



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

September 2021

Approved by the Governing Body Strategy Group 23/09/21

**This Policy is due for renewal in Term 1
2023–24**

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

OF

GODINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

SECTION ONE – RATIONALE

1.1 At Godinton Primary School we believe that early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. Our aim is to provide a caring and stimulating environment where every child develops individually with a love of discovery and learning.

The Foundation Stage staff provide children with opportunities that build upon children's experiences and interests to enable all children to reach their potential in every aspect of their development.

1.2 This policy is based on requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS 2021)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf

The EYFS Framework is a statutory document which details the standards for learning, development and care for all children within the Foundation Stage. At the end of the year teachers make a judgment on how well the child has achieved against all 7 areas of learning.

SECTION TWO – A UNIQUE CHILD

2.1 Godinton Primary School recognises that children arrive in the Foundation Stage with a wide range of skills, abilities and particular interests. Before the children start school staff obtain information from pre-school settings about the children who will be enrolling. Where possible we give Foundation Stage staff the opportunity to visit some pre-school settings, although it is not possible to visit them all as we often take children from over 20 different settings. Telephone calls are made where visits are not possible.

2.2 Foundation Stage staff visit the homes of our new intake children in the summer term prior to the children starting in September. This provides the teachers and parents with the opportunity to talk about the child's particular interests and any issues of concern. Our Assistant Head (SENCO) supports Foundation Stage staff and families with any additional educational needs or disabilities in order to ensure that children's needs can be appropriately supported. Often the Assistant Head will work with families prior to their children starting at Godinton and the Family Liaison Officer may be involved too.

2.3 We recognise that children's individuality means that they will cope with starting school in different ways. We invite all new starters into school during the summer term for story time sessions in order to familiarise them with the classroom and outdoor areas prior to

joining us in September. We hold 'Stay and Play' sessions, where parents are invited into school to spend time with the children in their new environment. They also have the opportunity to come to lunch with their parents. At Godinton new Foundation Stage children start in groups during their first school week in September. The staggered start allows the children the opportunity to become familiar with the classroom environment. How this is structured is determined by the needs of the cohort. The younger children in the year (with birthdays from 1st April to 31st August) will usually start in groups first. We usually invite children to attend for mornings only (staying for lunch) for the first few days after starting at Godinton. Most children then attend full time. Where, the school has concerns about a child's ability to attend school full time, this will be discussed with parents. Or if parents have concerns, this should be raised by the school. A plan may be put in place to support a child in working towards full time attendance. A part time timetable may, for example, be suggested as a way of supporting children with a high level of SEND.

2.4 Children are sorted into four registration groups of up to 15 children. Two registration groups will then join to make one class led by a teacher and supported by a Teaching Assistant (TA). This will give two classes in the year group. In term 5 the children will be assigned a house group colour and parents will be informed of this.

2.5 We recognise that children arrive at school with a wide variety of skills, abilities and particular interest. We understand that each child is a competent learner, so we start from the children, finding out about them before planning experiences to intrigue, challenge and extend their learning.

SECTION THREE – POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

3.1 At Godinton Primary School we recognise the huge contribution that parents and carers make to their children's learning and we work hard to develop and sustain positive links with parents. We actively encourage parents to become involved in the life of the school, and operate an open door policy in which we encourage parents to speak to their child's teacher to share any celebrations, concerns or worries. Reception support staff are available each morning as the children come into school and teachers are available at the end of school the school day. Home contact books provide a daily means of communication with parents and an opportunity to celebrate children's achievements. Comments from parents are noted and assist staff in their observations about the children.

3.2 Parents are encouraged to meet with teachers both before their children start school and during the academic year. Prior to the children starting school, teachers and teaching assistants visit parents and children in their own homes. This provides staff with the

opportunity to observe and interact with the children in a familiar environment. Alternative arrangements are made for parents who do not wish to have a home visit. Foundation Staff are easily accessible to parents after school throughout the year. The year group has an email account which parents may use to contact staff. Parent Consultation meetings are held to discuss a child's progress during the school year.

SECTION FOUR – LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS framework that applies from September 2021.

