Principal’s Address

Welcome to Thornhill College. I hope that you find this prospectus valuable and informative. Its purpose is to provide you with a practical guide to the spirit and learning culture of the College, in order to assist you in making decisions about your post-primary education.

We are an all girls’ Catholic Grammar School established by the Sisters of Mercy. Our ethos emphasises the traditional values of hard work, achievement, enjoyment of learning and service to our community. Over the years Thornhill has adapted to the needs of successive generations, always planning that students from Thornhill College will display learning and leadership in their spiritual, social and professional life roles.

Thornhill College has a tradition of achievement and success, established through high quality teaching and learning.

- It is a school for life - dedicated to preparing students to make a high contribution to society.
- It is a specialist school in Mathematics and Physics.
- There is an outstanding team of teaching and support staff committed to maximising the potential of every pupil.
- There is a clear emphasis on academic performance and achievement which places the College among the top performing schools in Northern Ireland.
- The school’s pastoral policy, deemed to be “outstanding” in a recent ETI report, emphasises high self-esteem, building on relationships with one’s self, with other students, teachers and the wider world.
- The school is multi-cultural in outlook and interacts with young people in other countries and with other cultures.
- The school attracts enthusiastic, well-motivated pupils who have lively enquiring minds, capable of critical and creative thinking.
- The school has a rich extra-curricular life.
- The school is highly regarded by the top universities which actively seek to attract students from the College.
- In 2009 the school was inspected by the Education and Training Inspectorate and received a very positive report.
- Finally, at Thornhill College we endeavour to meet the needs of every child entrusted to our care. We are proud of our school and of our pupils. Girls who come to Thornhill College can be assured of our dedication, our commitment and a great educational experience.

I hope that you enjoy your visit to our school.

Ms Marguerite Hamilton, Principal
The School Ethos

Thornhill College is a school rooted in the Mercy traditions. Education is approached in an holistic way so that students are encouraged to develop and nurture all the qualities and skills that will enable them to become independent, mature and sensitive adults, at ease with themselves, aware of the needs of others and ready to take their place in society.

In 2008, Thornhill College was designated a Specialist School in Mathematics and Physics. This reflects outstanding teaching and confident learning sustained by high levels of Coaching and Mentoring across the School Community in every subject area. A strategic emphasis on Mathematics and Physics encourages pupils’ enjoyment and sense of achievement in all areas of the school curriculum, resulting in a high level of “work readiness”.

Aims for students

Thornhill College, a Catholic Grammar School, promotes high achievement and learning for life. It aims to develop in its students:

- a real awareness of their dignity as children of God
- high self-esteem - respecting and valuing themselves and others
- high standards of academic achievement in all areas of the curriculum
- lively enquiring minds and a spirit of curiosity
- the ability to be self-motivated
- the ability to communicate effectively using a variety of media
- the ability to work both independently and collaboratively
- flexibility and adaptability in the world of work
- understanding of their responsibility towards the environment
- an appreciation of their cultural identity and of the diversity and interdependence of all people within the World Community

Board of Governors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Term</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairman</td>
<td>Mr John MacCrossan</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Ms Marguerite Hamilton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trustee Representatives</td>
<td>Rev Father Colum Clerkin</td>
<td>2017</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mrs Elizabeth McCloskey</td>
<td>2017</td>
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<td>Mrs Siobhan Porter</td>
<td>2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>DENI Representatives</td>
<td>Mrs Ann Toner</td>
<td>2017</td>
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<td>Mr Ciaran Hampson</td>
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<td>Mr Darren Ward</td>
<td>2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Representative</td>
<td>Mr Brian Douglas</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Representative</td>
<td>Mrs Eimear McCauley</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Ms Marguerite Hamilton</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Each Governor’s name is followed by the date on which his/her term of office expires.
Assessment Arrangements

The school’s policy is that all assessment must facilitate learning and be an integral part of all curricular activities. Currently, there are formal examinations twice yearly. The school reports to parents from these examinations which are also the basis for the annual Parent/Teacher Meetings. We continuously monitor, evaluate and review all assessment and reporting arrangements to ensure optimum curricular experience and achievement.

The School Day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:15</td>
<td>Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:25</td>
<td>Lesson 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Lesson 2</td>
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<td>10:35</td>
<td>Lesson 3</td>
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<td>11:10</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:25</td>
<td>Lesson 4</td>
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<td>12:00</td>
<td>Lesson 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:35</td>
<td>Lesson 6 (Lunch 1)</td>
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<td>12:55</td>
<td>Lesson 7 (Lunch 2)</td>
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<td>1:20</td>
<td>Lesson 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:30</td>
<td>Lesson 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:05</td>
<td>Lesson 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Access to Documents and Information

Copies of relevant documents, policies and other information, which may be inspected or obtained by parents or other members of the public, will be available from the school on request, in accordance with the Education (School Information and Prospectuses) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003. Appointments to talk to the Vice-Principal or Principal can be made through the main office.
Admission to Years 9 - 12

Pupils will be considered for enrolment provided that:

1. Their admission will not cause the school to exceed its enrolment number;
2. Their admission will not cause the particular year group to exceed the admissions number set for it, at its time of entry. This limitation will not apply to pupils recently come to reside in the area;
3. In the opinion of the Board of Governors, their admission would not prejudice the efficient use of the school’s resources.

