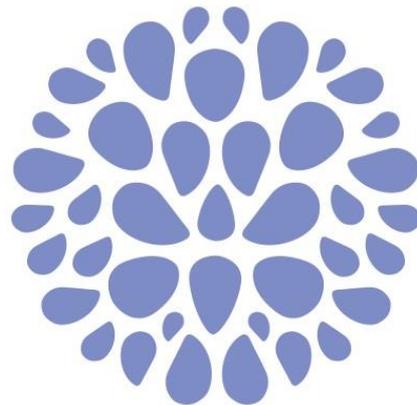




The Linden Academy Parent Handbook 2017-2018 V2





ETHOS

Our ethos is much more than a statement of aims, as it permeates all aspects of life and work at school and is reflected in everything we say and do.

At The Linden Academy we welcome all children and see each one as an individual. We are very proud of all our pupils; the wealth of their diversity is one of our greatest strengths.

We provide a high standard of education in an environment in which children of all abilities and varied cultures can achieve their full potential and enjoy learning.

By support, understanding and example, our children are encouraged to give of their best in all areas of school life. High standards of self-discipline and behaviour are expected. We regard education to be a partnership between home and school, with parents, carers and staff working together for the benefit of the children.

AIMS OF THE SCHOOL

At The Linden Academy we believe that children should be provided with opportunities to reach their full potential in every aspect of their development.

The School has developed the following aims to help our pupils to become well motivated, enthusiastic pupils with a positive attitude towards learning.

- To foster individual academic excellence by encouraging educational development in a happy, disciplined atmosphere;
- to help each pupil develop a lively, enquiring mind, the ability to question and argue rationally and to apply him/herself to tasks and physical skills;
- to help each pupil use language and number effectively;
- to encourage courtesy and respect for others within and outside the school community;
- to encourage respect for religious and moral values, appreciate human achievement and to develop a sense of integrity;
- to help each pupil to understand the world in which we live;
- to enable each pupil to develop self-confidence and to obtain satisfaction and personal fulfilment at each stage of his/her development.

To ensure that every child will have access to the whole curriculum, the school will ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all pupils, especially with regard to gender and culture.



GENERAL INFORMATION

Please be advised that where we refer to parents in this document, this includes carers.

Arrival

The school day commences at 8.30 am, when the doors are opened to the children. This time is used for morning activities which consolidate learning, 1:1 reading and socialising. Children should arrive at school **no later than 8.45am**. Any child arriving at or after 9am will receive a late mark in the register.

Children attending our 'wrap around care' service (known as Out of School Club or OOSC for short) can arrive between 7.45am and 8.30am but must have been pre-booked and pre-paid into the facility (Please see the Out of School Club brochure available from the main reception on request or on our website). Entry to the OOSC will be via the main entrance doors only.

Entry for OOSC – main front doors

Entry for Year R – side gate leading to Year R playground

Entry for Years 1,2,3,4 – bottom doors closest to Park Street entrance

Entry for Years 5,6 – main front doors closest to Osborne Road entrance

Please be advised that the main front entrance of the school should be used in all circumstances by parents and visitors. No other access into the school building is permitted. This entrance is manned by school staff throughout the school day (8.30am-4pm).

Collection Arrangements

The following times signal dismissal times. Pupils must be collected as follows:

Reception: **3.35pm**

Year 1 and Year 2: **3.40pm**

Years 3 - 6 at **3.45pm**

Collection for OOSC – via the main front door accessible via Osborne Road entrance (unless otherwise signposted)

Collection for Year R – Year R playground (accessible via Osborne Road entrance)

Collection for Years 1,2,3,4 – main playground (accessible via either entrance)

Collection for Years 5,6 – front entrance plaza area (accessible via Osborne Road)

On your child's contact form, you will list those adults that will regularly collect your children from school. However, a system of 'passwords' will also be used to indicate the trusted adults that you permit to collect your child from school. The school will not allow any person to collect your child unless they know the password for your child. We request that you let us know of any changes to regular collection arrangements (via telephone or email please).

It is important that you adhere strictly to this arrangement as staff will not release a child to a third party unless they have previously received instructions to do so.



