



# Curriculum Policy

**February 2023**

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## Linton School

### Curriculum Policy

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## 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 centered 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. Curriculum aims

Our curriculum aims to:

1. Provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils that's coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for skills and future learning and employment
2. Enable pupils to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations
3. Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
4. Support pupils' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active
5. Promote a positive attitude towards learning
6. Ensure equal access to learning for all pupils, with high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support
7. Have a high academic/vocational/technical ambition for all pupils
8. Equip pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life
9. Provide a broad curriculum prioritising a strong academic core of subjects
10. Develop pupils' independent learning skills and resilience, to equip them for further/higher education and employment

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements for schools to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the Independent School Standards and where possible and appropriate the requirements of the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#).

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#) and [Equality Act 2010](#), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's [Governance Handbook](#).

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### The Governing Board/ Regional Lead

The Regional Lead will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Head Teacher to account for its implementation.

The Regional Lead will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- The school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, Maths ICT, and Science, and enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the requirements of the funding agreement
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and SEMH
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum

- Pupils from key stage 2 onwards are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance, and that this is appropriately resourced (through PSHE, Living Independently, Employability lessons and Career Guidance Sessions)
- All courses provided for pupils below the age of 19 that lead to qualifications

### **The Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The Head of Education and SLT is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The Head of Education is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with ALN & SEMH

### **Other staff**

Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

**Overall curriculum responsibility:** Rebekah Dennett

**English & Humanities:** Andy Cavill

**Math, PHSE & Employability:** Steph White

**Science & Arts:** Sean Di Sora

**ICT & Outdoor Education:** Tracey Pinder

**Physical Education & Outdoor Learning:** Ellen McCarthy

## 4. Organisation and planning

At Linton School we have a creative and bespoke way of delivering and organising our curriculum which takes into account the needs of all the young people. We create, adapt and differentiate topics to promote engagement, foster a love for learning and enable young people to make accelerated progress from their starting points.

The school is committed to providing a broad and balanced curriculum and blends the curriculum with opportunities for pupils to develop functional skills, independence skills and skills for working life. Most subjects are taught discreetly while others are covered through cross curricular activities.

We aim to promote the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development of the pupils as well as giving pupils experience in English, Mathematics, Science, Technology, Human and Social, Physical, Aesthetic and Creative education. We also have an extensive outdoor and enrichment curriculum at Linton School which provides the young people with opportunities for educational visits, access to key speakers and real life experiences all tailored to develop British Values and SMSC.

We also ensure that pupils acquire, within their abilities, speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills.

Curriculum subjects are taught by baselining the young people upon entry, establishing their strengths and areas for development and creating a curriculum where bespoke, achievable and subject specific targets are used to close the gaps in their learning and provide the young people with a basis on which they can make progression.

Teachers at Linton School teach their specialist subjects and staff are provided with training to help support the teaching of these. Teaching assistants support the young people and they are the consistent figures within the classroom. As the lessons change throughout the day, the teachers will visit classrooms, meaning that the students remain in a space that is familiar to them.

Teachers plan yearly overviews which identify topics that the young people will find engaging, as well as topics that are needed to promote Spiritual, Social, Moral and Cultural development and prepare the young people for a successful transition to further education and/or employment. From that, teachers use medium term planning to break the topics down into weekly sessions. This includes specific learning objectives, outcomes and detailing teaching activities with a focus on individual pupils. Teachers also create individual lesson plans using the 5 minute lesson plans from the Teacher Toolkit.

Classes at Linton School are organised in a variety of ways, taking into account the social, emotional and mental health needs of our young people. All pupils are placed into a class group by identifying their main area of need and matching them to the currently cohort / class groups. Children may not be with peers in the same year group and maybe with children both older and younger than themselves. However, these groups are created to promote social and emotional stability and ensure teaching can take place with minimal disruption.

The timetable and curriculum are reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current legislation and guidance and taking into account best practice within Special Needs Education.

