



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Godinton Primary School

June 2015

Policy approved by Governor's Strategy Group 10/06/15

This Policy is due for renewal in Term 6 2016-2017

Godinton Academy Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 9404783. The registered office is at Lockholt Close, Ashford, TN23 3JR.

1. 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 At Godinton Primary School we embrace the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework and the principles and commitments which it requires. The EYFS 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 17 early learning goals.

2. 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.

2.2 Foundation Stage staff spend the first of term visiting the homes of our new intake children. 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 for Inclusion supports Foundation Stage staff and families with any additional educational needs 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 and Pastoral Support staff 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 two story time sessions in order to familiarise them with the classroom and outdoor areas prior to joining us in September. We hold two '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, which follows the week of home visits by the teachers. The staggered start allows the children the opportunity to become familiar with the classroom environment. The younger children in the year (with birthdays from 1st April to 31st August) will start in groups first. All children then stay for mornings and lunch in week two, before becoming full time in week three. All children will start on a full time basis at the same time, unless they are younger ones in the year group and after consultation with the teacher and parents it is felt that they are not yet ready to do so.

2.4 Children are sorted into four registration groups ensuring a balance of gender, abilities, additional educational needs, siblings, and attendance at pre-school settings. Each group is led by a class teacher or a TA. Two registration groups will then join to make one class led by a teacher and supported by a 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.

3. 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 staff are available each morning as the children come into school on the school gate. 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. At the start of Term 1 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 both before and after school throughout the year.

4. Learning and Development

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 Teacher Directed, Teacher 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 six 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
- 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
- Try to listen to one another

5. Foundation Stage Environment

5.1 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, 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.

6. Observing and Assessing

6.1 We use information from parents and pre-school settings to inform our knowledge and understanding of every child. In school all Foundation Stage staff are involved in observing the children, noting down what is observed. Judgements are made about children's progress in each of the seven areas. Three times a year moderated assessments are made by the Foundation Stage staff. At the end of the year the profile is finalised.

6.2 We maintain files, which document the child's progress. These include observations, photos / video recordings and examples of their work. We encourage children and parents to make contributions to their child's file and to access them. In our Reception Classes we use our knowledge of the children and evidence collected in the children's file, to inform our judgements and to support completion of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile at the end of the year.

6.3 We analyse and review what we see or know about each child's development and learning, and then we will make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan appropriate next steps and is an ongoing process throughout the school year.

7. Reception Baseline Assessment

The reception baseline will form the starting point of teachers' broader assessments of children's development and will start to be used at Godinton from September 2015.

The purpose of the reception baseline is to provide a score for each pupil at the start of reception. When pupils reach the end of key stage 2, it will be used to calculate how much progress children have made compared to others with the same starting point.

At Godinton, we use Early Excellence Baseline Assessment (EExBA, which is a Reception Baseline Assessment tool accredited by the DfE for use on entry to YR. It establishes a starting point from which progress into KS1 can be measured and for which schools can be held accountable.

EExBA is divided into three distinct but related parts that build up the appropriate information in order to complete the assessment. This consists of:

- 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.
- An assessment of the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' using 9 statements that focus on children's learning behaviours.
- An assessment of the 'Areas of Learning and Development' as detailed in the EYFS statutory framework. This includes all three Prime Areas (PSED, C&L, PD) and the Specific Areas of Literacy and Maths.

EExBA produces the data required by the DfE and will report the data back to schools in a way that supports tracking and monitoring progress of groups of children, areas and aspects of learning.

8. Transition to Year One

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 outdoor area 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 at the end of the Foundation Stage Year where they have the opportunity to meet with Year One staff and find out more about the transition. 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.

9 Equal Opportunities and Racial Equality (Refer also to these specific policies)

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

Godinton Primary School provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils including those in the Foundation Stage.

We recognise that citizenship presents opportunities for encouraging respect for diversity.

Our coordinators are responsible for ensuring their subject programmes/schemes of work raise awareness of multi-cultural issues and challenge stereotypical views of different racial groups and nomadic communities. In the purchase of resources, our coordinators will ensure that materials reflect and celebrate ethnic and cultural diversity.

10 Children in Care (previously known as Looked After Children)

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.

11 Monitoring and review

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