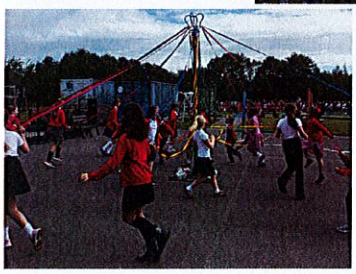
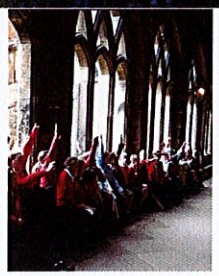
Finchale Primary School

School Brochure
2026 - 2027









www.finchale.durham.sch.uk

FFT National Attendance Award 2023/24

MUSIC MARK SCHOOL MEMBER

SCHOOL GAMES PLATINUM 2022/23 - 2023/24

International School Award

QUALITY MARK

We see the magic in every child … and help make them sparkle.

INTRODUCTION

Finchale Primary School is a community school which caters for boys and girls aged 4 to 11 (Reception to Y6). As a primary school, we are able to offer continuity of primary education for all of our pupils. Our school is situated on Newton Hall Estate approximately 2 miles from the centre of Durham City. We have purpose-built premises with state-of-the-art technology. We also have excellent outdoor facilities with two separate yards, an all-weather running track, a large all-weather playing pitch, sensory garden and extensive fields which include an outdoor learning classroom, a tyre park and a trim trail. There is a canopy outside Reception to further enhance outdoor learning opportunities all year round. The administration area is situated at the main entrance to the school, where you can find many helpful information leaflets covering a wide range of topics. These include information relating to clubs, sports, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) as well as support for families.

Before- and after-school care for pupils is provided by Canterbury Kids Club, which is Ofsted-registered, in purpose-built facilities from 7.30am – 8.55am and 3.25pm – 5.55pm. Provision includes both indoor and outdoor areas, and this is accessed through its own entrance down the side of the building - just follow the signs!

Our school meals are prepared on site for pupils in a purpose-built kitchen. There is a good choice of meals available, including vegetarian options, and a salad bar from which pupils can supplement their main meal choices. Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 currently do not have to pay for their meals.

School Awards and Achievements

* School Games Award (Platinum)
* Music Mark School Member
* Quality Mark
* FFT Attendance Award

Finchale Primary provides an exciting learning environment for our pupils in which children can reach their full potential. The school is proud of its achievements and constantly strives for improvement and success. Our most recent Ofsted report states that:

> "Pupils are proud to be part of the 'Finchale family'. This is a friendly and welcoming school. There are high expectations of pupils. The school's work is underpinned by clear values, such as resilience, inclusivity and kindness, that are lived out every day."
>
> "Pupils thrive here. They enjoy learning, feel safe and attend very well. Pupils achieve highly."
>
> "At playtime, there is a hive of activity as pupils play cooperatively and creatively together."
>
> "In lessons, pupils pay attention, join in and work hard. They receive regular praise and encouragement from staff, which boosts their confidence."
>
> (Ofsted, May 2025)

SCHOOL ETHOS

Finchale Primary is a vibrant school that prides itself on its pupil-centred approach to learning and its 'family feel'. We provide a rich and exciting curriculum for pupils based on their needs and interests from Reception through to Y6. We ensure our pupils leave us equipped not only with high levels of attainment, but also with the skills and attributes which will ensure they are well prepared for their life ahead and able to make good choices about things that matter. Some of these skills are developed through our wide range of pupil leadership roles and groups, such as our Playground Leaders, Wellbeing Buddies, Music Monitors and School Council. Our children also have many opportunities to represent our school at a wide range of activities including competitions for sport and other areas of the curriculum, e.g. Maths challenges. We pride ourselves on our inclusive approach, with staff constantly striving to bring out the best in every child, regardless of ability, by raising aspirations and promoting a healthy lifestyle.

"The school is deeply committed to pupils' personal development. It encourages pupils to try new things and to step out of their comfort zone...There is a wide range of clubs and activities available for pupils to develop their interests and talents" Ofsted, 2025

Our School Values:
Trust
Respect
Resilience
Inclusivity
Community
Kindness

Our mission statement is:

"We see the magic in every child.... and help make them sparkle".

