Linden Lodge School

Provider of specialist education since 1903

| | |
|---|---|
| Title: | SEN Information Report |
| Type: | POLICY |
| Review Cycle Frequency: | 1 year |
| Lead Staff: | Co-Headteachers |
| Support: | Deputy Headteacher |

VERSION CONTROL:

| Version No | New document or reasons for revision | Agreed by | Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Migration to new document version control system | Office | April 2021 |
| 2 | Policy update | Office | Autumn 2022 |
| 3 | Policy update | Lead staff | Autumn 2023 |
| 4 | Policy update | Lead staff | Autumn 2024 |
| 5 | Policy update | Lead staff | Autumn 2025 |
| 5 | Policy Update | Lead staff | Summer 2026 |

LINKED INTERNAL DOCUMENTS:

Therapy policy
Residential statement of purpose
Safeguarding Policy
Behaviour Policy
School Accessibility Plan

LINKED EXTERNAL DOCUMENTS:

https://www.sendiass.org/

SEND Local Offer | Family Information Service

## Equalities Statement:

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of these policies on equality and the possible implications for people with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

## Requests for Paper Copies:

If you require this policy in a different format e.g. print or braille please contact co-heads@lindenlodge.org.uk

## Wellbeing statement of commitment

We are committed to providing a healthy working environment and improving the quality of working lives for all staff and students. The wellbeing strategy aims to support our mission, core values and freedom of thought and expression, freedom from discrimination and the recognition that our community is our greatest asset. For further information on our school's commitment to wellbeing, please see the Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy and Strategy document, or visit our school website.

**Welcome**

We are a specialist school for children and young people aged 2–19 with visual impairment and multi-sensory impairment (MSI). Our provision supports students with a wide range of complex needs, including those who may have additional physical, medical, communication, and/or learning needs alongside their sensory impairment.

Every student at Linden Lodge has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), or is in the process of statutory assessment. These plans ensure that each student receives a personalised and coordinated approach to their education, health, and care needs.

At Linden Lodge, we place the individual child at the centre of everything we do. We work in close partnership with families, carers, and a range of professionals to create a nurturing, inclusive, and aspirational learning environment.

Our aim is simple but ambitious: to enable every student to develop effective communication skills, achieve the highest possible level of independence, and be well prepared for adult life. We support students to build confidence, resilience, and self-advocacy skills, ensuring they are empowered to make choices and participate actively in their communities.

Our curriculum is highly personalised and adapted to meet sensory and learning needs. It includes a strong focus on communication, mobility, independence, and social development, alongside academic learning where appropriate.

**Admissions:**

A dedicated Admissions team works closely with the various Local Authorities and a wider group of professionals in school.  There is an Admissions Coordinator who ensures that admissions into school is coordinated, well-informed, and supportive at every stage.

This includes:

- Liaising with Local Authorities
- Coordinating visits to school
- Arranging Suitability Assessments with multiple professionals in school
- Ensuring that student needs are assessed appropriately

Through the statutory Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Local Authorities may consult for a place at Linden Lodge School. This ensures that placement decisions are made in line with legal requirements and are based on a thorough assessment of the child or young person’s needs.

When a Local Authority consults with us, we carefully review all available information, including professional reports, the EHCP, and any additional assessments. This allows us to determine whether Linden Lodge is an appropriate setting and whether we can meet the student’s identified needs.  If the Admissions team are in agreement that we are able to meet the student’s need they will invite the student and family to school for a Suitability Assessment.

Our approach is collaborative and child-centred, recognising the importance of getting the placement right. We work closely with families, carers, and professionals throughout this process to ensure transparency, clarity, and reassurance. Our communication protocol is outlined to ensure that our communication flow is with the consulting Local Authority and Linden Lodge school.

In admissions, we aim to ensure that:

- Linden Lodge is the right educational setting for the child or young person
- We have the expertise, staffing, and resources to meet their individual needs
- Any required specialist support, equipment, or interventions can be identified and costed if necessary

Once a placement is agreed, we prioritise a carefully planned and supportive transition into the school. This may include:

- Pre-admission visits for the student and family
- Liaison with previous settings and professionals
- Gradual transition arrangements tailored to the student's needs
- Development of an initial support plan to ensure continuity and consistency

Our goal is to make the transition into Linden Lodge as smooth, positive, and reassuring as possible, helping each student feel safe, welcomed, and ready to learn from the very beginning.

**How do we understand your child's needs?**

At Linden Lodge, we use a continuous cycle of assessment and support known as Assess → Plan → Do → Review. This graduated approach ensures that every student's needs are carefully identified, supported, and reviewed over time. It allows us to respond flexibly to each child or young person as they develop and their needs change.

