

# Guidance for Parents

## **Welcome!**

Hello! We are looking forward to the time when we can welcome you and your child to Finstall First School. We are a happy, friendly, and hardworking school providing an environment in which your child can learn and develop their full potential

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum at Finstall First School aims to develop the unique child, providing care and support in a safe environment in order to give them the best possible start in their school life.

We have written this guidance to help you prepare your child for the great adventure of starting school.

When your child starts in Reception, they will be part of the Foundation Stage, moving on to Key Stage One of the National Curriculum in Year One.

Within the new Foundation Stage Curriculum, there are seven areas of learning:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design.

The following pages will hopefully give you some practical advice about how you can prepare your child in these areas to give them the best possible start at school.

## Getting your child ready for School

We want to encourage the children to be as independent as possible, especially in being able to cope with the daily routines of school life. As parents, you can help tremendously in this process by encouraging your child, over the next weeks and months, to practise some of the many skills s/he will need when starting school.

### Practise:

- Managing zips and buttons
- Putting on socks and shoes
- Putting on and taking off a coat
- Putting on and taking off their uniform and P.E. kits
- Hanging up a coat on a peg
- Opening snack boxes / water bottles
- To know where the name label is in their clothes.

### Encourage:

- Using a knife, fork and spoon
- Washing and drying hands
- Using a handkerchief
- Going to the toilet unaided and pulling the flush!
- Sharing toys with friends, brothers and sisters
- Tidying up after using toys, books, etc.

## Some ways of helping your child in each area of learning.

### **Communication, Language and Literacy**

Learn and sing nursery rhymes, songs and poems.

Listen, read and enjoy stories every day together and show them how to handle and look after books correctly.

Visit the library together, read shop signs, road names, labels, etc.

Talk to your child as often as possible and encourage them to take part in conversations, listen to and answer questions and use talk to organise their thoughts.

Play memory games and encourage them to take verbal messages to others.

Extend their vocabulary by exploring new words and discussing their meanings.

Help your child to learn the letter sounds rather than their names. E.g. cat starts with the sound 'c', pig starts with the sound 'p'.

Your child may want to write their name. Encourage your child to write the first letter in capitals and the rest in lower case.

### **Physical Development**

Encourage your child to play safely outside: running, jumping, climbing, hopping, skipping, throwing and catching.

Enjoy playing games together such as 'Simon Says', 'What's the time Mr Wolf'.

Give your child experience of building with bricks, doing jigsaws, cutting and sticking, colouring and mark making to develop fine motor skills.

Teach them to dress and undress independently and manage their own personal hygiene.

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Encourage independence by giving your child regular contact with other children, such as at playgroup or nursery.

Plan short periods of separation from you such as playing with a friend or staying with a relative.

Provide stimulating imaginative play experiences. E.g. Dressing up, making dens, painting, etc.

Help them to understand right and wrong and appropriate ways of playing. E.g. Sharing, taking turns, tidying up, looking after toys and books, etc.

## **Mathematics**

Help your child to count (actual physical counting e.g. fingers, toys or objects). Show them how to count by saying one number name for each object and touching each object as they count.

Show them that the last number they reach when counting quantities tells them how many are in the set.

Teach them to recognise numbers to 10 then 20.

Help them to recognise small quantities without counting (such as spots on a dice)

Compare small quantities using words such as 'more', 'the same' and 'fewer'.

Look for opportunities to use words such as up, down, between, wide, narrow, light, heavy, fast, slow, long, short, etc.

Help your child to recognise shapes and colours.

Help your child to sing number rhymes.

## **Understanding the World**

Share everyday experiences with your child such as cooking, cleaning the car, gardening and washing up.

Talk to your child about cultural differences they may come across and past events in their life.

Look at and talk about photographs of family and friends.

Answer their questions and build up their general knowledge about the world around them to encourage their curiosity.

## **Expressive Arts and Design**

Make available a variety of mark making tools such as pencils, crayons, felt-tips, brushes and paper.

Sing to and with your child and have CDs that they can listen to regularly.

Encourage children to represent their thoughts and feelings through art, music, dance and role play.

# Reception FAQ

## The school day

### **When does my child start school?**

Your child will be in either Rabbits or Hedgehogs class. Each class has been split into two groups; Group 1 and Group 2. The induction process will take place over four days where your child will be attending school on a part-time basis. This induction allows us to get to know your child well, help them to settle quickly and get used to the school rules and routines as well as being a very important time for us, as teachers, to assess what your child already knows and can do.