Where there are more applicants who meet these criteria than there are places, preference will be given as follows:

(i) Applicants who held a place in a grammar school elsewhere and who have moved into the catchment area of the College.
(ii) Applicants whose sibling(s) are pupils of the College in the year in which the application is made.
(iii) Applicants who had originally applied for a place in the College and whose grade was equal to that of the minimum scored by those accepted that year.

Applications for admission at the start of a school year will normally be considered in late August. Applications for admission during the school year will be considered as soon as possible after the application is received. If at the time of consideration of applications there are more eligible applicants than places available, sub-criteria number 2 of the admissions criteria for entry to Year 8 will be applied.
Admission to Years 13 - 14

Criteria for entry to Year 13 (lower sixth)

1. Students who wish to study 3 AS subjects must have a minimum of 12 points* over 7 subjects.
2. Students who wish to study 4 AS subjects must have a minimum of 15 points* over 5 subjects at GCSE.
3. It is expected that all students who wish to study AS and A Level will have achieved at least a Grade C in English and Maths at GCSE.

*Points are allocated as follows:
A* = 4 points A = 3 points B = 2 points C = 1 point

Having fulfilled the above minimum requirements students who possess a Grade A or B in a subject at GCSE are entitled to study the subject at AS provided it is offered in the curriculum.

Account will be taken of special circumstances that may have affected performance in examinations.

In selecting pupils for entry to Year 13 preference will be given in order of priority to:

- Applicants qualifying for entry from Year 12 Thornhill College.
- Applicants from other schools which do not have a sixth form.
- Applicants from other schools.
- Applicants wishing to repeat Year 13 and to whom, in the opinion of the Board of Governors, special circumstances (including a realistic ambition to pursue a particular third level course of study) apply.

Each applicant to Year 13 will:

- Have received a report from the Principal of Thornhill College (or the Principal of the applicant’s previous school), indicating a good pattern of work, attendance, punctuality and behaviour.
- Give a parental undertaking of continuing support for the school aims.
- Accept the rules of the school and understand that progress is dependent on adherence to the school rules.
- Be expected to study at least 3 full A Levels or the equivalent. It will only be in very exceptional circumstances that a student will be permitted to drop one AS subject and take up another one in Year 14 (this will also be subject to timetable restrictions).

Criteria for entry to Year 14 (upper sixth)

An applicant will be considered for admission to Year 14 who:

- Has completed Year 13 to the satisfaction of the Principal (normally measured by satisfactory performance, achievement, attendance and conduct).
- Having arrived in the Derry area from outside the school’s traditional catchment area, has completed one year of post-GCSE study or its equivalent in another school, and has submitted a report from her Principal indicating a good pattern of work, attendance, punctuality and behaviour.
- Wishes to repeat Year 14 having been in Thornhill the previous year, having a recommendation from the Principal and claiming either special circumstances or having obtained a minimum of 2 Grades Es or equivalent.

In selecting pupils for entry to Year 14 preference will be given in order of priority to:

- Applicants who have completed Year 13 at Thornhill College to the satisfaction of the Principal (normally measured by satisfactory performance, achievement, 95% attendance and conduct).
- Applicants who, having arrived in the Derry area from outside the school’s traditional catchment area, have completed one year of post-GCSE study or its equivalent in another school and have submitted a report from her Principal indicating a good pattern of work, 95% attendance, punctuality, behaviour and achievement.
- Applicants wishing to repeat Year 14, having completed Year 14 in Thornhill College, and to whom, in the opinion of the Board of Governors, special circumstances (including a realistic ambition to pursue a particular third level course of study) apply and who are recommended by the Principal.

Further Information:
A pupil who satisfies the above requirements for entry to Year 13 or a new applicant to Year 14 will be considered for enrolment provided that:

- The school will not exceed its enrolment number as determined by Department of Education.
- There are sufficient places available within the year group and the relevant teaching groups.
The Curriculum

While fulfilling the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum and Assessment proposals, the curriculum in Thornhill College has been organised to provide a broad, balanced, relevant and coherent experience for each pupil. Its objectives are to develop the young person as an individual, as a contributor to society, to the economy and to the environment. Consequently our pupils’ learning experience provides opportunities to acquire and develop the cross-curricular skills of Literacy, Numeracy, ICT and Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities.

