

St Thomas's Centre Curriculum Aims and Intent

Our pupils

The pupils of St Thomas's Centre all have additional social, emotional, or mental health learning needs. Some of the pupils also have additional SEND needs in other areas. Our pupils are aged 5- 16 and are taught over multiple sites in different provisions based on need.

Many of our pupils have experienced adverse childhood experiences and because of this, many have been absent from school for significant periods. As a result, many of our pupils will have lower levels of prior attainment, difficulties reading and writing, and gaps in their knowledge and understanding from their absence from mainstream school.

Our over- arching principles can be summed up in three concepts:

Ambition: most of our pupils will have experienced difficulty and rejection in mainstream schools and probably in their lives outside school as well. We must be ambitious for them at a point in their lives when they may have lost the ambition for themselves. Our expectations of what they can and should achieve need to be high.

Belonging: mainstream education does not suit our pupils for a variety of reasons. For some of them, once the crisis is past, or the need addressed, their time with us will be all they need. For some, they will stay with us. We must create a community to which they can belong and in which they experience unconditional positive regard.

Success: our pupils can and must be successful and this success may come in small steps. We must build the path to success for every child; helping them find pleasure in achievement as a pathway to future employment or further education.

These over-arching principles have informed our curriculum aims and intent.

Curriculum Aim

Our aim is to provide an excellent education for all our pupils, giving them opportunities to achieve and preparing them for success in life. We must therefore provide a curriculum which provides children with the core knowledge they need for success in education and later life, maximises their cognitive development, develops the whole person and the talents of the individual and allows all children to become active citizens and economically self-sufficient.

Curriculum Intent

Ambition

At St Thomas's we want all of our pupils to experience great learning. Underpinning this is our ambitious curriculum. This includes our common core academic subjects, based on The National Curriculum, and personalised vocational pathways, which are suited to pupils' individual needs. This ensures their potential can be realised and they can achieve success.

Belonging

We are committed to the principle that all pupils, regardless of individual circumstances or background, have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Through our ambitious curriculum, we teach our pupils the life skills necessary to help them belong and contribute to society.

Success

The curriculum is designed to ensure that all of our pupils develop the skills, knowledge and understanding, that together create 'great learning' and ultimately success.