We believe this can best be achieved through the following aims of our school:

* To create an exciting, vibrant and safe learning environment in which children are valued and encouraged to reach their full potential
* To provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum based on the basic skills which ensures continuity and progression, enabling children to achieve well
* To develop skills and values which will ensure children are well-equipped for the next stage of their development and which enhance their life-chances
* To develop respect, tolerance and understanding for all and to increase awareness of and respect for the world around us
* To ensure each and every individual is valued for the contribution they make to our school community
* To provide appropriate support to ensure everyone can achieve all that they are capable of whilst ensuring pupils develop independence and self-esteem, encouraging them to increasingly take responsibility for their own learning.

Underpinning all of this is **High Quality Teaching and Learning**. We believe pupils learn most effectively when they are enthusiastic, interested and enjoy their learning. Teachers need to be confident, knowledgeable and creative in their teaching and to facilitate this we access relevant, high-quality training, share good practice, support our colleagues and strive to ensure all staff retain a love and joy for their work. We plan our curriculum carefully by considering what we want our children to learn during their time at Finchale in terms of **knowledge (heads)**, **skills (hands)** and **personal attributes (hearts)**. We endeavour to build on learning, to encourage a deeper level of thought and to ensure learning is firmly embedded in young minds.

WHO'S WHO AT FINCHALE PRIMARY SCHOOL?

Head Teacher	Miss Natalie Ward
Deputy Head Teacher	Mrs Margaret Sleeman
Chair of Governors	Mrs Kate Hall
Safeguarding Leads	Miss Ward; Mrs. Sleeman; Mrs. Lennox
Safeguarding Governor	Mrs. Kate Hall

Teaching Staff and their Responsibilities

Reception	Mrs Hood	Early Years Reception Transition	Physical Education French (MFL)	School Council
Year 1	Miss McClure	Early Career Teacher	(Maternity Cover for Mrs Nower)	
Year 2	Mrs Lennox	English Lead KS1	History Student Mentor	Geography Safeguarding Lead
Year 3	Mrs McGuire Mrs Saunders (Maternity Leave)	Art Religious Education	Design Technology	Music
Year 4	Mrs Marley	SENDCo	Science	Finchale Futures (Personal Development)
Year 5	Mr. Grant	Computing	Careers-related Learning	Maths Support
Year 6 & Deputy Head	Mrs Sleeman	Mathematics Lead Y6 Transition	Curriculum Lead Health & Safety	Health & Safety Safeguarding Lead

Support Staff

Miss Bosomworth	HLTA / PPA Cover & Teaching Assistant
Miss Taylor	HLTA / PPA Cover & Teaching Assistant
Miss Stewart	Teaching Assistant
Miss Jones	Teaching Assistant
Dr. Addinall	Teaching Assistant
Mrs Cooke	SEND Support Assistant
Mrs Whiston	SEND Support Assistant

Non-Teaching Staff

Mrs Sludden	Office Manager	Mrs. Nicholson	School Cook
Mr. Pratt	Building Supervisor	Mrs Taylor	Assistant Cook
Mrs Parker	Lunchtime Supervisor	Mrs Taylor	School Cleaner
Mrs. Hebblethwaite	Lunchtime Supervisor	Mrs Tao	Lunchtime Supervisor
Mrs Sisson	Lunchtime Supervisor		

THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

Chair of Governors	Mrs. K. Hall
Vice Chairs	Dr. C Gurden Williams and Mrs G. Tock
Safeguarding Governor	Mrs. K. Hall
Head Teacher	Miss N. Ward
LA Governor	Mrs. A. Hopgood
Co-opted Governors	Mr. A. Board, Mrs. K. Hall, Mrs. J. Kemp, Mrs. S. Patrick, Mrs. M. Sleeman, Mrs J. McCormack
Parent Governors	Mr. K. Wills, Mrs. R. Ellis-Jones, Dr. C. Gurden-Williams, Mr. D Payne, Miss G. Tock, Miss G. Clark
Staff Governor	Mrs. V. Nower
Associate Governor	Mrs. A. Lennox

We have a very supportive governing body who are extremely involved in the life of our school. Governors are involved in the strategic planning of the school, making decisions regarding staffing, finance, curriculum and our environment. Alongside this more formal role, governors are regularly seen around school, working with staff to support the development of curriculum areas as well as participating in a host of ways including recording our school performances and judging competitions. In addition to this, it was three of our governors who set up our thriving Ofsted-registered Canterbury Kids Club, the excellent before and after school care provided on our premises. You can find out more about our governors on the **Governor** page on our website www.finchale.durham.sch.uk .