Key Stage 3
(Years 8 - 10)

All pupils follow a common programme for the first three years.

Subjects include:
- Art & Design
- Citizenship
- Drama
- Employability
- English
- Geography
- History
- Home Economics
- ICT
- Library Skills
- Mandarin Chinese (offered to one Year 10 class)

Modern Languages
(*2 languages are studied from French, Irish, & Spanish)
- Mathematics
- Personal Development & Social Education
- Physical Education
- Religious Education
- Science
- Technology and Design.

The school’s delivery of the Citizenship programme facilitates participation in activities relating to Education for Mutual Understanding.

Key Stage 4
(Years 11 - 12)

In these years pupils pursue GCSE courses. Students can select from two pathways depending upon their interests and career planning.

All pupils follow a common core of subjects comprising:
- Religious Studies
- English Language
- English Literature
- One Modern Language
- Mathematics
- Science*

(*Their Science course can consist of Double Award Science or Triple Award Science where all three science disciplines of Biology, Chemistry and Physics are studied at GCSE level.)

Pupils may study up to three subjects from a pool of options:
- Additional Mathematics
- Art and Design
- Business Studies
- Child Development
- Drama
- French
- Geography
- History
- Home Economics
- ICT
- Irish
- Music
- Physical Education
- Spanish
- Technology and Design.

All pupils in Years 11 and 12 have two periods of Physical Education and two timetabled Form Class periods per week.

Further information about curriculum provision is available from the school on request.
The Sixth Form (Years 13 and 14)

The vast majority of students who complete five years at this school obtain excellent grades at GCSE and return to Thornhill to take GCE A Level or AS Level or Applied GCE courses.

Subjects available are:

- Art & Design
- Biology
- Business Studies
- Business Studies (Applied-Double Award)
- Chemistry
- Drama & Theatre Studies
- English Literature
- French
- Further Mathematics
- Geography
- Government & Politics
- Health & Social Care (Applied-Double Award)
- History
- Home Economics
- ICT
- ICT (Applied)
- Irish
- Mathematics
- Music
- Physical Education
- Physics
- Psychology
- Religious Studies
- Science
- (Applied-Double Award)
- Spanish
- Statistics
- Technology & Design
- Technology & Design

Enrichment Programme

All Year 13 students follow a modular Enrichment programme. It is aimed at broadening the students’ perspective on life and provides opportunities to sample experiences beyond the curricular subjects studied at AS level.

An important core unit within the Enrichment programme is Relationships and Sexuality Education. This is delivered as a mandatory module and, with four other modules, makes up a programme of five compulsory units that all students take during two class periods each week.

During two other periods students are offered a choice of modules some of which run for the entire year, some for six weeks. This structure ensures that every student is able to develop interests, or pursue interests already developed, in a less formal environment than the classroom.

Available Modules:

- RSE (Compulsory)
- Company Programme (Young Enterprise Northern Ireland)
- Certificate of Personal Effectiveness
- Computer Programming (Java)
- Cookery / Food Hygiene
- Duke of Edinburgh/President’s Award
- Sport / Fitness
- Interview Skills
- Outreach to Primary Schools (Primary Maths)
- Outreach to Primary Schools (Faith Friends)
- Philosophy
- Pope John Paul II Award
- Something Special
- Third World Group
- Mandarin Chinese
- Hpat / UK CAT
- Eco Schools
- Heart Start.

Post GCSE Curriculum

In the interest of breadth and balance and depending upon GCSE achievement, it is envisaged that in the first year of A-level study, students may follow four subjects and then continue with three or four subjects to full A Levels.

It is expected that some students will combine A Levels with GCE Applied courses. Full GCE Applied Double Award courses will continue to be offered in Business Studies, Health and Social Care and Science. Information and Communication Technology and Business Studies are offered as Single Award GCE Applied courses.

The complete range of Physical Education activities is available to Sixth Year Pupils.
Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care permeates all aspects of school life and has, as its core priority, the well being of each student. We achieve this in an atmosphere of respect, trust and open communication among students, staff, parents and the wider community. We work to promote a caring and orderly environment which meets pupils’ needs and recognises their unique gifts and talents.

General Aims of Pastoral Care:
1. To support the spiritual, moral, emotional and intellectual development of each pupil.
2. To support the promotion of a school community where each individual feels respected and valued.
3. To support the promotion of a sense of achievement within the total experience of each pupil.
4. To support the delivery of a relevant, balanced and enjoyable educational experience for each pupil.
5. To support the development of attitudes through which individuals may become responsible members of society.
6. To support the development of links with parents, recognising our mutual responsibilities.