We endeavour to provide opportunities for pupils who are identified as having a gift or talent to develop their skills and abilities in that area.

## 5. Subject specifics

### English, Mathematics, ICT and Science

English, Mathematics, ICT and Science are taught discreetly and consciously reinforced through all aspects of the curriculum and the school environment. Where children and young people have significant gaps in their knowledge and understanding within these subjects we have trained staff available to provide interventions tailored to the needs of each pupil. These interventions allow the pupils to make accelerated progress in the area focused upon and can support them to be more independent with their learning by developing confidence and resilience.

English and Mathematics are taught four times a week and form part of the pupils' routine. How English and Mathematics are taught varies across the year groups and for each young person. Teacher will follow the National Curriculum as much as possible during Key Stage 2 and 3 but children will also be taught topics to close the gaps in their learning if required. Once children progress to Key Stage 4 they will be following one of three routes:

1. AQA entry level certificate
2. AQA functional skills
3. GCSE's

Which route each young person takes will be established by Year 9 and the staff team at Linton School will discuss this with the parents / carers and other significant adults.

Pupils reading schemes are developed by the use of a variety of methods, for example phonics and sight reading schemes, which provide a structured, age, appropriate and engaging scheme to support reading and comprehension skills. Linton School uses the Rising Stars reading schemes during guided reading to which more information can be found using the link below:

[Reading Planet - Reading scheme for home and school \(risingstars-uk.com\)](https://www.risingstars-uk.com)

Science and ICT can also be taught in a variety of ways. Like with English and Mathematics, Science and ICT will follow the National Curriculum as much as possible whilst children are in key stage 2 and 3 however, exceptions may be made. At key stage 4 there are different routes for the students:

#### Science

1. ASDAN short courses e.g Land Based Sector
2. AQA Unit Awards
3. AQA Entry Level Science
4. AQA GCSE Science

#### ICT

1. iDEA - [iDEA: Develop digital, enterprise and employability skills for free. Win career-enhancing badges and gain internationally recognised awards.](#)
2. AQA Unit Awards

All ICT lessons will begin with the basics of Online Safety. Depending on the students ability they may sight the Online Safety badge on the iDEA platform. For information about the schools commitment to Online Safety please see the Online Safety policy on the school website or you can request a copy from your class teacher.

Each young person's curriculum may differ and may not consist of units of works from the same National Curriculum year group or key stage. At Linton School we believe that teaching this way allows the children to have a bespoke curriculum to address their gaps in the learning and make at



least good progress. To do the latter, we baseline the children, work out what they can and cannot do and start to create a curriculum that closes the gaps in the learning.

### **PHSE, SMSC, Religious Education and Collective Worship**

PHSE is a timetabled session enabling all pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. An annual plan of significant dates in the religious and cultural calendar ensures that there is a focus, through assemblies and PSHE lessons on important cultural and religious festivals and commemorative days. Through PSHE we aim to ensure pupils are effectively prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

The PSHE and SMSC curriculum strongly encourages respect for other people, and promotes the fundamental British values– Democracy, the Rule of Law, Individual Liberty and Mutual Respect and Tolerance, particularly for those people with protected characteristics. This would include for example, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. As part of the Linton School offer we also hold ten ‘enrichment days’ where children and young people have the opportunity to do educational visits, spend time with key speakers, and create local community links and/or work within larger groups.

Sex and Relationships Education is taught in the PHSE lessons at a level appropriate to the level of understanding of the young people. We liaise closely with partner organisations and the School Nurse for specialist individual input and support. Parents may request that their child is excused from Sex Education.

