



The

Thomas Coram

Church of England School

Prospectus



Flourishing in learning and love

Swing Gate Lane
Berkhamsted
Hertfordshire
HP4 2RP

Tel: 01442 866757
Email: admin@thomascoram.herts.sch.uk
www.thomascoram.herts.sch.uk
www.castlefederation.org

Executive Headteacher: Mr Rob Halls
Head of School: Mrs Jackie Cutler

Chair of Governors: Mrs Jenny Jenkins

Welcome

Welcome to The Thomas Coram Church of England School. Here, you'll be part of a thriving, dynamic family committed to providing a broad and stimulating education.

At Thomas Coram, we start by having a supportive, caring environment where children feel happy and safe. Then, we add a diverse and exciting curriculum, a range of appealing and fun clubs as well as thought-provoking and inspiring activities and events that create motivated learners. We want our pupils to flourish, so we encourage them to discover their talents and interests, develop their personalities and understand those Christian values that will bring them happiness and success in the path they choose.



We have exceptional staff in whom we invest by ensuring there are opportunities for continual development, mentoring and training. What we expect of the children we expect of ourselves; we continuously evaluate, looking outwards as well as inwards, challenging ourselves to give the best teaching.

Our close relationship with our family infant schools Victoria CE and Swing Gate means children arriving in Year 3 will find much that is familiar and reassuring despite it being a different site and building. For any newcomer arriving part way through the year from another school or country, living our core values mean we'll all do just what you'd expect; we'll welcome them in, help them find their feet and support them making friends. It won't take them long to feel part of the/our family.

Thomas Coram is no ordinary school, we're a family where everyone is encouraged to start exploring, follow their interests, investigate more. Our aim is to make every day extraordinary.

Join us and **flourish in learning and love.**

Jackie Cutler
Head of School

Castle Church of England Federation

One governing body and executive headteacher oversee both The Thomas Coram CE School and Victoria CE Infant and Nursery School. This is known as a federation. Our exciting partnership provides our schools with many new opportunities, from children working together across schools, to shared teaching, staff developments and projects. Our highly effective relationship with our other partner infant school, Swing Gate, ensures that the transition for children or staff from either infant school to Thomas Coram is as seamless as possible.



"You have a lovely school ...Your children love being here; your staff love being here ...
Thomas Coram would be proud of the young people you turn out by the age of 11."
(Paul Brooker, HMI, Ofsted, 2018)

Our vision and values



The Thomas Coram Church of England School is named after an 18th century sea captain who, moved by the plight of homeless and abandoned children in London, opened a "hospital for the maintenance and education of vulnerable and deserted young children". Thomas Coram was very much ahead of his time, fighting for the education of girls, as well as boys, seeing every child as equal and deserving of better life chances. Thomas Coram's Foundling Hospital moved from London to Berkhamsted in 1935, eventually becoming Ashlyns School. Our school was built on Foundling Hospital land in 1970. Learn more at www.coramstory.org.uk



The Christian values, and the determination to make a difference to the lives of others, that inspired Thomas Coram are at the heart of our school: **respect, responsibility and friendship.**



To this day, our House system maintains a link with Thomas Coram's inspirational fight for the rights of children. Pupils are placed into one of four Houses when they join us: **Luther King, Mandela, Malala and Pankhurst.**

Our vision is to **flourish in learning and love within a happy, Christian family.**

We aim:

- To be proud of ourselves and each other for always being the best that we can be
- To be happy and safe, and feel part of a caring school family
- To love learning through exciting, creative opportunities
- To know that we are all special in God's eyes
- To have a sense of responsibility and the confidence to stand up for what is right in our world
- To work together to prepare us for 'life in all its fullness'
- To practise Christian values in everything we do

As a Church of England school, we welcome those who live by all faiths or no faith, as partners with whom we build our school community. True Christian hospitality is generosity, resourced from God's own generosity and knows no boundaries.

We are proud to be an inclusive family in which to belong; a place to explore and go deeper in learning; a place to pray, grow and serve.



"Thomas Coram is a lovely school with excellent facilities for learning."
(Ofsted, 2018)

Flourishing in learning

Originally built and resourced as a middle school, The Thomas Coram Church of England School offers an unparalleled range of resources and opportunities for 7 to 11 year olds, through the retention and adaptation of specialist teaching areas to support and enhance pupils' learning, including an ICT suite, art room, food technology room and well-maintained and staffed library.

Class teachers in each year group organise and plan lessons together, to provide meaningful and enjoyable learning. Many subjects are organised around themes which encompass areas across the curriculum, but there is a special emphasis and discrete time for English, maths, science and religious education.

At Thomas Coram, children discover and nurture their passion for learning and become skilled independent learners. Learning is organised in different ways: sometimes working in small groups, other times individually or with a learning partner. Working in small groups helps children to explore a topic in greater depth and encourages them to learn from their own experiences. A range of visitors (from theatre companies to immersive 'living history' groups), activities, homework, clubs and trips (some residential) set learning within a wider context.