#### Group 1

#### Group 2

Day	Session	Day	Session
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> & Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> September	AM 8.50-11.50am	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> & Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> September	PM 12.45 – 3.15pm
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> & Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> September	PM 12.45 – 3.15pm	Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> & Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> September	AM 8.50-11.50am
Week beginning 12 <sup>th</sup> September	Full time 8.50am – 3.15pm	Week beginning 12 <sup>th</sup> September	Full time 8.50am – 3.15pm

### **Morning Sessions**

Drop off between 8.50am – 9.00am at classroom door

Collect 11.50am from classroom door

### **Afternoon Sessions**

Drop off at 12.45pm at classroom door

Collect at 3.15pm from classroom door

**When does the school day officially start?**

The school doors open at **8.50am** when the Reception Teaching Assistants will be at the door to begin letting children into school. The bell will ring again at **9.00am** for the start of the school day and the outside doors will be closed and the register will be taken. We encourage children to enter school independently.

**Where should my child's older sibling enter and exit school?**

If you have older children in school, they should enter the school through their own year group doors.

**Where can I find information on breakfast club?**

If you have any questions regarding starting breakfast club, please contact the school office. We do ask that you allow your child to settle into school at least one full week before introducing Breakfast club to their routine.

Further information about 'Breakfast club' is available on our website at [www.finstallfirst.co.uk](http://www.finstallfirst.co.uk). Click the 'Information' tab and then 'Breakfast club' is an option to choose.

**What should my child bring into school each day?**

Children must bring in their book bag every day and this should be placed in their drawer. On Friday, they should place their reading folder in the box outside the classroom so that their reading book can be changed. Inside their book bags, please include a piece of fruit for morning snack, their reading folder (reading book and reading record) and communication book. Please place communication books in the trays outside the classroom if there are comments that require attention.

Children should also bring in a water bottle each day and they will be shown where to keep it in the classroom. Please also send a coat/jumper/cardigan. They can be kept on their peg when they are not needed.

## **Food & Drink**

### **Do I need to bring in anything for snack time?**

Yes. Please can you send a healthy morning snack, that is a recognisable piece of fruit, in your child's book bag. Please can you ensure that you show your child how to open their snacks and, if possible, place them in a disposable bag that they can throw away in the bin in the snack area. Snack for the afternoon is provided by school but you may send your child with two snacks if you wish to.

### **Does my child need a drink for the classroom?**

Yes please! Your child will need to bring in a bottle filled with water each day. Please ensure the water bottle has a lid to prevent spillage. The children will be shown where their bottles will be kept during the day and they will have access to this all day. Please can you ensure that the bottle is named and your child knows where the name is.

### **Do I need to pay for milk?**

Milk is free until your child reaches the age of 5. When your child turns 5, you will receive a letter from the office, asking if you would like your child to continue receiving milk, and how much this will cost.

### **Where can I find the school menu and how do I pay/order?**

You can find the latest school menu on our website at [www.finstallfirst.co.uk](http://www.finstallfirst.co.uk)

Click the 'Information' tab and then 'Class catering (school dinners)' is an option to choose. You will be given an order form but additional copies are available on the website. School meals are free for all Reception, Year One & Year Two children. Please ensure that you return the order forms provided to the office as soon as possible. From September, the forms can be returned by placing them in the trays outside the Reception classroom when you drop off your child. If you prefer, your child can have a packed lunch from home.

## **PE kit**

**When is PE and what does my child need?**

### **Indoor P.E.**

Rabbits: Monday

Hedgehogs: Tuesday

Indoor P.E. kit.

Please can children come to school wearing their indoor P.E kit on the day of indoor P.E

- White t-shirt
- Green shorts
- Trainers

### **Outdoor Games**

Rabbits and Hedgehogs: Thursday

Please can children come to school wearing their outdoor games kit on Thursday.

- White t-shirt
- Navy sweat shirt
- Navy jogging bottoms
- Trainers



## **Reading**

### **When will my child have a reading book?**

We follow the Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programme, “Essential Letters and Sounds” and phonics will be taught on a daily basis.

Every Friday your child will be sent home with two books, each book will be labelled with a sticker.

**‘I read’** – a book your child should be able to read independently, practicing new sounds learned that week.

**‘Read with me’** – a book to share. Your child may be able to read some of the words but may not have come across all of the sounds and may need your help.

Please encourage your child to read the **‘I read’** book four times within the week.

A key part of learning to read is that children re-read words and sentences that they can decode (sound out) until they are fluent (read with ease and precision). By reading the school reading school book several times, children have the greatest opportunity to achieve this fluency.

