

Finborough School Culture Charter

Perpetuating a Powerfully Positive Culture at Finborough that Supports the Best Preparation for life for Every Child

This foundational document is a result of extensive and ongoing collaborative work between children and adults at Finborough school. A part of our extensive and inclusive continuous cultural review and development process.

Introduction

At Finborough we have worked together as a school family to create a deeply positive culture that drives the development of our students' strong positive characters. Recognising and celebrating individuality and promoting relentless synergy across our whole school family. All of our approaches are systematically joined up, persistently aligned with our culture and the development of character.

Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural

Our approach to developing character is centred on the pillars of our students social, moral, spiritual and cultural experiences across all aspects of school life.

The Finborough Way (see appendix 1)

The 'Finborough Way' is our cultural code for all children and adults at our school. It is a result of extensive collaborative development between children and adults at the school to capture what it is to be part of our positive and diverse school family. With a foundation of respect the 'Finborough Way' sets out how we exist together with relationships and actions that align us all with our powerful positive culture founded on us all being perpetually liberated to become the best versions of ourselves in a safe and universally inclusive environment.

Equality and Diversity

All staff, students and parents are members of our school family and must be universally valued for who they are. Gender, sexuality, background / heritage, physical and mental characteristics are what make us unique and interesting and able to contribute to school life and each other's learning in unique and powerful ways.

Issues of Significant Concern

There are many issues that cause significant concern that can invade our children's lives. At Finborough we are age appropriately open about these and recognise that even within our inclusive and positive culture these will exist and we must be perpetually vigilant to ensure everyone in our school family is free to #speakout and be safe.

Abuse or prejudice of any kind, be it racism, sexism, sexual harassment and violence, misogyny or misandry are counter to our culture. We will however never be complacent, ensuring our mission is to relentlessly sustain our universal approachability, vigilance, and commitment to identifying and dealing with any form of such deeply negative and damaging behaviour.

Most children will experience either directly or indirectly abuse or prejudice as their life unfurls, it is vital they are equipped with the values and strategies to deal with such behaviour towards them, including being empowered by the importance and power of their own consent.

#speakeasy

Excellent relationships across our school family are driven by our inclusive and positive culture. Staff have outstanding professional relationships with students supporting generally unfettered opportunities for students to share any concerns they may have. Our pastoral care approach empowers class / lead teachers to support the children and young adults in their care. #speakeasy is the banner under which we relentlessly promote the chance to speak, share and be supported. This can be with an adult, peer, student mentor or trained #speakeasy facilitator. #speakeasy also has an electronic reporting option, to enable students to share concerns and reach out for help anytime, anywhere.

For students experiencing an issue that is or could affect wellbeing there are two levels of support, the first is general and would usually involve their form tutor, the second tier if required is commissioned via our school nurse and will involve three sessions with a trained #speakeasy facilitator.

At all levels parents will be fully involved in the support process and particularly if further 'external' professional support is needed.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Any form of peer-on-peer abuse is counter to our school culture and counter to everything we expect through the 'Finborough Way'. This does not mean however that it does and will not happen. Our vigilance and unrelenting emphasis on the 'Finborough Way' are the proactive measures in place, however we are always ready to respond to cases of abusive behaviour of any kind

iTrust - Digital Safety and Civility

Our ground-breaking iTrust approach was inspired by a national expert who has worked with the school and was created in collaboration between teachers, students and parents to protect our students and support the development of good digital character (see iTrust for further details).

Character Combos

Our relentless focus on character development is centred on the following 'Character Combos' which are designed to co-ordinate our mission across all stages of the school.

- Honesty and Respect
- Humility and Forgiveness
- Empathy and Kindness
- Courage and Resilience
- Service and Loyalty
- Positivity and Aspiration
- Creativity and Imagination

Every fortnight we focus on one of the combos, inspiring students to have character awareness, ownership and commitment to self-development.