The structure of the pastoral system within the school is clearly identifiable and involves every member of staff. Special responsibilities are held by the Vice Principals, the Heads of School, Year Heads and Form Teachers. A key feature of the system is the Personal Development Programme which addresses issues specific to the Year group and includes Induction procedures, Health Education, Alcohol and Drug Awareness, Enterprise Skills and Building Self-esteem. The programmes promote healthy behaviours by encouraging students to be resilient, to develop their strengths and capacity to cope with pressure and deal with difficulties. We are particularly fortunate in the comprehensive range of outside agencies that assist us in the delivery of these programmes and in our counselling provision.

In Form Class each student is supported in setting and maintaining attendance and academic targets which will encourage and challenge her to reach her true potential and develop the skills necessary for lifelong learning. A key feature of the target setting and mentoring process is “knowing myself as a learner”, which helps them to focus on building a personal profile of their skills and capabilities. This process involves close collaboration between each student and her form teacher and encourages the student to take greater responsibility for her own learning.

Positive Behaviour Management

On admission, each girl is given a copy of the school’s Positive Behaviour Management Policy. School rules are clearly stated in this, and also in the Day Book. It is our policy to seek to create an ordered atmosphere in which education in its broadest sense can happen. Pastoral Care places emphasis on developing a sense of responsibility to others while promoting personal growth. Most breaches of discipline are dealt with by referral within the Pastoral System. Where a serious breach of discipline occurs, a sanction such as detention, community service or suspension will be put in place. Should this occur, parents will be contacted automatically. In very serious instances the School reserves the right to exclude pupils.

Parents may contact the school, by phone or in writing, to obtain copies of the school’s Anti-Bullying, Child Protection and Special Educational Needs policies. Concerns about a child’s safety should be reported directly to the designated teacher.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

The approach to education in Thornhill College is holistic. We endeavour to ensure that all our pupils achieve and reach their full and true potential. Thornhill College embraces Inclusion, striving to ensure that all our pupils achieve and reach their full and true potential. Thornhill College embraces Inclusion, striving to ensure that all our pupils achieve and reach their full and true potential.

In keeping with the Code of Practice for Northern Ireland, a policy for Special Educational Needs (SEN) is in place. The SEN Co-ordinator, working closely with her team and with Form Teachers, is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the policy. The team is presently made up of the Learning Support Teacher, Heads of School, Heads of Year and Learning Support Assistants. Assessments are put in place to identify pupils with special educational needs. Information and concern from parents are also central to the process. Where a pupil has a statement of special educational needs, this information and arrangements to address her needs are communicated to all staff, teaching and ancillary, with whom that pupil has contact.

Pupils with specific learning difficulties are supported by the Learning Support Teacher, while those experiencing general difficulty are assisted by the Head of School and Head of Department, working with class teachers to develop strategies and materials to meet their needs. Departments continue to develop learning approaches to take account of the range of pupils’ ability within each class.

In operating the Special Needs Policy, the SEN Co-ordinator calls on the expertise and support of WELB personnel. Support at all stages can only be effective when it builds upon parental involvement. Parents are involved at all stages of the implementation of the Code of Practice.
Careers Programme (CEIAG)

Thornhill College is committed to preparing our students for the rapidly changing skills based global economy. CEIAG plays a pivotal role in the life of the school. Through high quality careers education, information, advice and guidance we enable students to make informed and realistic decisions at key transition points along their career pathways.

Careers Education & Information

Lessons have been developed to promote self-awareness, career exploration and career management. Through a series of taught lessons students are introduced to Personal Career Planning at Key Stage 3 which involves identifying skills & qualities, the process of target setting, action planning, researching career options and the changing world of work. This process continues throughout Key Stage 4 with a firm focus on Post-16 options. The Year 12 students particularly enjoy the annual Special Career Awareness Day where they can benefit from the first-hand experience of a range of guest speakers from diverse backgrounds within the world of work.

Timetabled careers lessons are provided in 6th Form where students are engaged in lessons, seminars, university talks, work related experiences and activities exploring the ever-changing labour market. The focus is on the continued development of independent learners. Students are encouraged to reflect on their achievements and after researching the latest labour market information, to make realistic and informed decisions about their Post-18 pathway. All A-level students are given the opportunity to attend Open Days.

Careers Advice & Guidance

At key transition points all students are offered access to individual and impartial careers advice and guidance from experienced careers teachers and Careers Service advisors. This is particularly important when students are making final GCSE and AS subject choices. Individual interviews for A-level students in Year 13 and Year 14 assist our students in making an informed decision. Careers teachers are available to support students and parents after examination results in August.

Work-Related Learning

On offer at A-level are short courses such as ‘Interview Skills’, ‘Medicine & Dentistry Applications’, ‘Vocational Areas – Teaching & Nursing Support’. Professionals from a variety of career areas support our students during these programmes. Many students avail of work experience and work shadowing opportunities offered throughout A-level and all of our students participate in a carefully planned week of work experience at the start of Year 14. With the support of staff, the girls are encouraged to arrange their own placements in line with their chosen career route. At the end of the placement the employer provides a written report about each participant. Each student is encouraged to assess her own performance and use it to inform her own career planning.

