



# Thirsk School

& Sixth Form College

## SEN Information Report 2023

### visions

TOLERANT

HAPPY

INSPIRATIONAL

RESILIENT

SUCCESSFUL

KNOWLEDGEABLE



## **SEN Report for Thirsk School & Sixth Form College**

This report complies with:-

- Section 69 (2) of the Children and Families Act 2014
- Regulation 51 and Schedule 1 of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Chapter 6 of the Code of Practice 2015

### **1. Special Educational Needs that are provided for**

The school provides for students with a wide range of Special Educational Needs. These would include students with special educational needs in communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social, emotional and mental health difficulties and sensory and physical needs. The school operates an inclusive mainstream model of provision.

### **2. Identification of students and young people with SEN, assessing needs and contact details of the SENCO and key SEN Support Staff**

SENCO: Mrs Rachel Elliott

Assistant SENCO: Tori Fletcher

Staff can be contacted via telephone: 01845 522024

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Identification of Special Educational Needs is made through:

- liaison with feeder primary schools and transition review meetings;
- receipt of transition information from the Local Authority;
- monitoring of progress data through termly Internal Pastoral review meetings and termly Achievement Progress tracking meetings;
- regular liaison with curriculum leaders, pastoral leaders and subject leaders;
- feedback from teaching assistants;
- feedback from parents' meetings;
- discussion with student;
- referrals from subject teachers
- feedback from external agencies working with students such as Specialist Teaching Service, CAMHS, Early Help Team.

The Special Educational Needs Department uses a range of non-standardised (e.g questionnaires and checklists) and standardised assessments (e.g. WIAT -3- to clarify and identify a range of needs). Parents and teachers are asked to contribute so that we have a complete picture of strengths and challenges at both school and home. Screening of reading ability is carried out on transfer from Year 6 to identify those students who may benefit from additional support with reading or 1:1 intervention. Cognitive Abilities Tests are completed by all new year 7 students to identify strengths and weaknesses in verbal, numerical and non-verbal skills.

### **3. Arrangements for consulting parents of students with SEN and involving them in their child's education**

The school and SEN Department welcome contact from parents. The SENCO is in attendance at Parent Liaison Evenings for prospective Year 6 students, Year 6 Induction Parents' Evening and the Year 7 Parent and Tutor Evening which provides parents with an opportunity to ask questions or share concerns about their child and discuss provision.

Parents are invited to actively participate in review meetings; for students with an Education, Health and Care Plan formal consultations take place annually in line with the Code of Practice.

At the end of the autumn and spring terms, a SEND review report is written for each student with an EHCP or at the SEN support stage. Every subject teacher contributes to the report with written feedback about the progress and classroom provision for the student. Parents are contacted by the SENCO or Head of Year to discuss the report and to contribute their views and to agree any changes to support and desired outcomes. At the end of the summer term, parent views are sought through questionnaires when pupil profiles are sent home.

#### **4. Arrangements for consulting young people with SEN and involving them in their education**

Students are invited to attend meetings as appropriate where their progress is being discussed. Students who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) are formally consulted annually. Students are usually involved in review meetings and planning of their provision and support. Students at the SEN support stage are consulted about their views by SENCO or Head of Year when the reports are reviewed at the end of the term. All students have a key point of contact via their form tutor or head of year. In addition, for students with SEN, we have teaching assistants who mentor individual students, 6<sup>th</sup> form mentors, pastoral mentors in our inclusion unit.

#### **5. Arrangements for assessing and reviewing children and young people's progress towards outcomes**

Students' progress is assessed and reviewed by school staff formally at three assessment points through the year. Departments and subject teachers are responsible for progress of all students in their classrooms and the progress of groups of students, such as those with SEN, is monitored strategically by the SENCO and Senior Leadership Team of the school. Where students have intervention programs which are additional and different, student progress is reviewed by the relevant staff delivering the intervention, supported by the SENCO in line with the graduated approach outlined in the Code of Practice.