THE SCHOOL DAY

The following times reflect our normal school day:

Infant (EYFS & KS1) Classes	Morning session	9.00 a.m. - 12.00 noon
	Afternoon session	1.15 p.m. - 3.25 p.m.
Junior (KS2) Classes	Morning session	9.00 a.m. – 12 noon
	Afternoon session	1.00 p.m. - 3.25 p.m.

We ring the bell at 8.55am so that the children can enter the school in time for the 9am register. Please ensure that your child arrives promptly at the beginning of the school day. If a child is late, they should report to the school office so that registers and dinner numbers can be adjusted. Pupils assemble in class lines in the playground at the start of the school day and this ensures the safety of every child on entry into school. Staff are not available to supervise children in the playground until 8.55am. Children should not arrive before this time for reasons of health and safety.

ADMISSION POLICY

Parents wishing their children to attend Finchale Primary School should apply online stating that Finchale Primary is their preferred option. Please note that all applications must be made online to County Hall at www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions. You can access a copy of the Parents' Guide "Primary School Admissions in County Durham" which contains essential information that will help you in making your application. If you cannot access the Council's website you can contact them at:

Admissions, Appeals and Transport Entitlement Team Telephone 03000 265896

and they will send you a copy of the Parents' Guide and an application form. Please note that there is a deadline for applications and that you will be informed of the outcome.

The closing date to apply for a primary school place for September 2026 is **midnight on Friday, 15th January, 2027**. Dates are shown on the above web site.

The school admits children according to the Local Authority's published admission criteria. In County Durham children can start school at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. Our admission limit is 30. If we are oversubscribed, in accordance with Local Education Authority policy, the following admission criteria apply:

Children in Care
Medical reasons
Sibling links
Distance

This information is available in more detail in the Admissions Guide for parents mentioned above.

We welcome visits from prospective parents. We would be happy to show you around our school and introduce you to our staff and children. Please telephone 0191 3865187 to make an appointment.

We hold an Open Evening in the autumn term for parents who have children due to start school the following September. Parents of pupils who have been allocated a place at Finchale Primary School are also invited to a meeting in the summer term. At this meeting they will receive information about their children starting school. They will have the opportunity to meet staff and have their queries answered.

We usually offer pupils coming into Reception classes a home visit and pre-school visits in the summer term before they start school so that familiarity with the school day and routines can be established. This will normally include the opportunity to stay for lunch. We believe this ensures a happy and secure start to school. Our pupils start Reception in September with a full day as we find this is best for both pupils and parents. If you require any further information, please ask at the office and we will try to help. Arrangements are changed if local and/or national circumstances require this. However, we will always do everything we can to offer a visit for our new starters, even if this differs from the normal.





COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Parents are always very welcome to visit the school and we actively encourage parental involvement in their children's education and in the life of the school generally. We hold 'Meet the Teacher' sessions in the Summer Term before each new academic year where you can come in, meet your child's new teacher and learn about the routines of the class for the coming year. We find this helps us develop a good working partnership between home and school. Children are highly motivated when their achievements are celebrated and so we keep parents well informed about their children's successes and the rewards they have gained, presented at our weekly Awards Assembly and welcome communication about home achievements so that we can celebrate these, too. You will also be invited to discuss your child's progress formally with the class teacher during our two annual Parent/Carer Consultation meetings.

If you have any concerns, talking to the class teacher can usually resolve issues quickly and easily. If you would like to speak to the Head Teacher, Miss Ward, she is usually available at drop-off and pick-up points, though it is helpful to make an appointment. Our telephone number is 0191 3865187. We hope that any difficulties can be addressed swiftly but should you wish to make an official complaint, information on how you may do so is available from the school office, the school website or from School & Governor Support Service, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UJ.

Our address is: Finchale Primary School, Canterbury Road, Newton Hall, Durham, DH1 5XT. If at school we feel that your child's work or behaviour is giving us cause for concern then either the class teacher or Miss Ward will contact you to discuss the situation, at a time which is mutually convenient. Similarly, if we feel that your child has excelled in some way we will inform you so you can share in your child's success. Our school has two different newsletters that help keep parents/carers informed about what is happening in school. These, together with other useful information, are published on our website www.finchale.durham.sch.uk and are:

Finchale Flyer	Our monthly newsletter, providing dates of events, celebrating pupils' achievements and informing everyone of what is happening at Finchale.
Weekly Notices	This newsletter is published weekly to help families stay organised in advance of the week ahead.