Seven Habits

Covey's Seven Habits are a foundation tool to support our character centred culture, supporting our students and staff to be independent and interdependent growing effectiveness every day as we learn together.

The Private Victory (Our journey to Independence – Bronze to Gold)

- Habit 1 'Be Proactive'
- Habit 2 "Begin with the End in Mind"
- Habit 3 "Put First Things First"

The Public Victory (Our Journey to interdependence – Gold to Platinum)

- Habit 4 'Think Win Win'
- Habit 5 'Seek First to Understand then to be Understood'
- Habit 6 'Synergise'
- Habit 7 'Sharpen the Saw'

Character Centred Positive Behaviour Approach

At Finborough we have a fully character centred approach to positively ensuring excellent behaviour (see policy / procedure). We do not use traditional punitive approaches, rather character centred individualised restorative approaches with bespoke interventions and coaching. This innovative deeply character centred approach is coupled with high expectations that provide what we believe is the best possible preparation for the lives that will unfurl for every child at the school.

Learnability

'Learnability' is a deeply established approach at the school that focuses on the development of learning character, manifested through their learning behaviours. It is aligned with the Seven Habits and drives best learning to ensure great subject specific skill acquisition alongside the achievement of excellent progress in knowledge and

understanding. As part of our school culture 'Learnability' is an integral part of the 'Finborough Way'. We also use 'Class Learnability' to evaluate the effectiveness of learning and therefore teaching in classes, further supporting the constant development of both culture and character.

Sportability

'Sportability' like 'Learnability' is about the development of character, achieved through the experiences provided by the multitude of sporting opportunities available to students at the school. Fully aligned with our culture it harnesses the power of sport to shape a strong positive character.

'Better Never Stops'

Our mantra for continuous betterment, inculcating a resilient and perpetual 'Growth Mindset' in the development of every child and adults character at Finborough.

I will.....

All staff and students set themselves 'I will' statements which are regularly reviewed. These are displayed as a declaration of positive intent and unifies us all in our unrelenting commitment to being our best and keep getting better.

Finborough Flyer

The Finborough Flyer is a weekly whole school family (Students, Staff and Parents) publication that embodies our culture through its focus on Character, 'Learnability' and being the best version of ourselves. It unites us all and challenges us to be the best versions of ourselves and to keep striving to be better ('better never stops'). It asserts our culture, promotes community and supports the systemised, perpetual and proactive development of character (see Appendix 3 for an example).

Assemblies

Assemblies for specific age groups happen throughout the week. Every Friday the Headteacher holds keynote assemblies for all age groups (Pre-Prep, Prep and Senior) that are fully aligned with the next weeks 'Finborough Flyer' ensuring a fully integrated and joined up approach to character development across the school.

The 'Finborough Flyer' and Assemblies reflect our culture and have deeply embedded spiritual, moral, social and cultural themes.

Student Voice / Leadership

All of our students are leaders and have a wealth of opportunities to have a voice. Leadership / character development is intricately interwoven through everything we do, supporting every individual to be the best versions of themselves and to keep getting better. We have a structured set of leadership opportunities in each year group, with meetings every week to support the development of our school wide approaches. Students are also involved in broad range of focused strategy meetings with staff at the school to support our ongoing development as a school holding fast to our mantra 'better never stops'

Student leadership and voice is deeply embedded in our culture and approach enabling a deep and full involvement on how 'our' school operates and develops.

House System

Our House System (Athelstan, Boudicca, Edmund and Raedwald) is student led and compliments all aspects of our culture providing a further richness for the development of our students character. It provides a beautiful opportunity for our students to synergise across age boundaries, amplifying further our positive family culture.

Boarding

Our thriving boarding house embodies our school culture in all regards, echoing every element of our approach in a richly diverse and positive community. It truly is a premium to be part of our vibrant boarding family providing a raft of opportunities and experiences that foster independence and interdependence through the 'Finborough Way'.