**Assess**

We begin by building a comprehensive understanding of your child's strengths, needs, and preferred ways of learning and communicating.

This includes:

- Baseline assessments when your child first joins the school, to establish starting points across key areas such as communication, cognition, mobility, and independence
- Regular, structured assessments built into the yearly calendar to monitor progress and inform next steps

- Ongoing observations and assessments from teachers, therapists, and support staff as part of daily practice
- Specialist assessments where appropriate (e.g. vision, hearing, communication, or physical development)

This holistic approach ensures that we consider the whole child, not just academic attainment.

**Plan**

Using the information gathered through assessment, we develop a personalised plan tailored to your child's individual needs.

This includes:

- Personalised planning and delivery of learning, based on your child's strengths, interests, and areas for development
- Clearly defined outcomes, agreed in partnership with you and aligned with the EHCP
- Individual targets that are specific, measurable, and meaningful for your child's progress
- Input from a range of professionals to ensure a coordinated and consistent approach

We place great importance on working collaboratively with families, ensuring your views and aspirations are reflected in planning.

**Do**

The agreed plan is then implemented through high-quality teaching and specialist support.

This includes:

- Teaching and therapy delivered through an inter-disciplinary approach, where education, health, and care professionals work closely together
- Adapted teaching strategies, resources, and environments to meet sensory and learning needs
- Targeted interventions and therapies embedded into daily routines wherever possible
- Support that is responsive and tailored to your child, promoting engagement, independence, and wellbeing

Our staff are highly trained in supporting students with visual impairment and multi-sensory impairment, ensuring that provision is both specialist and inclusive.

## Review

We regularly review your child's progress to ensure that support remains effective and appropriate.

This includes:

- Termly progress reviews to evaluate progress towards targets and outcomes
- Annual EHCP reviews, involving families and professionals, to formally assess progress and plan next steps
- Regular meetings and communication with families to share updates and gather your views
- Annual written progress reports summarising achievements, development, and future priorities

The review process is central to our approach, enabling us to celebrate success, identify any changes in need, and adapt provision accordingly.

This ongoing cycle ensures that support at Linden Lodge remains dynamic, responsive, and centred around each individual student.

## How will my child learn?

At Linden Lodge, learning is carefully designed to meet the unique needs of every student. We recognise that children and young people with visual impairment and multi-sensory impairment learn in different ways, and our approach reflects this through a highly adapted and supportive curriculum.

## Our curriculum

Our curriculum is:

- Personalised – built around your child's individual strengths, needs, interests, and preferred ways of learning. No two students follow exactly the same pathway
- Ambitious – we have high expectations for every student, focusing on meaningful progress, independence, and preparation for the next stage of life
- Practical – learning is relevant and functional, helping students develop the skills they need for everyday life, both now and in the future

The curriculum is flexible and responsive, ensuring that it remains appropriate as your child grows and develops.

**What we focus on?**

We place particular emphasis on key areas that are essential for development and independence:

- Communication – supporting students to express themselves, understand others, and develop effective ways to interact using speech, sign, symbols, objects of reference, or assistive technology
- Independence – developing life skills such as personal care, mobility, decision-making, and self-advocacy
- Physical and sensory development – supporting movement, coordination, and sensory processing, helping students to access their environment safely and confidently
- Social interaction – encouraging relationships, shared experiences, and participation in group activities

These areas are embedded throughout all learning experiences.

**How we teach?**

Teaching and learning at Linden Lodge is adapted to ensure that every student can access learning in a way that works best for them.

This includes:

- Small class sizes, allowing for a high level of individual attention, alongside opportunities for group and one-to-one learning
- Specialist teachers and a skilled multidisciplinary team, including therapists and support staff, working collaboratively
- Sensory and structured learning approaches, using adapted materials, routines, and environments to support understanding and engagement
- Communication systems tailored to each child, ensuring that every student has a voice and can participate as fully as possible

Our approach is flexible and responsive, with teaching strategies adjusted as students' needs and abilities evolve.

**Therapies as part of learning**

Occupational, Speech and Language and Physiotherapy programmes are embedded within students' everyday routines and experiences. This integrated approach ensures that therapeutic strategies, specialist advice and targeted interventions are applied consistently throughout the day rather than delivered as isolated sessions.

Embedding therapy within learning contexts reflects evidence-based practice, supporting students to practise and generalise functional, communication and physical skills in meaningful situations. This approach also enables continued and appropriate postural

management as part of daily provision, promoting opportunities for optimum postural alignment, comfort, engagement and readiness to learn.

The whole school integrated model provides students with the opportunity for progress with independence and participation across all aspects of school life.

