



Exclusion Policy

December 2020

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Linton School

Exclusion Policy

Adopted by: Rebekah Dennett

Review date: December 2021

Designated Safeguard Lead: Rebekah
Dennett

Date: 1st January 2020

Deputy Designated Safeguard Lead: Sean
Di Sora & Paul Barton

Date: 1st January 2020

Head Teacher: Rebekah Dennett

Date: 1st January 2020

Head of Education Service: Declan Tuer

Date: 1st September 2019

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Rebekah Dennett

Contact email: rebekah.dennett@rocnorthwest.co.uk

Tel: 01772 957062 / 07776 528079

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Sean Di Sora

Contact email: sean.disora@lintonschool.co.uk

Tel: 01772 957062

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Paul Barton

Contact email: paul.barton@lintonschool.co.uk

Tel: 01772 957062

The LA Designated Officer for Lancashire County Council is: Tim Booth

Contact email: tim.booth@lancashire.gov.uk

Tel: 01772 536694

The LA Designated Officer for Blackpool Council is: Amanda Quirke

Contact email: amanda.quirke@blackpool.gov.uk

Tel: 01253 477541

Lancashire County Council – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 0300 123 6720

Lancashire County Council – Emergency Duty Team: 0300 123 6722 (out of office hours)

Blackpool Council – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 01253 477299

If the child is at immediate risk, please call the police on 999.

Our School

Linton School is an independent special school for young people with social, emotional and mental health difficulties for both boys and girls aged 8-18 years old. The school is registered for up to 12 learners and consists of 4 small classes to provide a nurturing environment to develop and progress throughout their learning journey. We are a trauma informed school that is able to support children and teenagers who suffer with trauma or mental health problems and whose troubled behaviour acts as a barrier to learning. Located in rural Preston we therefore benefit from some amazing outdoor space where we develop our outdoor, equestrian and horticulture skills. All the staff at Linton School are committed to creating a setting which not only focuses on academic success, but also provides our learners opportunities to develop their social, communication and independent skills.

Culture and Ethos

We are committed to providing a nurturing, safe and ambitious learning environment that supports every young person to achieve lifelong skills through a diverse learner centred curriculum. Respectful and supportive relationships are at the heart of all we do; we value every member of the school community equally. Through bespoke curriculums tailored towards each individual pupil's needs, experiences, interests and strengths we foster a love for learning and support our young people to achieve their full potential. As an educational setting our main aim is to prepare our pupils to make a positive contribution towards society by giving our students the skills they need to be successful, resilient and inspirational young adults. Linton schools purpose is to improve the quality of life for our young people both now, and in the future, 'building our futures together'.

The Vision

Linton School provides a safe, nurturing learning environment to provide skills for lifelong opportunities, which gives the young people an ambitious outlook towards their future. The vision drives everything we do and will be achieved through:

- Outdoor enrichment activities to promote life skills through play, nurture and teamwork.
- Promoting independence, patience and listening skills through Equestrian lessons.
- Multi-disciplinary links from both internal and external companies to provide a bespoke, broad and balanced curriculum that develops the education of our pupils.
- Empowering each learner to achieve their personal goals and develop a lifelong love of learning.
- A positive and ambitious school environment that promotes learning for all.
- Offering a broad range of learning experiences within the curriculum that values academic attainment as well as developing social skills, experiences and resilience.

More information about the school can be found in the school Prospectus.

1. Exclusion Policy

Ultimate sanctions are Fixed Term and Permanent Exclusions. Neither sanction is used lightly. Only the Head Teacher has the power to exclude a child. If the Head Teacher excludes an Individual, the parent/guardian/carer are informed immediately, giving reasons for the exclusion. At the same time, the Head Teacher makes it clear to the parents that they can, if they wish, appeal against the decision to the Cambian Board. Parents are given information on how to make any such appeal.