FRIENDS OF Finchale

Parents, carers & family members are all welcome to join our school PTA.

Our amazing Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) also regularly produce the 'PTA patter' to share how their activities have supported children in school and advertise upcoming events.

CHILDREN'S PROGRESS

We monitor our children's progress carefully throughout their time at Finchale. Formal assessment is carried out through optional assessments in Years 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 as well as Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs) at the end of Year 6. Individual results of SATs and assessments are available to parents/carers and the end of year assessment results are provided on the school website. In addition, teachers are continually assessing children's work. This ensures that pupils are familiar with their own targets and so they are able to work towards meeting their own personal goals. The results of these assessments assist in planning for whole classes, groups and individuals where necessary so that teachers and children are aware of their future learning targets. As well as being invited to attend our Open Evenings each year, you will also receive a formal written report at the end of the Summer Term. The Government now assesses pupils at the end of Year 6 against Age Related Expectations. In addition to this, we continue to monitor pupil progress and attainment through our own tracking procedures to ensure progress is being continually made.

ASSESSMENT

Statutory Assessment

During **Reception** our pupils take part in baseline assessment which allows us to assess their abilities in areas of communication, language & literacy, mathematics and personal, social & emotional development. These results allow us to set targets for the end of Year 1 and the end of Key Stage 1. Teachers also use this information to help with their planning and share with parents and carers the progress their child has made.

Our pupils take part in formal assessments in writing, reading, mathematics and grammar, punctuation and spelling from Year 1 to Year 6. The results help teachers set targets for the following year and for end of Key Stage 2. Pupils in **Year 1** also take part in the Phonics Screening and we have sessions at the start of the Autumn term, each year, to inform parents about phonics in school so that all parents/carers are able to help and support their child's learning. If a pupil does not pass the Phonic Screening Check in Year 1, or they did not sit the test in Year 1, they are required to sit/resit the test in Year 2 during June.

Pupils in **Year 4** sit a Multiplication and Times Table check. The results of this are shared with parents and carers.

At the **end of Key Stage 2** all pupils participate in statutory formal assessments in reading, mathematics and English grammar, punctuation and spelling as well as producing writing that is teacher-assessed. These results are reported to parents/carers and published in line with national regulations.

Non-Statutory Assessments

As well as the above, children in all year groups take part in our school assessments throughout the school year. Teachers use the data to help set targets for the following year and to help inform their planning and teaching. Information is shared with parents/carers.

Continuous Assessment

Throughout the year teachers and classroom assistants assess children's learning in various ways - through the marking of books, observations, questioning and discussions. This all helps to ensure that the teachers are planning appropriately to meet the needs of all our pupils. We assess progress regularly by talking to pupils to ensure they are learning more and that they are remembering more.

As children go through the year groups, they are increasingly involved in their own learning and assessment. They are aware of what the aim for each lesson is and what their teacher will be assessing their learning against. Our older children are involved in assessing and levelling their own as well as the work of their peers.

Teachers mark work in relation to the aim(s) stated at the outset of the lesson. Pupils are frequently informed of their successes and what they need to work on next in order to improve. Feedback takes both written and verbal forms, helping children to understand clearly how they are doing and celebrate progress whilst indicating what they need to do next in order to move on. We use Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies within school to support pupils' learning.

CONTENT AND ORGANISATION OF THE CURRICULUM AT FINCHALE

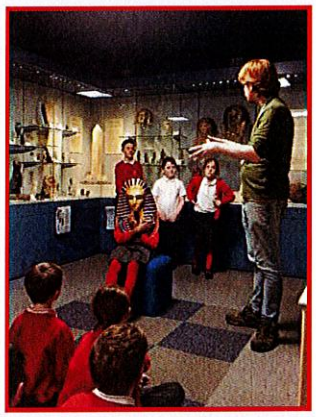
At Finchale Primary, staff are committed to getting the best from our pupils and value everyone regardless of ability, race, or gender. We take social inclusion very seriously and work very hard to remove barriers to learning. We aim to provide the best possible support for children in an effective learning environment, to inspire them to strive for great things and we value the

contributions they make to our school. We incorporate a range of teaching styles into our classroom practice to ensure children are given the best possible opportunities to learn.
We encourage children to bring in water bottles every day to ensure they are properly hydrated and able to learn effectively.

