



The Thomas Hepburn Community School

A Specialist Science College

Prospectus 2010

“The Thomas Hepburn Community

School

is a good school”

OFSTED June 2008



Dear Parent/Carer

We have three very clear aims for the children who come to our school. We want them to be:

1. Successful learners, who enjoy learning and make progress
2. Confident individuals, who are able to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
3. Responsible Citizens, who make a positive contribution to their local community and to society

We believe that every child is entitled to “taste” the confidence which comes with success. We have a strong tradition of success and believe that success comes in many different forms, however, we are very proud of our strong tradition of improving examination results. Due to our good achievement at GCSE we have been among the top 200 most improved schools nationally for the last 3 years.

“The school is successfully living up to its motto of, Learning, Achieving, Succeeding.”

OFSTED (June 2008)

We know that choosing the right secondary school for your child is an important decision. Transition from primary school to secondary school can be both exciting and daunting for children. As a parent/carer you will want to make the right choice for your child. We work in partnership with parents/carers and children to ensure a smooth and effective transition into our school. We build on the many great experiences of primary education to equip your child for life long learning and adult life. The Thomas Hepburn Community School offers an 11-18 provision. We are currently in the process of developing a brand new building to further enhance our delivery of a first class, cutting edge, 21st Century education which encourages your child to aim high.

We know you and your child will have many questions about our school. We hope that this booklet gives you the answers you need. If you need to know more then please do not hesitate to contact us. We will be more than happy to talk to you and discuss why we are the first choice for your child.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Barker

Headteacher



An Open Evening
at
The Thomas Hepburn Community School
A Specialist Science College
Wednesday 16th September 2009
6:00pm

We would like to invite you to an Open Evening where we will introduce parents/carers and children to The Thomas Hepburn Community School.

Current students and our staff will be there to talk to you and tell you about the many strengths, achievements and exciting new developments planned for our school.

It will be a great opportunity for you to ask all your important questions and to find out more about us.

Come along and join us, bring your children and learn more about The Thomas Hepburn Community School – we are no ordinary school.





Admission arrangements

The admission limit of The Thomas Hepburn Community School is currently 160 students. There were 142 admission requests for the intake of September 2009 for Year 7. If you wish your child to have a place for September 2010 in Year 7 it is important that you put The Thomas Hepburn Community School as your first choice. Please read Gateshead Local Authority's Admissions Policy carefully. This is available at www.gateshead.gov.uk or a copy can be collected from our school central office.

Achievement

The achievement of students in our school is good and improving. This can be seen in our recent examination results.

Examination results 2008

Key Stage 3 Results 2008 (Previous year in brackets)

	% Students gaining NC level 5+
English	67% (64%)
Maths	68% (73%)
Science	69% (72%)

** Parents/Carers should note that 2008 was the year where the Government experienced national problems with test marking at Key Stage 3*

Key Stage 4 Results 2008 (Previous year in brackets)

% of students gaining 5 GCSE passes at grade C or above	53% (48%)
As above but including Maths and English	36% (30%)

"Students enjoy going to school; attendance is improving and behaviour is good."
OFSTED June 2008

"There are high levels of application in lessons with students very willing to participate."
OFSTED June 2009



On entry to our school your child will become part of a tutor group with a group tutor who becomes a very important person to him/her. Your child will meet with his/her group tutor every day. They will track your child's progress in school as well as monitoring attendance, welfare, well being and achievement.

Each Year Group is led by an Achievement Leader and supported by a full time Learning Mentor. The Achievement Leader for Year 7 is Mrs Elaine Myers. If you have any questions or concerns she is the first point of contact for your child.

Every child in our school has a set of personal targets. These targets are based on how well your child achieved in primary school. In addition to attainment targets we also set attendance targets. Targets are recorded and tracked in a Student Planner. We expect children to carry planners in every lesson. Your child will need to bring his/her Student Planner every day to record any progress or homework. It will also be used by school staff to award rewards. This is an important book and helps your child to be organised.

