

Linuwel School Ltd

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Information for Parents /Carers

The school website www.office@linuwel.nsw.edu.au contains general information about the school.

This document contains important information and requirements which parents /carers agree to abide by when they enrol their child.

1. The Class Teacher - Parent /Carer relationship

The class teacher is able to work most effectively when there is good communication with the parents /carers and a shared sense of working towards the same goals for the child's development. To this end there are regular parent teacher meetings, and class performances to which parents /carers are invited. Also the teachers make themselves as available as possible to discuss any aspects of the children's progress, and welcome any contact which will assist them in dealing with the children, such as when they might be upset or fragile for some reason. Likewise if the teacher has some pleasing progress to convey, or has concerns which need to be addressed, they will be in touch. Of course both parties need to work at maintaining a constructive parent-teacher relationship.

Parent /Carer Teacher Meetings are held for each class each term. This may be a combined meeting for part of the school, a single class meeting or individual meetings with parents /carers/carers. They provide the opportunity for parents /carers to find out what the class is doing and how it is relevant to their children's progress and development, as well as to meet with other parents /carers.

Reporting of progress ~ In Kindergarten progress will be reported verbally at a parent interview at the end of each semester. For Years 1-10 a written report will be issued near the end of each semester, and teachers will be available for interviews around this time.

2. Enrolments

Up to about 24 students can be enrolled in each class. Parents /carers are encouraged to visit the school website and read this brochure before applying to enrol their child.

When considering an enrolment application the Kindergarten teacher may take into account: the date of application; the enrolment of siblings in the school; and the parent(s)' demonstrated commitment to Rudolf Steiner education. Acceptance of additional students into classes 1-10 is at the discretion of the class teacher, also taking into consideration the size and dynamics of the class.

A diversity of backgrounds is welcomed within the school.

For students entering in Years 7-10, enrolment is probationary for six months, i.e. during or at the end of that time the class teacher can cancel the enrolment if the student is not integrating successfully into the class and school.

Enrolment involves an interview process. To arrange for an interview, please ring the school office. If there is a waiting list for the class, you can request for your child's name to be added to the list and you will be contacted when a vacancy arises.

If there is a vacancy for which you can apply, the relevant class teacher will contact you to arrange a meeting with you and the child. At this meeting you and child see the school environs and classrooms, and are introduced to the operation of the school and basic principles of Steiner education. In turn the teacher learns about the child and is informed of any factors which may have a bearing on the child's school life. If the teacher is willing to accept the child and you want to enrol him or her, you will be given an enrolment form to complete.

On receipt of the signed enrolment form and a non-refundable enrolment fee of \$200 the child's place is secured. A bond of \$600 and the first term's fees must be paid before the child starts at the school. Provided that a full term's written notice is given, the bond will be refunded when the child leaves the school, less any deductions for unpaid fees or charges.

The teacher will contact you if there are any further details or arrangements to be discussed.

3. Behaviour and Discipline

Guiding the social development and behaviour of students is an important aspect of the class teacher role. Positive behaviours are modelled and encouraged, as is interaction between students of different year groups.

Incidents of inappropriate behaviour, particularly of a bullying nature, are dealt with in a firm and timely manner, and in accordance with the School's Anti-Bullying Statement & Guidelines which is available upon request.

The teacher's understanding of child development and deep concern for each individual provide the basis for establishing discipline. In a small school, all teachers have the opportunity to observe and interact with each student. At staff meetings the combined experience and suggestions of staff can provide the class teacher with a wealth of strategies to win the child's trust and influence their patterns of behaviour. Central to the success of the school is the premise that the parent(s) and class teacher work together for the development of the child.

Where an unbalanced pattern of behaviour becomes evident the teacher will arrange to meet with the parent(s) to discuss the issue, consider possible contributing factors and look for ways in which their combined actions could work for the benefit of the child. No form of corporal punishment is allowed at the school, nor will any member of staff suggest or sanction the use of corporal punishment by any other person.

If a child's behaviour becomes unduly disruptive or of danger to other students, and the child will not cooperate with the teacher's requests, removal from the class (to the care of another teacher) for the remainder of the lesson or day may occur. In this case the teacher will contact the parent that afternoon or evening to discuss the problem, and also complete an incident report indicating what has happened and what course of action has been decided on.