Religious Education themes and topics are covered through assemblies, PHSE and designated enrichment days throughout the year. Children of any faith, and those of no faith, are encouraged to value everyone and their beliefs equally. Shared assembly times focus on celebration and the worth-ship of all those within Linton School’s community and aims:

- To show interest in and concern for members of Linton School’s community
- To celebrate special occasions together
- To show concern for the daily happenings in school life, the local community and the wider world
- To share appreciation of worthwhile activities undertaken by groups within the school
- To reflect upon the dimensions of human life, the wonderful, beautiful, joyful, heroic, humorous, tragic, ugly, sorrowful

Learning outcomes are accredited by AQA unit awards and where appropriate entry level qualifications e.g. Functional Skills, ASDAN, and GCSEs.

### **Arts**

Linton School believes that all students should be allowed to express themselves creatively. We have skilled and trained staff offering a wide range of activities following the Arts Award scheme of work, for more information please click on the following link: [Arts Award](#)

The principles of the Arts Award are:

- to offer learning and qualifications which support individual creative development in any setting
- to place young people at the heart of the Arts Award process
- to increase young people's experience and understanding of arts practitioners and cultural organisations
- to embrace new art forms and technologies
- to reach the widest possible range of young people

The programme develops creativity, leadership and communication skills. Through Arts Award young people learn to work independently, helping them to prepare for further education and employment. Young people can achieve an award through any arts, media or cultural activity, such as music, literature, film-making or drama, and through technical and support roles such as arts marketing, stage lighting and web design.

Arts Award is open to anyone aged up to 25, and embraces all interests and backgrounds. Arts Award has four levels, 3 of which are on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF):

1. Discover & Explore
2. Bronze
3. Silver
4. Gold

### **Humanities**

Humanities are taught across all key stages at Linton School and children get a broad and balanced curriculum of History and Geography topics. Where possible teachers will follow the National Curriculum and adapt the learning content to meet the needs of the young people. Children and young people should be completing age appropriate topics where possible. As part of the humanities curriculum students may go on a range of educational visits and outdoor education days will be linked to the topics being covered.

Learning outcomes are accredited by AQA unit awards and where appropriate entry level qualifications e.g. Functional Skills, ASDAN, and GCSEs.

### **Physical Education**

Physical Education at Linton School is taught in a variety of ways. We will ensure that each child or young person has the opportunity to participate in a range of sports as stated in the National Curriculum however, we will also provide opportunities for additional learning such as Equestrian. Children will get the opportunity to play sport in larger groups when possible and children may attend other local educational settings to participate in activities with peers of a similar age.

Learning outcomes are accredited by AQA unit awards and where appropriate entry level qualifications e.g. Functional Skills, ASDAN, and GCSEs.

### **Career guidance, Employability and Living Independently**

At Linton School we offer a range of programmes tailored to meet the pupils' needs that are designed to help prepare them for adult life and the world of work. From the day that children start at Linton School they are offered a range of careers information and we ensure that all the career guidance that pupils receive:

- a) is presented in an impartial manner;
- b) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options and;
- c) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential.

The school will hold careers weeks, attend careers fairs and ensure that the children have access to a wide range of information regarding careers. One way in which Linton School achieves this is by the use of Xello. Xello is an engaging online programme which prepares students for post-secondary success in academics, careers and life. With Xello, Linton School can support the students to develop their skills and knowledge in order to create actionable plans for the future, regardless of their chosen pathway.

The Living Independently short course is aimed at young people of all abilities, mainly aged between 13 and 18. The Living Independently Short Course contains nine modules:

- Earning and spending money
- Keeping track of your money
- Making financial choices
- A place of your own
- Health and wellbeing
- Cooking on a budget
- Practical cooking skills
- Career management
- Preparing for the world of work

Each learner will need their own copy of the Short Course student book or an e-portfolio login – this contains the challenge content and recording documents.

The Employability qualifications provide a framework for developing and recognising general employability skills at Entry 2 to Level 1. At Key Stages 3 and 4, Linton School will use the qualifications to accredit preparation for employment training, career education, enterprise education, work-related learning and work experience. Employability is a nationally recognised qualification, fully approved by Ofqual in England. The Entry 2, Entry 3 and Level 1 qualifications are intended for young people and adults who are not yet ready for employment but for whom a job is a realistic aim within a reasonable timescale.

