

Subject: Re: Axel Rudakubana

From: Tony Fay <tfay@presfieldschool.org>

Date: 05/09/2022, 17:26

To: [redacted] **DPA**

CC: "hdawson@presfieldschool.org" <hdawson@presfieldschool.org>, "lmcloughlin@presfieldschool.org" <lmcloughlin@presfieldschool.org>, "iain.calderbank@lancashire.gov.uk" <iain.calderbank@lancashire.gov.uk>, "catherine.martin@lancashire.gov.uk" <catherine.martin@lancashire.gov.uk>, Laetitia Muzayire

[redacted] **DPA**

Dear Alphonse Rudakubana

Thank you for your email and I too hope you and Axel had a good summer.

As stated in our letter dated 14/7/22 I do not feel we are meeting Axel's needs and consequently withdrew his placement. This decision was not made in haste and we did discuss this in the review meeting held on July 7th 2022. We have tried many different strategies to try and engage with Axel to no avail.

We are a school who caters for students with a diagnosis of Autism and have an awareness of how anxiety can impact students. I am pleased to hear he does not dislike school and understand how the secretion of excess saliva can be upsetting for him. However, as an oversubscribed school his inability to leave his house and attend school is blocking a place for another student who may benefit from the education offer we have.

It is our belief that his mental health and wellbeing are his primary need and this is what he requires support with. We do not have the specialisms to support Axel with his mental health. We have tried to engage with Axel at home without any success and I am not confident that asking our OT and Speech and Language therapist to attend your house will be a success. I appreciate he has assured you he will speak with staff if they come to him. Unfortunately our past experience shows a different picture and from your comments he does not seem to have improved his mental well being.

We have a duty to try and get the best care for Axel and do not believe that is with us. If he was to remain on our roll he would not be a priority in Lancashire and consequently may not get the support he so clearly requires. By not being on our roll the authority will have a duty to find a setting and package of support best suited for his needs.

As a staff team we display great patience and understanding and an awareness of the time rehabilitation into education can take. Unfortunately we have not seen any signs that this has had any impact. As stated in Ms Dawsons letter we believe:-

- Presfield is unsuitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude or special educational needs. This is the case as Axel's need is clearly mental health.
- His placement would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children in the school. This is the case as time is taken away from supporting other students while staff travel to try and engage with Axel. Axel is also blocking a place for another student who may benefit from the support the school offers.
- the placement would be incompatible with the efficient use of public resources. This is the case

because we would be drawing funding for a student who we do not see. This is against the Nolan Principles of public life.

I hope axel receives the support he clearly requires

yours sincerely

Tony Fay

On Mon, 5 Sept 2022 at 12:01, DPA wrote:

Dear Mr Fay,

I hope you had a good summer holidays.

I am writing with the assumption that Axel's place in Presfield Sixth Form is secure. My understanding is that the Lancashire's Inclusion team was going to contact you to ensure that Axel's place in the school is not revoked due to his difficulties with his attendance.

I hope everybody understands that Axel has autism and extreme anxiety that causes him to avoid going out of the house in general.

Today was the first day of the school year and a taxi was sent home to collect him. Axel wasn't ready to go to school today but to be fair to him, I didn't prepare him yesterday that the school was starting today. My apologies.

I spoke to Axel during the summer holidays and we talked again this morning. He repeated to me that his problem is not disliking school but when he steps outside in public he secretes excessive saliva and it happened two days ago when we went together in the car to pick up his brother from the train station even though he didn't leave the car. I told him that on 7th July 2022, I referred him to Presfield's Language Therapist and the OT/Counsellor and asked him if it was okay for them to come and see him at home. Axel replied that he would let them see him at home.

I would like to ask for patience and understanding of Axel's condition to appreciate that rehabilitating him back in the public space including the school will be a slow process and will require a lot of patience from Presfield and that his place there be secure in order to give him a chance to a formal education, especially now we are in September and Community colleges have already started this academic year. Please let us not forget the reason that we sought him a place in special education instead of the mainstream education.

Please find attached my consent that I had sent in July and please allow and support those professionals to see Axel at home to reassure him and give him tips on how to cope with anxiety and give him the confidence he needs to return to school.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks,

Alphonse Rudakubana

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Tony Fay
Head teacher



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DPA

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