PSHE / RSE

Our students experience a comprehensive and age-appropriate set of experiences aligned with statutory Government requirements to support their development as healthy and happy individuals with strong positive

characters that are equipped with all they need to be safe and universally respectful sexual beings appropriate to their age and stage, laying the foundations for all that they will experience as their life unfurls.

The following statements of intent, set out the objectives of our SRE and PSHE approach and curriculum at each stage of the school.

- Pre-Prep (3-7 years old)
- Prep (7-11 years old)
- Senior 1 (11-13 years old)
- Senior 2 (13-16 years old)
- Sixth Form (16-19 years old)

Emotional health and mental wellbeing is deeply embedded in our culture here at Pre Prep. We take a very proactive approach with all our pupils and staff. Each day our children are encouraged to share their thoughts and feelings with peers and staff. Circle time is a very powerful tool which enables our children to talk freely and openly about their feelings, emotions, worries, concerns or any area they feel they would like to discuss. In Prep 2 children are encouraged to make emotional deposits to each other, each class has an emotional bank account where children can write kind notes to each other and deposit them into each other's emotional bank account cup. At regular intervals the cups are emptied and children get to take home their positive messages to share with their family.

We host a weekly feelings group that is available to all pupils where we cover a range of emotions for example bereavement, loss, anger, frustration. We offer a wide variety of enrichment activities for all our students including cookery, Lego therapy, tennis, ICT, language club, construction club, art club.

Our aim here at Finborough is to support, encourage and guide our children to become happy, confident, resilient, independent and successful unique individuals.

We are very fortunate at Finborough school that we have a purpose-built yoga/meditation room where all of our children have the opportunity to partake in a relaxing, stimulating yoga session with our fully trained yoga teacher. Our spacious new play area enables all our children to spend time playing together, sharing and exploring in a safe secure open plan natural environment.

Each week all year groups are enriched with time spent in our forest schools area where they take risks, synergise, collaborate, build relationships and develop an appreciation of nature.

In KS1 children are invited to take on roles of responsibility within our school. These roles include being a morning greeter at the door for the parents, serving fresh fruit and vegetables throughout the day, holding the door for their peers and being line leaders.

Throughout our PSHE and RSE programme in the Prep School we aim to create the opportunity for open and honest discussions about the important topics of contemporary society.

We aim to help the children in our care develop open minds, aligned with the habit "seek first to understand, then to be understood", listening to others and understanding viewpoints outside of their own, on often challenging subject matter.

In Year 7 and 8, students build on the knowledge and understanding, skills, attributes and values they have acquired and developed during the prep school. Our PSHE / RSE Programme acknowledges and addresses the changes that young people experience, beginning with transition to secondary school, the challenges of adolescence and their increasing independence. It teaches the knowledge and skills which will equip them for the opportunities and challenges of life. Students learn to manage diverse relationships, their online lives, and the increasing influence of peers and the media.

In Year 9, 10 and 11, students deepen their knowledge and understanding, extend and rehearse skills, and further explore attitudes, values and attributes acquired during Year 7 and 8. The PSHE and RSE reflects the fact that students are moving towards an independent role in adult life, taking on greater responsibility for themselves and others.

By the end of the Sixth Form, many young people will leave home for the first time and live independently, possibly in distant locations. There is a balance throughout our Programme of Study between preparing students to manage their current lives and laying the foundations for managing future experiences. As our students progress through Year 7 to

11, this balance shifts towards teaching related to young people's current experiences. The Sixth Form gives us the opportunity to ensure that students have the knowledge and understanding, skills, strategies, and attributes they need for independent living and the next stage in their education or career.