Throughout school our students are provided with opportunities and experiences to develop essential employability and life skills in order to become effective citizens and employees within the world of work.

Religious Education

As a Catholic school, we understand that parental preference for Thornhill College implies a commitment to the school’s Christian ethos and to the Religious Education programme provided in this college. However, the school welcomes pupils from other faith traditions and will make the necessary arrangements to accommodate a person’s faith commitment.

Grounded in the Mercy tradition of education, we see religious faith and practice as something which is an integral part of the whole school experience of our students and we aim to foster and promote faith development throughout the entire curriculum and school community.

The aims of the Religious Education Programme are:

- To provide students with opportunities for daily prayer and to encourage regular participation in sacramental and liturgical worship.
- To enable students to grow in knowledge and understanding of their faith, with a commitment to live by its spirit and precepts.
- To promote the Christian values of compassion, dignity and mutual respect.
- To encourage students to strengthen their basis for making well-informed moral choices and to encourage them to place God at the centre of their lives.

Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE)

This is a whole school issue and is covered in many subject and pastoral areas. However the Religious Education, Pastoral and Science departments play a significant role in the implementation of this programme. Relevant topics are introduced gradually over seven years and the content is appropriate to the developmental stage of each year group. Emphasis is placed on treating topics in a tactful and sensitive manner and students are encouraged to understand that their sexuality is a gift from God which encompasses the whole person, body, mind, emotions and soul.
The emphasis is “Sport for All” where participation and social interaction are the key issues. The primary aim of the Physical Education programme is to offer a wide but balanced range of physical activities which will stimulate enjoyment, create a sense of achievement and increase confidence.

The main objectives throughout the programme are to nurture a positive attitude to the activities performed individually and with others; to encourage, assess and evaluate the student’s own and each other’s ability; to guide towards the development of a sense of responsibility, discipline, co-operation and fair play in relation to themselves and others, so that students will establish a healthy sense of competition.

PE Curricular Activities include:

- Netball
- Basketball
- Badminton
- Gymnastics
- Athletics
- Health Related Fitness
- Rounders
- Fitness Suite
- Boxercise
- Zumba
- Yoga
- Rugby

Extra-curricular Activities include:

- Netball
- Cross-Country
- Athletics
- Gaelic Football
- Camogie
- Soccer
- Tag Rugby
- Fitness Club
- Fitness Suite
- Sailing
A wide range of extra-curricular activities is available. Meetings are normally held weekly and pupils are encouraged to participate in these, in order to extend and complement the statutory curriculum, and to broaden their learning experience.

Such activities include:

- Netball
- Cross-Country
- Athletics
- Gaelic Football
- Camogie
- Soccer
- Tag Rugby
- Fitness Club
- Fitness Suite
- Eco Schools Award Group
- Third World Group
- The Mini Company
- Health Promotion Team
- Year 8 French Club
- Year 8 Spanish Club
- Year 8 Art Club
- Year 10 Mural Painting Group
- Ceili Club
- Teaghlach Cholmcille
- Year 8 Drama Club
- Debating & Public Speaking
- The Fictionaries Writing Club
- Student Council
- Politics Society (Years 12-14)
- Year 8 Choir
- Junior Choir
- Chamber Choir
- Senior Choir
- Year 8 Orchestra
- School Orchestra
- Senior Recorder Ensemble
- Junior Recorder Ensemble
- Traditional Music Group
- Guitar Club
- African Drumming Club
- Credit Union
- H.A.N.D.S.
- Christmas Show Committee
- Young Enterprise
- Pope John Paul II Award
- Duke Of Edinburgh Award
- President's Award
- Year 8 Science Club
- First Lego League
- Peer Mentoring (Maths)
- Calligraphy Club
- Sentinus Engineering Scheme
- Technology & Design Club
- Stem Club
- Year 10 Cookery Club
Major School Events and Activities

- Summer School for new Year 8 Pupils (End of June/Early July)
- Service of Dedication and School Mass at the start of the school year
- Year 8 Welcome Service of Light and Information Evening
- Year 11/13 Reach Across’ Team-building activities
- Prize-giving where achievements, academic and non-academic are acknowledged
- N.I. Enterprise Week Christmas ‘Craft Fair’ (organised by PTA)
- Christmas Carol Service and Liturgies
- Christmas Variety Show – an opportunity for some hidden talents to be discovered
- Penitential Service
- Easter Liturgies
- Year 9 Ecumenical Church Visits
- Year 10 Ambassador of St. Paul Award
- Year 12 LIFE Conference
- Year 8 and Year 11 RSE/Love for Life
- Faith Friends Programme
- Pope John-Paul II Award Programme
- School Mission and Retreats
- Year 14 Liturgy Prefects’ Retreat
- Year 12/14 End of Year Mass