Our experienced staff are dedicated to drawing the best out of each individual child. They regularly assess pupils' learning and share their next steps regularly with pupils and, on consultation evenings, with parents. Pupils' progress towards meeting – or exceeding – age-related expectations is monitored and tracked regularly. Homework is used to reinforce, support and develop learning depending on each child's needs.

At the end of Year 6, pupils complete the national Key Stage 2 statutory (SATs) tests. Our most recent results are published on our website.

Their time at Thomas Coram is a journey on which they can draw strength, support and inspiration from our Christian foundations, high aspirations and caring ethos.



"Staff set high standards for pupils, both in terms on their conduct, and in their academic work. Pupils respond by behaving well and working hard."
(Ofsted, 2018)



"I have found through personal experience the move from infant to junior school has given the children the opportunity to develop their independence; I have also noticed a change in their maturity. At the end of Year 2, the transition was managed really well and has been seamless in my experience."

(Parent)

Out of hours learning



We believe that learning, growing and developing as independent young learners is something which occurs throughout a child's day. We have a fantastic setting; ten acres of mostly grass with some hard playground as well as outdoor climbing gyms which the children can enjoy at breaktime and lunchtime. We offer a range of lunchtime and after school clubs that are fun and popular giving children the chance to try out a new sport, cookery or musical drama. We regularly review what's offered to ensure a wide mix of opportunities.

We have a very popular **Breakfast Club** and **After School Club**, which school staff run to provide wraparound care from 7:30am to 6:00pm daily, either side of the school day. More information of this is on our website.

"Pupils are carefully nurtured from the moment they start."
(Ofsted, 2018)

Flourishing in love

At Thomas Coram, we nurture both the individual and the school family as a whole. We set high expectations and outcomes for all pupils in terms of behaviour, well-being and achievement.

We expect everyone in our school family to feel safe, valued and able to learn and work unhindered. Consequently, we actively encourage everyone to show respect for others, both within and outside the school community. This means modelling, recognising and celebrating good behaviour as well as supporting, with clear boundaries, those who need additional help.

We want every pupil to be a happy, confident learner who feels secure within the school community and able to focus on and enjoy their learning. All our staff are on hand to identify concerns, support and encourage individuals and work with parents/carers and external agencies to secure the well-being of pupils.

Our Special Educational Needs co-ordinator (SENCo), working with class teachers, plays an important role in the identification and support of pupils who, for whatever reason, find learning difficult either in the short or long term.

Being part of a family brings responsibilities: we encourage all our pupils to play their part and make a contribution by becoming school council representatives, learning buddies, peer mediators and learning resource assistants. Combined with supporting others within the wider community through chosen charities, this brings to life our vision of 'flourishing in learning and love.'



"Meeting and making new friends in Year 3, and getting used to a larger school environment, and with lots of familiar faces for reassurance, is good preparation for the later transition to secondary school."
(Parent)

Partnership with parents

Partnership is at the heart of our approach to the education and development of children. Thomas Coram fosters a strong partnership with parent/carers, governors, the local church, support agencies and the wider community.

Central to our partnership with parent/carers is our commitment to regularly communicate progress, successes and concerns through reports, consultation evenings, awards and certificates, letters home, pupil planners and individual conversations. We value parents' support, from volunteering to hear readers, accompanying visits, joining The Friends of Thomas Coram (our parent-teacher association) or sharing their skills and interests to support learners, to ensuring that their children are in school on time and in correct uniform.

"The friendly, supportive and welcoming character of the school community (is clearly evident)." (Ofsted, 2018)

Our relationship with partner schools

The special relationship we enjoy with our two infant schools, Victoria and Swing Gate, is paramount to the continued success of pupils as they progress on their learning journey. The close collaboration of senior leaders, and other key staff, ensures an effective transition that prepares pupils for their step up to junior school. Children will find lots of familiar routines in the classroom, consistency in curriculum coverage and approaches to assessment. We carefully plan the timings of our school day and our school calendars to cater for siblings on two sites. Historically, all pupils on roll at our partner infant schools who have applied for a place at our school have been admitted.



We also keenly follow the progress of our Year 6 leavers on to secondary school and beyond. Our collaborative partnership extends to our neighbouring Ashlyns School, while others choose to move on to Chesham Grammar and surrounding schools.

"The infant to junior school system has made my daughter more independent, which in turn has given her the skills to prepare her for the transition to secondary school." (Parent)

Distinctive Christian character

Our acts of collective worship are a central part of our life together as a school community, providing an opportunity to reflect on the fundamental values that underpin and guide our individual membership, not only of the Thomas Coram family, but also of the wider community and world. Christianity is central to our teaching in RE, but we teach our children about other major world religions too, ensuring that they are able to make links and comparisons between different religions. We believe our Christian ethos is essential part of what makes our school such a special place to learn.

The Thomas Coram Church of England School is a thriving and dynamic community committed to providing the best learning opportunities for all of our pupils.

We look forward to welcoming you and your child into our school family and sharing with you our emphasis on learning, achievement and success.

Flourishing in
learning and love