

EYFS Policy



Our Curriculum at Finchale

At Finchale Primary School we are proud of our curriculum and the range of experiences we provide for our children. Our curriculum is accessible to all children, irrespective of their ethnic background, gender, disability, religious or linguistic background. We strive to meet the needs of those pupils with additional needs, including special educational needs, those with disabilities, those who are more able, those with gifts or talents and the children who are learning English as an additional language. We provide a rich and challenging curriculum which aims to stretch our children. Staff monitor our children to ensure that they are supported in their learning, whatever their ability.

Statement of Intent for our Early Years Foundation Stage

The intention of the EYFS curriculum in our school is to provide high quality education and care for our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with enjoyable learning experiences that motivate children and support them to become confident, resilient and independent learners. We value each child and work alongside parents, carers and professionals to meet their needs to help every child reach their full potential. We plan carefully to ensure that our EYFS curriculum provides a solid base from which pupils can smoothly transition into all national curriculum subjects as they move into Key Stage 1.

This Policy was agreed in January 2024 and will be reviewed in Spring 2026.

Chair of Governors: Mrs. Gayle Foster

Head Teacher: Miss Natalie Ward

Introduction

At Finchale Primary, we greatly value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development. This policy outlines the provision we offer to all our pupils aged four to five years. Children within this age range are taught in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in our reception class.

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2024 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and DfE 'Early years foundation stage profile: 2024 handbook' which promote the principles of the [EYFS Statutory Framework](#) alongside using the [non-statutory Development Matters](#).

Aims

At Finchale Primary, we believe all children deserve the best possible start to their school life; emotionally, intellectually and physically, in order to enable them to develop their full potential. We care for all our children to ensure they are happy, safe and secure. Our foundation stage encourages learners for life through playing and exploring, active learning and the development of creative and critical thinking skills. We aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- ★ recognising that all children are unique and special
- ★ understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates - physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally
- ★ providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued by the practitioners looking after them
- ★ fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community
- ★ teaching them to communicate their needs and manage their feelings in appropriate ways
- ★ encouraging children's independence and decision making skills supporting them to learn through their mistakes and persevere to succeed
- ★ engaging and talking with children to develop communication skills vital for learning across the curriculum
- ★ developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously
- ★ supporting children to care and respect others and appreciate others may have different beliefs, cultures and opinions to their own
- ★ providing active learning experiences through play which reflect children's personal interests in order to excite and motivate children to explore and learn
- ★ using observation and assessment to inform planning
- ★ providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge, skills and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend learning and development
- ★ providing effective learning opportunities through indoor and outdoor provision
- ★ encouraging the development of creative and critical thinking skills

What this means at Finchale

We are committed to underpinning our provision with the four themes of the Early Years Foundation Stage in our reception class:

The Unique Child: all children are treated as individuals at Finchale Primary. We understand all children learn and develop at different rates and in different ways. In Reception, our children play, explore and are encouraged to have a go to develop resilience. Through active learning, children make links, explore ideas and develop strategies for problem solving through creating and thinking critically. Practitioners support children in developing these characteristics of effective learning by playing alongside, scaffolding and supporting learning. All children are treated fairly and welcomed into our setting so that they feel included, safe and valued.

Positive Relationships: at Finchale, we promote positive relationships between children, staff and parents to ensure children can thrive. We work closely with parents and carers, acknowledging

the essential role they play in their child's early education. We pride ourselves in knowing every child as an individual and forming good relationships by engaging with them in all aspects of their learning. **The Enabling Environment:** in the Early years, we recognise the importance of a rich learning environment both indoors and outdoors to ensure high levels of engagement and attainment. We prepare and plan areas of continuous provision to enable children to learn with and without the presence of an adult. The organisation of these resourced areas changes on a termly, weekly or daily basis in response to the children's needs, and their stage of development. Adults facilitate and scaffold learning by providing additional resources in specific areas in response to children's interests and requests.

Learning and Development: there are seven areas of learning and development, set out below, which shape the educational programmes. All areas of learning are important and inter-connected.

Our Curriculum

At Finchale, our EYFS follows the requirements outlined in the EYFS statutory framework that applies from January 2024, to help shape our curriculum. This framework includes the 7 areas of learning and development that are inter-connected. These areas are all important and a child cannot achieve what the DFE considers to be a *good level of development* unless they achieve in all seven areas.

The **prime areas** are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity, enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. The **prime areas**:

Communication and Language	Listening, Attention and Understanding Speaking
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Self-regulation Managing Self Building Relationships
Physical Development	Fine Motor Gross Motor

The **prime areas** are strengthened and applied through **four specific areas**:

Literacy	Comprehension Word Reading Writing
Mathematics	Numbers Numerical patterns
Understanding the World	Past and present People, culture and communities
Expressive Arts and Design	Creating with materials Being imaginative and expressive

At Finchale, we provide a range of rich, meaningful, first-hand experiences for our children in which they explore, think creatively and are active learners. We foster positive attitudes to learning and develop resilience and independence. We focus on children's language and vocabulary skills. Reading is a key aspect within our curriculum and we do all we can to develop a love of reading in our children.