Should the problem continue the teacher will meet with the parents /carers, together with the child if both parties feel that is appropriate, to agree on a further course of action. If there is no improvement in the child's behaviour a further meeting will be called at which another (senior) staff member acceptable to the parent(s) will be present to help clarify and overcome the problem. At this stage the parent(s) are to be made aware that if the behaviour cannot be modified within an acceptable time frame the student will be suspended (i.e. not permitted to attend at school) for up to one week. A student may also be suspended or expelled immediately (pending due process) for serious offences such as wilful damage to property, abusive behaviour, possession or use of tobacco, alcohol or any prohibited substance. Every attempt will be made at this time to resolve the problem through parent-teacher liaison.

At any time during this process, if the parent(s) feel there are issues they cannot raise with the class teacher, or that they are in conflict with the class teacher, they are welcome to raise the matter with a senior member of staff whom they feel comfortable to approach. This staff member can mediate between the parent(s) and class teacher. The parent(s) may also be supported by a person who they feel can assist them.

If, on the suspended student's return to classes a satisfactory improvement in behaviour is not evinced he or she can be expelled. Ultimately, as it is the teacher who has a responsibility and duty of care to the class, the teacher has the right to refuse to have a child in the class if the child's presence prevents them from effectively fulfilling their obligations as a teacher. This is particularly important if the teacher has cause to believe that the child will not obey directions from the teacher outside the classroom situation. Class outings and camps are an integral and compulsory part of the school programme, and as the risks and potential consequences are much greater in these circumstances a teacher will not take a child off the school grounds if they pose an unacceptable risk. This could ultimately preclude the child from continuing at the school.

4. Expulsion from school

If the Principal considers that a student: is guilty of a serious breach of the rules; or continuing unsatisfactory behaviour; or has otherwise engaged in conduct which is prejudicial to the School or its students or staff, then the Principal may suspend the student or expel the student permanently. The Principal has the final decision regarding suspension/expulsion. In exercising its powers under this section the School will follow the process below.

If the School's Board of Directors or the Principal believes that a mutually beneficial relationship of trust and cooperation between a parent/carer and the school has broken-down to the extent that it adversely impacts on that relationship, then the school may require the parent/carer to remove the child from the school.

No remission of fees will apply in relation to any of the above cases.

The School does not have a policy of excluding students from other schools.

The Process:

1. The Principal may immediately suspend the student.
2. The student and the parents/carers of the student will be provided with details of the conduct which resulted in suspension and which may result in a decision to expel or further suspend the student;
3. The student and the parents/carers will be provided with a reasonable opportunity to respond;
4. The Principal will review all of the information and make a decision.
5. The student and parents/carers may request a meeting with the School's Board of Directors to review and reconsider the decision.

5. Policies

The School's policies, which are made from time to time, are made pursuant to the registration requirements set out in section 47 of the *NSW Education Act* and the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards. Access to relevant policies can be arranged by contacting the office.

6. School Requirements

A child is enrolled in the school on the understanding that the child's class teacher and parents/carers will work together for the balanced development of the child, and that the parents/carers will support these requirements and the ethos of the School. In all dealings with members of the School community parents/carers are expected to treat others with politeness and respect. When you are attending school activities please remember your purpose is to support the children. It is a time to put your personal and business activities aside and to be fully present for the children.

Work Health & Safety

The School has an obligation to provide a safe and healthy environment for staff, students, and other visitors. The School's WHS Statement (available at the office) provides a framework for meeting this obligation.

All persons at Linuwel, including students, parents /carers, and other visitors, must take reasonable care for their own health and safety and take reasonable care that their conduct does not adversely affect the health and safety of others at the school or school events. They must also comply, so far as they reasonably are able to, with any reasonable instructions given by the school.

All visitors/volunteers to the school must attend the office where they must sign on/off in the visitor's register and wear a visitor I.D. tag or be accompanied by a staff member. In the event of an emergency the volunteer must follow the directions of the teacher.

Medical Conditions and Treatments

To ensure the health and safety of students at all times and to ensure that staff have necessary medical information, parents /carers are responsible, in relation to their children and/or charges, for:

- Keeping the school informed of any medical conditions, treatments and medical contact details.
- Providing staff with appropriate information and training/instruction where medical conditions require specialised treatment.
- Updating the school on any changes in medical conditions and/or required treatments.
- Obtaining the relevant blank medication forms from the school and arranging for their completion and return.
- Providing the medication in the original labelled container to the class teacher.
- Ensuring the medication is not out of date and has an original pharmacy label with the student's name, dosage and time to be taken.
- Providing a written request by parents /carers and/or a medical practitioner for medication that is not obtained on prescription, indicating: Name of student, condition for which the medication is required, and guidelines for administration.