**Creative Therapeutic Arts as part of learning**

Linden Lodge has a well embedded Creative & Therapeutic Arts provision which comprises of Music Therapy, Dance Movement Psychotherapy, Art Therapy, Massage Therapy and Special Yoga. The team works to enhance, support and motivate wellbeing and development at an emotional, psychological, physical and social level for the children and young people at Linden Lodge School. We provide highly specialist therapeutic support that is person-centred and delivered by qualified practitioners to support pupils during their time with us. A key strength of the provision is the school's in-house therapeutic offer, which enables a responsive and personalised approach for students requiring targeted support.

Creative Arts Therapies, Massage Therapy and Special Yoga are available to children and young people across the school, from Early Years to Sixth Form, and sessions are responsive to each student's needs. Sessions are allocated on a referral basis and pupils can be offered individual sessions or small group sessions depending on the reasons for referral, using a range of creative mediums as the primary means of connecting to support emotional wellbeing and to facilitate opportunities for relationship building, communication, self-development and developmentally appropriate play. The duration of the course of therapy is determined during assessment and review; a number of student's also receive sessions in line with their EHCP.

**Habilitation as part of learning**

Linden Lodge School has a team of Habilitation Specialists and Assistants who provide expert support to children and young people with vision impairments including advice and guidance to other professionals supporting a child including TAs, therapists and their families in supporting them to develop safe orientation, mobility and essential life skills.

Habilitation training is provided to complement each pupil's wider development, equipping them with the skills and strategies required to access a range of environments including the school campus, wider community and travelling on public transport confidently and safely.

Habilitation enables our pupils to fully participate in school life and prepare for greater independence, with skills and strategies being taught at an age and stage appropriate level.

**Residential – Richley House**

We ensure that our young people are equipped for the best outcomes and the highest quality of life. We offer a child and family centered provision which is planned to enable each young person to achieve their full potential following a Waking Day+ Curriculum.

We work collaboratively with internal and external professionals to support young people's personal development and well-being.

The residential team works closely with the team around the young person to include but not limited to parents, carers, education colleagues, nursing, habilitation, therapists and creative therapeutic arts team.

**Preparing for adult life**

From Year 9 onwards, we place an increasing focus on preparing students for adulthood. This reflects the statutory requirement within EHCP planning for transition and ensures that students are supported to develop the skills, confidence, and experiences they will need for life beyond school.

Our approach is personalised and forward-looking, with planning based on each young person's aspirations, strengths, and level of independence. We work closely with families and external professionals to ensure that preparation for adulthood is meaningful and realistic for every learner.

**From Year 9 onwards, we focus on:**

- Independence – developing practical life skills such as personal care, decision-making, daily routines, travel training, and managing familiar environments with increasing confidence
- Employment skills – introducing work-related learning experiences, including vocational pathways, workplace behaviours, and opportunities to explore different types of work and responsibility
- Community access – supporting students to safely engage with their local community, build confidence in new environments, and develop an understanding of public spaces and services
- Health and wellbeing – promoting physical and emotional wellbeing, including understanding health needs, developing self-care routines, and building resilience and self-awareness

These areas are embedded across the curriculum and supported through both classroom-based learning and real-life experiences.

**Sixth Form:**

The Sixth Form provision builds on earlier learning and places greater emphasis on transition into adulthood.

This includes:

- Life skills and independence – further developing essential daily living skills such as cooking, budgeting, personal organisation, travel training, and managing personal care with increased independence

- Work-related learning – accessing meaningful work experience opportunities, developing employability skills, and exploring supported employment or volunteering pathways where appropriate
- College and transition planning – supporting students to explore post-16 and post-19 options, including specialist colleges, supported internships, adult services, and community-based provision

Transition planning is highly individualised and reviewed regularly to ensure that next steps are realistic and aligned with each young person's aspirations and level of independence.

**Transition support**

A dedicated Transitions Lead works closely with students and families throughout this process. Their role is to ensure that transition planning is coordinated, well-informed, and supportive at every stage.

This includes:

- Liaising with families, Local Authorities, and external agencies
- Coordinating visits to post-school placements and services
- Supporting EHCP transition planning meetings
- Ensuring smooth handover to adult services or further education providers

Our aim is to ensure that every young person leaves Linden Lodge with a clear, supported pathway into adulthood, equipped with the skills and confidence they need for their next stage of life.

**How do we listen to students?**

Student voice is extremely important at Linden Lodge. We are committed to ensuring that every student has opportunities to express their views, preferences, and feelings in ways that are meaningful and accessible to them.

