

# Inspection of Finlay Community School

Finlay Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire GL4 6TR

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Inspection dates: 9 and 10 May 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Finlay Community School is warm, welcoming and inclusive. The vision for all pupils to aspire, to belong and to achieve underpins the ethos of the school. Staff know pupils well. As a result, pupils feel a valued part of the school community. Pupils are keen to learn and to do well.

Relationships in the school are positive and caring. This starts in the early years. Children learn to play well with one another, taking turns and showing consideration of others. Pupils learn the importance of respect. For example, pupils learn to respect others' opinions that may differ from their own. Pupils are advocates for equality. They understand that everyone is different and the importance of treating everyone fairly.

There are high expectations for behaviour. Pupils are well behaved and polite. They listen well to adults and to their peers. The school is calm and orderly. Disruptions to learning are minimal. Pupils know that there are adults who will help them if they have a worry. As a result, pupils feel safe.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves healthy including their physical and mental health. They recognise the importance of brushing their teeth, of sleep and a healthy diet. Pupils understand how to look after their emotional well-being and mental health. They learn to be grateful, to celebrate positives and to express their feelings.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The school has developed an ambitious curriculum. It sets out the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn from Reception to Year 6. It is well sequenced and progressive. Teaching activities give pupils opportunities to revisit and recall their previous learning. This helps them to know more and remember more.

The school has taken effective action to address the previous weaknesses that are evident in the most recent key stage 1 outcomes. Pupils have received the support they need to catch up and to regain lost ground from key stage 1. Pupils' knowledge and understanding develops well during key stage 2. As a result, pupils are well prepared for secondary school when they reach the end of Year 6.

A distinct focus on teaching strategies to support pupils' learning has led to a consistent approach to teaching and learning in most classes. The school has prioritised staff training. Staff have the subject knowledge they need to deliver the curriculum well. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' vocabulary. Pupils broaden their vocabulary through reading a wide range of high-quality books. The curriculum identifies the subject specific vocabulary for pupils to learn. Teachers model this well. As a result, pupils, including the youngest children in early years, learn to use subject specific vocabulary. For example, pupils in Reception Year, use words such as chrysalis to describe their learning about caterpillars and butterflies.

The school has worked hard to ensure an inclusive culture permeates through the school with a shared belief that all pupils can achieve. The school identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) accurately. Some pupils with SEND have gaps in their learning. This is because at times, some activities and the support that pupils receive, do not precisely match their needs.

The school has prioritised developments in reading. Staff are keen for pupils to learn to read well and to foster a love of reading. There is a well-structured programme in place for phonics. This starts as soon as children begin in Reception. Most pupils read books that match the sounds that they know. This helps them to read fluently and confidently. There is a consistent approach to teaching phonics. This helps pupils to become familiar with the strategies they need to apply when reading new and tricky words.

The school is working hard to improve attendance. It sets out clear expectations. Regular monitoring and support for families is starting to make a difference. Nonetheless, the number of pupils who are persistently absent remains too high. These pupils miss too much school which leads to gaps in their knowledge and understanding.

The school has ensured that pupils' learning extends beyond the academic. As a result, pupils' wider development is well supported. Pupils learn about discrimination and have an age-appropriate understanding of protected characteristics. They learn about different cultures and religions. This helps pupils to prepare for life in modern Britain.

Staff feel well supported by leaders. They appreciate leaders' consideration of their well-being and workload. Staff value the training and support they receive. Most parents speak highly of the school. They appreciate the care that staff provide.

The federation board knows the school well. They recognise its strengths and priorities for development. They understand and fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The needs of a small number of pupils, including some pupils with SEND, are not met as well as they could be. At times, the learning activities do not precisely match pupils' knowledge, which means that they are unable to build on what they

already know. The school should sharpen how teaching matches learning to pupils' needs, to ensure that pupils build on what they already know.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135727
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10322239
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	387
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Daniel Gillingham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Hannah Williams (Co-Headteacher) Heather Willis (Co-Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.finlayschool.co.uk">www.finlayschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date(s) of previous inspection</b>	21 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school joined the CHF Community Federation in May 2020.
- There has been a change of leadership since the last inspection, including new co-headteachers.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- There is a breakfast-club run by the school for pupils who attend the school.

## Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders, curriculum leaders and groups of staff.
- Inspectors held meetings with governors, including the chair of governors, and met with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussion about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the view of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's Parent View online survey. An inspector also spoke with parents at the start and end of the school day. Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted online staff survey.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, the inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views of the school.

### **Inspection team**

Nicky McMahon, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Angela Folland	His Majesty's Inspector
Wendy Hanrahan	Ofsted Inspector

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