Smoking & Alcohol

Neither smoking nor consumption of alcohol is permitted on school property, in the designated parking areas adjacent to the school or near public entrances to the school.

Punctuality and Attendance

Students are to arrive at school no earlier than 8.15am unless a prior arrangement has been made, and no later than 8.40am. If your child arrives after 8.45am, please accompany them to the office and sign a late slip which they will need to take with them to their classroom. Office staff will accompany young children to their class.

An important aspect of Steiner education is the continuity of lesson content and social interaction from one day to the next. A low rate of absenteeism is vital to the children's progress and to the class. Students are expected to attend to the last day of each school term, and to participate in class performances and other activities which may take place in the evening or on weekends.

Please Note: Class camps are an integral and compulsory part of the School's programme, and non-attendance must be supported by a doctor's certificate.

If your child will be absent please phone the school before 8.40am to alleviate concerns regarding the child's whereabouts. It is a legal requirement that the school is notified of the reason for absence verbally or in writing. You must ring each day of absence until you can advise the date when the child will be returning to School.

It is important for each child, and the continuity within the class, that holidays are not taken during term time. There are 2-3 weeks of scheduled holidays in addition to State school holidays each year. If travel during school term is necessary the parent(s) are legally required to apply for extended leave by completing an "Application for Extended Leave" form (available from the class teacher) 7 days prior to travel. There is no power to grant approval retrospectively. In order to grant a "Certificate of Extended Leave" the Principal must be satisfied that the absence is in the student's best interests. For other leave, apart from sick leave or family emergencies, parents /carers are required to complete an Application for Exemption from Attendance at School (available from the class teacher) in advance.

Daily Transport & Supervision Outside School Operating Hours

Kindergarten children are to be brought to school and collected from school by a parent or adult known to the child, as train and bus travel are generally unsuitable for this age. Either car park may be used for set-down in the morning. For pick up in the afternoon please use the car park near the soccer field so as to keep the bus turning/waiting area clear. Buses are available to most regions and a bus connects to the East Maitland railway station. Note that there is no supervision of students travelling on buses and trains. Kindergarten finishes at 2.30pm, the other classes at 2.45pm.

Prior to 8.15am and after 3pm the School does not provide supervision to students. If students are arriving early or remaining in the afternoons it is the responsibility of the parents /carers to arrange supervision for their child. If you will be late for pick-up in the afternoon please call the office on 49333095 so that arrangements can be made for the supervision of your child.

If arrangements other than normal have been made for student pick-up, or there is anything else which will impact upon transport home on the day in question, please telephone the office.

Once students have left the school premises no duty of care exists on the part of the School and parents /carers must use their own discretion to determine the appropriateness or otherwise of available travel options for their child.

School Outings

School outings which extend beyond normal school hours will be notified beforehand, however impromptu class outings for sporting, recreational or cultural purposes (without prior notification) are a normal occurrence. This may involve use of the school's buses, cars or public transport.

Access to electronic games and media

Especially in the primary years, many behavioural, social and learning difficulties can be contributed to or exacerbated by exposure to electronic games and media. This is counter-productive to the children's education and well-being, and parents /carers are expected to work with the teacher in monitoring and restricting this access.

Phones and electronic entertainment devices are prohibited at School and if confiscated will be returned only to the parent.

Parent and students are asked to be mindful of privacy and ethical considerations when using electronic communications and social networking sites. No photos or video clips associated with school activities may be used without the express permission of every person featured in the images/video, and then only for private purposes, unless sanctioned by the school. The use of electronic or social media to transmit material which may denigrate, be offensive or upsetting to another member of the school community is not acceptable. Do not post personal information about another student or member of the school community on the internet such as their image, name, birth date, address, telephone number, current location and/or school.

Food

Diet has an important effect on a child's well-being through the day, especially the effects of sugar and food additives. Apart from occasional class fund-raising activities there is no school canteen, and parents /carers are asked to provide a nutritious morning tea and lunch for their child. Sweets, soft drinks, crisps and other packaged treats and snacks are not permitted.

