



# FINTON HOUSE SCHOOL

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Governing committee/sub-committee responsible: Education Committee

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).

Version	Policy Update
September 2023	Updated with reference to Whole School focus on embedding creative thinking across the curriculum.
September 2025	Inclusion/integration of Display policy, Presentation policy, Homework policy and More Able, Gifted and Talented policy.  Updated curriculum allocation for 2025-2026 and Staff coordinator list 2025-2026.  Updated Learning Skills information and added Appendices 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3

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## 1. Aims

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- 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.
- To enable children to develop positive attitudes to learning (curiosity, self-motivation, perseverance, eagerness to embrace challenge, develop a growth mindset) and recognise and appreciate the intrinsic pleasure in and value of learning, fostered through a stimulating and engaging learning environment.

## 2. Expectations

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### 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 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.

### 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

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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:

- |               |                                    |
|---------------|------------------------------------|
| • 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

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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 provide an annual overview of the schemes of work, which are centrally stored so they are available to all teaching staff to promote the development of cross curricular links. They detail the subjects and topics to be covered in each year group throughout the academic year.

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. These documents detail the learning objectives, 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 weekly 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. This is an opportunity for teachers to consider how best to develop the children's learning skills. Following these planning meetings, teachers and assistants plan for individual pupils or groups within their class including SEND, EAL and MAP, whilst ensuring that there is consistency across the year group.

## 5. Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEND)

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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. Provision for More Able Pupils (MAP)

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### Policy Statement

Finton House provides a broad, current and inspiring education where all children can develop their interests and talents, whether academic, creative or sporting. We respect the right of all children in our school, irrespective of differences in ability, to access the curriculum and to develop the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that are necessary for their self-fulfillment and development into active and responsible adults.

We aim to ensure that boys and girls of all abilities, including the most able and those with special educational needs, are nurtured and challenged to make excellent personal and academic progress. All children are encouraged to express their opinions, strive for excellence and think 'out of the box'.

We aim to ensure that a caring, inspiring and educationally appropriate environment is provided for all children, including those with exceptional abilities, through a stimulating and challenging curriculum. We endeavor to plan our teaching and learning in such a way that we enable each child to attain the highest level of personal achievement.

We are committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory and in line with the Equality Act (2010).

The overview and development of strategy and practice is overseen by the Academic Team, in particular the Assistant Head: Teaching and Learning.

## Aims and Objectives

Finton House aims to provide MA pupils with appropriate learning opportunities and suitable challenges to enable them to develop their abilities to the full. In order to do so, we need to be aware of the social and emotional needs of these pupils as well as their academic needs.

Through this policy and our practice, we aim to:

- a) Provide a shared understanding of the term More Able Pupil.
- b) Assist staff in identifying More Able Pupils.
- c) Ensure staff understand their responsibilities regarding the support of More Able Pupils.
- d) Encourage the use of differentiated provision within the mixed ability classroom and beyond through challenge, enrichment and extension of learning.
- e) Offer pupils opportunities to generate their own learning and encourage them to think and work independently.
- f) Support the needs of our pupils and help them to develop to their full potential.

## Definitions

There are many definitions of the terms ‘gifted’, ‘talented’ and ‘able’, and much discussion about the terminology that should or shouldn’t be used. For example, PotentialPlus UK currently use the term ‘high learning potential’ and the DfE and ISI refer to ‘most able’ pupils. The National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE) refer to the following definitions: ‘more able / most able / highly able’.

Due to their inherently similar meanings, NACE suggests it is easier if the terms more able, most able and highly able are defined in the same way or encompassed within one “more able” definition. At Finton House we use the term More Able Pupils (MAPs) defined by the following elements:

- Learners who have the potential or capacity for high attainment;
- Learners who demonstrate high levels of performance in an academic area;
- Learners who are more able relative to their peers in their own year group, class and school/college;
- Exceptional ability in all areas of the curriculum or in a specific subject/curriculum area, including the arts and physical activities.’

At Finton House we believe that whatever the terminology used, semantics should not become a barrier for providing for the needs of this group of individuals.

