



Finlay Community School

ASPIRE

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EYFS Policy

Governor Committee Responsible:	Finlay Community School	Staff Lead(s):	Nikki Livermore
Status (Statutory / Advisory)	Statutory	Review Cycle	Annually
Last Review	September 2025	Next Review Date	September 2026
Chair of Governors	Mike Adlam chair@finlay.gloucs.sch.uk		

Introduction

“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”.

(Early years foundation stage statutory framework, Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five – September 2025)

1. Intent

At Finlay Community School, we intend to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners by providing a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

At Finlay Community School, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

2. Implementation

In early-years education, the opportunities we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

2.1 Transition

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

Starting Reception – Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an Induction Meeting in the summer term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff and learn more about the Reception curriculum. This is an opportunity for staff to

- To go through the school handbook
- Explain about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals
- Explain about holidays and absences
- Purchase uniform and book bag if requested
- Explain the arrangements for the gradual induction in to reception

New class sessions - The children are given three opportunities to come in to school to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class. They will spend a morning in their new class. Parents can leave their child during this session.

This means that before they join their new class the Reception environment is already a familiar place to them. Arrangements are also made for the children's new class teacher to visit them in their current nursery setting.

Starting in Key Stage 1 (Year 1) - Throughout the Reception year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in Key Stage and whole school assemblies as well as sharing playtimes during OPAL play.

2.2 The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The Early Years Foundation Stage sets standards for the learning, development and care of your child from birth to 5 years old. All schools and Ofsted-registered early years' providers must follow the EYFS, including childminders, preschools, nurseries and school reception classes

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

2.3 . A Unique Child

At Finlay Community School, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as

celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

2.3.1 Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at Finlay Community School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

At the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. We do this through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary (such as referrals to speech therapy) as necessary.
- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.
- Using interventions to give the children the best possible chance using personalised my plans. (Please see SEND policy).

2.3.2 Positive Relationships

At Finlay Community School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners - We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at our induction meetings.
- Arranging, where possible, visits by the teacher to all children in their home setting or childcare provision prior to their starting school.
- Providing a handbook of information about commencing Reception at Finlay Community School.
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home-School agreement.
- Inviting parents/carers and children the opportunity to spend time in Reception
- Providing an induction meeting for Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.
- Holding a parent consultation early in the academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Written contact through the Home-School Diary and school newsletters.
- Publishing a Creative Curriculum theme map detailing the areas of learning and the overarching theme of the term or half-term as well as a class newsletter/termly overview.
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading.
- Sharing regularly the children's 'Learning Journey' with parents/carers and valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents/carers.
- Offering two parent/teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child's progress is discussed.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in reception.
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food tasting and photographs etc.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, workshops, Christmas productions and sports day etc.
- Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers.
- Offering a range of activities, throughout the year, to encourage specific collaboration between child, school and parents e.g. Theme outcome events, Reading afternoons.

2.3.4 Staff

Reception – 1 class teacher and 1 teaching assistant per class.

Plus specifically appointed staff to support children with additional needs. All staff in the Foundation Stage aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

2.3.5 Enabling Environments

At Finlay Community School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

We have learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

2.3.6 Learning and Developing

The EYFS Curriculum – Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early year's settings. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.

They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Three Prime areas are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Reception pupils also participate in a daily phonics sessions, following the guidance in the "Read, Write Inc" document and in line with school policy.

2.4 Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Play and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- Active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

We consider the characteristics of effective learning when engaging with the children and planning activities. We highlight on the TBATS in theme lessons which one the children have achieved in that activity. We also have this on our planning to support staff with what to look for / engage in when exploring with the children.

In September 2021 a new EYFS framework was introduced for early year's settings to follow. From this the EYFS lead created an intent guide which includes (please see Finlay school website for EYFS intent guide):

- EYFS intent
- Themes planned for each term – what should be taught and when
- Timetable
- What evidence / books we keep in Early Years
- Continuous provision
- Assessment Knowledge organisers
- Transition
- parental engagement

2.5 Organisation of activities

Child Led / Continuous Provision:

The classroom and outdoor area in EYFS is set up in a way for children to carry out meaningful experiences to support their learning. Children are encouraged to seek resources to support them to be independent learners. This may be through using the displays in the classroom such as phonic sounds or selecting their own resources such as Numicon to support their number development. Adults in the room interact with children during these child led moments to extend and develop their learning. When planning continuous provision, adults think about the 'why' behind the activities, explicitly sharing

this on their plans. This allows adults to ensure continuous provision is purposeful and takes into account the children's needs and interests from detailed assessment and observation.

Adult led / Group Activity:

These activities cover a range of the curriculum subjects throughout the day. During the morning, English and maths focus activities take place both indoors and outdoors. These activities lead on from the whole class input and support this teaching. In the afternoon the adult led activities range from the other areas of the curriculum. Children will have the opportunity to do an activity with an adult in literacy and maths every day which will enhance their learning, through modelling. Whilst a group is with an adult, the other children will be accessing the continuous provision with the other adult support by questioning and observing.

2.6 Planning

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers use the national schemes of work, where appropriate, to support their planning for individual children. The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. The planning is based upon themes with phonics, maths and reading directed teaching. However, planning, which is based upon a different themes which is identified as vehicle of interest to deliver the children's next steps in learning, also therefore responds to the needs, achievement and interest of the children. Our themes are mapped out for Reception in the EYFS / foundation subject intent guide to ensure coverage of subjects.