We recognise that communication may take many forms, and we actively support each student to participate in decision-making about their learning and school experience.

We support students to share their views through: I believe therapy also request student voice

- Annual reviews – where students' views are gathered and shared as part of the EHCP process, using appropriate communication methods
- Student Council – providing structured opportunities for students to contribute ideas, influence school decisions, and take part in school development
- Therapy team - gathers student voice in relation to the support students receive. Students are encouraged to share their feedback specific to their therapy provision, ensuring what is being delivered is responsive and meaningful to each student.

- Everyday choices and communication – ensuring that students are given regular opportunities to make choices throughout the school day, from learning activities to personal preferences

We adapt communication methods so that every student can be heard. This may include the use of objects of reference, symbols, signing, communication aids, assistive technology, eye gaze systems, or other personalised communication approaches.

Our aim is to ensure that student voice is not a single event, but an ongoing and embedded part of school life.

**Inclusion**

At Linden Lodge, inclusion means ensuring that every student is valued, supported, and able to participate fully in school life in a way that is meaningful and appropriate to their needs.

Inclusion at Linden Lodge means:

- Every student has access to learning that is carefully adapted to meet their individual needs, abilities, and communication methods
- Every student is supported to take part in school life, including lessons, enrichment activities, therapies, and wider school experiences
- Every student is encouraged and supported to develop independence, confidence, and a sense of belonging within the school community

We also recognise the importance of wider inclusion. Where appropriate and beneficial for the student, we provide opportunities for learners to access activities, sessions, or partnerships with mainstream settings. These experiences are carefully planned and supported to ensure they are positive, safe, and meaningful.

**Our specialist facilities**

Linden Lodge provides a highly adapted and specialist learning environment designed to meet the complex needs of students with visual impairment and multi-sensory impairment.

Our facilities include:

- Sensory rooms – providing controlled sensory environments to support regulation, exploration, and sensory development
- Hydrotherapy pool – supporting physical development, movement, relaxation, and therapeutic intervention
- Specialist therapy spaces – designed for individual and group therapy sessions delivered by trained professionals
- Assistive technology – including communication aids, switches, eye gaze systems, and other adaptive technologies to support access to learning and communication

- Adapted learning materials – including Braille, large print, tactile resources, objects of reference, and symbol-based systems

These facilities enable students to access learning in ways that are tailored to their sensory, physical, and communication needs.

**Working with parents and carers**

We believe that strong, trusting partnerships with families and carers are essential to achieving the best outcomes for students.

We work closely with families and offer:

- Open and regular communication with staff
- Termly meetings to discuss progress, wellbeing, and next steps
- Annual EHCP reviews involving families and professionals
- Workshops, training sessions, and school events to support understanding and involvement
- Regular updates on progress, achievements, and school activities

We recognise that parents and carers are experts of their child, and we value their knowledge, insights, and ongoing involvement in decision-making.

**Safeguarding**

Keeping students safe is our highest priority. We are fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in our care.

All staff receive regular safeguarding training and are aware of their responsibilities in identifying and responding to any concerns. We follow national safeguarding guidance and local authority procedures to ensure that every child is protected, supported, and able to learn in a safe environment.

We work closely with external agencies where necessary to ensure that any concerns are addressed promptly and appropriately.

**What if I have concerns?**

We aim to resolve any concerns quickly, openly, and constructively in partnership with families.

If you have any concerns, we encourage you to follow this process:

1. Speak to your child’s class teacher in the first instance
2. Contact the relevant Head of Department if the issue is not resolved
3. Contact the Co-Headteachers if further escalation is needed

You may also follow the school's formal Complaints Policy, which is available on the school website.

Independent advice and support can also be accessed through your local SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS).

**Who do we work with?**

We work collaboratively with a wide range of professionals to ensure that each student receives coordinated and holistic support.

This includes:

- Speech and language therapists
- Occupational therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Health services, including nurses and specialist medical professionals
- Educational psychologists
- Social care teams and family support services
- Creative Therapeutic Arts
- Habilitation Specialists
- Residential Teams
- CAMHs teams
- Various Local Authorities and case coordinators

By working together, we ensure that education, health, and care needs are fully integrated and consistently supported.

**How do we check we are doing a good job?**

We are committed to continuous improvement and regularly evaluate the quality and impact of our provision.

We do this through:

- Monitoring student progress across all areas of learning and development
- Reviewing outcomes through EHCP annual reviews and termly assessment cycles
- Gathering feedback from families, carers, and students
- Ongoing school improvement processes, including internal review, external evaluation, and professional development

This ongoing evaluation ensures that we continue to provide high-quality, effective, and responsive education for all students at Linden Lodge.