## Identification

Identifying MAPs is a complex matter. NACE recommends that “every school has a robust, while ongoing and flexible, method of identifying its more able cohort”.

At Finton House we use a range of strategies to identify these pupils and plan for their needs. The identification process is ongoing and begins when the pupil joins Finton House. A pupil is identified as being a MAP when they achieve, or are believed to be capable of achieving, high levels of attainment across the curriculum, or in particular skills or aspects of subjects.

Pupils identified as being MA in one or more areas of the curriculum are included on the More Able Register which is shared with all staff via OneDrive on the Frog dashboard. This list is reviewed and updated twice a year.

MAPs are identified by making a judgement based on a variety of sources of information, including:

- teacher observation and assessment
- discussions with pupils, and information shared by parents and carers
- data from exams, cognitive ability tests and other standardised scores
- other observations and reports e.g. previous schools, educational psychologists, coaches and peripatetic/specialist teachers, etc.

In 2011, DfE research into how to provide the best tuition for pupils who are learning at a more advanced level identified the following common characteristics of academically more able pupils:

Pupils often:

- enjoy a creative and sometimes more cross curricular approach to teaching and learning; they often have a passionate interest in a particular area, for example a specific period of history or aspect of science
- become more acutely aware of their progress and rapidly become despondent if they start to fall behind their peers
- have less emotional maturity which can manifest in poor behaviour, despite being academically more able
- have more diverse learning preferences and approaches and therefore need a wider variety of teaching strategies.
- find it difficult to fit in and work with their peers
- only do the minimum amount of work and can be prone to under-performing, if not sufficiently academically stretched; they need to be 'pushed to deeper thinking'
- have a disparity between their cognitive ability and their written outcomes as they can become impatient with the process of writing.

At Finton House, we recognise that MAPs are a diverse group and that they can be:

- high achievers across the academic spectrum
- high achievers in one area (curricular or extra-curricular)
- of high ability but with low motivation
- pupils not achieving their potential
- pupils whose skills and knowledge may extend beyond national measures of progress and attainment
- pupils on the special needs register

## Provision Strategies

Teachers at Finton House plan carefully to meet the learning needs of all pupils. We give all children opportunities to show what they know, understand and can do, and we achieve this in a variety of ways when planning for children's learning by providing:

- an 'open ended' common activity that allows the children to respond at their own level
- an enrichment activity that broadens an individual's learning in a particular skill or knowledge area
- an individual activity within a common theme that reflects a greater depth of understanding and higher level of attainment
- opportunities for children to progress through their work at their own rate of learning.

Children meet a variety of organisational strategies as they move through the school: whole-class teaching, small group work, paired work and individual tasks. Each strategy supports all children in their learning, whilst taking into account the needs of MA learners.

Children are grouped in a variety of ways, including ability-based groups within a class and across a year group. Differentiation is planned for within such groups and appropriate targets are set for individual pupils.

Teachers regularly review the progress of pupils and pupils move between the groups as appropriate. This enables teachers to plan work that reflects the band of ability in each group.

When working with ability-based groups, we recognise that some MAPs may require further differentiation to cater for their learning needs. The Academic Team and teaching staff work closely with the SENCO to ensure children who can be both SEND and MAPs are also fully catered for and supported.

Learning is also enriched through regular homework activities linked to the work being undertaken in classes. This offers teachers a further opportunity to set work to challenge pupils, particularly in individual research.

All the pupils have the opportunity to experience a range of educational visits and before/after-school clubs that further enrich and develop learning.

We have developed links with other schools and provide MAPs at Finton House the opportunity to meet and work alongside pupils from other year groups and other schools in a variety of activities, workshops and competitions.

We promote celebration of achievements by asking parents to inform the school if their child has an out-of-school award, etc. These are recorded on our whole school Successes and Achievements Document and are often celebrated in assemblies during the 'Amazing People' section.

Monitoring and tracking of pupil progress is the responsibility of individual teachers using the provided formative assessment spreadsheets alongside the tracking of standardised assessment data. These are regularly reviewed during assessment meetings with the SENCO and Deputy Head: Academic.