- Open Day
- Year 8-10 Socials (organised by PTA)
- Year 10 Science Fair
- Year 10 'Shakespeare Festival’
- European Day of Languages
- Educational visit to France in the context of Language Learning
- Educational and Cultural visits to London, Europe and America
- Irish Language courses in the Donegal Gaeltacht
- St Patrick’s Day Ceili
- Blood Donation Sessions
- Health Awareness Campaigns and Talks

- Exhibition of GCSE and A Level Art and Design
- Years 9/10 Student Council Elections
- Year 10/12 Careers Options Evenings
- Year 12 Special Careers Day
- Year 14 Work Experience
- Sports Day
- Sports Prize-giving – to acknowledge those who excel in sports
- Fund-raising events for a variety of charities
- Whole School and External Examinations

Pupils also participate in a variety of competitions and events, on a school, county, provincial, national and international level.

For example:

- Biology Field Trips
- Biology, Chemistry and Physics Olympiad Competitions (Belfast)
- Royal Society of Chemistry Schools Analyst Competition
- First Lego Science League
- Salthers Festival of Chemistry (Year 8)
- Bombardier Flight Experience Competition (Year 8)
- Loughs’ Agency Classification (Year 8)
- Lough’s Agency Fish Dissection (Year 9)
- Culture Tech (Years 8-10)
- Seagate Real World Science Conference (Year 10)
- Seagate Environmental ‘Think Act’ Event
- DUPONT ‘Dare Bigger’ Stem Collaboration
- QUB ‘Dawn til Dusk’ Environmental Workshop
- SENTINUS-Engineering Education Scheme
- SENTINUS Interview Skills
- St Columb’s College Careers Fair
- Past Pupil Talks on Careers and University Courses
- Past Pupil Career Presentations to Years, 10, 13 and 14
- University Talks (Year 14)
- University Open Day Visits (Year 14)
- Maths LASCO Competition
- Maths Week Ireland
- Happy Puzzle Company
- Young Enterprise Competition and Workshops
- Proshare Student Investor Portfolio Challenge
- Target 2.0 Interest Rate Challenge Competition Online
- Stock Market Challenge
- Bank of Ireland Dragon’s Den Competition
- Student Council Elections
- Student Council
- Prejudice Face on - Year 10 Citizenship
- Ulster Schools Athletic Series (Year 9)
- Ulster Cross-Country Championship
- Ulster Secondary Schools Swimming Gala
- North-West Schools Swimming Gala
- IFA Indoor and Outdoor Football Tournaments
- CILT-A Level French Debating competition (Year 14)
- Thornton Cup Project Competition in French (Years 8-10)
- Onatti Theatre Productions in French and in Spanish
- Talk from the Spanish Dept. QUB (Year 13/14)
- ‘Scith Nic Lochlainn’ Irish Public Speaking Competition
- Feis Doire Cholmille (Music, Irish, Drama)
- Ulster Orchestra Workshops
- City of Derry International Choral Festival
- Spring Concert
- Summer Piano Recitals
- Music trip to Barry’s (Years 8-10)
- Schools and Colleges Poetry Competition
- ‘Live Theatre’ Theatre Visits (Years 11-14 Drama)
- BP Ultimate Stem Challenge
- St. Mary’s Limavady Technology Competition
- Your Life ‘Formula 100’ Stem Competition
- Image Business Systems 3D Printing Competition
- Derry City Council ‘Designing Christmas Decorations from Recycled Materials’
- Geography Field Trips (Years 8, 9, 10 and 12 and 13)
- Art Department Christmas Picture Competition (Years 8-9)
- Art & Design Mental Health Poster Competition (Year 11)
- Credit Union Art Competition (Year 10)
- Sorrell Foundation Art and Design Saturday Club (KS4)
- NWRC Art Portfolio Building (Year 14)
- ‘Something Special’ Link Initiative (Year 13)
- Health Promoting Schools Competitions
- Eco Schools Competitions and Events
- First Trust School Bank Challenge

Pupils also participate in a wide-range of fund-raising activities for local and global charities such as:

- Foyle Hospice
- St. Vincent de Paul Society
- Sisters of Mercy Mission in Africa
- Red Cross Shoebox Appeal
- H.A.N.D.S. (Help the Aged and Needy in Society)

Young Enterprise Group selling their merchandise at the Christmas Craft Fair

Year 11 Mental Health Poster Competition
The Extended Schools Programme

The concept of the Extended School has become part of government policy in an attempt to provide a holistic environment for young people to learn and develop skills that will enhance their life chances. Traditionally, Thornhill College has provided opportunities that allow its students to remain beyond the school day so that they may use facilities that they may not normally have access to. In addition to the activities already in place through the Extended Schools Programme i.e. the provision of ICT facilities at 8.30 a.m. and breakfast in the cafeteria, we offer short courses in a range of activities designed to add value to the experience of the students, parents and the community. Support classes for parents in key areas of the curriculum, as well as courses of a more recreational nature are popular and well attended. Thornhill College is situated in a semi-rural location, so the Extended Schools Initiative provides vital finance necessary for transport costs. Students from all areas are able to avail of many clubs and societies that offer opportunities for the acquisition of life-long skills.