If a pupil has not been collected from school on time, the school will place the children in 'the late room'. There WILL be late collection fee chargeable to parents in five-minute intervals for this facility. This is set at £5 per 5 minutes. This is to deter parents from late collections and to safeguard the staff's own time outside of their working day. If you know that you are going to be late, please contact the school and make an emergency OOSC booking via Parentpay or make alternative arrangements for your children.

Please be advised that it is within the school's duty of care to refer persistently late or uncollected children to Social Services.

Parking

For reasons of pupil safety, we do not permit use of the school car park for parents. A barrier system will be in operation throughout the day to ensure that this is respected.

The barrier will only be lifted to allow use of the **designated drop off zone** during the times:

8.25am- 8.55am

Under NO circumstances can cars be parked in this zone or in the staff spaces. It is for the dropping off of children ONLY. Please be advised that this system will be overseen by school staff and any family choosing not to abide by these rules will have their right to enter the school site withdrawn. **The school reserves the right to withdraw this facility if it is not used correctly.**

Please consider our neighbours if you choose to park in any side streets or other car parks and park without causing obstruction to their properties. Parking or stopping is not allowed on the yellow zigzag lines.

Contact Form and Home School Agreement

All new children starting school will be given a contact form and a Home-School Agreement. This will be updated by all families on a yearly basis. Both should be filled in and returned as soon as possible. The form asks for contact telephone numbers (so that we know how best to contact you during school hours should the need arise) in addition to other important information with regard to diet and medical conditions etc. Please update this form during the year, should there be any changes, using a change of details form available from the office. The Home-School agreement outlines our commitments to each other towards a successful partnership between school and home.

Snacks and Water

In order to encourage healthy eating and also to avoid loss of lunchtime appetite, we would ask for parents' co-operation in providing the following snacks only:

Reception, Years 1 and 2: One item of fruit or vegetable for either of the morning or afternoon breaks. The school also provide fruit/veg snacks for children on a daily basis.



Years 3 – 6: One item of fruit or vegetable for the morning break

Out of School Club (3.45pm-6pm): fruit, vegetables, crackers, cereal bars or sandwich only.

For reasons of health, we do not permit crisps, chocolate or any drink other than plain water and ask for parents' support in this. Items that do not meet the school rules above will be confiscated by teachers and sent home.

Please provide a water bottle for your child to have available in their classroom. This should be clearly named.

Lunches

School dinners are compulsory for all children in Year R, Year 1 and Year 2. The government provides funding for this and no charge is made to parents.

For children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 the option of either school dinner (chargeable to parents) or packed lunches is available.

The cost for a delicious school lunch is £2.35. Payment for lunches will be made in advance or 'as you go' via our new ParentPay payment system. No credit facility is available.

If your child requires a specific diet (i.e. no beef/pork/dairy products etc.) please make sure that this is made clear on the contact form. If a specific diet is required for a medical reason, please ensure that this is communicated clearly to the teachers and on the contact form. Confirmation of medical needs will be asked for from the child's doctor.

Should any family experience difficulty in paying for or providing lunches, we respectfully request families to contact us directly to discuss in a confidential manner.

Did you know that families with a combined annual income of less than £16,190 and in receipt of government benefits may be entitled to FREE school meals, uniform assistance and trip subsidy? Please contact Mrs Ludlow or go online www.luton.gov.uk/Education_and_learning/Pages/Free-school-meals to fill in an application form! It is certainly worth it and can allow families to access all manner of support!

School Uniform

It is our school policy that all children wear school uniform when attending school. Full details of our uniform policy can be found on our website.

Please ensure that all purchases of branded items are purchased from our official supplier; Prestige Design and Work Wear. Further details can be found on our website. We are aware of counterfeit supplies being sold and urge parents to take caution.

All items of clothing and sportswear should be clearly named.



Pupils in all year groups will require a branded 'The Linden Academy' folio bag. No other bags will be permitted due to space constraints. This includes older children in KS2.

Termly uniform checks will take place and letters will be sent home if children do not follow our strict uniform code. We thank all parents in advance for supporting this important school expectation.

PE days for Years 3,4,5,6 – on allocated PE days, Year 3-6 children will be expected to come to school in their full PE kit for the day. This is to ensure no lost time due to changing for PE lessons and to overcome any issues of public changing as the children get older. The day affecting your child will be communicated to you prior to the start of the year.

