



SEN Information Report

Thriftwood School and College 2024 / 25

Thriftwood School and College form an Academy within the SEAX Multi Academy Trust and provides education for learners with moderate special educational needs and disabilities between the ages of 5 and 19, although currently only has pupils in year 3 and upwards. For this year we will not have a year 14 class group due to capacity. All pupils require an EHCP to qualify for a place at the Academy. The Local Authority retains the statutory responsibility for admissions.

This report has been developed in accordance with the 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years' 2015 to ensure all statutory information is included, as well as 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCSIE) 2024 which addresses specific areas and additional risks staff members should be aware of for pupils with SEND.

Thriftwood School and College

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1. The Profile of Learners at Thriftwood

Both Thriftwood School and Thriftwood College aim to offer learners with moderate learning difficulties, a vibrant education which is appropriately matched to their learning needs in a safe environment where personal development is at the heart of the curriculum. The aim is to enable young people to develop the confidence and skills they need to move on to the next phase of their lives, whether it is to further education and training, employment or to work towards a happy, healthy and independent life.

Thriftwood supports learners with a range of learning needs.

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| Communication and Interaction | Learners with a range of social communication difficulties such as those diagnosed with moderate Autistic Spectrum Conditions. Also those with a range of Speech and Language conditions. |
| Cognition and Learning | Learners with moderate impairments and developmental delays in cognitive function. Those learners whom have struggled to acquire functional literacy and numeracy in relation to mainstream peers. |
| Social, Emotional and Mental Health | Some learners present with anxiety. This may be in relation to a diagnosed condition such as ASC, but may also be a result of self esteem issues and under developed resilience. |
| Sensory Physical Needs | Some learners may require support for 'sensory integration' and self-regulation as a result of ASC. Other learners may have physical impairments as a result of diagnosed conditions such as cerebral palsy and a range of other medical needs. |

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| Resilience, Independence and Preparation for Adulthood | All learners who come to Thriftwood require a determined approach to improve their ability to cope emotionally with challenge, particularly in preparing for Adulthood. This is a key focus for both School and College |
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2. The Maintenance of the EHCP

Admission to Thriftwood is determined in consultation with the LA and requires an EHCP. Some learners transferring from the Mainstream sector will have specific provision written into the EHCP, which may not be available at Thriftwood. Both the LA and parents need to be aware of how the provision of education and the support for learners is organised within the School and College, which may not fulfil the specificity outlined in the original plan. Clarity about provision in relation to an EHCP will be a key aspect of the consultation and admissions procedure.

The EHCP will be reviewed on an annual basis and provision will be adjusted to reflect the offer available in both the School and the College. Both learner voice and parental involvement within the review process form the bedrock of the subsequent outcomes and aims.

Where children are in Public Care (LAC) the Review of the EHCP, will, where possible, be held in conjunction with the PEP and LAC Review.

3. Provision for Learners

The organisational structures and curricula in School and College are designed to meet the needs of learners and are as personalised as resources allow. Class sizes are maintained at a small size, with an ideal maximum of 12 pupils on the school site for MLD classes (lower for classes with a designation of SLD profile pupils), and 13 on the college site (lower for pupils with an SLD profile), with learning support provided depending on the needs of specific groups. The school has a staffing ratio of between 2 to 3 adults per group dependent upon age, whereas the College has a ratio of 2 adults per group. No learners receive 1:1 support unless they have a specific impairment and are unable to be included effectively across the curriculum without. The resources for this are agreed through the Local Authority.

Pupils from Year 10 up to Y13 are ability grouped for both Maths and English in order to ensure that all learners needs can be met, should that be for highly intensive pre-literacy/ numeracy development or for the preparation for formal accreditation.

The school aims to ensure that learners can develop appropriate social skills including essential learning behaviours and independence in order to access a broad and enriching curriculum within group learning.

The College aims to prepare learners for Adulthood and employment within a vocational learning environment. This includes high quality English and Maths.

Both school and college aim to deliver a stimulating curriculum that learners will value and engage with. This requires a commitment of resources and finance to ensuring that the quality of provision is maintained.

