



FINTON HOUSE
SCHOOL

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Date Revised: September 2024

Governing committee/sub-committee responsible: Education

A copy of this policy is available to all governors and parents via the school website or a hardcopy on request from the School Office. It is accessible to all staff electronically (in the Policy folder on the Staff Admin Drive) and a hardcopy held on file in the Head's Office. This policy applies to all at the school including those in Reception (the EYFS).

Contents

1. Aims.....	2
2. Expectations.....	3
We expect all teaching staff.....	3
We expect children.....	3
We expect parents and carers.....	4
We expect all members of the school community.....	4
3. Strategies and Practices.....	4
4. Planning.....	5
5. Pupils with Special Educational Needs.....	5
6. High Quality Lessons.....	5
Before the lesson.....	5
During the lesson.....	5
After the lesson.....	6
7. High Quality Teaching.....	6
8. High Quality Learning.....	7
9. Classroom Routines.....	7
10. Resources.....	7
Shared resources and rooms.....	7
11. Celebrating Effort and Achievement.....	8
12. Lesson Observations.....	8

Version	Policy Update
September 2023	Updated with reference to Whole School focus on embedding creative thinking across the curriculum.

1. Aims

- To enable every child to make good academic progress and fulfil his/her potential by providing a broad, current and inspiring education.
- To enable children to develop positive mental attitudes to learning (curiosity, enthusiasm, self-motivation, perseverance, eagerness to embrace challenge, development of a growth mindset) and recognise and appreciate the intrinsic pleasure in and value of learning.
- To take account of children's individual needs and stages of development, and build on a child's interests, knowledge and experience within a context of equality of opportunity for all, regardless of class, race, creed, gender, age or ability.
- To ensure teaching does not discriminate against pupils contrary to Part 6 of the Equality Act 2010.
- To educate the whole child and discover and nurture each child's abilities, both within the school day and extra-curricular activities.
- To help children develop skills, knowledge and concepts relevant to everyday life.
- To equip children with the skills to become enthusiastic, resourceful, resilient, confident and independent and creative thinkers and learners, and establish within each child a strong foundation from which they can confidently meet the challenges of the future, in what is a rapidly changing, technological world.
- To develop a sense of understanding themselves, including discovering their own strengths and passions, and the importance of building, fostering and promoting positive relationships with others and being a responsible citizen.

2. Expectations

We expect all teaching staff

- To respect and adhere to the Teachers' Standards in all they do.
- To provide a positive and dynamic learning environment with high standards.
- To follow school policies and schemes of work, and provide a challenging and stimulating programme of study to all children.
- To ensure effective planning, delivery and evaluation of the curriculum.
- To be clear about the learning objectives and ensure that concepts, skills and knowledge are introduced progressively and efficiently so that children achieve well and make good rates of progress, taking account of children's age, individual needs, learning styles and prior learning.
- To ensure there is a consistency of approach and continuity throughout the school, but that there is sufficient flexibility to take account of different barriers to learning.
- To manage change and the development of their own professional expertise, ensuring they maintain an up-to-date knowledge of educational and technological developments.
- To work collaboratively, share expertise and develop purposeful cross curricular links.
- To have a consistent approach to classroom management and organisation, and promote and encourage good behaviour in line with the Pastoral Care Policy
- To be a positive role model and uphold professional standards, including being punctual, well prepared and organised.
- To be committed to giving a balanced presentation of political views and avoiding partisan viewpoints, and to make the most of all opportunities to promote Fundamental British Values.
- Please see the Employment Handbook for further details outlining expectations from the Code of Conduct.

We expect children

- To attend school regularly and be punctual for lessons.
- To be organised by bringing the necessary kit and equipment, and completing tasks set, including homework.
- To endeavour to produce work to the best of their ability.
- To take increasing responsibility for their own learning.
- To have a positive attitude towards school life.

- To demonstrate self-motivation and responsibility for their own learning, e.g. independent learning and homework.

Please refer to the Homework Policy.

We expect parents and carers

- To promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general.
- To ensure their child attends school regularly, and arrives on time and in good health.
- To participate in discussions concerning their child's progress and attainment.
- To support the teaching and learning in school by offering encouragement and praise to their child and reinforcing the importance of homework.
- To encourage and allow their child to take increasing responsibility as they progress through the school.
- To keep the school informed of any changes in the child's circumstances which may affect their learning.

We expect all members of the school community

- To uphold the aims of the school and behave appropriately in line with the school's values and policies.
- To provide an environment in which everyone feels safe and secure, and has high expectations.
- To work as a team, motivating, supporting and encouraging each other, and promoting positive relationships and a sense of belonging to the whole school community.