As a parent/carer you will receive a written report detailing your child's progress every year. We also hold an annual Parent/Carer Reporting Day. This is an opportunity for an in-depth individual discussion with your child's tutor to discuss progress at school.

You do not have to wait for this day if you have any questions or concerns. We are always happy to talk to parents/carers.

We know that your child can only achieve highly if he/she is in school every day. We know how important good attendance at school is to achieving high examination grades and to securing the best opportunities beyond school. Our school has a rising trend in attendance and we work in partnership with parents/carers to help children come to school every day. We know that good attendance is essential if your child is to achieve highly in school. Having a good education will help to give your child the best possible start in life.



We track attendance very carefully. We ask you to let us know if your child is going to be absent. If we do not know why your child is absent we will contact you. If appropriate an Education Welfare Officer (EWO) may visit you to help you get your child back to school.



We believe homework is very important and contributes to a good education; it reinforces classroom learning and helps to develop independent learning skills. You can help your son/daughter by organising a comfortable space for her/him to work in each night. If your child does not understand what to do it is important that you encourage him/her to ask. In an OFSTED inspection of our Science Department (June 2009) the students said:

“.....teachers are approachable and always willing to help.”

Our school meets the individual needs of every child including those who are gifted and talented or those who have special educational needs. We are an inclusive school and want every child to feel welcome and valued. We work with a range of support agencies and partners to ensure that everyone can access appropriate learning within our school community.

Our new school building, which is due for completion in 2011, will be fully disabled accessible and incorporate all the latest technologies and best practice in facilitating learning in the 21st Century. Every classroom will be equipped with the latest wireless technology as well as hardwired computer facilities including interactive white boards in all learning spaces. Every child entering The Thomas Hepburn Community School will be given his/her own laptop mini-book computer from September 2009.

The new school will be equipped with a wide range of different learning spaces including a state of the art Science and Mathematics warehouse and a range of fully equipped ICT rooms. We will have a four court sports hall, an activity studio and a sports science laboratory as well as a media studies suite.

One of the most striking features of the new school is our large open atrium space leading into an open plan, spacious cafeteria and a brand new 300 seat school hall. Our open plan Learning Resource Centre dominates the front section of the second floor.



The outdoor facilities are also extremely impressive, with many opportunities for taking learning into the outdoors.

To see more visit the “fly through” of our new building on the school website at www.thomashepburn.org.uk.



Keeping our students safe

We know that when you send your child to school you want him/her to be safe and cared for. We see ourselves as a family – the Purple Family. We care about our students and we want them all to succeed. Every child at The Thomas Hepburn Community School matters. OFSTED (June 2008) recognised this when they said

“...the staff know the students well. The school has a positive ethos in which students are nurtured.”

If you, or your child, has any concerns or worries we want to know about them. We will work in partnership with you to resolve them.

Many students worry they will be bullied when they arrive at secondary school. This can be quite frightening. We take this fear very seriously and we talk to our students about bullying. We know that keeping this issue in the open is the best way to confront bullying. We also know that bullying is rare. At The Thomas Hepburn Community School we deal with any bullying issue immediately. All we ask is that if you suspect your child is the victim of bullying you contact the school straight away.

We know that many young people carry mobile phones. We would ask that during lessons phones are switched off. Children should not use any camera or video facility on a phone within school. Children bring phones into school at their own risk – we would not advise that any expensive item be brought into school.

All students who will be joining The Thomas Hepburn Community School in September 2010 will be invited to attend an Induction Week in Summer Term 2010. During this week your son/daughter will experience a Year 7 timetable and experience life in secondary school. This week will give your child the opportunity to

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become familiar with the school site, the teachers and other members of staff and to feel confident about the move to Secondary school.