*Please see Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy for further details.*

## Roles and Responsibilities

The Academic Team co-ordinates the provision and practice for MAPs at Finton House. Their role includes:

- Taking the lead in policy development.
- Supporting staff in the identification of MA children.
- Ensuring the MA list is reviewed bi-annually and all staff are aware of the updated list.
- Regularly reviewing the teaching arrangements for MAPs and sharing good practice including advice and learning strategies for MAPs
- Monitoring the progress of MAPs through discussions with teachers and, where appropriate, the analysis of data.
- Collecting samples of work/evidence in order to demonstrate the standards MAPs are achieving, inform the process of identification, and keep a record of progress and achievement. These are stored on Frog to share good practice with all.
- Co-ordinating events with other schools and organisations that will extend and challenge MAPs
- Keeping up to date with developments in this area and to reviewing the school's policy and practice.

The teachers' role includes:

- Planning lessons and activities which are suitably selected or differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils, including MAPs.
- Regularly reviewing the teaching arrangements for MAPs within the classroom and across year groups.
- Reviewing and updating the MAP list bi-annually.
- Monitoring the progress of MAPs through discussions with colleagues including the Academic Team.
- Assisting the Academic Team by organising MAP events and selecting and releasing pupils to attend these events.

## 7. High Quality Lessons

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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.*

## 8. High Quality Teaching

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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.*

## 9. High Quality Learning

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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 including adherence to presentation standards outlined in Section 16.
- Pupils make good progress.

## 10. Classroom Routines

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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.

## 11. Resources

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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.

A core of basic resources (backing paper, fabric and borders) needed to display work are available in the basement of 169. The Office Administrator is responsible for ordering basic resources. Individual requirements/requests should be ordered by the teacher and paid for out of the year group/phase budgets.

## 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.

## 12. Displays and the Learning Environment

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### Introduction and Purpose of Displays

Displays are an important part of a vibrant school and a well-organised school. Through our displays, we aim to create a learning environment that is stimulating and attractive, and encourage children to take pride in their work and school. All staff must actively follow the objectives and guidelines set out in this policy.

To help children form positive opinions about their own and other people's work; To help the children to develop ideas; To promote the children's interest and curiosity; To promote the children's sense of ownership in their classroom/school; For parents and visitors to see topics covered and appreciate the work that the children have completed.

### Planning and General Guidelines for Displays

Displays should be carefully thought out and attractive. They should be planned to support, extend, reinforce and illustrate current learning/topics.

Displays must be produced with an understanding of the school's Data Protection and Images of Pupils Policies. All staff generating displays must reference the school's fire strategy and displays must not contribute to excessive fire loading in corridors or escape routes.

Display boards should never be left blank for a prolonged period of time.

### Classroom Displays

A 'good' classroom has a variety of work on display, reflecting the different curriculum areas. Displays are:

- up-to-date and relevant to the work in hand
- have clear, well-written labels
- are interactive with carefully chosen backing paper and fabrics
- spark curiosity and enhance learning

All classrooms should display the Learning Skills and Finton House Values.

### Communal Area Displays

Most year groups and subject departments are responsible for producing and maintaining displays in communal areas such as staircases and corridors. These displays must be regularly changed and continuously monitored to ensure that they do not become tatty.

The display should clearly indicate the class/year group. All children's work should be clearly labelled with the child's first name and initial (e.g., 'Molly B') to ensure clarity, but also to protect children's personal data. Lists containing children's full names (e.g., sports teams) should not be

used as part of a wall display and should be shared online only. Where images of pupils are on display, these must not be accompanied with names at all.

The display should have a title and clearly explain the work/activity/trip etc. All displays should be securely mounted to ensure that they do not come loose.

### Display Guidelines for Posters (e.g., for Special Events):

Posters should be carefully produced and include relevant details of the event (e.g., date, house, charity). Where possible these should be displayed on the digital screens around school. Ideally, if posters are to be up for a prolonged period of time, they should be laminated as this helps to ensure that they do not become tatty. Posters must be securely fixed to the walls with sufficient white-tac so that they do not come loose or stain the walls. It is the responsibility of the member of staff organising the event to ensure that all posters are taken down the day after the event has taken place.