3. Strategies and Practices

Teachers provide stimulating, challenging and engaging lessons, which introduce children to new skills and concepts and develop and consolidate those previously learnt. They plan a wide range of activities, making good use of technology and outdoor learning, including but not limited to:

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| • independent and collaborative activities | • research |
| • first-hand experiences e.g. fieldwork | • written work |
| • practical investigations and experiments | • workshops, visits and speakers |
| • open-ended activities | • sporting and physical activities |
| • problem solving | • structured play |
| • creative activities, including design & making | • plays, performances & presentations |
| | • cross-curricular activities |
| | • activities that promote creative thinking |

Classes are organised in a variety of ways to allow children to work individually, in small groups, and contribute to whole-class activities. Children are encouraged to work collaboratively, co-operatively and independently. Teachers use a variety of strategies to encourage children to develop a growth mindset, hone their thinking skills and reach their potential.

These include:

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| • observing | • instructing |
| • listening | • diagnosing |
| • questioning | • target setting |
| • discussing | • marking, assessment and feedback |
| • explaining | • promoting self & peer assessment |

Children's progress is evaluated on an ongoing basis. For further details, please see the *Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy*.

4. Planning

In order for children to have an effective learning experience, each lesson must be well planned. This is achieved through thorough long, medium and short-term planning.

- Long-term plans are set out in the Finton House Schemes of Work and overviews, which are centrally stored so they are available to all teaching staff. The Schemes of Work detail the subjects and topics to be covered in each year group throughout the academic year. Each subject-based Scheme of Work provides clear learning objectives. Many Schemes of Work also provide suggested activities, resources and cross-curricular links through which the learning objectives can be met.
- Medium-term plans are produced by each year group or subject specialist teacher on a half-termly basis. A Finton House standardised form is available for medium-term planning. In addition to drawing upon the learning objectives set out in the Schemes of Work, the medium-term plans detail planned activities, differentiation and assessment. Medium-term plans are centrally stored so that they are easily accessible to all teaching staff.
- Short-term plans are produced on a weekly basis and reviewed and amended as appropriate on a daily basis. Short-term plans detail the specific activities to be covered in each lesson throughout the week. This is generally recorded by individual teachers in their planning books. Each year group has a weekly planning meeting in which teaching and learning is reviewed and evaluated, ideas are shared and plans for the coming week are discussed. Following these planning meetings, teachers and assistants plan for individual pupils or groups within their class, whilst ensuring that there is consistency across the year group.

5. Pupils with Special Educational Needs

The teacher is responsible for ensuring that work is suitably differentiated; children may be withdrawn for extra support or receive support in the classroom from an assistant, learning support teacher, therapist or SENCO. Where appropriate, Additional Support Targets or an Educational Health Care Plan will be in place. See *Special Needs Policy* for further details.

6. High Quality Lessons

We have identified the following main factors that contribute to effective teaching and learning in the classroom.

Before the lesson

The teacher will:

- Ensure that planning is shared with all assistants and additional teachers working with the group and that everyone is aware of the role they will fulfil.
- Ensure that resources are ready and appropriate to the pupils and learning objectives.
- Match work accurately to the children's abilities and have high expectations of all children.

During the lesson

The teacher will:

- Share the learning objective and aims of the lesson with the children and explain how these relate to previous and future learning.
- Manage the children well, using clear and orderly routines with consistency, so as to achieve high standards of discipline.
- Ensure that the children know what is expected of them, both in terms of work and behaviour.
- Act positively and interact effectively with the children, having an awareness of the whole class and individuals within it.
- Motivate and inspire the children, providing opportunities for them to extend their learning.
- Evaluate, assess and where appropriate adapt plans, as the lesson progresses in order to clarify misconceptions, secure knowledge and deepen learning further.
- Provide feedback to pupils on their learning and progress.

After the lesson

The teacher will:

- Evaluate the teaching and learning that took place, and make any necessary changes to future planning that might be appropriate.
- Mark work consistently and appropriately, providing feedback to pupils on their learning and progress which enables them to understand their next steps.
- Ensure that shared resources are returned.

Please see the Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy.

7. High Quality Teaching

When the quality of teaching is excellent, the following will be observed:

- Well informed, planned and organised lessons.
- Good knowledge of the subject being taught.
- Clear learning objectives, of which the pupils are aware.
- A good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils.
- High expectations of work and behaviour.
- Good relationships between the teacher and children.
- Activities which are well resourced and are engaging and challenging, and provide opportunities for further development.
- Differentiation.
- Explicitly teaching skills that promote creative thinking.
- Open-ended tasks to allow opportunities to think creatively.
- Purposeful and effective use of IT.
- Appropriate questioning, including the use of high level thinking skill questions (Bloom's Taxonomy) to challenge, motivate and inspire children.
- Specific practices, such as reviewing previous learning, modelling and scaffolding work, and providing adequate time for practice to embed skills.
- Good time management leading to well-paced lessons.
- Additional adult support being appropriately deployed.
- Evaluation and assessment being integral to the teaching, leading to flexibility and a willingness to adapt where necessary.