Dress Code

There is no school uniform, however appearance needs to be neat and within the following dress code, which has been formulated for the protection of students and to reflect a working environment where there is allowance for individuality without appearance becoming a point of focus.

Clothing needs to be comfortable for work and play, in good repair and free from inappropriate images, advertising motifs and writing.

Black clothing (including leggings, tights and stockings) is not permitted in the pre-school, kindergarten and primary school.

However, in the high school a lower half garment (e.g. shorts, tights, trousers or skirts) may contain black. Tops are not to contain more than a small and insignificant amount of black or dark grey.

Skirts and shorts (with or without tights or leggings) need to be of a reasonable length, i.e. at least reach below the finger tips when arms are at the side of the body.

Tops must be long enough to overlap pants/skirts. The minimum sleeve length requires the sleeve to cover the shoulder at all times (i.e. including when indoors). Singlets and "off the shoulder" tops, or tops that slip off the shoulder are not permitted.

Hats - All children need a wide-brimmed sunhat in their bag all year round.

Shoes need to be comfortable for walking and playing sport. Thongs, backless shoes and high heels are not permitted. Joggers, low heeled boots and sturdy sandals (with back strap) are appropriate. Sturdy filled-in shoes are required for sport, some craft and science lessons.

Jewellery - Earrings are restricted to one pair of small sleepers or studs. No facial or body piercing or tattoos are acceptable. Other jewellery is not permitted. However, in the later secondary years 3 items of discreet jewellery may be worn. In high school rings deemed dangerous or likely to affect the student's ability to write or use other equipment are not permitted. Teachers of practical subjects may ask that jewellery be removed for that class.

Make up and nail varnish is not to be worn.

Perfume and deodorant - We request that students respect the needs of children with asthma and allergies by only using natural non-artificial fragrance and non-aerosol deodorant. Strong perfumes are not appropriate.

Hair - Exaggerated hairstyles are not acceptable, including dreadlocks and cuts shorter than No 3. So that it doesn't interfere with learning hair should not fall across a student's face. Bleached or coloured hair is not allowed. If a child arrives with dyed hair they may be required to stay away from school until the hair is restored to its natural colour.

The School reserves the right to determine whether or not a student's appearance is acceptable at school/school activities.

Please label everything your child brings to school.

Fees

Fees are kept as low as possible and incorporate most materials used by the students. They also include an amount, which varies with year group, to cover the cost of camps and outings.

The school also operates a building fund to help finance new facilities and refurbishment of existing buildings. Donations to this fund are tax-deductible. Any such donations help keep borrowing costs and fees down, and would be greatly appreciated.

Fees are due one week prior to the commencement of term and must be paid in advance unless prior arrangement has been made. Fees are non-refundable.

Continuing enrolment is conditional on all fees being finalised by the end of each term.

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, a full term's written notice to the office is required if a student is ceasing to be enrolled at the school.

A separate note will advise of fees and term dates.

7. Communication

Email and sms

It is of vital importance that the school be provided with current email addresses for parents and carers. It is the parents' and carers' responsibility to read email correspondence from the school and to notify any change of email address. The types of correspondence sent via email include: important information from the Principal or class teacher; newsletters; and weekly updates. When appropriate, some paper correspondence will be sent home with the students.

Parents and carers may also communicate with the school via office@linuwel.nsw.edu.au or the class teacher's email address if it has been provided. Where possible, emails are checked daily.

Class teachers may provide parents and carers with their mobile number at their own discretion and use sms as a way to communicate group messages, for example time of arrival at school after a camp. If a teacher has provided their mobile number parents and carers may also use sms to send non-urgent messages to class teachers. Please be considerate about the time of day and refrain from messaging class teachers on weekends and before 7am or after 9pm on business days unless there has been a prior agreement or an urgent circumstance has arisen.

For urgent matters, please telephone the school 02 4933 3095.

General

The office hours are 8.15am – 3.15pm for telephone or face-to-face communication. Messages received for teachers are placed in their pigeon holes and checked daily. Please allow up to 7 days for teachers to respond, depending on the urgency of the matter.

8. Complaints & Grievances

The school values an ongoing good relationship with parents /carers, & welcomes feedback on the school's operation.

