



Guide for Thornton Primary SEND Unit for pupils with Social, Emotional Mental Health

Enhanced Provision - The Orchard

The Orchard is a full-time, two-year provision designed for children in Key Stage 2 who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) identified as their primary need. Children can remain in the provision for up to two years, provided they are making sustained progress toward their personalised outcomes.

Throughout their time at The Orchard, pupils will be continuously assessed to ensure their needs are being met and to support their development with the ultimate aim of reintegration into a mainstream school setting. As the two-year period draws to a close, a collaborative decision will be made, together with parents and relevant professionals, regarding the most appropriate next steps for each child. This may involve a return to mainstream education or a transition into a more specialised SEND provision, depending on the child's progress and individual needs. In some instances, this decision may be that the child remains in The Orchard based on their progress.

Description of need and suitability for an Enhanced Provision

Eligibility and Placement Process

To be considered for a place at The Orchard, pupils must have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)



identified as their primary area of need. This indicates that the child experiences significant and persistent challenges in this domain. In addition, pupils will typically be working below expected age-related standards in at least one core subject. Preference will be given to pupils living within the Thornton Cleveleys area.

At the point of entry, pupils will have been identified by both the Local Authority and Thornton Primary School as struggling to access mainstream education due to behavioural difficulties. Placements at The Orchard are commissioned by Lancashire Local Authority, in consultation with the Headteacher of Thornton Primary School and the SEND Unit class teacher.

Review and Transition Planning

Each child will have an Annual Review every 12 months to assess progress and determine the most appropriate next steps. The outcomes of this review may include:

- a) Continuing at The Orchard due to good progress
- b) Remaining at The Orchard with a phased reintegration into mainstream education
- c) Transitioning to a specialist setting better suited to the child's needs

At the conclusion of the two-year placement, a final Annual Review will be held to decide whether the pupil should:

- a) Transition fully into mainstream provision
- b) Move into a specialist setting to continue receiving tailored support
- c) Remain at The Orchard on a rolling programme as this is in the best interest of the child



Vision of The Orchard

The Orchard aims to:

- a) Conduct thorough and accurate assessments of each child's needs to ensure they are placed in the most appropriate educational setting
- b) Deliver a tailored curriculum that supports children in narrowing the developmental gap between themselves and their mainstream peers, where appropriate
- c) Work proactively toward achieving the outcomes outlined in each child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Staffing and Leadership of The Orchard

- The Orchard is an integral part of Thornton Primary School, and all school staff will contribute to supporting its work and ethos.
- Overall responsibility for the progress of the children in the class is a named, qualified teacher. For the academic year 2025–2026, this is Sam Gardner, a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Sam will serve as the main point of contact for both The Orchard and mainstream staff, supported by colleagues including subject leaders, lunchtime supervisors, SLT members, and the SENCO.
- The Orchard will benefit from consistent staffing, initially comprising a class teacher and a teaching assistant (TA). As pupil numbers exceed four, additional TA support will be recruited to maintain a high standard of care and learning ensuring appropriate child to staff ratios. Staffing levels will be regularly reviewed to ensure pupil safety and to support at least expected progress.
- When pupils begin integrating into mainstream classes, they will be accompanied by a familiar adult from The Orchard to support a smooth transition. This support will reduce, allowing the mainstream class teacher to take responsibility for the pupil's learning. Until the pupil formally transitions out of The Orchard, overall responsibility will remain with Sam Gardner.
- Once a pupil has fully transitioned into a mainstream setting, responsibility for their progress will be handed over to the staff within that setting.
- The Senior Leadership Team will work closely with The Orchard staff to ensure it is high quality provision, in line with the school's policies and procedures.
- In addition, the provision will be externally quality assured by a consultant with expertise in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).



Learning Environment

The Orchard provides a nurturing and inclusive environment designed to meet the diverse needs of its pupils. The setting will:

1. Be emotionally supportive and trauma-informed, promoting a culture of encouragement, empathy and respect for individual needs.
2. Offer welcoming and accessible spaces, with reasonable adjustments made to ensure all pupils can engage fully with their surroundings.
3. Include appropriately adapted resources, including ICT tools, to support and enhance learning across the curriculum.
4. Maintain a high-quality, structured and well-organised environment tailored to the age and developmental stage of each pupil.