All staff are encouraged and developed through a high quality and thorough induction and appraisal process. The school regularly invests in staff through whole school and individual training including INSET days.

Please see the Employment Handbook.

8. High Quality Learning

When the quality of learning is excellent, the following will be observed:

- Children displaying appropriate attitudes and approaches, e.g. enthusiasm, pride in their work, curiosity, eagerness to move on, reflection, resilience and a positive mindset.
- Children working conscientiously and able to explain the purpose of the activity.
- Quality outcomes in the work produced.
- Pupils make good progress.

9. Classroom Routines

The following are features of a well-organised classroom:

- The classroom has consistent rules and routines, of which all children are aware, including such rituals as handing in of work, storage of bags, attracting the teacher's attention, etc.
- Clear rewards and sanctions are consistently applied in accordance with the school's Pastoral Care Policy.
- Entry and exit routes and routines to and from the classroom to outside areas, including the hall and playground are well known to the children and used appropriately and consistently.
- Children are well informed about the timetable for the day.
- Routines are in place for the start and end of lessons and activities to maximise learning time e.g. retrieving, using and clearing away resources.
- The classroom clock is set correctly and used by teachers and children to monitor the use of their own time, punctuality and pace of lessons.
- Resources are neatly stored and accessible.
- Purposeful displays help to create an inspiring and dynamic learning environment.

10. Resources

A ready supply of appropriate resources is vital to teaching and learning. Resources should be stored tidily, and children should be trained in their retrieval, use and return.

Each classroom should have sufficient good quality and appropriate resources, relevant to the age group being taught. In order for planned lessons to take place efficiently and effectively, resources should be readily available and easily retrievable without disruption.

Shared resources and rooms

- When using laptops or iPads, priority is given to those who have booked them out in advance. Teachers must oversee the children collecting and returning IT equipment to ensure that it is correctly stored.
- When shared resources are used, e.g. scientific apparatus or equipment from the maths cupboard, these must be returned and cleaned, as soon as possible, to the appropriate storage area in a neat and orderly fashion.
- When a shared room is used e.g. Science Lab or workroom, the teacher must ensure that it is left in a neat and orderly condition and that any furniture that has been moved has been returned to its original position.

11. Celebrating Effort and Achievement

We believe in celebrating the achievement of individuals. Success is attributed to effort rather than ability and a growth mindset attitude is promoted by valuing resilience to failure. Ways in which we do this include:

- Encouraging children to draft and redraft work in order to raise standards.
- House points, stickers and other rewards for high achievement in work, effort or behaviour.
- Celebration and Commendation certificates.
- Showing work to their Head of House and receiving a House Sticker.
- Showing work to the Head and receiving a Head Teacher's Award.
- Displays in classrooms and around the school (*See Display Policy*).
- Organising special events e.g. Poetry Week, Music Festival, STEM Day, plays and assemblies, concerts, etc.
- Colours, Prizes and Cups which are awarded at the end of term prize giving.
- Sharing achievements with parents and the wider school community through the weekly newsletter, website, school magazine, Frog (VLE), and social media e.g. Twitter & Facebook.

See Pastoral Care Policy for further details.

12. Lesson Observations

Staff are encouraged to informally observe one another teach as often as possible, and are expected to carry out at least one observation per term. These are known as 'peer observations' and are logged by a member of the Academic team. This is an excellent way of sharing good practice and ideas, and provides a learning and development opportunity for both members of staff involved. A record of peer observations is maintained by the Curriculum Co-ordinator.

Head of departments and subject co-ordinators are expected to observe staff teaching their subject on a regular basis in order to monitor teaching and learning, and provide appropriate support where appropriate. Support and training needs are discussed with the Academic Head.

Where an observation takes place as part of an appraisal or training programme a detailed lesson observation sheet is completed, identifying areas of strength and highlighting areas for further development. Appropriate support and training is put in place in order to develop teaching and learning.

13. Learning Skills Trust

Finton House is a member of The Learning Skills Trust (LST) which is an education charity which exists to foster the development of life skills in young people.

The charity offers junior schools a framework to engage with core learning skills. The LST framework is designed to help pupils understand and develop these skills and Finton House has the freedom to reflect our ethos within these skills. Our 8 main learning skills are: collaborating, communicating, thinking and learning, reviewing and improving, leadership, independence, curiosity and imagination.

We are in the process of developing these core learning skills and are rolling this out in 2024-25.