

The Link Secondary School

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2019 - 2020

SCHOOL VISION & VALUES

Vision – Achievement, Well-being, Communication and Independence

Values – Success, Charity, Resilience, Positivity, Courage, Kindness

SECTION 1: CONTEXT

- The Link Secondary School is a special co-educational school for students aged 11 to 19 whose primary need is either Speech, Language and Communication or ASC. There are currently 48 students on roll (all have an EHCP) of which 64% have SLC and 67% ASC. 9% have a need of Epilepsy and 15% MLD
- The Link Secondary School converted to become an academy on 1st July 2017 following an inadequate judgement by Ofsted on October 2016, and a previous judgement of “requires improvement” on October 2014. In the inadequate judgement the following three areas were highlighted: leadership and management, outcomes for students, and the quality of teaching and learning. Personal development and welfare was graded good
- The Link Secondary School is part of Orchard Hill College Academy Trust (“OHCAT”) and sponsored by Orchard Hill College, an outstanding college primarily for adult learners with a range of complex needs and disabilities. The Link Secondary School is part of the Sutton and Croydon Hub and also works closely with Carew Academy and The Link Primary School to share resources, offer INSET training and CPD for all staff.
- All our students display a range of complex social, speech language and communication needs such as, but not limited to, high levels of anxiety, wellbeing and associated mental health issues, rigidity of thought, impulsive behaviour patterns, high levels of dependence, complex learning needs, weak understanding and use of spoken language and a range of speech disorders (including stammering and selective mutism) and we have several students with ADHD. This exposes our students to high levels of vulnerability. They display behaviour and language which is significantly behind their chronological age/expectations.
- The school has students on roll from 8 local authorities, with 41% from the London Borough of Sutton, with 68% of boys and 32% of girls. White British is the dominant ethnic group at 52%; the next largest is Black Caribbean at 10%. 23 out of 48 students are eligible for a pupil premium grant (48%)
- The majority of our students have progressed through education in a special school setting with a smaller number joining the school due to difficulties in a mainstream provision and/or late diagnosis of needs/the issuing of an EHCP. 17% of students joined late and not from the start in Year 7. The school is currently offering an outreach support programme for 3 London Borough of Sutton.
- As a result of complex social, speech, language and communication needs, the school offers a structured comprehensive therapy package to support progress. All students benefit from onsite speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, canine assisted learning, a school nurse, drama staff and a range of other therapies. This intervention is bespoke and can be one to one or in a small group.
- All students benefit from an access programme in the curriculum which is written and delivered by our therapy staff and delivered to each teaching class in the school.
- Since the last inspection there have been a number of changes in the leadership of the school. The Principal started in September 2017 and reshaped the Senior Leadership Team, recruiting a new Deputy Head Teacher with a focus on improving the quality of education. A new middle leadership tier was introduced in September 2018.
- The school’s vision or intention, through the curriculum, is to promote Well-being, Independence, Communication and Achievement for all students through the school motto “Aiming High”. The school has a well-defined and articulated set of daily values to support this over-arching vision. These are success, charity, resilience, positivity, kindness, courage. These are British values in daily existence and all staff are expected to model this.

Any changes to context?

1. Since Academy conversion in July 2017, relations with the LA have improved significantly. Student numbers have increased during this time by over 50% and the majority of our students now come from The London Borough of Sutton. The school is well regarded. Half termly open mornings were attended by over 100 parents in 2018-19 and Sutton have already asked to take all the 10 student places available for September 2021 in Year 7.
2. Since September 2018, the curriculum has been restructured and expanded to each meet the needs of our students, appeal to their interests/enthusiasms and fulfil the school vision. Students now study a range of subjects using a core/foundation and access approach.
3. The school sends home curriculum plans for every subject every half term. The learning objectives are clear and linked to school values. Homework packs focusing on literacy and numeracy development are sent home every half term.
4. Since September 2018, the school introduced a new assessment system to monitor the progress of all students against academic targets and track progress against school values. Parents receive progress reports home three times a year and can view, in greater detail, progress data online.
5. From September 2019 our commitment to the quality of education received by our students has seen the introduction of the DfE sponsored Commando Joe programme, drama, photography, textiles and an ICT scheme of work now fully delivered by OHCATs digital school.