Jewellery

We **do not** allow children to wear jewellery in our school.

The exceptions to this rule are small objects of religious significance, or for girls, a small pair of stud earrings. Watches are permitted but must be appropriate for school use and should not make noise.

For earrings, they must be removed for all PE activities by the child. No member of staff will be permitted to do this for them.

For the items of religious significance, they may be removed or covered with a sweatband for PE. Please notify us in writing if your child is required to wear such an item.

We recommend that if you choose to get your child's ears pierced, this be done at the start of the long summer break. In general, jewellers' guidelines specify a 6 week period for no removal of earrings. Plasters will not be permitted nor supplied to cover newly pierced ears. Please support us in ensuring full participation in National Curriculum PE.

Hair

The school **does not permit** children to have 'extreme' haircuts. This includes patterned designs shaved into the head, excessive beading or colours/dyes.

Girls are requested to use only **plain** navy blue hair accessories.

Long hair should be tied back at all times during the school day.

Footwear

Plain black school shoes are required. Shoes with heels or platforms and shoes which slip on and off are not permitted. We do not allow children to wear trainers to school; this is because we think that this footwear is appropriate for sport or for leisurewear, but is not in keeping with the smart appearance of a school uniform. The only exception to this is children who have been asked to come to school in their sports kits.



Outdoor Wear

Blazers are required for pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 and must be worn each school day, regardless of the weather.

Hats and caps are required for pupils from Reception to Year 6 and must be worn each school day, regardless of the weather.

We request that school coats for wearing in inclement weather are **plain navy** or **black** with no motifs or decorative trims.

Coats must be brought to school during the Autumn and Spring terms as children will be outside, if only for a short “fresh air” break, in adverse weather.

Discretion should be exercised by parents during the summer term as regards to their child bringing a coat to school. We would suggest that if the weather is forecast to be inclement, that a coat is brought to school on such days to be worn at break times and off-site activities (such as those listed above). This will then either protect their blazer or may be worn instead when pupils are outside.

PE Kit

Children in Year R, 1 and 2 will bring their PE kit into school at the start of each new half term and will leave it at school until the following holiday period. This is to ensure that kit is always on hand for timetabled and spontaneous physical activity.

Children in Key Stage 2 (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6) will NOT bring their PE kit to leave in school. They will instead, wear their PE kit as their school uniform on their allocated day for PE lessons. A schedule of days explaining which day of the week your child should wear their PE kit to school rather than their school uniform will be sent to all parents prior to the start of the year and will also be on our website.

As with the main uniform, it is imperative that the school’s PE kit list is adhered to. Visit our website for a full pictorial guide.

Absence due to Illness

Please alert the school to all absences through illness via telephone or email (daily with each day absent please). The school will telephone or SMS message all families who fail to report their child’s absence in order to ascertain the reason for absence.

Children with **diarrhoea and vomiting combined** must be kept away from school and only return after being symptom free for forty-eight hours (as per Health Protection Agency guidelines). These measures are to help reduce the spread of infection to both children and staff. It is school policy that any child who vomits (without diarrhoea) can return to school 24 hours later if well enough to do so. If a child is taken ill during the school day, the school will contact the parent to make arrangements for the child to be collected from school.



Administration of Medicine

Only prescribed medication will be administered at school. Parents are requested to fill in an authorisation form which will apply to the whole course of the medicine (available from the School Reception). Medicines should be brought to school in the original container clearly marked with the Pharmacy's label. Please ensure the dosage measuring spoon is included in the package to allow us to administer the medicine accurately.

Punctuality, Other Absence and Request for Leave

It is the legal responsibility of a parent to ensure that their child attends school. The Principal will only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. All requests must be made in writing using the standard form. This can be requested via the school office or downloaded from our website.

An Education Welfare Officer is employed by the school to check children's attendance. They have the legal right to serve Penalty Notices to families who do not adhere to the school's attendance policy and will do so on behalf of the school and local authority. This includes pupils who are persistently late. Please be advised that registers close at 9.00am.

Our policy is also available on the website, as are leave of absence forms.