In addition to the indoor learning space, pupils will benefit from access to outdoor areas that support the outcomes outlined in their EHCPs and address their SEMH needs. A state-of-the-art sensory room will also be available for daily use, providing essential support for emotional regulation and sensory integration.

Curriculum and Assessment in The Orchard

The curriculum in The Orchard is carefully designed to be developmentally appropriate and responsive to the individual needs of each pupil.

Curriculum Design

The curriculum will include:

- a) Curriculum coverage, adapted to the individual needs of each pupil for all areas of the National Curriculum. There will be a greater emphasis on communication & language, literacy, numeracy and personal, social & emotional development. Providing breadth, balance and ambition while meeting the specific needs of each pupil.
- b) Personalised learning goals aligned with each child's end of key-stage outcomes, as outlined in their EHCP, ensures a tailored approach to progress.
- c) Targeted interventions, including therapeutic support, informed by needs identified through SNAP assessments.



Assessment Approach

Initial Baseline

Upon entry, each pupil will undergo a comprehensive baseline assessment, including:

- The **SNAP Behaviour Assessment Tool**, focusing on areas such as emotional regulation, social interaction and behaviour patterns.
- The **SNAP Diagnostic Tool for Specific Learning Difficulties**, assessing areas such as memory, processing speed and literacy/numeracy difficulties.
- The **Dibels Reading Age Assessment and Red Rose Phonics stage** assessments to determine current literacy levels.

Ongoing Assessment

Pupil progress will be reviewed termly through:

- Reassessment against the developmental areas identified in the initial SNAP baseline.
- The **Assess–Plan–Do–Review** cycle, using annual review targets broken down into manageable, measurable steps.
- When pupils are settled and ready to engage in formal learning, they will be assessed using the school's assessment systems.
- **Lancashire LAPS framework** and **PIVATS** may also be used to support small steps assessment where appropriate.

Foundation Subjects

Assessment in foundation subjects will align with whole-school procedures and be based on each child's developmental stage, ensuring consistency and relevance.

Specialist Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

All staff working within The Orchard will receive specialist training tailored to the specific needs of pupils in the SEND Unit. This professional development will be ongoing and responsive to the evolving needs of the children.

Core training will include:



- **Trauma-Informed Practice**
- **Brain Architecture Training**
- **Team Teach** (positive behaviour support and de-escalation strategies) will be a core part of training for the lead teacher and identified staff.

Additional CPD will be delivered through a rolling programme, ensuring staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills required to provide high-quality, individualised support. Training content will be regularly reviewed and adapted in line with pupil needs and emerging best practices in SEND education.

Good practice, strategies and relevant training from The Orchard will also be shared with staff and teachers across the mainstream Thornton Primary School setting. This collaborative approach ensures a consistent, inclusive ethos throughout the school and supports the successful integration of pupils transitioning between settings.

Home, School, and Community Partnership

Regular communication between the teaching team in The Orchard and parents/carers is a key part of ensuring a consistent and supportive approach to each child's development and outcomes. These conversations are aimed at meeting the needs of both families and staff and may include phone calls, face-to-face meetings and the use of positive communication tools.

This ongoing dialogue helps to build strong, trusting relationships and ensures that everyone involved in the child's education is working together with a shared understanding and common goals.

Capacity and Admissions

The Orchard offers a total of 8 commissioned places for pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) where Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) is identified as the primary area of need. In addition, pupils will typically be working below expected age-related standards in at least one core subject. Preference will be given to pupils living within the Thornton Cleveleys area.

The commissioning of these places is governed by a Service Level Agreement (SLA), which outlines the roles, responsibilities and expectations of both Thornton Primary School and Lancashire County Council in relation to the provision.

Admissions Process



THORNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Love ○ Respect ○ Ambition

All 8 places will be commissioned by Lancashire County Council, in consultation with Sam Gardner (The Orchard Class Teacher) and the Headteacher of Thornton Primary School. This collaborative approach ensures a transparent and consistent admissions process.

Lancashire County Council will also provide appropriate funding to reflect the additional costs associated with delivering high-quality, specialist education for pupils with EHCPs within this setting.