The curriculum is laid out in 2 pathways; the Core Pathway and the Foundation Growth Pathway. Please see www.ThriftwoodsSchool.com for further details.

The school commits funding to allow for small groups to engage in high quality activities such as, cooking, Forest School, use of external providers for Art, Music, topic based visits and residential activity breaks.

The college commits funding to promote, high quality vocational learning, including Catering and Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. The promotion of maintaining robust mental health through sport and leisure activities including outdoor education.

Both school and college, have invested in the IT infrastructure and the maintenance of a high quality physical environment. Each site also has a Pupil Support and Family Engagement Manager, a sound Pastoral support structure and access to psychotherapy.

Progress is monitored by leaders using two systems: -

We have a bespoke English and Maths assessment system that runs throughout the school and college. We also record a pupil's reading age. In addition to this, we use the Fundamentals for the Future framework to track pupils in key life skills from school to college. These skills are also monitored within a child's Education Health Care Plan.

Data from these systems is analysed by the Leadership team and reported to parents in a range of ways including parents' evenings, reviews of the EHCP and reports, or at the end of the year. Data is also reported to the Academy Committee and the Board of Trustees at the SEAX Trust.

4. The Co-ordination of Provision for SEN within the Academy

The Academy does not operate using a SENCO role but has a Pastoral Team that works directly with leaders to ensure that learners needs are met. The Pastoral Team works directly with Parents and learners and liaises with leaders to assess learners needs on a regular basis. In school this is called the SEN Panel and at College, the SMP – (Student Monitoring Panel). Both Panels assess learning, health and emotional needs using a traffic light system. Interventions are then determined by the presenting needs of individuals. Reviews of the Safeguarding concerns are also included in this process. Senior Leaders are members of the SEN and SMP panels.

5. Staff Training and Meeting Pupil Needs

All leaders are qualified teachers

All staff have access to high quality CPD throughout the year regarding aspects of SEN provision

Specialists are in place who have training in: -

- Speech and Language – at an assistant level
- Trauma Perceptive Practice
- Forest School
- PSCHE

6. Deployment and Maintenance of Resources and Facilities

It is a key function of special schools to ensure that learners are not disadvantaged by their background, designated needs or their disabilities. Thriftwood aims to use resources to reduce the barriers to both inclusion and learning in order for learners to participate effectively in a full life, where they are as autonomous as possible and have access to future leisure activities or employment. Thriftwood invests in: -

- a high quality well maintained and stimulating environment for both learners and staff
- suitably trained staff and investment in further education opportunities for staff including leadership training
- resources that are matched effectively to learner needs
- Sensory equipment
- Sport and Healthy Living resources – outdoor gym, trampoline, bicycles, swimming sessions, residential trips, enrichment visits and outings
- Suitable routes of accreditation
- IT
- External providers for training including Music, Speech and Occupational Therapists, counselling

Other sources of Information

- Audited accounts
- PPG Expenditure Review
- Academy Improvement Plan 24/25

7. Parent/Carer Involvement

Parents are invited to a range of events across both school and college. Our menu of events includes: -

- Parents Evenings
- Coffee Mornings / parent workshops
- Residential information sessions
- Curriculum events/open events
- Safeguarding events e.g. Online safety
- Annual Reviews of the EHCP
- Lunches/picnics
- Presentation events
- Productions/performances/assemblies
- Careers events
- Sporting events

Parents are surveyed for their views as part of the reporting process on their child's progress.

Parents can communicate by email, by phone and have direct access to the School and College Pupil Support and Family Engagement Managers. Parents are free to make contact with staff members and the Headteachers and will be warmly received.

8. Student Voice

Both school and college maintain active Student Councils. Learners are encouraged to participate in decision making and this is valued by all staff. Learners feel invested and have strong views about the improvements that need to be made. Learners are surveyed regarding safety at school and college and are asked about Bullying and how any incidents are managed.

The Codes of Conduct are regularly discussed with learners.

9. Safeguarding

Learners at Thriftwood remain vulnerable to a range of safeguarding issues that the school and college are very aware of and both continually endeavour to inform and support learners in managing these issues safely.