4.1 At Godinton Primary School we believe children learn best through real experiences and active learning. We know children learn at their highest level when at play; therefore, we do not make a distinction between play and work. We provide a daily routine for the children, which provides for Adult Directed, Adult Initiated and Child Initiated learning opportunities. We support children's learning throughout the Child Initiated and planned play activities and in doing so we ensure children have opportunities to engage and thrive in all aspects and areas of learning. Activities are short in length, often with children rotating around several different ones during a week.

4.2 The seven areas of learning comprise:

Prime areas:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical development
- Communication and Language

Specific areas:

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

4.3 We believe that it is vitally important for adults to support children's learning through play. Learning should be personalised by building on the child's interests and involving them fully in reflecting on what they have learned and how they may build on their skills. Children will be intrinsically motivated to be life long learners.

4.4 At appropriate opportunities the adults will:

- Question, respond to questions and engage the child in extended conversations that support sustained shared thinking

- Extend vocabulary, knowledge and skills
- Encourage independence, resilience and perseverance
- Add resources that stimulate, motivate and engage the learner
- Demonstrate / model and work alongside
- Help children to see links in their learning
- Support and encourage
- Encourage children to be problem solvers , problem setters and investigators
- Re-direct the play if necessary
- Help children to learn how to negotiate and resolve conflict
- Promote children's well-being
- Observe and assess learning
- Record judgments and plan for next steps in learning
- Provide feedback to child/other adult/parents
- Ensure the environment is safe and secure and that the Welfare Requirements are in place
- Encourage children to 'plan, do and review' child initiated activities

4.5 At Godinton Primary School we model and foster respect, empathy and caring relationships. We encourage understanding of self and a responsibility to others.

So that we can play and learn safely and happily at Godinton Primary we encourage the children to:

- Be kind to each other
- Look after each other and school property
- Try to listen to one another

SECTION FIVE – FOUNDATION STAGE ENVIRONMENT

We aim to provide a rich and varied learning environment as we know this will evoke the children's curiosity and increase their motivation to investigate, explore and to become involved; extending their ideas and experiences. The learning environment comprises of the inside and outside areas. Both of which are of equal importance, will be available to the children and resources will be reviewed regularly in order to make the best provision for the children's learning and development. Children will have the freedom to move from one to the other during their Child Initiated activity. The indoor space provides an open area and is not restricted by tables. Both the indoor and outdoor areas address the 7 areas of Foundation Stage learning.

SECTION SIX – OBSERVING AND ASSESSING

6.1 All EYFS staff will contribute towards on-going assessments of all children throughout the year. We use Tapestry to record 'Wow Moments' and whole-class floor books to

showcase learning across all 7 areas. In addition, we will use our proud pegs to display work and pictures and to show progression as the year goes on. We recognise that observations should not take away from interactions with the children and should not require excessive paperwork (as stated in the new EYFS Framework) so we will ensure that any observations recorded are of a high quality and are informative. We will have a whole-class tick sheet whereby we mark off when a wow moment for a child has been recorded so that we ensure an even spread of observations across the whole year group. We aim to be responsive to the children's needs by having daily conversations between all members of staff. The daily interactions we have with our children will inform our planning and help us identify next steps.

6.2 Data

Each term, in line with the rest of the school, we will submit data to show progress across all the areas of learning, identify gaps across the cohort and highlight any need for additional support or interventions. These are moderated across the year group. This will be reported to SMT. Staff will use their knowledge of each child, discussions with other members of staff, and professional judgement to decide whether each child is '**on track**' or an 'area for concern'. We use the Development Matters statements to help us form these judgements but recognise that this should not be used as a checklist exercise but instead as a tool to help us make confident judgements as to where are children are in their journey. In addition to this, each term we will revisit 1:1 phonics and numeracy assessments to inform planning for the following term.

6.3 End of Year Assessment (EYFS Profile):

In line with statutory requirements, we will assess all children against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) to create a 'EYFS Profile' by the end of June. We will decide whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging') through discussions as a team, referring to any observations or evidence collected over the previous year and, most importantly, using our extensive knowledge of the child. This will be shared with both parents / carers and Year 1 teachers.

6.4 Information from parents also forms a valuable part of our assessment of the children. A variety of different means may be used to collect this information including verbal communication, written information and digitally.