## 13. Celebrating Effort and Achievement

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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.
- Organising special events e.g. Poetry Week, Music Festival, STEAM 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.*

## 14. Lesson Observations

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Staff are encouraged to informally observe one another teach as often as possible, and are expected to carry out at least two observations per year. 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 Academic Team.

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 Deputy Head: Academic.

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.

## 15. Homework

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### Introduction and Aims

Homework is anything the children do outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning in response to guidance from the school. Its purpose is to support pupils in making maximum personal and academic progress, and achieving the highest possible standards. At Finton House, homework encompasses a wide variety of activities, which change and develop as a pupil moves through the school.

Finton House acknowledges the importance of homework as part of the education our pupils receive and recognises that staff and parents/carers are jointly responsible for this part of their education. We also acknowledge the vital role of play and free time and believe that whilst homework is important, it should not be too onerous or stressful, or prevent children from taking part in a wide range of activities and clubs, and developing their interests and skills to the full.

The aim of this policy is to provide a consistent approach to homework throughout the school and set out clear guidelines and expectations for staff, pupils and parents.

The aim of homework is to:

- Promote a constructive and positive partnership between home and school to support each child's learning.
- Consolidate and reinforce learning done in school and allow children to practise skills taught in lessons.
- Develop and build independent study skills and promote habits of enquiry and investigation.
- Help children develop good work habits and a sense of responsibility and commitment to their own learning.
- Enable pupils to make maximum academic and personal progress.

### Homework Allocation

#### Reception – Year 2

Formal homework is not set in the Lower School or Year 2. However, all parents are encouraged to play an active role in their child's learning. Staff encourage children to talk to their families about what they are learning at school and to try to find out more about the topics. When appropriate, children may be asked to bring in books or other resources from home. In addition, the subject pages on Frog, the school's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) contain resources and activities which parents can explore with their children.

All parents are expected to regularly hear their child read, to read to them and discuss texts. Reading books/resources are sent home each day and every child has a reading record in which parents are encouraged to write comments. To support parents in hearing their children read, Finton House produces detailed Reading Guidance for Parents booklets. These can be downloaded from the Parent Portal on Frog.

Parental support is also vital in helping children learn words and songs for school performances, and also their chosen poem for Poetry Week.

In Year 1 and 2, all children have a weekly spelling test. Parents are asked to support their children in learning their weekly words, which are brought home in their spelling list book/folder.

In Year 2 and above, parents are asked to support their children in learning their times tables. All children in Year 2 and above have Mathletics and Times Table Rockstars accounts, and are able to log on at home if they choose to complete activities to support their mathematical development.

In addition, from the Summer Term of Reception onwards, all children from Reception to Year 2 are given a weekend task, which is generally linked to a topic being covered at school. This task provides valuable writing practice, but is not compulsory.

### Year 3- Year 6

Formal Homework is set in the Upper School and all pupils are given a Homework Diary in which to record tasks set. These are also recorded on the children's class Frog page. The table below details the homework allocation for each year group.

Year Group	Daily Allocation	Subjects
Year 3	20 - 30 minutes	English x 2 Maths x 2 Science x 1 Humanities x 1 (From Spring Term)
Year 4	30 - 40 minutes	English x 1 English/cross-curricular x 1 Maths x 2 Science x 1
Year 5	40 - 60 minutes (Monday - Thursday) 1 x 30 minutes (weekend)	English x 1 Maths x 2 Reasoning x 2
Year 6 (Autumn Term)	40 - 60 minutes (Monday - Thursday) 2 x 30 minutes (weekend)	English x 2 Maths x 2, Reasoning x 2  <i>*Note: homework tasks will vary dependent upon 11+ assessments</i>
Year 6 (Spring Summer Terms) &	40 - 60 minutes (Monday - Thursday) 2 x 30 minutes (weekend)	English x 1 Maths x 1 Science x 1 Humanities x 2 Languages x 1

Homework activities generally consolidate or continue work completed in class and usually need to be handed in the following day. Homework tasks should be able to be completed by pupils within the allotted time without adult help. Obviously, however, many parents take an active interest in homework and there are times when adult guidance can be beneficial or when a child may choose to spend a little longer on a piece of work they are enjoying.