Review and Development

Our culture driven approach is reviewed frequently at all levels including our governance. Children and adults will be involved in comprehensive ongoing review

Appendix 1: The 'Finborough Way'

The Finborough Way

Great Students	Great Adults
Are always kind and thoughtful	Are always kind and thoughtful
Are always honest and trustworthy	Are always honest and trustworthy
Are consistently positive, polite and well mannered	Are consistently positive, polite and well mannered
Have a sustained high level of digital safety and civility, with a healthy 'non-dependent' engagement with technological devices / the internet	Use the plethora of opportunities technology opens up in a totally professional manner. Always focusing on their responsibilities with respect to safeguarding students.
Always communicate with everyone verbally, in writing and online showing the greatest respect.	Communicate with students and parents in a professional manner; verbally, in writing and using school email (no personal social media connections / communications with parents or students)
Recognise and value the importance of the Seven Habits, 'Learnability' and a 'Better Never Stops' Growth Mindset, the foundations of their character and our positive school culture.	Champion and value the importance of the Seven Habits, 'Learnability' and a 'Better Never Stops' Growth Mindset, the foundations of a strong character and our positive school culture.
Value the diversity that exists across our school community and champion equality in all aspects of school life	Value the diversity that exists across our school community and champion equality in all aspects of school life
Are persistently eager to be the best version of themselves, feeling rightly really good when recognised and praised for achieving high standards	Are persistently eager to be the best version of themselves, feeling rightly really good when recognised and praised for achieving high standards
Actively invite and are inspired by challenge for improvement	Actively invite and are inspired by challenge for improvement
Always strive to have the best possible 'Learnability', valuing and seeking feedback that supports continuous improvement 'Better Never Stops'.	Always strives to be the best possible professional, valuing and seeking feedback that supports continuous improvement. 'Better Never Stops'
Take expectations about things like uniform and behaviour really seriously and always aiming for the highest standards.	Are a role model high professional standards of appearance and conduct in all situations.
Take responsibility for making healthy life choices protecting physical and mental wellbeing.	Takes responsibility for making healthy life choices protecting physical and mental wellbeing.
Always values and appreciates the wonderful opportunities we all have being part of Finborough School.	Always value and appreciates the wonderful opportunities we all have being a part of Finborough School.
Never has a 'them and us' attitude with the adults who support, care for and teach them.	Actively prevent a 'them and us' attitude with students by developing the strongest possible positive professional relationships.
Don't try to grow up too fast, you value your childhood and young adulthood as a wonderful stage of your life.	Recognise the importance and value of safeguarding our student's childhood and young adulthood and always act to protect this important life stage

Are always prepared to get involved including volunteering if something needs to be done, taking part enthusiastically	Are always prepared to get involved including volunteering if something needs to be done, taking part enthusiastically
Value the opportunity to talk to the trusted adults and older students around them, particularly if something is troubling them.	Are always ready to take the time to listen and really understand the children and young adults at the school, particularly when something is troubling them. Taking appropriate action if any safeguarding concerns are raised.

First the right attitude

kind, thoughtful, positive, polite, well-mannered

Integrity

honest, trustworthy

Neighbourly

volunteering / community service

Best version of myself

invites/inspired by challenge for improvement; feel good when praised

One civility and safety

Respect

communicates; diversity; equity

Open up to those adults you trust

Understand others first

listen first with the intent to understand, not reply

Growth mindset, Seven Habits and Learnability

The foundations of our culture!

High standards

uniform; behaviour; feel good when

Well-being

healthy life choices – physically and mentally

Appreciate opportunities

Youth is cherished

don't grow up too soon

Finborough Flyer

268th Edition: Monday 30th October 2023

[#speakeasy](#)

#betterneverstops

Week Eight of the Autumn Term

Courage and Resilience

We now move on to our fourth character combo Courage and Resilience. Across the next two weeks we will all explore and evaluate these two vital components of our character. Together we will see ways we can be more courageous and resilient and discover we can all take steps to further grow our character.

Quote of the Week

"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."

Nelson Mandela

Character Focus

Courage as part of your character is not about the physical risks you will take; it is so much more than that. Having a courageous character is about a depth of bravery where you will always do what you know is right regardless of what others might think.