2. Serious Offences and Exclusions

Serious offences are those that may have a significant impact on the individual or others at the Location. Examples include:

- Extreme or persistent bullying, racism or harassment;
- Stealing;
- Extreme or persistent violence, actual or threatened, against a pupil or member of staff;
- Sexual abuse, assault or activity;
- Smoking, illegal drugs (possession and/or use) or alcohol (consumption or possession)
- Persistently absconding;
- Repeated damage to school property;
- Dangerous behaviour (climbing on the roof, absconding from site)
- Carrying an offensive weapon.

3. Fixed Penalty Exclusion and Permanent Exclusions

We will apply our behaviour policies in a consistent, rigorous and non-discriminatory way and all areas of application of these policies will be monitored routinely. Ultimate sanctions are:

- Fixed Term Exclusion (suspension)
- Permanent Exclusion

Neither sanction is used lightly. The power to suspend an Individual can only be exercised by the Head Teacher in consultation with the Head of Education. If the Head Teacher excludes a pupil, the parent/guardian/carer are informed immediately, giving reasons for the exclusion. At the same time, the Head of Service/Head of Education makes it clear to the parent/guardian/carer that they can, if they wish, appeal against the decision to the Cambian Board. It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to monitor the rate of exclusions, and to ensure that the school policy is administered fairly and consistently.

4. Procedure

- Parent/guardian/carers must be informed immediately by phone with a follow up letter.
- Social worker to be informed on the same day via email or phone call with a follow up letter.
- A copy of a sheet entitled 'Advice for Parents/Carers' will be attached to the letter.
- Parent/guardian/carers/social workers must be notified of their right to appeal.
- Ensure that arrangements are in place for work to be sent home.
- Arrangements will be made for a return to school interview that includes the parents/carers.
- A re-integration support plan will be put in place (if appropriate) and always after more than one exclusion

All cases of exclusion will be treated in the strictest confidence on a need to know basis and are not to be discussed outside the school

5. Responsibilities

Before resorting to exclusion Linton School will implement a range of alternative solutions such as;

1. Utilising a restorative justice approach
2. Working closely with parent/carer/clinical team to address underlying causes of the behaviour
3. Targeted programme of pastoral support
4. Implementation of personalised reward system

Linton School:

- Requires all staff to use positive strategies for handling any unacceptable behaviour by helping Individuals find solutions in ways that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development;
- Acknowledges that such solutions might include, for example, acknowledgement of feelings, explanation as to what was not acceptable and supporting Individuals to gain control of their feelings so that they can learn a more appropriate response;
- Ensures that there are sufficient resources and activities available so that individuals are meaningfully occupied without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns;
- Supports each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence;
- Avoids creating situations in which individuals receive adult attention only in return for unacceptable behaviour;
- Explains the effect of unacceptable behaviour, making it clear to the child that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable, and not the person.

When individuals behave in unacceptable ways, we help them to understand the outcomes of their actions and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately. We provide opportunities for individuals to learn how to interpret and cope with feelings, listening to them and offering the necessary support to enable them to verbalise their own frustrations, hurts and disappointments. We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to individual's unacceptable behaviour. We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual individuals. Corporal punishment, which is strictly forbidden at Linton School, is a criminal offence.

Under the Equality Act 2010 schools must not discriminate against, harass or victimise pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, because of pregnancy/maternity or because of a gender reassignment. For disabled children, this includes a duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' to policies and practices.

There are certain groups of pupils with additional needs who are particularly vulnerable to exclusion. This includes pupils with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) and 'looked after' children. Head teachers should, as far as possible, avoid permanently excluding any pupil with an EHCP or a 'looked after' child. Schools should engage proactively with parents in supporting the behaviour of pupils with additional needs. In relation to 'looked after' children, schools should co-operate proactively with foster carers or children's home workers and the Local Authority that looks after the child. Where a school has concerns about behaviour, or risk of exclusion, of a child in one of these vulnerable groups, it should, in partnership with others (including the Local Authority as necessary), consider what additional support or alternative placement may be required. This should involve assessing the suitability of support for a pupil's SEN. Where a pupil has an EHCP, schools should consider requesting an early annual review or interim / emergency review.