At times, homework may involve research or a carefully structured 'flipped' learning activity. For research-based homework, teachers should guide pupils towards suitable websites and/or books and other resources via the subject pages on Frog. On occasions, Upper School children may be set a project, independent study or revision activity that lasts for a number of homework sessions.

It is important that both staff and parents monitor this work carefully to ensure that it does not all end up being done on the last night: monitoring homework involves checking and providing feedback on the work in progress after each homework.

In addition to the formal homework detailed above, pupils are required to read at home each day and to regularly read aloud to an adult. Pupils also need to practise any set spellings and regularly practise their times tables.

In Year 3, the children learn the recorder, and practice at home is encouraged to ensure that progress is made. Likewise, children having individual music lessons at school are expected to regularly practise at home.

## Expectations and Responsibilities

### Staff are expected to:

- Set homework tasks which are a relevant and coherent part of the work in hand.
- Ensure that individual needs are taken into account and tasks are appropriately differentiated.
- Vary the type of tasks and ensure that the work set is reasonable in terms of the time allocation.
- Provide sufficient information so that pupils and parents/carers know what is required. Note: it is important that the homework set is recorded on Frog.
- Allow sufficient time in class for homework to be explained and recorded in diaries.
- Mark homework and give feedback as appropriate.
- Celebrate effort and achievement in homework tasks.
- Liaise with the Academic Team before making any changes to the homework timetable or when setting a project/homework activity that lasts for longer than three homework sessions.
- Check and sign homework diaries every day (Upper School Class Teachers/Assistants).

### Pupils are expected to:

- Listen carefully to instructions about homework and complete their homework diary accordingly.
- Complete their homework to the best of their ability.
- Take pride in the work they complete.
- Hand in their homework on time.
- Hand in their homework diaries every day.

### All parents/carers are expected to:

- Take an active interest in their child's learning and provide encouragement and support.
- Listen to their child read (ideally every day), read to their child and discuss texts.
- Sign and complete the reading record regularly, as agreed with Class Teacher.
- Support their child in learning any set spellings.
- Support their children in learning their times tables (Year 2 upwards).

### Year 3 -6 parents/carers are expected to:

- Reinforce the message that homework is important and is the pupil's responsibility.
- Provide a suitable working environment and regular routine.
- Ensure the pupil has all the necessary equipment.
- Discuss homework set and assist in planning and organising time, ensuring the time allocated is adhered to.
- Encourage and promote independent work habits.
- Provide assistance during a task, as appropriate, but ensure the work is the child's own.
- Feedback to teachers as appropriate e.g. about the time taken, any difficulties experienced, level of adult intervention, etc.
- Check and sign the homework diary on a daily basis.

If parents have any questions or concerns about homework they should contact the Class Teacher in the first instance. If questions or concerns are of a more general nature, they should contact the Deputy Head, Academic.

## Holiday Homework

Holiday homework is not routinely set; however, parents/carers are asked to encourage their children to keep up their reading and times tables over the holidays. For children in older year groups, occasionally revision packs will be set in preparation for exams.

In the run up to the 11+ assessments, pupils are given revision and extra work, which they can complete during the holidays under the supervision of their parents/carers.

## 16.Presentation of Work

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At Finton House, the neat presentation of children's written work is highly valued and this helps to establish high expectations and pride in everything we do. Naturally, when appropriate, special arrangements may be made for individual children.

### General Guidelines for Written Work

#### Exercise books

The child's first name, subject, class (and group if appropriate) should be recorded on the front cover of every exercise book. This may be handwritten or a typed sticky label.