Within computing, children have the opportunity to develop skills in measuring and monitoring data, communicating and control technology. The school is equipped with a wide range of IT equipment including laptops, IPads, digital cameras, visualisers and digital microscopes. All classes have Smartboards and your child will have supervised access to the Internet. We teach e-safety to pupils and actively share information regarding internet safety with parents and carers.



We have revised our curriculum delivery to ensure that we provide a broad and relevant curriculum based on the basic skills which ensures continuity and progression, enabling children to deepen their knowledge and achieve well. We believe that learning involves the 'head, hand and heart' and provide a curriculum that promotes gaining knowledge and practical and disciplinary skills as well as develop personal skills to prepare children for their future lives.



"The school has worked successfully to develop the curriculum so that it is ambitious and taught in a logical order"

Ofsted, 2025

Our Reception class is based on the Foundation Stage Curriculum with Early Learning Goals being taught using a practical, play based approach. As children move into Year 1, they begin the National Curriculum where subjects include: English, Mathematics, Science, Design and Technology, Computing, Art, PE, MFL, Music, Geography, History and RE, as well as 'Finchale Futures'. Subjects are generally taught discreetly but links are made when appropriate. Pupils also participate in a range of lessons and activities to support their social, moral and cultural development and wellbeing.



"The school's work to support pupils' personal development is very effective. Pupils are proud of the fact that everyone is treated equally at their school. They appreciate the differences in other people. Pupils have an assured, age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships and they know how to stay safe online. The school supports pupils with their mental and physical health successfully. Ofsted, 2025



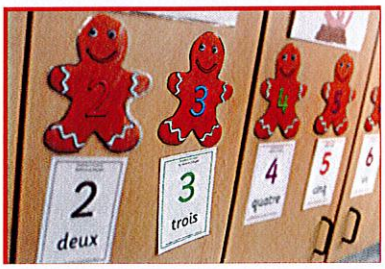
TEACHING AND LEARNING

Staff use a range of teaching and learning styles: whole class, group, pairs and individual. They adapt their approach to suit the subject being taught and the children involved. Teachers vary their teaching style to take account of the needs of the learners. As well as developing academic skills we are committed to providing a safe, secure, challenging and stimulating learning environment which encourages the development of self-discipline, independence and confidence. Every child is valued as an individual and is encouraged to develop their potential by making the most of every opportunity presented. The school recognises breadth of talent across a wide range of areas such as art, music and sport. All pupils have the opportunity to work as members of a group where collaborative and co-operative skills are practised, and as individuals where self-motivation and focused concentration are emphasised. We aim to teach children skills which are essential and relevant to their next stage of learning.

"There is a wide range of clubs and activities available for pupils to develop their interests and talents, such as orchestra, choir, art club and fitness." Ofsted 2025

Modern Foreign Languages

All pupils at Finchale learn a Modern Foreign Language, focusing on French in KS2. In Reception children are introduced to a different language, learning numbers, colours and basic phrases, usually through songs and rhymes. We believe that learning a different language enhances work in geography, increases understanding and tolerance of other nations as well as supporting pupils' language development.



Relationship Education

Primary schools in England are required to teach Relationships Education. We have recently developed our RSHE policy in school following the revised national guidelines. This was completed in consultation with our full school community, including parents and carers.

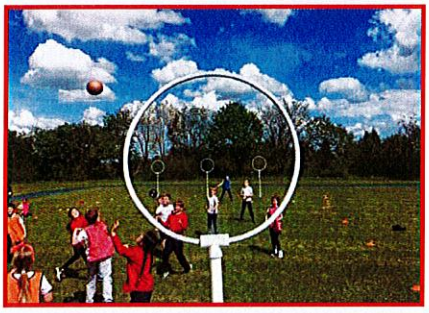
We are aware that there may be parents whose backgrounds and religious or other beliefs may cause them to hold strict reservations about this part of their child's education. Please contact us if you wish to discuss this further. Year 5 & Year 6 pupils will learn about matters of personal health, hygiene and puberty. Parents are informed when this is taking place and can request that their child does not attend.

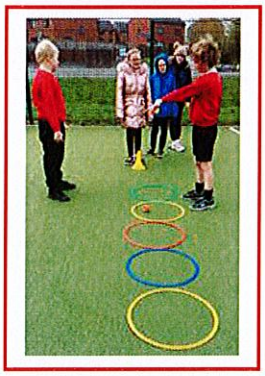


Religious Education

We have daily acts of collective worship which are broadly Christian in content. We follow the Durham Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education and children are taught about Christianity and other world religions including Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism and Islam. Parents have the right to request that their child does not attend collective worship or participate in R.E. lessons. Please let us know if this is what you wish. Children who do not attend collective worship or R.E. will be engaged in an alternative curriculum activity.