**SECTION 2:
PRIORITIES FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT FROM SCHOOL'S SELF-EVALUATION**

<p>Quality of Education</p> <p>1.1 To support the new teaching members of staff to ensure that the improvements made in teaching and learning are sustained</p> <p>1.2 To continue to refine assessment practice and feedback.</p> <p>1.3 Ensure that the depth and breadth of curriculum opportunities both in and out of the classroom are designed to identify and nurture talent so that our students fulfil the vision set out by the school.</p> <p>1.4 Continue to develop good/outstanding governance in school</p>	<p>Behaviour & Attitudes</p> <p>2.1 To underpin all TLA improvements through an effective CPD/INSET programme which address all school needs and allows for professional expertise to be shared (Autism/Team Teach)</p> <p>2.2 To improve whole school attendance through targeted support for students/families below 90%</p>
<p>Personal Development</p> <p>3.1 To continue to ensure all school systems inform and develop school vision and practices (Access, Behaviour, Rewards)</p> <p>3.2 Strengthen the careers programme still further so that pupils have the necessary skills and resilience to become active members of the community. Meet the Gatsby benchmarks</p> <p>3.3 Work with local providers within the community to develop appropriate opportunities for life beyond the Link</p> <p>3.4 Audit, plan and launch/trial the new SRE statutory guidance</p>	<p>Leadership & Management</p> <p>4.1 To develop capacity in the new middle leadership tier to ensure greater lines of accountability at all levels</p> <p>4.2 To work with the LGB to establish a cohesive group to closely align with the Primary School</p> <p>4.3 To review all roles within the school to ensure accountability and impact</p> <p>4.4 To effectively support staff well-being and mental health</p>

SECTION 3:
QUALITY OF TEACHING TARGETS

		TERM 1						TERM 2						TERM 3					
		I	RI	G+			O	I	RI	G+			O	I	RI	G+			O
				2C	2B	2A				2C	2B	2A				2C	2B	2A	
OVERALL QUALITY OF TEACHING (TRIANGULATED BY SLT)	TARGET	0	0	4	4		2	0	0	2	4	2	2	0	0		4	4	2
	ACTUAL																		

**SECTION 4:
ATTENDANCE TARGETS 2019-20**

		Historic 2018/2019	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
Whole school	Target	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
	Actual	90.9%	91.8%					
Year 7	Target	95%	92%	92%	94%	95%	95%	95%
	Actual	92%						
YEAR 8	Target	95%	90%	92%	94%	95%	95%	95%
	Actual	90.8%						
YEAR 9	Target	95%	90%	90%	92%	94%	95%	95%
	Actual	87.8%						
YEAR 10	Target	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
	Actual	94.5%						
YEAR 11	Target	95%	90%	90%	92%	94%	95%	95%
	Actual	87.6%						
Post 16	Target	95%	92%	92%	94%	95%	95%	95%
	Actual	91.5%						

Current Judgement: 2	Quality of Education
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PERIOD COVERED BY PLAN: ACADEMIC YEAR 2019 - 20	PLAN WRITTEN BY: John Reilly
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Priorities for Improvement

1.1 To support the new teaching members of staff to ensure that the improvements made in teaching and learning are sustained

1.2 To continue to refine assessment practice and feedback.

1.3 Ensure that the depth and breadth of curriculum opportunities both in and out of the classroom are designed to identify and nurture talent so that our students fulfil the vision set out by the school.

