



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

June 2025

Approved by the Governing Body Strategy Group 19/06/25

**This Policy is due for renewal in Term 6
2026–27**

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. We are committed to providing a high-quality, 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 Our policy is underpinned by the principles and requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS 2021), which ensures that all children receive the best start in life.

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.

1.3

Aims and Objectives:

- To provide a broad, balanced, and inclusive curriculum that supports all areas of children's learning and development.
- To offer a safe and nurturing environment where children feel valued, respected, and confident to explore and learn.
- To promote positive relationships with children, parents, carers, and other professionals to support children's development and wellbeing.
- To observe, assess, and plan for individual children's needs, ensuring every child is provided with the opportunity to reach their full potential.

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. As part of the transition into school, we arrange a variety of activities to support the children to become familiar with our school. 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 also hold 'Stay and Play' sessions, where parents are invited into school to spend time with the children in their new environment. They children also have an opportunity to join us for 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 might 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 could be suggested as a way of supporting a child with a high level of SEND.

2.4 Children are organised 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), creating two classes for the year group. In Term 5, the children will be assigned a house group colour and parents will be informed of this. Additional Teaching Assistants are also deployed to the year group, in accordance with the level of need within each cohort.

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 has their own unique learning style 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 throughout 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 an opportunity to observe and interact with the children in a familiar environment. For those parents who do not wish to have a visit to the family home, they can request a meeting with the class teacher in school. Foundation Staff are easily accessible to parents after school throughout the year.

The year group also 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 regular updates. 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. We also encourage this platform to showcase their homework projects too. Parents are also invited into school on a variety of occasions, which include special dates on the calendar i.e. Mother's/Father's Day and 'Handwriting' workshops. Furthermore, '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 remains 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

Our setting follows the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, which consists of four key principles:

1. ***Unique Child*** – Every child is a unique individual, capable of learning and developing at their own pace. We recognise and celebrate each child’s strengths, interests, and challenges.
2. ***Positive Relationships*** – Strong, respectful relationships with children, families, and staff are the foundation of a positive and effective learning environment.
3. ***Enabling Environments*** – We provide an environment that is rich with resources and opportunities for exploration, discovery, and learning. The environment encourages children to engage with others, ask questions, and explore their world.
4. ***Learning and Development*** – We provide a balanced and varied curriculum that promotes the development of the ***three prime areas*** and the ***four specific areas***.

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 Through 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.
- Provide resources that stimulate, motivate and engage the learner.
- Demonstrate, model and work alongside.
- Help children to identify links in their learning.
- Support and encourage.
- Encourage children to be problem solvers, problem creators 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 basic 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 are interwoven throughout the 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. The professional discussions which take place are also used to inform planning. The sessions are also designed to provide further training opportunities for the staff.

6.2 Data

In line with the rest of the school, we 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. Data is reported to SMT and also discussed at 'Pupil Progress' sessions. Staff 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 'Arbor' using tailor-made trackers that have been carefully developed to fit alongside our curriculum and that reflect our knowledge of child development.

6.3 End of Year Assessment (EYFS Profile):

In line with statutory requirements, all children are assessed against the 'Early Learning Goals' (ELGs) to create an 'EYFS Profile' by the end of June. We 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 takes place across the 'Lower School' and with other schools where possible, to ensure judgements are accurate and fair. The EYFS profile judgements are 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 into 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 these are recorded, using our tracker documents. These assessments include all three Prime Areas (Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, Physical Development) and the Specific Areas (Literacy and Maths, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design). These activities help to 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 on an individual basis, 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 is used to measure progress from Year R to Year 6. The outcomes of these assessments are 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. The assessments are due to be administered electronically, using ipads with the children, starting from September 2025.

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 are committed to promoting the health and wellbeing of all children in our care.

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 importance of a healthy and balanced diet, promoting good eating habits and hydration.
- The importance of physical exercise.
- How rest and relaxation can help us.
- The importance of expressing our emotions and sharing how we feel with others.

Further 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 further. The staff work closely together to ensure that principles such as child initiated activities are extended and developed, providing further challenge for the children as they move into Year One. Year One teaching staff also spend time in the year R classrooms throughout the summer term getting to know the children in their own learning environment. The children also spend time in their new Year One classrooms with their new teachers and teaching assistants, providing them with 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 have 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 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.