SECTION SEVEN – BASELINE ASSESSMENTS

7.1 On entry to school we complete our own initial internal assessments, consisting of several different activities designed to provide us with a snapshot of where children are when they start school. We use observations from both adult directed and child initiated activities to inform our judgements and assessments on all ‘Areas of Learning and Development’ as detailed in the EYFS statutory framework. This includes all three Prime Areas (Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, Physical Development) and the Specific Areas of Literacy and Maths, Understanding The World and Expressive Arts and Design. These activities help form the basis for planning for the rest of the term and enable us to develop next steps, interventions, and support plans where necessary. These activities provide us with opportunities to get to know our children really well so we can tailor our curriculum to their needs.

7.2 In addition to this, The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA 2021), introduced in September 2021, is a statutory assessment that will be used to measure progress from Year R to Year 6 and is reported to the DFE. It is completed on a 1:1 basis, delivered by a familiar adult who has undergone training and is completed within the first six weeks of a child starting school. Once completed, the school receives a short narrative statement informing us as to how each child performed in these tasks. This will form the starting point of teachers’ broader assessments of children’s learning and development. The school adheres to all the statutory requirements of this assessment.

7.3 In order to provide us with further information about a child’s language development on entry, and to identify whether further support or intervention may be required, a Language Link assessment is completed on each child during Term 1. Speech Link assessments are also completed for some child where a need is identified.

7.4 We also carry out an initial ‘screening’ process to assess each child’s Well-Being and Involvement using the Leuven Scales. The scales ensure children are assessed at the optimum time and before any significant new learning takes place.

All assessments are carried out as unobtrusively as possible. We ensure that the children feel comfortable and at ease.

SECTION EIGHT – SAFEGUARDING AND WELLBEING PROCEDURES

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in our early years curriculum, for example by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

SECTION NINE –TRANSITION TO YEAR 1

At Godinton we operate a ‘mini school’ system. Foundation Stage and Year One form Lower School and are led by the Lower School Leader. The reason for this is to ensure a smooth transition from Foundation Stage to Year One; ensuring that the principles of the Foundation Stage are built upon. The staff work closely together to ensure that principles such as child initiated activities are extended and developed providing more challenge for the children as they move into Year One. We have looked at the process of reviewing the use of the indoor and outdoor areas in Year One to ensure that this links smoothly with the type of environment in which the children are used to working in the Foundation Stage. We hold a meeting for Reception parents of the Foundation Stage Year where they have the opportunity to meet with Year One staff and find out more about the transition into year One. Year One teaching staff will spend time in year R in the summer term getting to know the children in their own learning environment. The children will then spend time in their new Year One classrooms with their new teachers and teaching assistants, giving them the opportunity to become familiar with their new environment.

SECTION TEN – STAFF SUPERVISION

The school has a Supervision Policy which sets out the responsibilities of Godinton Primary School under the 2021 Early Years Foundation Stage requirements (EYFS 2021) in providing supervision. Supervision is mandatory for all staff that come into contact with children in the Foundation Stage, including all those in maintained schools, non-maintained schools and independent schools. This policy should be read in conjunction with the EYFS Supervision policy.

SECTION ELEVEN – EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

At Godinton Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all members of our school community irrespective of race, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy or maternity, marriage and civil partnership or socio-economic background. We are determined to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and ability to participate fully in school life.

We tackle discrimination through the positive promotion of equality by challenging stereotypes and by creating an environment that champions respect for all. At Godinton Primary School, we believe that diversity is a strength that should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit us.

All school policies have an explicit aim of promoting equality and will be reviewed in terms of their contribution and effectiveness in achieving this aim.

At Godinton we recognise the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs are already implicitly embedded in the 2021 Early Years Foundation Stage.

SECTION TWELVE – CHILDREN IN CARE

As for all our pupils, Godinton Primary School is committed to helping every Child in Care (CIC) to achieve the highest standards they can. To this end staff will ensure that in delivering the curriculum they set suitable learning challenges of CIC, respond to the diverse learning needs of CIC, and help to overcome the potential barriers to learning and assessment for CIC.

SECTION THIRTEEN – MONITORING AND REVIEW

Monitoring of the standards of the achievement and the quality of teaching in EYFS is the responsibility of the Lower School Leader and SMT. This policy is due for review every two years.