The Homework Club

The Homework Club operates with full transport for three of the five afternoons each week from 3.45 until 5.00 p.m. and offers a diverse and comprehensive spectrum of pastimes and pursuits. At present, the school library is the vibrant focus of activities where students are able to access resource material and receive guidance, help and encouragement from members of teaching, library and support staff. The facilities offered are of great value to students who wish to research and write assignment work, carry out investigations or simply seek a motivating environment in which to complete their homework. The girls have access to the ICT suites where they are assisted and looked after at all times. Peer mentoring for Numeracy and Literacy, where Year 13 students offer support to younger students, is also available.

Complementing the academic curriculum, a range of activities is offered for Yr8 students, including:

- Art work
- Dance/Drama
- Science, Technology and STEM Clubs
- A variety of Sporting activities, such as Netball, Cross-Country, Athletics, Camogie, Gaelic
- Debating and Public Speaking, Book Club,
- Fitness Club
- Yr 8 Choir;
- Language Clubs: - French, Spanish, Irish
- Ceili Dancing, Traditional Music Club

Those students who stay for the after school activities are provided with a snack in the school cafeteria at the end of the school day for which they pay a token sum. Transport is provided at 4:55pm to take students to the Ulsterbus depot to catch connecting transport while other buses leave the school and travel throughout the city dropping girls at a location close to home.

The Summer School

The Summer School runs for two days at the beginning of July for the new Year 8 pupils. The main aims of the programme are to smooth the transition from primary school to Thornhill College, provide pupils with a positive introduction to their new school and to raise self-esteem and confidence. A wide variety of fun activities, delivered and supervised by teachers, support staff, Junior Class mentors and sixth year girls, is on offer. These include Drama, Dance, a range of Sporting activities, Science, Technology, Calligraphy, Cookery and Creative Activities. Lunch is provided in the cafeteria at mid-day. The Summer School has proved a huge success. Pupils enjoy the many activities offered; they make many new friends and feel more confident about the move to their new school in September.

The Student Council

The Student Council is composed of representatives from every form class in Years 9, 10, 11 and 12. The councillors are elected annually by their class colleagues. The aim of the council is to provide the pupils with a forum through which their views can be expressed and acted upon. In general the councillors have been involved in a great variety of activities during the last school year; they met with members of the Senior Management Team and other relevant individuals to discuss important issues such as the use of mobile phones, school uniform, the school scarf, school meals and the provision of revision classes at key times in the school year. They have participated in a number of projects organised by Children in Crossfire, Derry City Council and the Verbal Arts Centre. Projects included “Prejudice Face On” which was an opportunity to confront prejudice in all its forms culminating in a presentation in the City Hotel. Additionally in 2014 the Year 10 and 11 Student Councils organised and coordinated the visit of the NI Children’s Commissioner, Patricia Lewsley Mooney to Thornhill College. This visit involved extending invitations to a variety of Derry Schools and proved most informative and worthwhile.
Examinations Policy

Parents of Year 8 pupils receive copies of the school’s policy on Positive Behaviour Management on enrolment. Copies of other policies are available to parents from the school on request.

Homework Policy

Homework is an integral and vital element of the teaching and learning experience providing invaluable information about pupil progress and facilitating communication between teacher and parent.

The aims of the homework policy are:

- to inform teaching and enhance learning
- to inform teachers about pupils’ learning and progress
- to revise, consolidate and complete class work
- to provide regular, meaningful feedback to pupils and information to parents
- to encourage pupils to take an active and responsible role in their learning, assessment and achievement
- to develop pupils’ independent study and self-evaluation skills
- to further facilitate parental involvement in their daughters’ learning.

At the commencement of the school year pupils in Years 8-12 are issued with a Day Book in which they record daily homeworks which have been set by teachers. Parents are asked to check the Day Book and to sign it when they are satisfied that homework is completed.