1.4 Continue to develop good/outstanding governance in school

Actions to Address Priorities for Improvement	Time Scale	Led By	Resources	Success Criteria	Monitoring of actions and practice indicators in this section (who, what, when)	Evaluation of impact in this section (who, what, when)
Priority 1.1 Hold a comprehensive induction process for new staff All new staff assigned a staff mentor "Drop in" visits to lesson at least twice a day Use middle leaders to offer additional support/observations Use of PM and TES to ensure standards are maintained	Ongoing 2019-20	JR DHT Middle Leaders	Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda/minutes published • Impact demonstrable through data on PM and TES • Staff survey 	Meetings chaired by HT/DHT LGB, Vice chair Teaching and Learning OHCAT, John Prior CEO External verification through termly health checks by	

<p>Priority 1.2</p> <p>Work with all teaching staff to refine/revisit all SOLAR targets Move to a three per school year system Set individual academic targets for students bespoke to each subject Consider review days with parents in school Set up a new parents evening system to engage with parents on progress and feedback</p>	<p>First term and then ongoing</p>	<p>DHT Middle leaders</p>	<p>Meeting time CPD training PM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda/minutes published • Impact demonstrable through data on progress, attendance, TL and personal social development of students • SOLAR • Reports Home 	<p>David Scott, school inspection consultant</p>	
<p>Priority 1.3</p> <p>To have an audit and action plan on the Gatsby benchmarks To use the appointment of a new PSHE lead to focus again on the opportunities beyond the classroom offered to all students To embed the Commando Joe's programme alongside the school values</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>DHT Middle leader - extra-curricular and foundation lead All staff</p>	<p>Meeting time CPD training PM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda/minutes published • Impact demonstrable through data on progress, attendance, TL and personal social development of students 		
<p>Priority 1.4</p> <p>To ensure the consistency and quality of portfolio reports for the LGB members</p> <p>To offer CPD and training in school improvement and role of governors</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>SLT OHCAT</p>	<p>Meeting time CPD training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda/minutes published • Portfolio reports • Attendance at appropriate training recorded 		

Current Judgement: 1	Behaviour & Attitudes
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PERIOD COVERED BY PLAN: ACADEMIC YEAR 2019-2020	PLAN WRITTEN BY: John Reilly
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Priorities for Improvement

2.1 To underpin all TLA improvements through and effective CPD/INSET programme which address all school needs and allows for professional expertise to be shared (Autism/Team Teach)

2.2 To improve whole school attendance through targeted support for students/families below 90%

Actions to Address Priorities for Improvement	Time Scale	Led By	Resources	Success Criteria	Monitoring of actions and practice indicators in this section (who, what, when)	Evaluation of impact in this section (who, what, when)
Priority 2.1 Produce a weekly CPD plan for each term Therapy team to lead session for teaching staff at least every 3 weeks Effective and directed use of INSET to aid school priorities and improvement Develop use of Autism Education Trust and training for staff in school	School year 2019-20 and ongoing	HT DHT (TL) SLT	Time CPD resources – INSET costs	CPD schedule available Feedback available on all training Student progress and staff evaluation demonstrates impact	Meetings chaired by HT/DHT LGB, Vice chair Teaching and Learning OHCAT, John Prior Deputy CEO	
Priority 2.2 Attendance to be a standing item on every meeting, SLT/Middle/Staff Attendance reports to be introduced alongside half termly behaviour/rewards Closer links with families of targeted students through meetings in school	September 2019 and ongoing	DHT SLT Office	Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half termly reports available • Minutes and agendas available • Data showing attendance improvements 	External verification through termly health checks by David Scott	

Current Judgement: 2
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
PERIOD COVERED BY PLAN: ACADEMIC YEAR 2018-19
PLAN WRITTEN BY: John Reilly
Priorities for Improvement

3.1 To continue to ensure all school systems inform and develop school vision and practices (Access, Behaviour, Rewards)

3.2 Strengthen the careers programme still further so that pupils have the necessary skills and resilience to become active members of the community. Meet the Gatsby benchmarks