SPORT AT FINCHALE







We are very proud of the many sporting successes we have in local and county competitions. We were one of the first schools nationally to achieve the Sainsbury's School Games Platinum Award, which we have retained each year. These are tremendous achievements, recognising the quality of the teaching and coaching, the wide variety of sports activities offered and the very high level of sports participation of all our pupils.

Our aims for sport are to:

- encourage and enable each child to fulfil his/her potential
- enable each child to experience a variety of sporting activities
- develop in each child an enjoyment of physical activity
- promote a healthy life-style, supported by our daily Finchale Fitness activity

These aims are met by our PE curriculum where children cover a wide range of activities including gymnastics, games skills, athletics, swimming, outdoor & adventure activities. Swimming lessons are currently taken by Y3, Y5 and Y6 children. Pupils participate in PE for at least two hours per week. They also all take part in our daily Finchale Fitness on our new running track. Children do need **a pair of trainers** as part of their PE kit which need to be **left in school at all times for PE lessons and daily exercise** or 'Finchale Fitness'





Have a look at our website www.finchale.durham.sch.uk
for a celebration of our sporting activities and achievements

PUPIL INCLUSION

At Finchale Primary School, we believe that every child matters. We aim to take into account the different strengths, interests and needs of all children. We promote a caring, stimulating learning environment, where all achievements are celebrated. We strive to meet the needs of all children, to build self-esteem and confidence. Our curriculum is carefully planned to take into account the abilities of all children within our care. We have high expectations, and provide a high quality learning environment where children experience success and are motivated to take their learning forward. All staff carefully monitor the progress each child within their class makes. Progress is tracked carefully throughout school to ensure that each child is moving on from their own individual starting point.

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)

At Finchale, our Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCO) is Mrs. Marley. She works closely with teachers and our trained team of Learning Support Assistants to provide targeted support both in-class through quality first teaching and through intervention programmes with individuals or small groups. For example, this might be to develop basic skills in English and mathematics, work on gross and fine motor skills, or support children with their social and emotional or speech and language needs.

"Pupils with SEND engage well in their learning and progress through the curriculum well."
Ofsted, 2025.

Parents are fully involved in the process of identification and supporting pupils with additional needs. Pupils are identified at different levels of need on our Inclusion Register. Children are supported in school as far as possible. If an appropriate level of progress is still not made, we seek additional support and advice from external agencies. Pupils who have an Education, Health and Care Plan and those on SEN Support are entitled to additional support within school. Reviews are held regularly, often termly. Our school benefits from being fully involved in our COL (Community of Learning). The COL is a network of around 18 schools in our area which focuses on Special Educational Needs, making collective decisions on issues such as budget spending, resources and training needs. Over recent years our COL has provided our school with additional resources and training which has been of great benefit to our pupils. More detailed information about our provision can be found on our school website – Click on About Us and there you will find the Finchale SEND Information Report.

USEFUL INFORMATION

SCHOOL CLOTHING

A school uniform gives children a sense of identity, of belonging to Finchale Primary School. Pupils are required to wear clothes in the school colours:

- plain black or grey skirt
- plain black or grey trousers
- plain red jumper OR red school sweatshirt (available from school)
- plain white shirt/white polo shirt OR white school polo shirt (available from school)
- red and white summer dress
- black shoes or boots (not trainers)

(Plain clothing, in school colours, can be bought from any retailer)

Please label your child's clothing as it makes it much easier to find the owners of lost items - and it's cheaper for you not to have to replace lost jumpers etc. Hairstyles should be neat and suitable for school (i.e. no inappropriate styles, no elaborate hair accessories and no hair dye). An exception to this will be special non-uniform days. Long hair should be tied back.

For P.E. and games lessons we require children to be appropriately dressed in dark shorts, white T-shirt, and trainers. School t-shirts are available for purchase from the school office. The P.E. kit can be kept in a small bag at school, **trainers must be in school at all times** for daily exercise. School book bags and P.E. bags are also available for purchase from Etika, our online retailer: Finchale Primary School DH1 - etika uniforms

Please note that children are not allowed to wear jewellery because of health and safety regulations. In addition, children are not allowed to wear Smart watches in school and we ask them to hand in mobile phones at the office before entering school.

