



# **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

**June 2023**

**Approved by the Governing Body Strategy Group 29/06/23**

**This Policy is due for renewal in Term 6  
2024–25**

# 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 that fosters curiosity, instils a love of learning, and allows every child to reach their full potential across all areas of development. Our EYFS staff carefully consider how to build upon children's experiences, interests and needs, and have developed the curriculum to reflect this.

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](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 each child's level of achievement, 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 pre-school settings, although it is not always 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 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. In September, we implement a carefully considered transition process, which is structured according to the needs of the cohort. Usually, the children will start school in smaller groups, so that our large open-plan environment is quieter, calmer and less overwhelming during the first few days of school. Children will attend 2-hour sessions for the first three days, half the cohort in the mornings and half in the afternoons. These smaller groups will allow staff to focus on building important relationships with the children in their class. Following this, children will attend school for mornings and lunchtimes only for one week. Most children then attend full time. Should staff or parents have concerns regarding a child's ability to attend full-time, opportunities will be provided for all parties to discuss the best course of action together, with the child's best interests at the forefront. A plan may be put in place to support a child in working towards full time-attendance, following discussion with the class teacher, SENCO and Headteacher. For example, a part-time timetable may be suggested as a way of supporting a child 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 interests, and we tailor our curriculum in response to this. We understand that each child is a learner, and use our knowledge of the cohort to plan experiences that 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 which provides opportunities for parents to speak to their child's teacher regularly in order to share any celebrations, concerns or worries. Reception staff are available each morning as the children come into school and teachers are available at the end of the school day.

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. Foundation Staff are easily accessible to parents after school throughout the year. The year group uses the online platform 'Tapestry' as the primary means of communication between staff and parents, in addition to a year group email account. Parents are supported in setting up a Tapestry account from the moment their child starts Godinton, and are kept informed of learning that takes place in class through regularly uploaded newsletters. We understand how valuable parent voice can be and invite parents to upload observations, pictures or videos onto Tapestry that relate to the child's learning at home. Parent Consultation meetings are held to discuss a child's progress during the school year, and written reports are sent home to inform parents of their child's attainment in relation to each area of learning.

## **SECTION FOUR – LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

4.1 At Godinton Primary School, we work hard to ensure that every child develops a genuine love of learning and achieves their full potential. We have built a holistic, creative curriculum, which endeavours to foster an enthusiastic, curious and creative community of learners who embrace challenge, are resilient and have high expectations of themselves and of others. Our cross-curricular approach ensures that the 'Prime Areas of Learning' underpin all activities and experiences. The Educational Programmes featured in the EYFS Framework (2021) form the basis of our curriculum. Our knowledge of the children's interests, needs, cultures, backgrounds and prior experiences allow us to tailor the curriculum so that it is personal to each cohort. Therefore, although our taught curriculum generally stays the same, many of the activities, play opportunities and learning that takes place is ever evolving, and will vary year on year. In response to current research, the EYFS curriculum at Godinton focuses greatly on language, curiosity and learning through play. Children are exposed to weekly 'wow words' to extend their vocabulary, and their own questions are explored during our 'I Wonder' sessions. Teacher directed sessions are short and purposeful. Children are provided with exciting play opportunities in our Investigation and Discovery (child initiated) sessions to further expand their knowledge, develop skills, and build relationships.

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 understand the important role that adults play in children's learning, particularly when learning through play. EYFS staff provide skilled support to children in order to take learning forward, extend vocabulary and develop vital 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

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. Continuous provision across all areas of learning is well resourced and easily accessible so that children can develop their basis skills. Staff enhance provision depending on the intended learning outcomes and the children's needs and interests. Children are able to freely access both inside and outside learning environments during Investigation and Discovery. Learning is not limited to particular parts of the classroom; learning for any area can take place no matter where the children are playing. For example, maths learning does not take place solely in the maths area, but across all parts of the classroom and outside area. Our motto for learning outside is 'Bigger, Louder, Messier'. We know how important being outside is to young children's learning and development and use our ample outside spaces (including the field, forest and pond) regularly.

## **SECTION SIX – OBSERVING AND ASSESSING**

6.1 All EYFS staff will contribute towards on-going assessments of all children throughout the year. Formative assessments will take place daily, and maths, writing and phonics assessments take place three times a year. We regularly hold EYFS team meetings where teachers and teaching assistants engage in professional dialogue to determine next steps in learning, verbally share any notable moments observed in class and raise any safeguarding concerns. We focus on five children per week so that, by the end of the year, each child will have been discussed at length at least three times. These conversations are recorded as 'reflections' on tapestry and are for staff use only. These professional discussions are also used to inform planning.

### **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 at the '**expected**' level for that particular stage of the year, or '**emerging**' (not yet at the expected level). Staff record these on tailor-made trackers that have been carefully developed to fit alongside our curriculum, and that reflect our extensive knowledge of child development.

### **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 an '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. These judgements will be 'best fit'. Moderation will take place across the year group and with other schools where possible, to ensure judgements are accurate and fair. The EYFS profile will be shared with both parents / carers and Year 1 teachers. Year 1 teachers will use the information provided to inform planning.

## **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, and we record these on our tracker documents. 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 of our planning for the rest of the term and enable us to develop next steps, interventions, and support plans where necessary. These activities also 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. It 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 for 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.