Planning

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum provides the basis for planning in our Foundation Stage. Our planning is based upon half termly themes with discrete lessons in phonics, reading, writing and maths. Practitioners select themes according to children's interests, experiences and prior learning and plan sequential, clear steps of learning. For each learning area in the classroom and outdoor areas, we have continuous provision which promotes learning opportunities. Staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

Planning within our school includes:

Long Term Planning: this forms an overview of learning, predictable themes, topics and core texts and helps us focus on our medium term planning.

Medium Term Planning: this informs the sequencing and teaching of content, knowledge, understanding and skills.

Short Term Planning: we continually use our observations and assessments to determine the children's starting points, needs and interests. Short term planning is responsive to the children's needs / fascinations and provides a weekly overview of the implementation of the curriculum through teaching and learning activities covering the seven areas of learning.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners may interact to stretch and challenge children further. As children grow, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for their transition into Year 1.

There are some set routines that we follow each day such as designated times when the children come together to be taught and we focus on maths, literacy, phonics, stories and topic work. These times provide the opportunity for children to develop their ability to work as a group to listen, to take turns, to answer and concentrate. Whole class reading and story time are important parts of the day. We want our children to develop a lifelong love of reading. Children are exposed to a wide range of both fiction and non-fiction texts to provide them with opportunities to hear and use new vocabulary. We want our children to leave the EYFS knowing both traditional and modern stories well. We make sure there is always time for whole class stories during the day, as well as opportunities to enjoy books within the continuous provision. In Reception, every child is provided with their own book bag and will receive a reading book linked to our phonics scheme, when appropriate. In school, they will share this book with an adult in group reading sessions.

Our teaching is always carefully planned to meet the needs of our children. Our Phonics work is based around the Monster Phonics scheme and more information about this can be found in our Phonics Policy, which is available in school.

Early maths and number work is based around White Rose maths although all activities are tailored to the needs and abilities of our pupils.

Linking with Key Stage 1: Threads of Learning

We work closely as a school to ensure all activities we provide have a relevance to the development of our children. In the early years, we ensure through our planning that what we teach provides a meaningful basis for what children encounter as they move onto Key Stage 1. For this reason, our staff are familiar with the threads for learning identified by our school that run through the national curriculum subjects they go on to study. In this way we can best prepare our children for their future learning, thus helping them to be successful.

Making Learning Memorable

At Finchale, we plan active learning experiences within a broad topic to develop specific skills through practical activities. These may be used within whole class teaching sessions or with small groups or individuals. Through engaging in practical first hand experiences children are able to discover, explore, investigate, develop interests and curiosity which help them make sense of their world and acquire skills, concepts and knowledge. This helps make their learning both meaningful and memorable to them. We also provide a range of experiences aimed to enrich their learning. This includes visits out of school, sometimes to places nearby where the children can walk to, such as the local shops or the church, thus developing their understanding of their local neighbourhood. They may also go on trips involving transport, such as to the seaside or to the farm. We also organise visitors into school such as local author, Adam Bushnell, Captain Chemistry, the police or fire brigade. We have themed days such as Marvelous Maths Day, World Book Day, Finchale Reading Day, Comic Relief Day etc. All these experiences serve to inspire and motivate children and provide

the perfect opportunity to further language development which is essential.

Assessment

In the early years at Finchale, assessment is continuous and forms an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff constantly observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles and they use these observations to shape teaching and future planning. Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts** in our reception class, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the **end** of Reception, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- ★ Meeting the expected levels of development
- ★ Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and carers with their annual report towards the end of the school year. To ensure consistency, the assessments are moderated in partnership with other local schools. Our EYFS data is submitted to the Local Authority as required.

Working With Parents/Carers

Parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child, during planned home visits before their child starts in our school, to create a bespoke plan as necessary.
- Giving children the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transition sessions.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and a Meet the Teacher session during the first half term of the child's reception year, in order to detail how we aim to work with their child, particularly in relation to reading and phonics.
- Inviting all parents to workshops linked to phonics and maths, in order to give them the tools to support their children effectively at home.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. We have an "open door" policy where parents can talk to staff about any concerns however minor. There are formal meetings for parents twice a year at which the teacher and parent discuss the child's progress. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents including: celebration and class assemblies and school trips.
- Weekly Home Journals; every child is given their own journal in which to record any celebrations, events or activities at home which are then shared with their class in school.
- Monthly newsletter – the Finchale Flyer – is sent home to inform parents of learning and events taking place in school. Alongside the reception page on the school's website.

We believe that by school and home working together, children have the best opportunities to progress and reach their potential.

'All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.'

EYFS Statutory Framework 2024