

Inspection of Linton School

Kirkham Road, Freckleton, Preston, Lancashire PR4 1HX

Inspection dates: 29 June to 1 July 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Linton School are supported extremely well to overcome the many complex obstacles to their learning. Pupils say that they feel safe because there is always someone to talk with about their worries and concerns. They thrive in the calm and nurturing environment. Pupils arrive each day happily ready and willing to learn.

Pupils' belief in themselves and trust in others flourishes. They begin to understand how their actions can affect others. Pupils manage their emotions extremely well. Their behaviour and attitude to learning improves considerably. Pupils learn to concentrate and make the most of all learning activities. Any bullying is rare. Pupils are confident that it would be dealt with quickly should it occur.

Staff expect pupils to do well. Pupils appreciate the extensive range of opportunities which develop their confidence, resilience and teamwork. They enjoy taking part in equestrian events, exploring the local countryside and visiting local places of interest. Pupils take their responsibilities very seriously. These include being members of the school council, as 'eco warriors' and taking care of the schools' many animals.

Pupils take full advantage of the many opportunities available to prepare them for future careers. These experiences enable pupils to be extremely well informed about future choices in work or study. These include visits to working farms, engineering workshops and colleges. Parents and carers are delighted with the positive change in their children's learning, behaviour and self-esteem.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

When pupils initially join the school, they have gaps in their knowledge and understanding across a range of subjects. This is because their education has been severely disrupted over a period of time. Pupils have little confidence and do not trust others. They often find it hard to control their emotions and struggle to engage with learning and those around them. Leaders design an individual learning plan which carefully links together a pupil's academic, social and emotional needs. In most subjects, leaders have identified the precise subject knowledge that they want pupils to learn. These curriculum plans are carefully sequenced. This helps pupils to build on what they know when learning something new and pupils achieve well. However, in a small number of subjects, curriculum plans are not as clear about the precise knowledge that pupils will gain over time. This hinders pupils' learning in these subjects.

Teachers use a range of assessment techniques effectively. This helps them to plan what pupils will learn next. Pupils practise what they know. This helps them to be more resilient when learning something new. Over time, pupils begin to remember what they have been taught. They gain confidence when applying their knowledge to new situations.

Teachers foster a love of reading for pleasure through the broad range of books that they read to pupils. Some pupils talk avidly about the stories that they enjoy. Other pupils prefer to read widely across a range of subjects.

For pupils in the earlier stages of learning to read, teachers ensure that the books that they read match their needs and interests well. Over time, pupils' daily reading sessions help them to become confident and fluent readers.

Pupils demonstrate excellent manners and are extremely polite. Highly skilled support staff quickly identify any potential disruptions to lessons. This enables them to defuse situations swiftly and sensitively. Over time, pupils develop very effective strategies to be able to manage their own emotions appropriately. Pupils are fully engaged in their learning. They work hard and take pride in their achievements.

Staff actively promote an understanding of different faiths, cultures and lifestyles. This helps to develop pupils' empathy and respect for others. Pupils explain how laws are used to ensure that people are safe and to protect their rights. Through their roles on the school council, pupils help to make decisions about the life of the school. Pupils understand the importance of keeping fit and healthy. They actively encourage each other to eat healthy meals made from the fruits and vegetables that are grown in the school's allotment.

Members of the proprietor body have a comprehensive understanding of the school. They ensure that the school's resources, accommodation and premises are maintained to a high standard. The proprietor body ensures that the independent school standards are consistently met. Members ensure they meet their obligation under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The proprietor body holds leaders to account for the quality of education, care and support that pupils receive. Leaders are mindful of the well-being of staff and support them effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The high-quality training that staff receive ensures that they have a range of effective strategies to be able to meet the needs of pupils well. Staff are extremely vigilant. They recognise any changes in pupils' demeanour and respond appropriately. Staff know what to do if they have any concerns. They work together to ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe and behave in a safe way towards others.

Leaders have developed close links with other agencies and professionals. Staff engage daily with parents and carers to ensure that pupils, and their families, receive the practical and emotional support that they need. This invaluable support continued throughout the pandemic.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In most subjects, curriculum plans sequence the subject content leaders want pupils to know and remember carefully. This is reflected in pupils' individual learning plans. However, in a few subjects, the curriculum plans do not identify the precise knowledge that pupils will gain. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum plans for all subjects clearly identify what will be taught and when, so that pupils gain the knowledge that they need to be able to access new learning effectively.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	145242
DfE registration number	888/6075
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10193420
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	8 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	11
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	ROC Northwest Limited
Chair	Steve O’Gara
Headteacher	Rebekah Dennett
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,532 to £82,132
Telephone number	01772957074
Website	www.lintonschool.lancs.sch.uk
Email address	rebekah.dennett@rocnorthwest.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 to 21 November 2018

Information about this school

- All pupils who attend this school have a high level of need and an education, health and care plan related to their social, emotional, behavioural and mental health needs.
- The school provides a combination of academic and outdoor curriculums. The outdoor curriculum consists of equestrianism, agriculture and horticulture.
- The referral route for placing pupils at the school is through local authorities from across the North West region.
- Since the last inspection, a new chair of governors has been appointed, as well as a new headteacher and several new members of the teaching and support staff.

Information about this inspection

Ofsted carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This was the first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and staff and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector had a virtual conversation with two members of the proprietor board. She also spoke with the headteacher, members of the leadership team and staff. The inspector also had a telephone conversation with a representative from one of the local authorities that places pupils at the school.
- The inspector considered the following subjects during the inspection: reading, mathematics, personal, social, health and economic development, art, science and the equestrian curriculum. She met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to staff and spoke to pupils about their learning and the life of the school. The inspector also looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils read.
- The inspector considered the single response to Ofsted Parent View, the online questionnaire. There were no free-text comments. However, there were five emails from parents and carers which were considered. The inspector had a telephone conversation with a parent. The inspector also considered the seven responses to the staff questionnaire and the three responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- The inspector checked the school's premises and reviewed a range of documentation related to the independent school standards and the work of the

school. The inspector also scrutinised a range of documentation relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Amanda Stringer, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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