It is important that any complaint or grievance is addressed & every effort made to resolve it to the satisfaction of both parties. All grievances will be dealt with in confidence.

Issues relating to a parent's child should be taken up with the class teacher. If the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily with the class teacher, the parent(s) are welcome to arrange a meeting with the principal or a senior member of staff who will work towards an acceptable outcome & follow up after an appropriate interval. Parents /carers may bring a support person with them to any such meeting.

Issues relating to administrative matters or the school in general should be brought to the Principal who will endeavour to resolve them.

If a mutually acceptable resolution cannot be reached, the parent(s) may: -

- (i) address a letter to the School's Board of Directors who have ultimate responsibility for the school. They will review the matter & the school's position, take any appropriate action, & advise the parent(s) of their determination; or
- (ii) contact the Board of Studies Hunter Liaison Officer (or other relevant authority) if they believe the School is in breach of law, or
- (iii) contact NCAT, the NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal, who can provide further advice.

Reasonable Time Frames.

The School will always endeavour to acknowledge receipt of any complaint within a timely manner and begin taking action to resolve the complaint as quickly as possible in the circumstances. There are many variables which may affect the perceived timeliness of our process including camps and staff leave. Please allow the following time frames for acknowledgement of complaints brought to:

- a Class Teacher – allow 7 days
- the Principal – allow 7 days
- the Board of Directors – allow up to 3 months (the Board meets quarterly)

The School will continue to communicate time frames as the matter proceeds to resolution. Some matters will understandably take longer than others.

ANNEXURE A

PARENT/STUDENT COLLECTION NOTICE

1. Linuwel School collects personal information, including sensitive information about pupils and parents or guardians before and during the course of a pupil's enrolment at the School. This may be in writing or in the course of conversations. The primary purpose of collecting this information is to enable the School to provide schooling to the pupils enrolled at the school, exercise its duty of care, and perform necessary associated administrative activities, which will enable pupils to take part in all the activities of the School.
2. Some of the information we collect is to satisfy the School's legal obligations, particularly to enable the School to discharge its duty of care.
3. Laws governing or relating to the operation of a school require certain information to be collected and disclosed. These include relevant Education Acts, Public Health, and Child Protection laws.
4. Health information about pupils is sensitive information within the terms of the Australian Privacy Principles under the Privacy Act. We may ask you to provide medical reports about pupils from time to time.
5. The School may disclose personal and sensitive information for educational, administrative and support purposes. This may include to:
 - other schools and teachers at those schools;
 - government departments;
 - medical practitioners;
 - people providing educational, support and health services to the School, including specialist visiting teachers, sports coaches, volunteers, counsellors and providers of learning and assessment tools;
 - assessment and educational authorities, including the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority;
 - people providing administrative and financial services to the School;
 - anyone you authorise the School to disclose information to; and
 - anyone to whom the School is required or authorised to disclose the information to by law, including child protection laws.
6. Personal information collected from pupils is regularly disclosed to their parents or guardians.
7. The School may use online or 'cloud' service providers to store personal information and to provide services to the School that involve the use of personal information, such as services relating to email, instant messaging and education and assessment applications. Some limited personal information may also be provided to these service providers to enable them to authenticate users that access their services. This personal information may reside on a cloud service provider's servers which may be situated outside Australia. Further information about the School's use of on online or 'cloud' service providers is contained in the School's Privacy Policy.
8. We may include pupils' and pupils' parents'/carers' contact details in a class list.
9. The School's Privacy Policy (available on our web site) sets out how parents /carers or pupils may seek access to and correction of their personal information which the School has collected and holds. However, access may be refused in certain circumstances such as where access would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of others, where access may result in a breach of the School's duty of care to the pupil, or where pupils have provided information in confidence. Any refusal will be notified in writing with reasons if appropriate.
10. The School Privacy Policy also sets out how you may complain about a breach of privacy and how the School will deal with such a complaint.
11. If you provide the School with the personal information of others, such as doctors or emergency contacts, we encourage you to inform them that you are disclosing that information to the School and why.
12. In the event that your child does not proceed to enrolment the School may store your personal information on a waiting list for a period of up to one year. If, at that time, you no longer wish to be on the waiting list the information will be destroyed.
13. It is important that the School has accurate, complete and up-to-date information. Please ensure that you notify the school of any changes to personal information such as emergency contacts and health information as soon as possible.