Days of Religious Observance

Absence of a pupil for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong is classified as authorised absence. This can only be up to two observances per year. We request that advance notice be given for such days when a child will not be attending school. If authorisation is not sought in advance, the absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised'. Leave of absence requests are available on the website and at the main Reception desk.

Keeping in Touch

Should you wish to discuss a matter with your child's teacher please contact the School Office for a mutually convenient appointment to be made. You may also email the school for a message to be delivered on your behalf.

In order to keep you in touch with school news, regular letters and newsletters are sent out via the website and e mail. A bulletin is issued fortnightly on a Friday which provides a round-up of past and forthcoming events. Our website is also updated weekly to provide information and key dates. You can also Follow Us on Twitter @TSLTTheLinden and on Facebook (The Linden Academy) for real-time updates and news.



Reporting to Parents

School reports will be issued twice a year; once at the mid-year point (March/April) and once towards the end of the summer term (July). A Parent/ Teacher communication event will be held each half term either via a “book look” or a Parent Consultation evening. Should you wish to discuss any matter with your child’s class teacher on an impromptu basis, a meeting may be arranged at a mutually convenient time. The same will apply should the teacher wish to discuss a matter with parents.

Parents of pupils in statutory testing year groups (Year 1 phonics screening, Year 2 and Year 6 SATS) will receive a copy of their child’s end of key stage teacher assessment levels and test results with the school report at the end of the academic year.

School Events and Dates for your Diaries:

ALL dates for the entire year are communicated via the Calendar on the website and also via the fortnightly bulletins. An email link to these bulletins is provided for your ease on the day of publication. The school aims to give a minimum of 2 weeks’ notice of all school dates and events. We will also use our SMS system to send occasional text-message reminders for events and significant dates.

Curriculum

The school aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum to meet the individual needs of each child. We provide a stimulating environment in which pupils receive the desirable amount of individual attention in small classes, with additional support as necessary. In such circumstances the talents of every child are encouraged to develop. We aim to provide a thorough grounding in preparation for entry to a wide variety of senior schools, while at the same time establishing the self-confidence in our pupils to successfully meet new challenges and a sense of belonging to a society in which they can fully participate as citizens.

English, Maths, Science, RE, Computing, French and PE lessons are all taught as “stand-alone” subjects. Our thematic approach to curriculum design then allows for all other subjects to be taught in collaboration.

‘Virtues’ are our focus for PSHCE lessons; the qualities we hope to see in our children as they develop into wonderful citizens. These are communicated to parents at the start of each new half term.

‘British Values’ are also something we take seriously at TLA and can be found to permeate all that we do. Respect for all cultures, fair play and democracy are also visited specifically.

Full details of the curriculum that your child will follow will be available to view via the Curriculum section on the school website.



The School Day

The timetable for the school day varies according to each Key Stage. Registration takes place prior to 9.00am. The school doors are opened at 8.30am. Timetables displaying more detail for your child's class will be distributed at the start of the new academic year and are also available on the website.

Gifted and Talented Children, Children with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) and Children with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

In our school we aim to provide a curriculum that is appropriate to the needs and abilities of all our children. We plan our teaching and learning in such a way that we enable each child to reach for the highest level of personal achievement. This policy helps to ensure that we recognise and support the needs of those children in our school who have been identified as 'gifted' or 'talented' according to national guidelines and also who may need additional support in their learning. Parents with a child identified as either 'G&T', 'EAL' or as having 'SEND' will be contacted by the school, where a personalised plan will be put into place for each child.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

The school has robust processes and policies relating to the safeguarding of children. The designated officer for safeguarding in school is Mrs Sillars. The deputy for Mrs Beach is Mrs Ludlow. The nominated governor for safeguarding is Mrs Badu. Further information can be obtained via the policy which is located on the school's website.

Homework

Homework is an important part of a child's education and can add much to a child's development. One of the aims of our school is for children to develop as independent learners. We believe that homework is one of the main ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.

Homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. We also acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development. While homework is important, we believe that it should not prevent children from taking part in the wide range of out-of-school clubs and organisations that play an important part in the lives of many children.

Amount of Homework

Daily reading and spelling practice is expected across all Year Groups. Reading scheme books are provided, free of charge. However, lost and damaged items will incur a fee of £6 per book for replacement.



