



THE THOMAS GROUP Prospectus 2023/24

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LOCATION

The Thomas Group is located at RFHCS Konstam Centre from Sep 2023



**75 Chester Road
London
N19 5DH**

Rail

The nearest over ground trains are Upper Holloway and Gospel Oak (both about 10 minute walk)

Underground

Archway or Tufnell Park tube stations are a 15-minute walk away.

Buses

C11 bus stops very close by.

Parking

There is very limited parking.

ABOUT OUR PROVISION



The Thomas Group (TTG) is a small, nurturing, educational setting for KS3 children presenting with social, emotional and psychological difficulties.

Personalised and effective education is provided, helping to keep children motivated, connected to their normal world and preventing them from falling behind or suffering educational failure. The majority of children recruited to the group are receiving support from medical or mental health services and the TTG, facilitates their recovery from the emotional, psychological and educational deficits they have for whatever reason, experienced. Although the Thomas Group is aimed at KS3 pupils, KS4 pupils may also be considered where there is no other suitable provision available to them.

Mental Health and wellbeing are taken seriously and our provision is committed to trauma informed practice. Pupils receive individual attention while remaining in a classroom context and over time this generates trust and enables them to re-engage in learning.

The provision operates within a multidisciplinary framework; working closely with a range of professionals including consultant doctors, mental health professionals, occupational therapists, speech therapists, educational psychologists and other agencies. Direct contact with parents, carers and referrers is welcomed.

TTG offers a space where young people are encouraged to embrace change and develop independence and resilience. It has a proven track record in achieving positive outcomes for its young people and as part of the RFHCS, is inspected by Ofsted. The progress that current students in TTG make is at least good and in most cases outstanding relative to their starting points. Some children may return to

mainstream education and others may go on to the RFHCS Futures or other educational provisions according to their individual needs.

TTG is viewed as a key player in Camden Council's approach to securing better outcomes for children and young people through developing resilience and in achieving greater impact and efficiency by intervening earlier and preventing escalation.



MISSION STATEMENT AND AIMS

Our Mission is –

- To enable continuity of education for children and young people, who are currently facing significant barriers to their learning
- To provide personalised learning support and intervention
- To provide opportunities for progress and achievement
- To support reintegration back to mainstream education or another alternative provision such as RFHCS Futures
- To work collaboratively with parents, carers, professionals and schools to improve the overall well-being of children and young people
- To enable pupils with medical and mental health needs to reach their full potential

Our Aims are –

- To create a happy, secure and supportive learning environment that develops confidence in expressing own ideas and creativity
- To place the child's voice at the centre of education, health and care planning
- To offer every pupil full and equal access to all areas of the curriculum, taking into account health or developmental needs through personalised learning programmes
- To help each pupil achieve the greatest possible degree of independence
- To prepare each pupil for life beyond school, encouraging a sense of self-worth and recognition of themselves as part of the community.
- To integrate therapies with curriculum activities where appropriate.
- To value all adults' and pupils' contributions to the group's progress, and celebrate success and achievement.
- To build self-confidence, resilience and respect for self and others.
- To ensure all adults access appropriate specialist training and encourage development to support young people and reach their full potential.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

TTG is aimed at young people who live in the London Borough of Camden or the surrounding boroughs, or attend local schools but due to medical or mental health challenges are unable to access mainstream education.

Pupils in TTG tend to present with complex and inter-related special educational needs that affect their ability to learn which could include any of the following:

- Significant social emotional vulnerability or mental health needs (SEMH) affecting their ability to thrive in mainstream school
- Severe and persistent attendance issues in association with significant anxiety, emotional vulnerability and/or school refusal

Although pupils' social communication, emotional and social development needs may impact on their presentation at times, due to its size and setting *TTG is not appropriate for any significant emotional and behavioural difficulties that either present a risk to others or impact on the ability of other members of the group to learn and make progress.*

WHO REFERS A CHILD FOR A THOMAS GROUP PLACE?

A range of professionals make enquiries to the school including –

- Camden Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Camden School Inclusion Team
- CAMHS
- Social Care
- Educational Psychologists
- School Pastoral Leaders or SENDCOs

All referrals or initial enquiries can be made by contacting:

Dylan Buckle
Camden School Inclusion Team
Dylan.Buckle@camden.gov.uk
Tel: 07880793039

THE SCHOOL DAY

From Monday to Thursday, the Thomas Group runs from 10am to 2.00pm. On Friday, Equine Therapy <https://strengthandlearningthroughhorses.org/> takes place.

CODE OF CONDUCT

To help us achieve our aims, the Thomas Group has adopted a simple code of conduct.

The Code of Conduct

Pupils and adults are expected to:

- be polite and not hurt or bully anyone through unkind or careless words or actions.
- listen when someone else is talking.
- work hard to achieve their best.
- switch mobile phones off during lessons
- dress appropriately for the learning situation

"The school provides an exceptional quality of education for pupils" OFSTED 2019

The Thomas Group has a proven track record in achieving positive outcomes for its young people. The progress that current students make is, in most cases, outstanding relative to their starting points. There is an emphasis on care, safety, health and an enjoyment of learning.

The provision offers a holistic approach to teaching and learning that takes account of each child's medical, psychological, social, emotional and educational needs. Children are provided with purposeful educational opportunities using a wide range of resources and are offered individually focused one-to-one and small group teaching opportunities.