In addition, skills such as basic cooking are taught and, where appropriate, work experience will be arranged within ROC Northwest or external employers.

### **Post-16 Provision**

We see the development of independence skills and Skills for Working Life as vital to our pupils. To that end, there is a Living Independently and Employability focus in the timetable which gives pupils the opportunity to prepare for adult life.

Please see the separate policy for Post-16 Educational Provision.

### **Third Party Providers**

At times, Linton School may choose to use third party providers to enhance the curriculum offered and provide the young people with quality experiences in a chosen subject. Linton School has previously worked with local colleges and enrolled students on their 14-16 programme. These courses also help provide a scaffolded transition into further education.

### **Resources**

Resources are allocated in line with the School Development Plan.

## **CPD**

All staff are provided with opportunities for professional development and training in line with the School Development Plan and the organisational training needs analysis and strategy. Training needs will be linked to the school's performance management process.

## **6. Outdoor Curriculum / Learning**

Linton School offers a range of outdoor learning such as; Equestrian, Horticulture, Outdoor Education, Forest School, Animal Husbandry and Animal Care. These lessons provide opportunities for the children and young people to experience, develop and master life skills. All pupils can gain qualifications and work experience that will provide them with a platform to find a career once they leave Linton school. Our extensive outdoor curriculum can also be used to support a child's therapeutic needs.

Outdoor Education is available to all young people at Linton School and all will get an opportunity to access this provision. This programme is taught discretely and integrated with other topics such as humanities, SMSC and British Vales. Children will do a range of activities such as outdoor pursuits taught by Linton School staff and external providers and attend a range of educational visits.

Equestrian and small animal care subjects are taught at Linton School discretely by trained and qualified professionals with over 10 years' experience in the field. Our lead Equestrian instructor works closely with other professionals such as Occupational Therapists so that the children's therapeutic needs can met where possible. Equestrian and small animal care helps to develop children's self-esteem, confidence and resilience whilst teaching them about animal welfare and horse riding. The students at Linton School work through a progressive and challenging curriculum making full use of the facilities that we have on-site.

Linton School has a large Horticulture and gardening section in which children can grow their own fruits and vegetables for cooking lessons or plant and nurture a range of flowers, shrubs and trees. Some examples of topics that are covered are:

- Planting in the garden
- Growing food on the allotment
- Working under cover
- Wildlife in the garden
- Using your produce in the kitchen
- Construction in the garden
- Art in the garden
- Careers in gardening

Forest School is a child-centred inspirational learning process that offers opportunities for holistic growth through regular sessions. It is a long-term program that supports play, exploration and supported risk taking. It develops confidence and self-esteem through learner inspired, hands-on experiences in a natural setting. The process helps and facilitates more than knowledge-gathering, it helps learners develop Socially, Emotionally, Spiritually, Physically and Intellectually. It creates a safe, non-judgemental nurturing environment for learners to try stuff out and take risks. Forest School inspires a deep and meaningful connection to the world and an understanding of how a learner fits within it. Our approach to risk means that learners constantly expand on their abilities by solving real-world issues, building self-belief and resilience.

Learning outcomes are accredited by AQA unit awards and where appropriate entry level qualifications e.g. Functional Skills, ASDAN, and GCSEs.

## 7. Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)
- Pupils who have a social worker
- Pupils who have been or previously been looked-after

Teachers will plan lessons so that ALL pupils can study every subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our Additional Learning Needs (ALN) policy and information report.

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Head Teacher and Regional Lead. It will be due for review in **February 2024**.

## 9. Links to other policies

Certain points discussed in this policy may be investigated in greater detail through referring to other policies and documents listed below:

- Post-16 Educational Provision
- Safeguarding Policy
- Additional Learning Needs policy
- Equality statement
- Remote learning strategy
- Online safety