In addition to our usual student monitoring and reviewing systems, for the students with a formal identification of SEN support needs, we gather the views of teachers, parents and students at the end of each term as to progress specifically related to their SEN needs and the effectiveness of provision and support and agree any actions or changes of provision. The comments, views and agreed actions are collated onto a SEN report document which is available to view on the My Child At School Portal as an ongoing record of progress towards outcomes.

#### **6. Arrangements for supporting children and young people in moving between phases of education and in preparing for adulthood**

##### **Transition from Primary to Secondary School:**

The Head of Lower School has a strategic role in working closely with all feeder primary schools and Headteachers. The Head of Year 7 and the SENCO visit all primary schools and meet with staff and students. The SENCO gathers information about all the pupils transferring, including those with SEN. In addition, where invited, the SENCO attends Year 5 and Year 6 Annual Review meetings. The SENCO also attends Year 6 transition meetings arranged with key staff in the main feeder primary schools to gather information about SEN and possible pro-

vision needs of students for whom primary staff feel additional transition support may be needed. Additional transition visits to the school are often arranged for pupils with SEN prior to the main Year 6 induction week. These typically begin in the summer term after SATS but can start earlier in the year if a need is identified.

### **Other key transition points:**

#### **Year 9 into 10:**

The SENCO, the Head of Year 9 and the Head of Upper School meet to identify students who may need additional support and guidance with the options process. Students with an Education Health Care Plan, will have additional interviews with Careers Advisors. Discussions will take place with individual students and parents. The majority of students will take 4 optional GCSE subjects. A small number of students with SEN may require a more personalised curriculum which will be created in partnership with student, parents and school.

The SENCO carries out assessments and, together with the exams officer, makes arrangements for those students who may need exam access arrangements through their GCSE courses. Identification of SEN does not automatically mean that students will be granted access arrangements. For some access arrangements such as extra time, the use of a reader or scribe, an application has to be made for permission to the exam board and evidence must be kept on file to demonstrate that the arrangement represents their usual way of working and that there is a history of provision as well as the student meeting eligibility criteria by way of standardised scores on appropriate assessments.

#### **Year 11 into 12:**

Students with SEN continue to receive additional support and provision and identified through their Education Health Care Plan. Other students with SEN continue to access additional support and provision as appropriate to their needs. The school has a well-established Bridge Programme in Year 12 which is a one year course available to students who may need additional opportunities to secure their Maths and English GCSE Grade C and continue study in a range of subjects at Level 2 or a mix of Level 2 and Level 3 with a range of qualifications including BTEC and GCEs.

## **7. The approach to teaching children and young people with SEN**

The approach of the school to teaching children and young people with SEN is line with the SEND Code of Practice, i.e. that they should be included in the mainstream classroom and their progress is the responsibility of the classroom teacher. The majority of SEN can be met with quality first teaching and learning within the mainstream classroom where there is scaffolding to support students access to the curriculum and personalised teaching and learning strategies. Our whole school teaching and learning model means that within each lesson there are opportunities to review prior learning, input of new learning, opportunities to practice, feedback and review.

A small minority of pupils may need some adaptation or personalisation of their curriculum within the mainstream of the school. Where this is the case, support is timetabled in our learning support classrooms or in our inclusion area.

Time limited specialist intervention programmes such as an individual reading programme are delivered based on individual need.

We also have classroom based teaching assistants who support students with SEN to access teaching and learning in the classroom. They are deployed by the SENCO to support specific groups of students or individual students with a higher level of need.

There is additional support for literacy with 1:1 intervention with specialist teaching assistant, paired reading with 6<sup>th</sup> form students and group intervention for KS3 students identified through the accelerated reading programme as requiring intervention.