Guidelines for handwritten information:

- The child's name consists of the first name and, if necessary, the initial of their surname.
- In Reception to Year 4 this is written by a member of staff in blue or black ink using handwriting that is consistent with the school's handwriting policy for that age group.
- In Years 5 & 6 the pupils may record the information themselves, using fountain pen and their best handwriting.

#### Dates and Titles

All written work, whether completed on paper or in an exercise book, should be clearly dated and where appropriate, include a clear title (**which may be the learning objective**). The child's name must be written on all loose worksheets.

#### Lower School

- All work is dated by the teacher at the top of the sheet or page. The short date is usually used e.g. 1.9.25 or 1/9/25.
- When appropriate, a teacher will write or print a title.
- Specially prepared worksheets may include a typed date and title.
- The child's name must be written on all loose sheets, either by the teacher or child.
- During the course of Year 1, children start to learn how to record the date themselves.
  - On loose worksheets, the short date written e.g. 1.9.25 or 1/9/25.
  - In maths exercise books the short date is written next to the margin on the top horizontal line of the page. e.g. 1.0.25 or 1/9/25.
  - In all other exercise books, the long date is written next to the margin on the left hand side of the top line e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> September.

#### Middle School

- Loose worksheets e.g. spelling, maths

- The short date, if not already typed at the top of the sheet, is written by the child e.g. 1.9.25 or 1/9/25
- Worksheets should usually include a typed title.
- In maths exercise books the child writes the short date next to the margin on the top horizontal line of the page. e.g. 1.9.21 or 1/9/25.
- In all other exercise books, the child writes the long date next to the margin on the left hand side of the top line e.g. Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September.
- During the course of Year 2, the children are taught how to:
  - underline the date using a ruler.
  - write and underline the title. Titles are usually centralised, underlined and written two lines beneath the date. A blank line is left below the title before beginning work. (i.e. date, miss a line, title, miss a line, start work).

## Upper School

- Maths exercise books
  - The short date is written and underlined with a ruler e.g. 1.9.25 or 1/9/25.
  - The date is positioned next to the margin on the top horizontal line of the page.
  - The title is centralised, underlined and written one or two horizontal lines below the date (depending upon the size of the squares).
- Other exercise books
  - The long date is written and underlined with a ruler e.g. Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September.
  - The date is positioned on the top line, next to the margin.
  - The title is centralised, underlined and written two lines below the date. A blank line is left below the title before beginning work. (i.e. date, miss a line, title, miss a line, start work).
- Mental Arithmetic and Reasoning Books
  - The short date is written at the top of each page e.g. 1.9.25 or 1/9/25
- Loose worksheets and papers e.g. maths, reasoning, 11+
  - The child must write their name and the short date neatly at the top of the sheet or in the specified place.

## Margins

- For written work completed in an exercise book, margins (where not already printed) should be drawn. They should be approximately 2-3 cm wide (ruler width) in lined books and between 1 and 3 full squares wide (depending upon the size of the squares) in maths books.
- Margins are always drawn in pencil.
- Lettering and numbering for questions/answers should be written in the margin and must be consistent with the format used on the worksheet/question sheet.

## Paragraphs

The correct use of paragraphs is introduced in Year 2, although many younger children develop a basic understanding through their reading books and text work in English lessons. Children are taught to show a new paragraph by indenting the first line of the paragraph.

Children are taught there should be a new paragraph for a change of:

- topic or viewpoint
- time
- place

- speaker

## Setting out of maths work e.g. formal sums

Please refer to the Calculations Policy for details. (Do we want to include this? Is it necessary?)

## Handwriting

The presentation of handwriting follows the school Handwriting Guidelines detailed in the English Policy.

## Pencils and pens

- In Reception to Year 3 all work is written in pencil, with the exception of some display work and work completed on whiteboards.
- In Year 4, children work towards being awarded their pen licence. Once this has been awarded, a child may use a fountain pen for all subjects except maths and reasoning.
- In Years 5 & 6 pencil is used for all maths and reasoning work and fountain pens are used for all other subjects.
- Pencils are used for diagrams and for labelling lines and maps, for example in science, geography, etc.
- Rubbers and/or ink eradicators may be used, but their use should always be appropriate e.g. crossing out may be encouraged in some situations. The independent use of rubbers is not encouraged in Reception.
- Care should be taken to ensure that children do not use colouring pens that show through on the other side of the paper. The children do not use felt tips in exercise books.