Our medium-term planning identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children on track for the Early Learning Goals, and also for those working towards National Curriculum levels. The medium term planning is based upon a different theme. The children in Reception are assessed against the statements from INSIGHT. This online assessment platform has statements in each term to show progression of skills. We look at the skills taught in that term and if the children are on track or not on track. We use this information to inform our planning and next steps.

Each term, staff then complete a teacher judgement, sharing whether children are on track or off track. This data is then analysed by the Curriculum Lead and Subject Leaders.

When planning an activity for adult led or continuous provision the adults ask themselves 'why' we are doing this activity. This is to ensure the activities have a purpose and will support the children's learning and next steps.

During the first term in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using a baseline test. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal

observations, photographic evidence, quotes and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. We look at the observations to inform the child's next steps. We take into account the children's interests in enhanced provision – this means the activities in continuous provision will be based on what we are learning in literacy, maths and theme. The children's interests will be cooperated within the other areas such as fine motor, construction.

2.7 A typical day in Reception:

- Registration / dinner choices: incidental Maths learning
- Maths: whole class session - following Can do Maths following Maths policy.
- Phonics: RWI Scheme – following the phonics policy.
- Break and Snack – Fruit and Milk/Water.
- Literacy - Group activity within ability groups with an adult and opportunities to explore and use taught skills independently during learning time, with resources prepared and supplied accordingly.
- Lunchtime.
- Afternoon sessions:
 - PE x1 a week
 - Music x 1 a week
 - Jigsaw (PSED) x 1 a week
 - Theme - Linked to theme focus for the term - Group activity within ability group with an adult opportunities to explore and use taught skills independently during learning time, with resources prepared and supplied accordingly
 - Planned and resourced activities linked to theme
 - On-going opportunities for children to use and apply skills through play and for the children to lead the learning through their interests
 - Complete a recap of maths through the NCETM mastering number programme
 - Happy minds assembly as a class x1 a week
 - Celebration assembly x1 a week

2.8 Safeguarding & Welfare

‘Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.’
(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2025)

At Finlay Community School we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;

- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

2.8.1 Keeping Safe

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Finlay Safeguarding Children Policy).

2.8.2 Good Health

All children are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of milk. They have access to water at all times. They have a choice of 3 hot dinners: meat, vegetarian, jack potato / pasta bar, or a cold option (sandwich) each day.

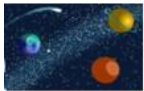
Milk – Pupils under 5 years old ('rising fives') in primary education reception classes are eligible under either the School Milk Scheme. Once children turn 5 then parents are welcome to pay for milk through the School Milk scheme.

Oral health - Within the EYFS (2025) it states about promoting good oral health. At Finlay we clean teeth in Reception for at least 2 minutes 3 times a week. Every child has their own tooth brush and learn how to clean their teeth. We have a visit from the dentist to discuss the importance of oral health to the children.

2.9 Behaviour

Behaviour in Reception, we strongly believe in modelling and teaching desired behaviours such as respecting each other and our environment, sharing, listening and demonstrating polite manners. Collectively, we agree on classroom rules. We use the following reward/sanctions systems in line with the schools behaviour policy.

Reception:



Out of space – This is for children who have demonstrated outstanding behaviour all day. They will receive a special out of space sticker. If a child is on out of space at the end of the day they will be star of the day.



Shooting Star – Our 'gold' behaviours. This is for children who demonstrate excellent behaviour daily. Any child on the star or shooting star can then be chosen for star of the day. If required, when all children are on the shooting star, the class can be rewarded.



Star – This is what all children are working towards. Children can move their name up from green to the star for making the right choice and displaying role model behaviour and attitude. Any child on the star or shooting star can then be chosen for star of the day. If required, when all children are on the star, the class can be rewarded.



Green – 'Role Model Behaviours'. At the start of every day, all children will begin every day on the green circle



Orange – 'Verbal Reminder'. A child will receive a verbal warning, and then if that behaviour continues, the child will move their name to orange.



Red – 'If behaviour is repeated after orange then the children will move to red. Children will have time out straight away with a 5 minute timer. Depending on the behaviour that has been displayed will depend on if they are taken to a member of SMT.

3. Impact

Impact of the Early Years Foundation Approach can be measured in a number of different ways, both summative and formative data, observation and reviews of teaching and learning.

3.1. Observations

Staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's Learning Journeys.

Seesaw is the online platform that captures the children's learning experiences through photographs and videos. It allows learning that takes place at school or home to be shared with parents or staff. It is used as a way of showing a broader picture of a child's development. We use an individual secure password protected per child to ensure safety. Permission is also gained from the parents before use.

3.2 Assessment

During the first term in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using a baseline assessment. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

Reception Baseline Assessment – September 2021 - The RBA is an age-appropriate assessment of early mathematics and literacy, communication and language. It is delivered in English and is administered within the first six weeks of a pupil starting reception. The assessment has two components, each consisting of practical tasks using physical resources. There is an online scoring system for the practitioner to use as the pupil engages with the tasks. The RBA will be used to create school-level progress measures for primary schools which will show the progress pupils make from reception until the end of key stage 2.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

We record each child's level of development against the 17 early Learning goals as on track or not on track. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

The teacher keeps progress records and books and records examples of each child's work. These progress books contain a wide range of evidence that we share with parents at each parental consultation meeting.

At the end of the final term in Reception we send a summary of these assessments to the LA for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information too at parental consultation meetings and in the end-of-year report.

Parents receive an annual written report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June, and send them to parents in early July each year.

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3.3 Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head teacher and EYFS co-ordinator will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.