We support students with additional needs around written recording with the use of assistive technology in the classroom. We have a number of dedicated laptops that are available to students through a scheduled loan system for use in lessons where it has been identified that laptop use would support their needs. Some students may be allocated a laptop for their sole use and for use at home where need is identified by the SENCO or recommended by another professional such as an occupational therapist.

#### **8. How adaptations are made to the curriculum and the learning environment of children and young people**

The majority of students follow a mainstream curriculum. Personalised adaptations are made according to individual need. The school provides facilities in line with the Disability Discrimination Act to meet the requirements of those students with more complex needs and is always prepared to make reasonable adjustments according to individual student need. The school is keen to plan ahead and acknowledges that it has an anticipatory duty to make sure facilities are accessible to all.

The school has a dedicated learning support area where students with adaptations to their timetable receive individual and small group support and targeted intervention under the direction of the SENCO.

#### **9. The expertise and training of staff to support children and young people with SEN**

The Special Educational Needs Department has a high level of expertise and training. The SENCO has been in post since 2004 and has a Post Graduate Level qualification in Special Educational Needs and Coordinating and Supporting Special Educational Needs. We appointed an assistant SENCO in September 2022 and she is undertaking a nationally recognised SENDCO training qualification which is now required. The majority of General and Advanced Teaching Assistants have NVQ Level 2 or 3 qualifications in supporting SEN.

In our learning support area, we employ a Higher Level Teaching Assistant who has Qualified Teacher Status and has additional Post Graduate Qualifications in teaching English as a foreign language and an Advanced Level Teaching assistant who is also trained to qualified teacher level, both of whom have considerable knowledge and expertise in supporting students with SEN needs.

In addition, the SEN Department has a regular schedule of training meetings as well as participating in whole school staff development and training. These training sessions typically include a range of training in specific aspects of supporting SEN such as specific learning difficulties, behaviour management, emotional regulation, speech and language development, autism awareness, supporting students with sensory and physical impairments, coaching and mentoring of students, safeguarding and child protection and more. Some members of the department have undertaken external training on delivery of specific interventions. Any additional specialist expertise is sought and secured from the wider North Yorkshire Specialist Network of services.

#### **10. Evaluating the effectiveness of the provision made for children and young people with SEN**

The progress of all students, including those with SEN, is evaluated after each assessment point through rigorous data monitoring, and internal pastoral meetings.

Departments and subject teachers are expected to identify any students, including those with SEN, who are not making expected progress. A review of current provision will then take place and changes made where necessary. Action will be taken by subject teachers and Departments, supported by the SENCO and SEN Department where necessary.

The effectiveness of time limited intervention programs are evaluated by staff, students and parents.

**11. How children and young people with SEN are enabled to engage in activities available with children and young people in the school who do not have SEN**

All extra activities are open to all students. All reasonable adjustments are made to ensure student with SEN have equal opportunities to participate in school and extra-curricular activities.

**12. Support for improving social and emotional development. This should include extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to the views of children and young people with SEN and measures to prevent bullying**

The school has a very strong ethos of pastoral support and has robust systems in place which are accessible to all students, including those with SEN.

The school has adopted the Thrive Approach to social and emotional health and wellbeing. Thrive is a research based approach to identifying SEMH needs and allows for individual and group profiles and action plans to be created to support SEMH needs. The SENCO is a fully trained and licensed Thrive practitioner. Our inclusion team manager is also a fully trained and licensed Thrive practitioner. Our Head of Upper School and Head of Lower school have also completed Thrive training for senior leaders. The SENCO has delivered whole school training to all teachers and all teachers have had training in how to complete a group profile and action plan.

We have colleagues working in school from the Well Being In Mind Team which is part of CAMHS. We are able to consult with the team where we may have concerns about emerging mental health needs.

The school has designated SEN staffing and resources to support SEMH needs creating a dedicated inclusion unit and employment of pastoral support staff. The school has developed a strong culture of student voice and pupils with SEN are represented on student year group councils and the School Council.

SEN awareness and anti- bullying is incorporated into the whole school PHSCE program and assemblies.