The Thomas Group programme takes place over five days and is able to offer continued learning in the following areas:

- English
- Maths
- Science
- Arts Award
- Music
- History
- PSHE
- Drama therapy
- Equine Therapy

Particular emphasis is placed on learning Maths and English. Music lessons with a Music tutor take place once a week as well as Drama therapy. If pupils have a special interest or favourite subject not included above, this can often be accommodated.



The curriculum extends to an outdoor activity at the end of each week involving Equine Education (learning through horses) at the Edgware stables. Extra-curricular trips and visits take place where appropriate and sometimes in connection with the RFHCS

On a day-to-day basis, TTG provides class-based group teaching, opportunities for KS3 and KS4 self-supported study and one-to-one tuition where possible. A professional but very supportive and collaborative learning environment is created in the classroom, tailored to the needs of each individual child.

A detailed profile of each learner is built up and, through the use of pastoral assessment tools progress can be measured in a number of areas. Data is used to discover short-term and long-term targets for all pupils, which are regularly and systematically reviewed and supported by other agencies.

Data concerning pupil personal development is measured in two ways. Firstly, by teacher observation using our Pupil Profile system and secondly by a bespoke strength and difficulties questionnaire 'Looking at Myself and School'(LAMS).

RFHCS is a member of Camden Learning and has a commitment to regular Continuing Professional Development to ensure both teachers and teaching Assistants keep abreast of the latest good practice in teaching and learning.

Personal, Social and Health Education

Pupils participate in lessons that challenge them to think about themselves and the world they live in. They engage in lessons to assist in development of emotional literacy, and discuss ways to maintain positive well-being and avoid the common health risks. They are given a wider understanding of social and economic issues facing people in other countries and the world in general.

LUNCH TIMES @ THE THOMAS GROUP



Lunchtime 12 – 12.30pm

Most pupils bring lunch however we are a nut free environment and ask parents not to send in food containing nuts, fizzy drinks, chocolates and sweets.

We have to be particularly aware of specific pupil's health needs. For example, children with allergies, gastric problems, or eating disorders.

MEDICINES IN SCHOOL

During their Admission meeting, the child's needs are discussed and arrangements made for administration by the child or a member of staff. All parent(s)/carer(s) are asked to give their written permission for their child to be given non-prescription medicines during the school day e.g. for a headache. Administration of any medicines is logged with time, dosage, and reason

ARRANGEMENTS FOR PUPILS WITH DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The Thomas Group aims to –

- Identify each pupil's needs, assess those needs and ensure that the school works in partnership with the pupil, parent(s)/carer(s), medical team and any other agencies supporting the child
- Ensure that all pupils are provided with the support they need to access the curriculum and make progress commensurate with their ability.

The Thomas Group has specialist resources to support teaching and learning for pupils with a wide range of needs. Staff, have extensive experience in teaching children with learning difficulties and disabilities both RFHCS and in other settings.

The Thomas Group has well-established links and regular liaison with the RFHCS SENDCO, Speech and Language Therapist and Educational Psychologist.

Every pupil, including those with an EHCP who attends our provision for a period of time, will have their own Individual Learning Plan.

As a provision we are committed to being inclusive. During a pupil's admission meeting, a multi-disciplinary team will discuss the child's specific needs, any additional resources needed and who will provide them.

Konstam is wheelchair accessible with a lift; the school is on two levels, with wide doors and 3 disabled toilets. TTG is currently located on the first floor. The school

has a detailed Accessibility plan; covering the curriculum, teaching and learning and pupil participation.

WORKING WITH PARENT(S)/CARER(S) AND FAMILIES

The Director and staff welcome contact with parents/carers and families and are always happy to take time to talk over any issue. The Director has an initial discussion with parents/carers about the education and support their child will receive from the school.

Good communication with families, through personal contact and by telephone, is an essential part of our service.

Parents/carers of the Thomas Group pupils are kept regularly updated on their child's progress on a daily basis and throughout the week.

Progress is discussed more formally via a termly progress review meeting; attended by professionals from the child's mainstream school and other relevant agencies which ensures children experience consistency and continuity in their education and care.

ATTENDANCE

The expectations for pupils regarding attendance and punctuality are individually agreed with each child and their family at the Admission meeting. The school operates a daily morning call system to support both pupils and parents/carers with attendance.

Parents/carers of day pupils must telephone at the earliest opportunity to inform us of the reason a day-pupil is absent. Family holidays should be planned to occur outside of term time.

Often, with significant gaps in their education we believe that consistent attendance is the key goal for all pupils on the programme.

SAFEGUARDING

"The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Safeguarding arrangements are excellent."

"Parents report that they have every confidence in the school's work and know that their children are safe and well cared for. Safeguarding procedures are very well organised and secure." OFSTED

The school adheres to the London Child Protection Procedures, adopted by Camden Children, Schools and Families. Staff, have a responsibility to report concerns to a designated senior manager, who will take an appropriate course of action to ensure a pupil's safety and wellbeing. Although it is important to have a good relationship with families, it does not override the need to protect the child.

Parent(s)/carer(s) can obtain a copy of these procedures and the school's policy from the Royal Free Hive Senior Administration Officer or the Royal Free Hive School Website.

TRANSITIONS

Regular discussions take place around pupil progression including termly reviews with pupils, parents, schools and the team of supporting professionals. This involves careful thinking and planning before reaching a decision alongside and in the best interest of each pupil.

Some pupils transition to the Royal Free Hospital Children's School FUTURES programme, where they are given the opportunity to attend a 6-week induction in advance of their start date; some reintegrate into their main stream school or another alternative provision. Former pupils have also gained access to various colleges of further education and all destinations are tracked.