### **How often should I listen to my child read?**

Please encourage your child to read the **‘I read’** book four times within the week.

A key part of learning to read is that children re-read words and sentences that they can decode (sound out) until they are fluent (read with ease and precision). By reading the school reading book several times, children have the greatest opportunity to achieve this fluency.

### **How can my child read the same book four times?**

The following steps are a suggestion of how you could make the three/four reads slightly different and more interesting to your child:

#### **First read**

Focus on understanding and enjoying the book. Talk about what is happening in the pictures. Predict what might happen in the story before they read the next part. What might happen in the end?

#### **Second read**

Encourage fluent sounding out and blending.

Look in more detail at the vocabulary. Make sure your child understands the meanings of the words and spend time discussing these with your child.

#### **Third read**

Ask your child to retell the key events in the story in their own words and in the correct order. Ask them questions about what has happened and why.

#### **Fourth read**

Read the book with increasing fluency and try to add expression when you read.

#### **My child is a confident reader and can read the book fluently. What else can I do?**

Encourage them to read it with expression. Can they try and read the story like a storyteller? Look at the punctuation ( ? , ! . Speech bubbles) - explain what they are and why they are used.

#### **Other questions to ask:**

Can they think of a different ending to the story?

Can you name the main characters in the story?

Are there any words that rhyme?

Can you find any words with a certain digraph? (e.g. ai, oi, or)

#### **What days are reading books changed?**

##### **FRIDAY.**

On Friday, please can your child put their reading folder in the box available outside the classroom when they enter school in the morning. Please record every time that you hear your child read in the reading record book.

#### **What should I write in the reading record book?**

Please write a short comment about how your child did with the reading book and sign.

#### **Who changes the reading books?**

The Teaching Assistants change our reading books under the guidance of the class teachers and in accordance with the Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programme, “Essential Letters and Sounds” to always ensure your child is reading a book that they are able to fully decode independently.

#### **Who will listen to my child read?**

Each week, a member of the Reception team will hear your child read individually, Children’s early reading skills are supported through our twice daily phonics sessions.

## Writing

### **When do you start handwriting?**

The teaching of handwriting is taught within each phonics lesson. Each time a new letter sound is introduced, we also introduce how to write it using a pattern. We have included this within your child's pack.

At the start of the Autumn Term, we also follow an early writing programme called 'Write Dance'. This allows children to practise the patterns of writing in a fun way. The children also take part in 'Dough disco' sessions to support the development of the muscles in their hands, which they need to be able to hold a pencil effectively.

## Forest School

### **When will Forest School start?**

Sessions will normally begin after October half term. You will receive further advice and information nearer the time.

Hedgehogs class – Tuesday Afternoon

Rabbits class- Friday Morning

On **Hedgehogs** Forest school day, children should come to school dressed in their outdoor clothes (e.g. tracksuit bottoms, long sleeved top) not their school uniform.

Children to bring spare clothes, waterproofs, wellies, hats, etc. in a bag separate bag and will be asked to change into it at the appropriate time.

On **Rabbits** Forest School day, children should come to school dressed in their outdoor clothes, waterproofs and wellies, ready to go straight out to forest school (e.g. tracksuit bottoms, long sleeved top - not their school uniform).

Children to bring a bag with spare clothes, spare shoes, spare coat and a separate bag (for dirty wellies and clothes).

### **What should my child wear?**

#### **Winter**

- Warm clothing as we go out in all weathers!
- Thermal socks
- Wellies
- Trousers (tucked inside wellies)

- Jumper
- Hat
- Scarf/gloves (Thinsulate mittens )
- Waterproofs (ideally separate trousers and jacket)

### **Summer**

Even if it is warm, children need to wear clothing that covers their legs and arms to protect against nettles and branches.

## **What is my child learning at school?**

### **See Saw**

See Saw is an online learning platform that we use to send photographs of the children and also ask for you to send in photographs to support our topics throughout the year.

### **Curriculum maps**

What we are learning each half term will be available on the class page of the website.

## **Questions and Concerns**

### **I have a question that's not been answered!**

At Finstall First School, we feel it is so important that we work in partnership with parents. If you have a question, query or a worry, then please let us know! The best way to do this is to write a brief note or to ask for an appointment or telephone call, using the communication book. This should then be placed in the tray outside the classroom. If it's a quick word, the class teachers will usually be available at the end of the day. If you need longer, then please ask to meet with the class teacher who will be happy to meet you at a mutually convenient time. There is also a wealth of information available on our website at [www.finstallfirst.co.uk](http://www.finstallfirst.co.uk)