MEDICINES /ILLNESSES /HEALTH INFORMATION

From time to time it may be necessary for children to take prescribed medication during school hours. In such circumstances, the medication should be brought in to school and collected (if necessary) by the child's parent/carer. They will be asked to complete a consent form and in the case of children on certain medication, asked to help in the completion of a Healthcare Plan for their child. **For legal reasons medication can not be administered unless a consent form has been completed.** This is available from the school office or can be downloaded from the school website.

Parents/carers should bring no more than one week's medication into school at a time. It should be in its original container with a pharmacist's label showing the child's name and date of birth, and the dosage regime.

Please note that in line with the County Policy children who have had diarrhoea and/or vomiting should remain away from school for at least 48 hours after the diarrhoea has stopped. A copy of the County's general guidance for parents regarding infectious diseases is available from the school office.

Inhalers are kept in classrooms and close to the child whenever possible. Parents/carers of children who need an inhaler must complete a Healthcare Plan, in which specific questions will be asked as to how and when they are to be used. In the case of any out of school activities, such as an educational visit, the child will be responsible for their own inhaler.

In line with legislation we complete a Medical Healthcare Plan for all children who have any specific medical needs/conditions such as asthma, eczema etc. We work with parents to complete these plans and they are updated annually or if the needs of the child change.

HOMEWORK

Teachers provide homework on a regular basis. We believe that education is a partnership between school and home and ask for support from parents/carers in helping with reading, tables and any other tasks children may bring home. Research by Ofsted Inspectors indicates that children who complete homework regularly achieve better results than those who don't do homework. The DfE recommend that pupils in Years 1 & 2 spend about 1 hour a week on homework tasks, Years 3 and 4 spend 1 ½ hours and pupils in Years 5 & 6 spend about 2 ½ hours. This excludes time spent reading which should be a frequent activity, ideally daily, particularly with young children.

HEALTH EDUCATION

Our current health education programme covers issues which include personal hygiene and promoting a healthy lifestyle. We also discuss puberty with children in Year 5 and 6, sometimes with support from the school nurse. Children's questions will be answered sensitively, as and when they arise, according to the age and maturity of the child. We promote a healthy lifestyle through good diet and regular exercise and we encourage our parents to exercise with their families. We actively promote the eating of fruit and vegetables at lunchtimes and we also encourage children to include items of fresh produce in their packed lunches. Please ensure you **do not** include sweets, chocolate bars or unsuitable drinks (e.g. cans of fizzy drinks). Please also avoid items containing nuts, due to allergies within school.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Several events and after-school clubs are available for the children to attend. These vary during the year but have included:

Karate	Football	Choir	Multi-Sports	Science Club
Girls' Football	Nature /Gardening	Arts & Crafts	Basketball	Computing

CAR SAFETY

For safety reasons parents are not allowed to bring their cars onto school premises when dropping off children at the start or collecting at the end of the school day, unless they are in possession of a Blue Badge. We ask everyone to **please use the footpath** provided at all times and not to walk down the drive as this is unsafe and sets a bad example to pupils.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

In order for Finchale Primary School to be a community of people working, learning and playing together it needs to be well-ordered. One way that we have achieved this is by our rigorous and consistent approach to school discipline. This rewards good behaviour and challenges behaviour that goes against our school values and 'magic habits'.

We share our Behaviour Policy with parents and it is published on our school website. Staff, children and parents work together so that our well-mannered, happy and secure school can continue to flourish in the future.

"Pupils demonstrate excellent manners. They make helpful contributions around school to support their peers." Ofsted May 2025

We warmly invite parents to assist us in promoting children's progress and welfare through a consistent approach to and the modelling of positive behaviour.

USEFUL INFORMATION (continued)

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

During term time the Canterbury Kids Club (which is Ofsted-registered) provides before and after school child care on our premises. Parents need to register for this provision (registration is free). Canterbury Kids Club provides a wide range of both indoor and outdoor activities for pupils and further details are available from the school. Ofsted have reported that, "Children have access to a wide variety of toys and games" and "Children's physical development is promoted...Staff join in and are good role models." **Ofsted 2022**

MUSIC AT FINCHALE

Pupils at Finchale will have the opportunity to take brass lessons and these are provided by the Durham Schools' Music Service. In addition, our school takes part in the Wider Opportunity Programme for schools and pupils. We have benefited from "The Little Fingers" music programme for Reception Class and Year 1 plus whole class ukulele for Year 2 and Year 3. Y4 pupils also learn the mini-trombone. We also provide a range of musical experiences for all the pupils in our school through concerts and taking part in experiences such as Durham Brass Festival.