A lack of courage is often driven by the need for approval from others. We will often compromise who we are because we fear not fitting in, however true courage is about being strong enough to be you.

Courage is also standing up for others who may be being treated unkindly for just being themselves.

We never fully know what is going on in someone else's life and may not see their incredible courage in the face of great struggle.

True courage is not about seeking recognition or reward, however quiet respect from others who can see your bravery, inspires you to keep doing all you do.

A person with a lack of courage in their character will not stand up for themselves or others and will give up very easily when anything becomes challenging or difficult.

Having a courageous character is all about your mindset, it is your choice to be brave in any challenging situation you find yourself in. The more you do this, the more it becomes a part of who you are.

Being courageous makes you an exceptional person and will be a major feature in all you will achieve as your future life unfurls.

Learnability Focus

As we proceed through the second half of this autumn term we would like to challenge you to become feedback driven.

Don't wait for feedback from your teachers, seek it and show you want to be really challenged to be better and better.

In any subject, persist in asking how your work can be better and be ready for what you have done to be criticised, this is the fuel of progress.

If you are a Platinum learner, feedback will be so important to you, you will seek it all of the time. Whilst you will be pleased with excellent marks / grades, you will value feedback more as this has the greatest value in ensuring 'better never stops'.

Me

Our new wellbeing focus is called 'Me' and is all about how we care for ourselves both physically and mentally.

For a second week we explore consent. Having the courage to stand up for what you want is so important. You MUST never feel you have to do anything you do not feel comfortable with. Have the courage to say no in a polite yet assertive manner.

It is also important to recognise and respect when someone has had the courage to say no, this is not what I want to happen now.

For a second week your class teachers / form tutors will talk about this with you in a circle time, looking at examples relevant to your age.

Form Challenge – Christmas Hampers

As is the tradition at Finborough the second half of the Autumn Term is hamper time.

An opportunity for each form to engage their festive creativity and compile and construct a highly original Christmas hamper, that any family would love to have ready for the festive season.

Questions of the Week

Do you have the courage to truly be yourself?

Highest Standards Focus

For a second week we focus in on the importance punctuality. Are you setting a consistent high standard?

Those for whom being on time or even early is important demonstrate a character determined to maintain high standards.

Poor punctuality is a negative reflection on your character.

[#speakeasy](#)

Whether you are worried about something or have a concern it is always good to talk.

Any adult at school can be trusted, so you can choose who you would like to speak to

Adults at school cannot promise to keep all the things you share confidential, particularly if they might affect your safety and wellbeing, however they will know what to do and how to best get you help and support.

Sometimes it can be difficult to start talking to an adult, particularly if you are worried, the words can be difficult to find. [#speakeasy](#) can help you. Click on the link in the Finborough Flyer or scan the [#speakeasy](#) QR code. Both will take you to a simple form, where you can briefly record what is causing you concern. [#speakeasy](#) is monitored every day and an adult we know you will be happy to talk to will find you and start the conversation you need to have.

If you are cross or unhappy about something at school, you can also make a complaint. At Finborough we have a [Complaints Policy](#) which you can follow, ask any adult at school and they will help you express your complaint, so we can all work together to resolve your concern.

Adults at Finborough will ALWAYS be ready to listen to you and no worry or concern will ever be too much trouble to help you work through and solve. We are the Finborough Family and we ALL look after each other.

Some adults have special #Speakeasy training and can work with you through a programme designed to really help you.

Together everyone at Finborough can 'Speakeasy'

Final Words for the Week

How will you become even more courageous? How can you find ways to experience the type of 'real' challenge that will nurture your courage?

Fear is a part of life, it is not something to avoid, it is the fuel of courage.

Real life enhancing character growth only happens when we take a big step outside of our comfort zone and keep seeking opportunities to do this.

Be courageous!