in specific support strategies relevant to your child.
- The SENDCo may also support you with strategies, resources and ideas for supporting your child's learning at home.
- You may have an opportunity to meet with other professionals involved in supporting your child.

11. How is support allocated to children and how do they move between the different levels of support in school?

- Thomson House School receives funding from the Education Funding Agency and/or the local authority. These funds include money to support the learning of children with SEN and/or disabilities.
- The Head Teacher, in consultation with the school Governors, decides the budget for SEN provision on the basis of the needs of the children in the school.

- The Head Teacher and the SENDCo discuss the effectiveness of the school's current interventions and provisions and prioritise an action plan, which may include additional or alternative interventions, staff training and equipment needs.
- This process is reviewed regularly to ensure the best possible intervention is provided to those children who require additional support to learn.

12. How will the school know that the support has made a difference to my child's learning and how can I and my child be included in this review process?

- Your child's progress will be assessed both in terms of his/her regular learning within the class and with regard to specific intervention programmes.
- The impact of the support given is carefully measured to ensure that the targets have been achieved and if not, what adaptations are necessary. It may be decided that a further period of support would be beneficial for your child.
- You and your child will be kept informed and encouraged to be actively involved at all stages of this support.
- All children will have assessment data logged on to our tracking system. SEND children will have review meetings at the end of every term with the parents, the child, the SENDCo and the class teacher. All children will have their progress regularly reviewed in school.

13. What support will there be for my child's happiness and wellbeing at Thomson House school?

- At Thomson House school we believe that the happiness and well-being of all our pupils is paramount. All members of staff take this aspect of school life very seriously.
- You can be confident that in particular your child's class teacher, the Assistant Teachers and the SENDCo are available to provide support to match your child's needs.
- You should also feel free to contact your child's class teacher if you have any concerns.
- We have a programme of well-being which includes assemblies, circle times and PSHE lessons which all children will participate in.
- Our learning mentor will see children who require support at certain points in their lives.

14. How is my child included in all the same activities as his/her peers at school?

- Thomson House School is an inclusive school and committed to providing equal opportunities for all children.
- School clubs, educational visits and residential trips are available to all children.
- When necessary the school will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that children with SEN and/or disabilities are included in all activities.

- You should also feel free to contact your child's class teacher if you have any concerns.

15. How will Thomson House School support my child in transition stages?

- We liaise closely with the school or nursery your child is transferring from. We are able to discuss with the relevant teachers any individual needs and how best to support your child in school.
- Home visits are made by Reception staff before your child starts at Thomson House and visits to the outgoing school are often part of the transition process.
- While at Thomson House School we will take care to ensure that during transition points (between classes each year and at the end of Key Stages) all staff are aware of individual pupils needs, learning progress and best support strategies.
- Thomson House School will make arrangements to ensure there is a smooth transition when your child transfers to his/her secondary school of choice.
- If your child has an EHC Plan, we will participate and/or facilitate its review in sufficient time prior to him/her moving between key phases of education. You will be kept informed of these arrangements and asked to attend the reviews.

16. Who can I contact if I have a complaint about the SEND provision made for my child?

- Initially speak with your child's teacher and/or the SENDCo. Hopefully they will be able to address your concerns.
- You can then contact the Head Teacher, who may direct you to the school's Complaints Policy and procedure, see THS website.

17. If I have any other questions about my child at Thomson House School, who can I ask?

At Thomson House School we are very happy to speak to you about any aspects of your child's education. It is best to speak to one of the following in this order:

- The class teacher
- The SENDCo
- The Head Teacher

18. How will we measure the progress of your child in school?

- Your child's progress is continually monitored by his/her class teacher.
- His/her progress is reviewed formally every half term and a level is given in reading, writing and numeracy.
- If your child is in Year 1 or above, but is still working towards Early Learning Goals, a more sensitive assessment tool is used which shows their level in more detail and will also show smaller but significant steps of progress. The levels are called 'P levels'.
- At the end of each key stage (i.e. at the end of year 2 and year 6) all children are required to be formally assessed using Standard Assessment Tests (SATs). This is something the government requires all schools to do and are the results that are published nationally.
- Children requiring SEN support will have targets which will be reviewed with your involvement, every term and the plan for the next term made.
- The progress of children with a statement of SEND/ EHC Plan is formally reviewed at an Annual Review with all adults involved with the child's education.

19. What support do we have for you as a parent of child with an SEND?

- The class teacher is regularly available to discuss your child's progress or any concerns you may have and to share information about what is working well at home and school so similar strategies can be used.
- The SENDCo is available to meet with you to discuss your child's progress or any concerns/worries you may have (details on how to contact her above)
- All information from outside professionals will be discussed with you with the person involved directly, or where this is not possible, in a report.
- Targets will be reviewed with your involvement each term.
- Homework will be adjusted as needed to your child's individual needs.
- A home/school contact book may be used to support communication with you, when this has been agreed to be useful for you and your child

20. How is Thomson House School accessible to children with SEND?

- The building is accessible to children with physical disability via ramps. The ground floor of the Victorian building is accessible to those with physical disabilities.
- Internally we have a lift which can be used between floors.
- We ensure that equipment used is accessible to all children regardless of their needs.
- After school provision is accessible to all children including those with SEND.
- Extracurricular activities are accessible for children with SEND

21. How will we support your child when they are leaving this school? OR moving on to another class?

We recognise that transitions can be difficult for a child with SEND and take steps to ensure that any transition is as smooth as possible.

- If your child is moving to another school:
 - We will contact the school SENDCO and ensure he/she knows about any special arrangements or support that need to be made for your child.
 - We will make sure that all records about your child are passed on as soon as possible.

- When moving classes in school:
 - Information will be passed on to the new class teacher IN ADVANCE and in most cases, a planning meeting will take place with the new teacher. All targets will be shared with the new teacher.

If your child would be helped by a book/social story to support them understand moving on then it will be made for them.

Thomson House School Complaints Procedures

See policy on Complaints.