The SEN Department also offers a supervised lunchtime support club where students can socialise and access help and support with homework.

Students may be offered a mentor or key adult with whom they can meet on a regular basis.

We have a buddy system and a team of 6<sup>th</sup> form mentors to support students on a short term intervention.

Assemblies which have an anti-bullying message and focus on individuals' differences are delivered by Learning Support and pastoral staff.

Students participate throughout the year in fund raising activities to support associated charities.

**13. How the school involves other bodies in meeting children and young people's SEN and supporting their families**

The school has established strong links and work closely with outside agencies. We work closely with colleagues in education, health, social care and careers including agencies such as CAMHS, Disabilities Children's team, Local Authority support teams, Compass Buzz, Compass Phoenix, IDAS, Healthy Child Team. We work with local support organisations such as Community Works, a local charity providing a range of services to support young people.

**14. If you have any concerns about the provision made for a student with SEN, the first point of contact is the SENCO or the Head of Year or head of school.**

SENCO – [rachel.elliott@thirskschool.org](mailto:rachel.elliott@thirskschool.org)  
Assistant SENCO – [tori.fletcher@thirskschool.org](mailto:tori.fletcher@thirskschool.org)  
Year 7 – [owain.pierce-williams@thirskschool.org](mailto:owain.pierce-williams@thirskschool.org)  
Year 8 – [Julie.hudson@thirskschool.org](mailto:Julie.hudson@thirskschool.org), [ben.morgan@thirskschool.org](mailto:ben.morgan@thirskschool.org)  
Year 9 – [gillian.dolan@thirskschool.org](mailto:gillian.dolan@thirskschool.org)  
Year 10 – [ian.henderson@thirskschool.org](mailto:ian.henderson@thirskschool.org), [Julie.blogg@thirskschool.org](mailto:Julie.blogg@thirskschool.org)  
Year 11 – [shiona.head@thirskschool.org](mailto:shiona.head@thirskschool.org)  
Year 12 – [kate.leopold@thirskschool.org](mailto:kate.leopold@thirskschool.org)  
Year 13 – [Andrew.acheson@thirskschool.org](mailto:Andrew.acheson@thirskschool.org)  
Head of Lower school – [Jo.marston@thirskschool.org](mailto:Jo.marston@thirskschool.org)  
Head of Upper school – [Nicola.stimson@thirskschool.org](mailto:Nicola.stimson@thirskschool.org)  
Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form College – [Gordon.pentland@thirskschool.org](mailto:Gordon.pentland@thirskschool.org)

**Additional Information:**

**How do you support children and young people who have medical needs?**

- A Health Care Plan is compiled for students with serious medical needs and those students who may require additional support. This may involve the school nurse, in consultation with parents/carers. These are discussed with all staff who are involved with the student.
- Where necessary, and in agreement with parents/carers, medicines are administered in school but only where a signed Medicine Consent form is in place to ensure the safety of both child and staff member.
- All staff have basic first aid training.
- Many staff have 'EVAC' Chair training.
- Several staff hold the First Aid at Work Certificate (First Aid at a more advanced level) and an Outdoor Activities First Aid at Work Certificate.
- There is wheelchair access to the upper floor in A block via the lift to the library
- There is accessibility parking bays, toilet and changing facilities
- Specialist equipment such as height adjustable tables is provided where needed.

**The school supports the Local Offer of the Local Authority.**

## **WHAT IS THE LOCAL OFFER?**

The purpose of the Local Offer is to enable parents and young people to see more clearly what services are available to them in the area and how to access them. The offer includes provision from birth to 25, across education, health and social care and has been developed in conjunction with children and young people, parents and carers, and local services, including schools, colleges, health and social care agencies.

Please read this in conjunction with the websites below which outline the North Yorkshire Local Offer.

**<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/send-local-offer>**

**<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/send-specialist-support-and-inclusion>**