Induction week is only the culmination of a series of transition activities operating throughout Key Stage 2 which help prepare your child for the big move from Primary to Secondary school. Our transition activities begin while your child is in Year 4 and slowly build up across Years 5 and 6. We also offer a residential summer school to all students transferring to us in the Summer holidays. This is a great chance to enjoy an outdoor pursuits activity adventure while getting to know all your new Secondary school friends and meeting some of your new teachers.

At The Thomas Hepburn Community School all students are expected to stay on the School site at lunchtime. The canteen serves a variety of hot and cold food, or your child can bring a packed lunch. A school meal currently costs £1.80. We operate a swipe card system. We will issue your child with a swipe card, which has a unique identifier number. Your son/daughter will use this swipe card in our cashless cafeteria. Money can be loaded onto the card at various cash loader machines around school. If your child is entitled to free school meals, money will be credited to his/her swipe card on a daily basis. We would encourage all families who are eligible to take advantage of free school meals. If you need advice on how to claim this benefit then please contact our central school office.

We also serve a free breakfast between 7:30am and 8:40am. All students are welcome to eat a healthy breakfast in school. Research shows that a healthy breakfast improves a child's concentration.

We run a full programme of extra-curricular activities. We have many sporting teams. We have our own big band and various musical groups. We offer a variety of residential experiences both in this country and abroad. We run the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and have a great track record of success. We are also a community school offering many different opportunities for the local community to work with us, or use our school site. Your child will be given every opportunity to take part in a wide range of activities beyond the classroom.





What subjects are studied in Year 7?

In Year 7 students are banded according to ability. They are then divided into teaching groups. We run a two week 50 lesson timetable. Each lesson lasts for one hour. In Year 7 this breaks down to:

Art	2
Design & Technology	4
English	8
Geography	3
History	3
ICT	2
Learn to Learn Skills	1
Mathematics	8
Modern Foreign Languages	4
Music	2
Physical Education	4
Religious Education	2
Science	7

The Thomas Hepburn Community School follows the Religious Education (RE) syllabus agreed by the Local Authority. RE forms a fundamental and valuable part of the school curriculum. We provide our students with the essential knowledge, skills, understanding and insights to appreciate the nature of religion, enhancing their personal search for meaning, purpose and value in life. Emphasis is placed on Christianity as the faith that has most affected our culture, whilst taking account of the teachings and practices of other main religions.

Parents/Carers have the right to withdraw their children from RE lessons and Acts of Worship should they so wish. If you have any questions regarding this issue, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Personal, Social and Health Education/Citizenship is delivered through tutorial work.

Year 7 is only the beginning and we hope to see your child stay with us until the end of Year 13. From September 2009 we are providing courses for Post 16 students on The Thomas Hepburn Community School site.



Our school day

Our day starts at 8.50am, so students should be at school by no later than 8.45am. Students finish their formal lessons at 3.15pm.

The Library (Learning Resource Centre), with its ICT facilities, is open from 8:30am until 4:30pm Monday to Thursday, 8:30am to 4:00pm on Friday. Other after-school activities offer children the opportunity to broaden their educational experience.

Lesson times during the day are as follows:

8:50am	Morning Registration in Tutor Groups
9:00am	Lesson 1
10:00am	Lesson 2
11:00am	Break time
11:15am	Lesson 3
12:15pm	Tutor time/Assembly (Early lunch for one year group on each day of the week)
1:15pm	Lesson 4
2:15pm	Lesson 5
3:15pm	End of lesson time
	Extra curricular activities



Uniform

We believe that our school uniform helps to achieve a sense of belonging and pride in our school. It also helps to prepare a child's mind for learning. We expect all students to attend school in the correct uniform. The Thomas Hepburn Community School uniform consists of:

- White polo shirt
- Purple sweatshirt with school badge (Year 11 select the sweatshirt colour on an annual basis) available from the school at a cost of £10
- Black skirt or black tailored trousers, not fashion trousers.
- Black leather or leather look school shoes - **not training or leisure shoes**
- A bag for books and other school equipment
- Students are not permitted to wear any jewellery with the exception of a watch

If it is necessary for your child to be out of uniform for any reason please arrange this with Mrs Myers, Year 7 Achievement Leader, prior to your son/daughter arriving at school.

