



SEN Information Report

Thriftwood School and College 2021 / 22

Thriftwood School and College form an Academy within the SEAX Multi Academy Trust and provides education for students with moderate special educational needs and disabilities between the ages of 5 and 19, although currently only has pupils in year 3 and upwards. 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) 2021 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 students with moderate learning difficulties, a vibrant education which is individualised and 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 students with a range of learning needs.

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| Communication and Interaction | Students 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 | Students with moderate impairments and developmental delays in cognitive function. Those students whom have struggled to acquire functional literacy and numeracy in relation to mainstream peers. |
| Social, Emotional and Mental Health | Some students present with high levels of anxiety and distress. 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 students may require support for 'sensory integration' and self-regulation as a result of ASC. Other students 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 students 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 students 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 student 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 below 15 students (with an ideal size of 12 pupils on the school site), 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, whereas the College has a ratio of 1.5/2 adults per group. No students receive 1:1 support unless they have a specific impairment and are unable to be included effectively across the curriculum without.

Groups from Year 9 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 students can develop appropriate social skills including essential learning behaviours in order to access a broad and enriching curriculum. The College aims to prepare learners for Adulthood by focusing on Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills within a vocational learning environment. This includes high quality English and Maths.

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

The school commits funding to allow for small groups to engage in high quality activities such as, cooking, Forest School, Outdoor Learning, use of external providers for Art, Music, theatre companies and theatre trips 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. A Music Therapist is employed using some PPG in order to support students and groups with emotional health needs.

Progress is monitored by leaders using two systems: -

School – PIVATs 5 – data is collected three times a year to assess development of learner’s skills. College – CAS – A bespoke EXCEL based system measuring increments of progress across a range of subjects/areas of the curriculum.

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, termly for year 9, 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 students needs are met. The Pastoral Team works directly with Parents and students 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

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

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Specialists are in place who have training in: -

- ASC

-

Speech and Language

-

Zones of Regulation

- Trauma Perceptive Practice
- Psychotherapy
- Forest School
- PSC
- HE

6. Deployment and Maintenance of Resources and Facilities

It is a key function of special schools to ensure that students 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 students 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 students and staff
- suitably trained staff and investment in further education opportunities for staff including leadership training
- resources that are matched effectively to student needs
- Sensory equipment
- Sport and Healthy Living resources – outdoor gym, trampolines, bicycles, swimming sessions, residential trips, enrichment visits and outings
- Suitable routes of accreditation
- IT
- External providers for training including Speech and Occupational Therapists
- Psychotherapy, Music Therapy, Counselling

Other sources of Information

- Audited accounts
- PPG Expenditure Review 2020/21
- Academy Improvement Plan 2018/21 – 21/24

7. Parent/Carer Involvement

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

- Parents Evenings – three times a year
- Coffee Mornings
- 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

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. Students are encouraged to participate in decision making and this is valued by all staff. Students feel invested and have strong views about the improvements that need to be made.
- Students are surveyed regarding safety at school and college and are asked about Bullying and how any incidents are managed.
- Special Interest events are held to obtain student views, recently Brexit and Environmental Issues.
- The Codes of Conduct are regularly discussed with students.

9. Safeguarding

Students 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 students in managing these issues safely.

- **Safety online** – students 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.
- **Per on peer 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** – students 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. Students are encouraged to reflect on the difference between what is real and what is

perceived. Views are openly expressed without fear of being punished. Students 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 (SOS) – 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
- EWMHS – Mental Health services – www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-ewmhs
- ESCB – Safeguarding Services for Schools in Essex - www.escb.co.uk
- PFA – Preparation for Adulthood - info@preparingforadulthood.org.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 students 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 need to be personalised and focused on the young person's aspirations, supporting as independent a life as possible

- 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 student 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 elements that are focused on for the PFA agenda are: -

- **Employment**
- **Independent Living**
- **Community Inclusion**
- **Health**

Parents will become familiar with new ways to address their child's progress in relation to better outcomes later in life. At each transition parents will be guided and supported in considering what needs to happen to make that transition successful.

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

- **Mainstream School – Thriftwood**
- **Thriftwood School – Thriftwood College**
- **Thriftwood College – Mainstream College (Post 18)**

Independent Guidance and Advice will be available to parents from Year 10 upwards in order to support learners in making the best choices for their next phase of life.

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>