3.3 Work with local providers within the community to develop appropriate opportunities for life beyond the Link

Actions to Address Priorities for Improvement	Time Scale	Led By	Resources	Success Criteria	Monitoring of actions and practice indicators in this section (who, what, when)	Evaluation of impact in this section (who, what, when)
<p>Priority 3.1</p> <p>To use our school values (and postcards) to guide personal and social development for all students. Record, monitor and celebrate when students contribute to our school ethos.</p>	Ongoing	DHT (PC) SLT Middle leaders All staff	Value postcards Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Half termly personal and social development (school value) reports Assembly celebrations Postcards and letters sent home 	<p>Meetings chaired by HT/DHT</p> <p>LGB, Vice chair Teaching and Learning</p> <p>OHCAT, John Prior Deputy CEO</p>	
<p>Priority 3.2</p> <p>DHT will work to ensure audit and action plan for careers education is delivered in school. Train staff members to support this work and develop additional career opportunities into the curriculum, eg World of Work week</p>	Ongoing	Middle leader (Access) AHT SLT	Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schemes of work – Access Reports from audit Feedback from all stakeholders 	<p>External verification through termly health checks by David Scott</p>	
<p>Priority 3.3</p>	Ongoing	DHT (PC) SLT Middle leaders	Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSHE/Access curriculum schemes of work Gatsby implementation plan 		

<p>Expand college curriculum/provision for the sixth form Develop employment and community access through LS Sutton Develop, track and monitor opportunities for all students to engage with the community</p>		All staff		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NESCOL Feedback from all stakeholders 		
<p>Priority 3.4 In the Autumn Term 2019 the school will complete an audit for the new SRE statutory guidance. This will then become a plan of action/implementation in the Spring Term 2020. The school will launch a trial in the summer term for a full roll out in September 2020</p>	Ongoing	DHT PHSE lead Science teacher	CPD training Visits to other schools Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRE audit and action plan • Appropriate SRE SoW launched 		

Current Judgement: 2	LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT
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PERIOD COVERED BY PLAN: ACADEMIC YEAR 2018-19	PLAN WRITTEN BY: John Reilly
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Priorities for Improvement

4.1 To develop capacity in the new middle leadership tier to ensure greater lines of accountability at all levels

4.2 To work with the LGB to establish a cohesive group to closely align with the Primary School

4.3 To review all roles within the school to ensure accountability and impact

4.4 To effectively support staff well-being and mental health

Actions to Address Priorities for Improvement	Time Scale	Led By	Resources	Success Criteria	Monitoring of actions and practice indicators in this section (who, what, when)	Evaluation of impact in this section (who, what, when)
Priority 4.1 To ensure middle leadership tier become fully part of the PM system and levels of accountability in school	Ongoing	SLT Middle leaders	Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle leader half termly management reports • PM review data 	SLT and Leadership Group meetings. Team meetings LGB, Vice chair Teaching and Learning	

<p>Priority 4.2 / 4.3</p> <p>Establish a joint working party with the primary school to strategically develop, plan and deliver proposals to take both schools forward</p>	<p>October 2019 and then ongoing</p>	<p>LGB HT – both schools</p>	<p>Time</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working party established • Minutes and agenda across both LGBs available • Roles and responsibilities of all staff clearly defined 	<p>OHCAT, John Prior Deputy CEO</p> <p>External verification through termly health checks by David Scott</p>	
<p>Priority 4.4</p> <p>Establish a staff association to promote staff well-being Set up a weekly staff mindfulness session run by the school counsellor Staff to have free access to Headspace app Use of CPD time to have half termly team building session facilitated by Commando Joe's Staff survey</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>All staff</p>	<p>Time</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All groups on well being set up and running effectively • Results of staff survey indicate positive results/feelings on staff well being • Recruitment and retention 		