## New work

Usually, a new piece of work is started on a new page. However, when this is not the case, a line should be drawn in pencil, beneath the old work and the new date should be written. Where appropriate, this may be done by the teacher.

## Sticking work in

Where a piece of work needs to be stuck into an exercise book, it should be trimmed by the teacher (using a guillotine) to ensure that it fits neatly on the page and does not overhang. Where it is not possible to trim the sheet, it should be neatly folded and stuck in.

When children are cutting and sticking in work themselves, they must be encouraged to ensure that every effort is made to cut neatly using scissors, to stick work in straight and to use the appropriate amount of glue. When appropriate, children in Year 4 and above may use the guillotine under adult supervision.

## Folders

Where folders are used to store worksheets, a hole punch should be used to create holes in the correct place. Work is generally filed with the most recent item on top. All worksheets must be dated.

## 17. Finton Learning Skills

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At Finton House, our ethos of *Open Hearts and Guiding Hands* underpins everything we do. To prepare pupils for an ever-changing world, we are proud to be part of the Learning Skills Trust (LST) and to embed the Pre-Senior Baccalaureate (PSB) framework into our curriculum. We refer to this framework as the Learning Skills when working with the children and it offers us both structure and the flexibility to adapt it so that it reflects the values and ethos of Finton House.

The eight core Learning Skills are: collaborating, communicating, thinking and learning, reviewing and improving, leadership, independence, curiosity, and imagination. These skills are not taught in

isolation but are woven into lessons, projects, co-curricular activities, and day-to-day school life. Pupils are encouraged to see that education is not only about *what* they learn, but *how* they learn, and to reflect regularly on their progress.

To support this, we have developed age-appropriate Learning Skills grids for the Lower, Middle, and Upper School (see Appendix 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3). These grids provide teachers and pupils with clear, consistent language that explains what each skill looks like in action and how it can be developed further. This shared vocabulary helps children recognise their strengths, identify next steps, and talk confidently about their learning.

Embedding the Learning Skills enhances academic success and personal growth. For example, pupils learn to collaborate in group projects, show resilience when tackling challenges, and use curiosity to drive independent enquiry. These experiences help them grow into confident, adaptable learners who can thrive in senior school and beyond. By placing these skills at the heart of our curriculum, we aim to nurture well-rounded young people who embrace challenge, support one another, and develop a lifelong love of learning.

## Appendix 1.1

### LS Grid

	Lower School Learning Skills
	I think carefully and try to remember what I have learned.
	I always try to make my work better and stronger.
	I speak up, listen well and share my ideas.
	I think of new and creative ideas.
	I can work on my own.
	I can work with others.
	I can lead the way.
	I love to find out more.

## Appendix 1.2

### MS Grid

	<p>I can ask 'I wonder' questions. I seek challenges to help me think more deeply about what I have learned.</p>	<p>I ask questions so I can make my work better. I explore new ideas, even if they're risky.</p>	<p>I ask clear questions that help me explore new ideas. I listen carefully to others and ask questions to understand their different viewpoints.</p>	<p>I can come up with different solutions to problems, even when the usual ones don't work. I can think of creative ways to look at a problem and find unique answers.</p>
	<p>I set an example to others in my learning. I take the lead when completing a task.</p>	<p>I work out ways to make my group more successful. I build on others' strengths and to solve problems.</p>	<p>I hand out tasks according to people's talents. I inspire others through my actions and words.</p>	<p>I help others think outside the box and share their ideas. I stay positive and encourage others to share their ideas, even when things are hard.</p>
	<p>I work in a group to solve problems. I work in a group even if I don't always agree with what the others have decided.</p>	<p>I improve my ideas by discussing them in a group. I take the views of all group members into account.</p>	<p>I listen and speak respectfully in group discussions. I welcome others into group discussions.</p>	<p>I listen to the ideas of others and combine them with mine to create something better. I use creative ways to help my group come up with new ideas and reach our goal.</p>
	<p>I am motivated to finish tasks and solve problems by myself. I persevere even when the going gets tough.</p>	<p>I respond well to advice on how I can improve. I can see how well I have done by comparing my work to mark schemes and model answers.</p>	<p>I express myself clearly when speaking. I express myself clearly when handwriting or typing on a computer.</p>	<p>I come up with new ideas and ways to solve problems on my own. I work on my ideas by myself, even if they're different from others.</p>
				