We increase the amount of homework that we give the children as they move through the school.

Full details of the expectations for homework and a schedule for submission will be given to parents at the start of the academic year and our full policy can be viewed on our website.

If parents have any queries relating to homework, they should contact the child's class teacher.

Behaviour at The Linden

We are a small school and a close knit community. As teachers, we respect and care for each and every child and we expect the same treatment in return.

Poor behaviour is NOT TOLERATED at our school and our teachers will undergo regular training to ensure that they have the tools and strategies for ensuring that the learning, safety and welfare of others is not compromised by the behaviour or attitude of another.

Sanctions

Each class will have its own behaviour monitoring systems. However, should these not be sufficient in deterring negative behaviours, the school has a Sanctions ladder which will be followed. Sanctions may include detentions (both during and after school if necessary), the withdrawal of privileges, internal seclusion from friends and teachers and where necessary, a personalised plan between home and school to support children in making the right choices. Exclusion is a decision that is never taken lightly but will be taken should the safety, wellbeing or education of others be compromised.

Rewards

We also have a 'Rewards Ladder' which serves to showcase the majority of children who work hard and achieve well. Copies of these ladders are distributed at the start of the academic year and displayed around the school. Positive behaviour management is a far more effective method for behaviour management in schools.



The House System; a way to reward excellence

The School has adopted a house system which runs from Year 3 up to Year 6. The house system has a pastoral role as well as encouraging individual and collective competitiveness.

Every child is placed in a house:

Years 3,4,5 and 6
St Andrew's House
St David's House
St George's House
St Patrick's House

House Points are awarded at four levels:

Blue Cross	-	1 House Point
Blue Star	-	2 House Point
Red Cross	-	3 House Point
Red Star	-	4 House Point

The class teacher will keep a record of House Points awarded and badges and certificates are earned by pupils in recognition of their efforts. These pupils are celebrated in assembly and on the school's website. Collectively, the winning House is celebrated each week in a special assembly and with the 'House song'. Once a year, on their Saint's Day, each House will host a special assembly for their families and will compete as a team at our annual Sports Day event!

Other Rewards

One of our most popular rewards is 'Tea with the Principal'. Each half term, a teacher nominates one member of their class for exceptional behaviour, effort or achievement. This person will then join the Principal for tea and cakes in recognition of their hard work.

Certificates, work sharing assemblies, stickers and 'good news' slips home to parents are further examples of our highly effective rewards system.

The highlight for children is the 'end of half term' celebration event for all children with fewer than 10 behaviour points only.

Extra-Curricular Activities (fee paying and non-fee paying) and Enrichment

In addition to the set curriculum, a wide variety of extra-curricular activities are provided during the lunch hour or after school. These are provided by peripatetic coaches and tutors. These generally incur a fee, payable in advance. Examples of such include Piano lessons, Rock and Pop lessons and Football coaching. Please be advised that fee paying activities are very popular and that waiting lists may be in place.



A letter is sent out during the first few weeks of the academic year outlining the programme for fee paying clubs for the forthcoming term.

Other enrichment activities such as trips, guest speakers, workshops and celebration events are organised throughout the school year. Our aim is for the total cost to parents to never exceed £25 per year.

In addition to this, charity events such as Macmillan Coffee Morning (September), Comic Relief (March), Children in Need (November), Winter Clothing Day (December), Remembrance Day (November) are all recognised at TLA. All donations/participation are suggested but never compulsory.

Out of School and Holiday Club

All registered pupils of The Linden Academy are de-facto registered with and entitled to use the facilities of the Club (OOSC). A full brochure is available from the main reception desk or via our website.

Please note that this facility is **pre-bookable and pre-payable** and can be withdrawn on the grounds of behaviour, non-payment, persistent late collection or at the discretion of the Principal.

School Website, Twitter, Facebook and Email

The school website contains a wealth of school information and we would encourage all parents to engage fully with this resource: linden.thesharedlearningtrust.org.uk

Email is now our main form of communication as we endeavour to reduce our paper usage and impact on the environment: linden@thesharedlearningtrust.org.uk

Twitter: @TSLTTheLinden

Facebook: The Linden Academy

SCHOOL CONTACT DETAILS

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