PE Uniform

We are a health promoting school and expect all students to take part in Physical Education lessons. Students can be excused on the production of a parent/carer note if they have a medical reason which prevents them from taking part in a physical activity. Obviously certain medical conditions supported by doctor's certificate/letter exempt the student concerned. Students should have the following kit for every Physical Education lesson.

Girls: Royal blue polo shirt

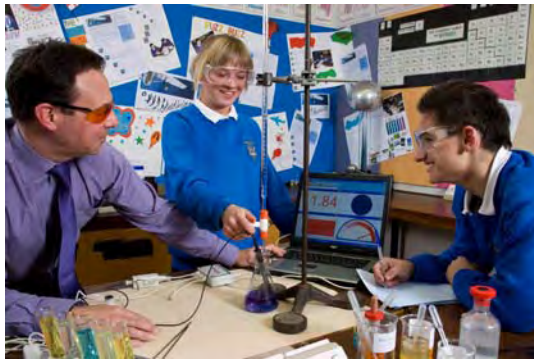
Boys: Royal blue reversible rugby shirt or royal blue polo shirt

Shorts and socks should be navy blue.

Inclement weather kit may also be worn, but is not compulsory:-

Navy blue sweatshirt, tracksuit, fleece or rain jacket.

Kit with the school logo can be purchased via the PE Department but this is not essential.



Standards of Behaviour

High standards of behaviour are expected at all times in our school. We believe that this is achieved through a culture of praise and encouragement. We promote and reward the behaviours which shape learning.

“Students behaviour is exemplary and very little off task activity or chat was seen in lessons.”

OFSTED June 2009

We also challenge any behaviour which distracts students from learning. We will be in touch with you if we have any concerns about your child’s behaviour in school. We ask you to contact us if you have any concerns that you want to raise. We will give you 24 hours notice if your child has been involved in any behaviour which leads to an after school detention. After school detentions last up to one hour.

The following policy documents can be accessed on our school website at www.thomashepburn.org.uk:

1. Local Authority Admissions Policy
2. Behaviour Policy
3. Anti-Bullying Strategy
4. Complaints Policy



School term dates 2009 – 2010

	From	To	Half Term Hols
Autumn Term	Mon 7 Sept 2009	Fri 18 Dec 2009	26 – 30 Oct 2009
Spring Term	Mon 4 Jan 2010	Thurs 1 April 2010	15 – 19 Feb 2010
Summer Term	Mon 19 April 2010	Fri 23 Jul 2010	1 – 4 June 2010

All dates are inclusive

In addition, to the above dates, schools will be closed to students on Monday 3 May 2010 (May Day Bank Holiday)

Three days within the above terms are to be used for in-service training activities. In addition, an occasional day will be taken in the summer term.

Parents/Carers will be informed of these additional times as information becomes available.



School Term Dates 2010/2011

	From	To	Half Term Hols
Autumn Term	Monday 6 September 2010	Friday 17 December 2010	25-29 Mon to Fri October 2010
Spring Term	Tuesday 4 January 2011	Friday 15 April 2011	21-25 Mon to Fri February 2011
Summer Term	Tuesday 3 May 2011	Friday 22 July 2011	30 May to-3 June Mon to Fri 2011

All dates are inclusive.

In addition, to the above dates, schools will be closed to pupils on Monday 3 January 2011 and Monday 2 May 2011 (Bank Holidays)

Two days within the above terms are to be used for in-service training activities. These dates to be determined and agreed by individual school governing bodies.

In addition, one occasional day within the Summer Term 2011 is to be utilised for the purpose of closure in the event of Government elections.