## Appendix 1.3

### US Grid

				
<p>I try to find out more about my learning to help me think more deeply and grow.</p> <p>I can ask 'I wonder' questions.</p> <p>I challenge assumptions.</p>	<p>I set an example to others through my approach to thinking and learning.</p> <p>I take the initiative by identifying key issues, anticipating problems and devising a plan.</p> <p>I suggest ways of thinking and approaching a challenge when others feel stuck.</p>	<p>I discuss my views with my peers and think of ways to solve problems alongside my group.</p> <p>I work productively in a group and remain committed even if I don't agree with what others have decided.</p> <p>By working with others, I recognise a problem as a challenge and work hard to find a solution.</p>	<p>I think of connections between different areas of my learning.</p> <p>I think of things that I want to learn for myself and find out about things independently.</p> <p>I am a self-motivated learner and strive for excellence even when the going gets tough.</p>	
<p>I can try new ways of doing things to see if they work better.</p> <p>I take risks with ideas, even if they haven't been tried before.</p> <p>I am self-critical, asking questions to explore how I can improve and adopt my work.</p>	<p>I help the group reflect on mistakes and learn from them.</p> <p>I can review my own and other people's strengths and weaknesses and lead the group towards a solution, making necessary changes.</p> <p>I identify ways in which my team can work more productively.</p>	<p>Through discussion with my peers, I refine my ideas and in doing so come to an agreement.</p> <p>I work with others to find the best way of working to suit the whole team.</p> <p>After discussion, I review progress and plan ways to improve.</p>	<p>I appreciate and identify ways in which I can improve as a learner.</p> <p>I respond positively to constructive criticism and advice.</p> <p>I set my own clear objectives with success criteria and timescales.</p> <p>I cope well when the situation changes and I ask for help when I need it.</p>	
<p>I listen carefully to others' ideas and respond with curiosity to understand their perspective.</p> <p>I stay open-minded and curious when communicating with people who think differently from me.</p> <p>I pose relevant and open-ended questions to share my curiosity.</p>	<p>I can build a team that values different ideas and points of views, helping everyone feel like their input matters.</p> <p>I persuade and inspire others through my actions and words.</p> <p>I organise and delegate effectively, responsibly and with empathy.</p>	<p>I build on the contributions of others in discussion and help move the task forward.</p> <p>I work with my peers to find common ground and bring others into the conversation.</p> <p>I take part in group discussions, listening respectfully and responding sensitively.</p>	<p>I choose the most appropriate medium to present my work to suit a particular audience or need.</p> <p>I express myself clearly and effectively when using ICT.</p> <p>I express myself clearly and effectively when speaking.</p> <p>I express myself clearly and effectively when writing.</p>	
<p>I look at a problem from multiple angles and come up with unique solutions.</p> <p>My ideas are innovative and original.</p> <p>I think of a range of resolutions to solve problems, even when usual methods don't work.</p>	<p>I set a positive example by staying enthusiastic and open-minded, even when challenges arise.</p> <p>I come up with new ideas and inspire others to think creatively about solutions.</p> <p>I encourage others to think outside the box and contribute their own creative ideas.</p>	<p>I use creative approaches to to achieve a shared goal.</p> <p>I listen to other people's ideas and find ways to combine them with my own to create something better.</p> <p>I work in a group to create new ideas.</p>	<p>I work on my creative ideas independently, even when they are different from what others might do.</p> <p>I take initiative in solving problems and trying new approaches.</p> <p>I think of new ways to complete tasks without needing help or guidance.</p>	