Safety online – learners may be subject to bullying, harassment and potentially grooming during their time on line. Thriftwood aims to offer guidance throughout IT lessons, PSHCE and support from Pastoral Team members, in order to adopt ‘savvy’ approaches online. e.g. not giving personal details, blocking abusive texts, messages, understand how to report suspicious people online, being encouraged to share what they are doing with parents.

Child on child abuse – Thriftwood recognises that learners with SEN have very confused views about sexual behaviours and can find themselves either as victims or perpetrators of sexual contact/sexualised interactions, or other abusive relationships practices. Thriftwood maintains a robust safeguarding system which is fully embedded in practice. This is underpinned by an open environment where aspects of the use of power and appropriate conduct are regularly aired in a non – punitive manner. The Pastoral Team and the SMP/SEN Panels are quick to respond to any potential issues.

Grooming/Radicalisation – learners at Thriftwood, due to feelings of isolation, may be attracted to groups that offer forms of support or a sense of belonging. YouTube, messaging via apps including Snapchat, Instagram etc lead to ill-conceived views of friendship and personal worth. Learners are encouraged to reflect on the difference between what is real and what is perceived. Views are openly expressed without fear of being punished. Learners are made aware of the safety nets for dealing with coercive situations and people.

10. Complaints Procedures

Thriftwood aims to ensure that any issue or concern is dealt with promptly and any misunderstandings, errors or poor service are rectified to the satisfaction of those raising the concerns. However, if there is a complaint that cannot be rectified by informal means then a formal process will be actioned.

The Trust’s Complaints Policy can be found on the Thriftwood Website, which guides the complainant through the process with the appropriate forms and contacts.

11. Associated Support Services

Thriftwood works closely with a range of external support services and professional bodies, these can be summarised as: -

Send Operation Services – County Hall Chelmsford – www.essex.gov.uk

SENDIAS – Impartial support for Parents with the EHCP process - www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk

Speech and Language Therapy Services - www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk

CAMHS – Mental Health services <https://www.nelft.nhs.uk/set-camhs/>

ESCB – Safeguarding Services for Schools in Essex - www.escb.co.uk

12. Preparation for Adulthood and Transition to other Providers

Thriftwood aims to use the 'Preparation for Adulthood' approach across the school and college to ensure that learners are able to make the transition from one phase to another with resilience and readiness. The recommendation for the approach is summarised in relation to the EHCP and how it should be used to facilitate the best outcomes for learners with SEN.

- The EHCP outcomes will be personalised and focused on the young person's aspirations, supporting as independent a life as possible.
- Thriftwood has a strong careers programme, including opportunities for work experience, to support learners in making appropriate choices for their next steps.
- Children develop at different rates. For some young people, indicators included in early childhood may continue to be outcomes they are progressing toward as they get older. Therefore, it is important that each new age/stage continues to develop and build on the previous ones
- At review meetings, the parents and learner should reflect on aspects at home, school and the community in order to set new aims and outcomes.
- The use of creative approaches to embed activities in the curriculum and in everyday activities outside of the classroom will motivate and encourage participation
- Families and school/college staff need to raise aspirations and expectations and encourage thinking from an early age about what the future might look like for children
- Promote a focus on outcomes that are transferable to the real world
- Local authorities should make sure they focus on the PfA outcomes in EHC plan reviews and make sure related information is covered in the Local Offer .

The review of the EHCP will be crucial in this process. The main points of transition at Thriftwood are: -

Mainstream School / Other SEN provision – Thriftwood

Thriftwood School – Thriftwood College / an alternative provision

Thriftwood College – Employment / Supported Internships, Mainstream College, Supported Day Provision

13. The Local Offer Family Support and Community

The Local Offer provides information and advice to help families find appropriate services or support, including information on voluntary and community services in Essex. Further information is also available on Thriftwood's website.

Parent support groups work with parents, carers and young people to offer advice, support and guidance on caring for a child or young person with disabilities.

Local (Essex) and National support groups and many other facilities can be found by following the links to - <http://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk>