Recommended times for homework:

- Pupils in Years 8-10: 2 hours maximum per evening
- Pupils in Years 11-12: at least 2 hours per week per subject
- Pupils in Years 13-14: at least 5 hours per week per subject (A-Level)

External Qualifications and Examination Boards:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AS/A2 Examination Boards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCEA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AQA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Science, English Literature, Physical Education, Psychology, Sociology, Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDXCEL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Health and Social Care, Drama &amp; Theatre Studies, Technology and Design</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GCSE Examination Boards

- AQA: Drama, Physical Education, Statistics

Other Qualifications

- CCEA: Key Stage 3 - English, Mathematics, ICT
- Key Skills: Application of Number, Information and Communication Technology, Communication, Certificate of Personal Effectiveness

Successful A Level students 2014
Charging Policy

The policy of the Board of Governors is to charge for:

1. Board and lodgings on residential visits.
2. Costs associated with the provision of individual tuition on a musical instrument whether inside or outside school hours, unless it is provided as an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination or to meet the requirements of Article 11 (1) (b) of the Education Reform Order (NI) Order 1989.
3. The cost of entering a pupil for a non-approved examination.
4. The cost of entering a pupil to re-sit an approved public examination where no further preparation has been provided by the School.
5. The cost of entering a pupil for a second approved public examination in the same academic year when preparation by the school enables her to take more than one examination in that subject (often referred to as double entry).
6. The cost of entry for any module taken by a pupil for a second or subsequent time.
7. The cost of re-scrutiny of examination results if parents request such re-scrutiny.
8. The cost of ingredients or materials in practical subjects such as Art and Design, Technology and Design and Home Economics.
9. Optional extra activities which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours and are additional to the education provided by the School for the purpose of preparing pupils for an approved public examination or meeting the requirements of Article 11 (1) (a) and (b) of the 1989 Order. Participation in such activities will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charge.
10. The cost of replacing or repairing school property, including text books, where loss, damage or breakages are the result of a pupil’s behaviour or lack of due care.
11. The costs associated with the provision of transport to and from school, where facilitated by the school.

Remission Policy

The charge for board and lodgings costs of a residential visit will be remitted in the case of pupils whose parents are in receipt of Income Support or Family Credit, if the education provided on that visit must otherwise be provided free, that is, if the activity takes place wholly or mainly in school hours and/or is required in order to fulfil statutory duties in relation to the Northern Ireland Curriculum or Religious Education.

Parental Contribution

In order to provide activities and facilities which extend and enrich pupils’ experience while at school, parents are asked to make a voluntary contribution of £50.00 per year, per family.

Drugs Policy

In response to our shared concern at a local and national level, we believe we have a duty to inform and educate young people about the consequences of drug use and misuse. Fundamental to our school values and practice is the principle of sharing the responsibility for education of young people with parents/guardians by keeping them informed and involved at all times.

Drugs Education is delivered within the Pastoral Programme as part of a pupil’s life skills and preparation for adulthood. It takes account of the age of the pupils and local circumstances and is provided at regular intervals in order to maximise its effectiveness.

To provide effective Drugs Education, we work with a number of external agencies. Training is provided for Form Teachers in the delivery of the Drugs Programme.

We aim:

- To enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and enhancing skills.
- To outline clear procedures for dealing with a drug-related incident and to define roles and responsibilities in the event of such an incident.
- To minimise the opportunities for substance misuse within the school.
- To communicate effectively with parents/guardians so as to heighten their awareness of drugs related issues and enlist their co-operation in dealing with these.
School Uniform

Uniform helps pupils identify with the School and assists in creating a sense of community. The importance of pupils presenting themselves well cannot be over emphasised.

Parents will appreciate that the general public make judgements about a school on the basis of how the pupils look and behave while wearing school uniform. Co-operation in the maintenance of good uniform standards and behaviour is greatly appreciated.

School Uniform (Years 8-14)

Green skirt
White blouse
School tie
Green blazer
Grey jumper with striped neckband
Strong, plain black flat-heeled shoes
Silver grey knee-length socks or plain black tights

Optional
Black waterproof jacket
School scarf
White summer blouse

PE Uniform
White polo shirt with school logo*
Training shoes
White sports socks
Bottle green school tracksuit bottoms*
Either - School hooded sweatshirt*
School tracksuit top*

The blazer is compulsory wear.
* These items are sold only in the school

School Meals

Mid Day Meal
The school currently offers a cafeteria service where pupils select items on a self-service basis. We operate a ‘cashless swipe card’ system. Every pupil is issued with a card which carries all necessary personalised information. Snacks are also available at lunchtime and breakfast is served in the mornings.

Pupils who bring packed lunches eat these in areas designated for this purpose.

Break Time
Pupils bringing a mid-morning snack to school will have an opportunity to eat this in the classroom at break-time. As the holders of the Health Promoting School Gold Award, we encourage pupils to follow a healthy diet by bringing water, rather than a fizzy drink, and fruit.
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Mrs Cathy Mallon BA PGCE MA PQH

Chairman of the Board of Governors:
Mr John MacCrossan