SCHOOL MEALS

School meals are cooked on the premises and provide children with a nutritious, well-balanced meal. Children are able to choose from a wide selection of healthy options. Our school meals provider, Chartwells, produce menus which include many items of fruit and vegetables, and which contain high quality meat and fish items and less preformed products. In September 2024 for pupils who pay, school meals cost £3.08 per day, £15.40 per week. **Please pay using Arbor, the school's on-line payment system. A link is on the school website. Alternatively, money can be sent into school in a named envelope on Monday for meals which are to be taken that week.** Please note that school meals are currently provided **free** for all pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

SCHOOL VISITS

In order to deliver a broad curriculum, we make use of the local area and take children on educational visits. These visits can only be financed from voluntary contributions from parents/carers, so we rely upon your generosity to be able to provide children with a range of experiences outside the immediate school environment. Whenever visits are arranged, an indication of the cost per child will be given in advance. Parents/carers are asked to complete a consent form on entry to the school which covers any trips and visits their child may go on. We will inform parents in advance when their child will be going out of school.

SCHOOL FUND

We invite parents to support the school fund which enables us to provide activities that we could not otherwise afford. As well as holding regular fund-raising events, donations are gratefully received at any time. Participation in all fundraising events is completely voluntary.

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

Our "Friends of Finchale" PTA organise a variety of fun events during the school year to help raise money for our school. More information is available on our website about joining the PTA, helping with the events they run, meeting dates and photos from activities. There is a PTA noticeboard in the front foyer near the school office.

USEFUL INFORMATION (continued)

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Should your child be absent from school for any reason then we ask parents/carers to ring or email school explaining the reason for the absence. A child who is absent due to illness is recorded as having an authorised absence. If we do not receive a telephone call or an email, then we must record in the class register that the child is absent without authorisation. In accordance with legislation, we must report all unauthorised absences to the Local Education Authority. This information will also be recorded on your child's end of year report. Please note that following legislation, schools **cannot authorise absences for holidays during term time** other than in the most exceptional circumstances. The Department for Education has instructed schools to fine parents or take court action against parents/carers who have 5 days or more unauthorized absence in any 10 week period. Fines are made against both parents and for each child, so a family of 4, parents and 2 children, will incur 4 fines. A leaflet setting out our Attendance Guidance is on the website https://finchale-primary-school.secure-primarysite.net/policies-procedures/ Every day, children have between 4 or 5 lessons on average and so a week of absence means a child will miss 20 – 25 lessons. Good attendance helps children to succeed at school and so we take attendance seriously at Finchale.

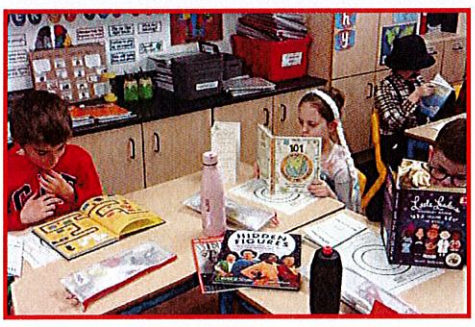
Procedures for Responding to Absence

- We require parents to inform school on the first day of their child's absence by visiting the school, telephone or email.
- If we have not received a reason for absence by 9.30 a.m. the school will call parents/carers.
- If a response and reason for absence is not given, the school will follow this up.

LATENESS

Please note that our doors close at 9am and children arriving after this time will have to enter through the main entrance and give a reason for their lateness. These incidents are closely monitored and followed up where appropriate. We do understand that there are times when people may be late for reasons beyond their control. However it has been made clear to schools that persistent lateness must be actively tackled. Moreover, we are aware of the difficulties involved in parking and if this affects you, you will now need to **allow more time** for your journey. Alternatively, you may consider Park and Stride where you leave your car at a suitable location and walk for the last part of your journey. As always, we at Finchale have your child's best interests at heart and we only wish to help ensure that they receive the education they are entitled to. **Parents/Carers are not allowed to park within school grounds to drop off or pick up at the start and end of the day unless they hold a Blue Badge.**





FURTHER INFORMATION...

Further information about the school can be obtained from our website. The school website address is: www.finchale.durham.sch.uk