Where reasonable adjustments to policies and practices have been made to accommodate a pupil's needs and to avoid the necessity for exclusion as far as possible, exclusion may be justified if there is a material and substantial reason for it. An isolated incident whereby allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in school may be such a reason. The decision to exclude for a fixed term will be notified to the parent in writing with reasons. If the school determines that a child should be excluded for a fixed period, the Head Teacher will provide the parent in writing with information as to:

- The period of the Fixed Term Exclusion;
- The arrangements, such as setting work, to allow the child to continue their education during the Fixed Term Exclusion.
- It is unlawful to exclude or to increase the severity of an exclusion for a non-disciplinary reason. For example it would be unlawful to exclude a pupil simply because they have additional needs or a disability that the school feels it is unable to meet or for other reasons such as the failure of a pupil to meet specific conditions before they are reinstated such as attend a reintegration meeting.

If the Head of Education commences an investigation which may lead to a permanent exclusion the Head Teacher must inform the parent/guardian/carers without delay. This will ideally be done by telephone and the telephone call will be followed by a letter within one school day. The letter will include information about:

- The nature of the offence(s) and the results of any investigation to date;
- That the sanction of a permanent exclusion may be imposed;
- The parent/guardian/carers' right to state their case to the Head Teacher and if that is not satisfactory then to the Advisory Board and whom they should contact to do this, including the latest date that the parent/guardian/carers may give a written statement to the discipline committee;
- The parent/guardian/carers right to see their child's record. The Head Teacher must comply within 15 school days, although in exclusion cases compliance should be as prompt as is practicably possible.

If the Head of Education decides (after completing the investigation or as a result of new evidence and further investigation) that it is necessary to extend a fixed Term Exclusion or to convert it into a Permanent Exclusion, the Head Teacher will write again to the parent/guardian/carers with the reasons for this decision. The decision to exclude a pupil permanently will only be taken as a last resort when a wide range of strategies for dealing with disciplinary offences has been employed to no avail or is an exceptional 'one-off' offence has been committed.

- Parent/guardian/carers co-operation forms part of the contract between the Location and all the parent/guardian/carers at the Location. The correspondence will be easily intelligible and in plain English.

6. Appeals

If parent/guardian/carers wish to appeal the exclusion then they must do so in writing to the Head of Education within one week of the letter notifying the parents or guardians of the exclusion. The Head of Education will establish an Appeal Panel to consider the appeal. The Appeal Panel will normally convene within 15 working days of the receipt of the letter requesting the appeal. No-one on the panel will have had any prior involvement with the decision making process surrounding the exclusion. If appropriate the Head of Education will appoint a SEN expert to advise the review panel.

The parents or guardian may bring a representative to the meeting. All letters and documents provided as evidence by the Head Teacher, shall be made available to the parents or guardian prior to the hearing. The parent/guardian/carers or their representative may ask questions of the Head Teacher or may raise any relevant matter for the consideration of the Panel. The Panel may call for any further information it requires. No evidence or argument shall be presented to the Panel in the absence either of the parent/guardian/carers or their representative, or in the absence of the Head Teacher or Head of Education. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Panel shall retire to consider what recommendation it may make.

The Panel may recommend:

- The exclusion is confirmed
- The exclusion is rescinded
- The exclusion be rescinded and replaced with an alternative sanction.

However, the final decision will always rest with the Head of Education, who may or may not accept the recommendations of the panel.

The recommendation shall be communicated to the parent/guardian/carers and the Head Teacher. Every child has a right to confidentiality – it will be kept in the strictest confidence and only disclosed to those who need to know. We appreciate that such sensitive matters must be dealt with in confidence.

7. Monitoring and Review

The Head Teacher will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than three years from the date of approval shown above, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

The local content of this document will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head of Education.