



Ely St John's



Teaching of Phonics and Early Reading Policy

Principles of our Reading Curriculum

At ESJ, we believe that a successful English curriculum should develop children's love of reading, writing, and discussion. We believe that a secure basis in literacy skills is crucial to a high-quality education, and will give our children the tools they need to thrive. Our curriculum recognises this through its focus on the two key dimensions of reading: word reading and comprehension.

We actively promote reading for pleasure and give children time to talk about and share their enjoyment of reading. We ensure the children have access to a wide variety of high-quality texts that reflect both their own experiences and the wider world that they are growing up in.

Why Do We Teach Phonics?

Teaching children to read and write is an essential part of their learning. Phonics is a way of teaching these skills effectively. It helps children hear, identify and use different sounds that distinguish one word from another in the English language. In synthetic phonics lessons, children learn the relationship between phonemes (sounds in words) and graphemes (the symbols used to represent them). Teaching children to recognise the sounds each letter makes and how to put them together, enables them to read. It also helps with spelling as they learn how to break up words into sounds, in order to spell them. The idea that surrounds synthetic phonics is that once they are comfortable with the letters and sounds that make up words, children should even be able to read 'nonsense' words that don't actually exist in the English language.

In the UK, phonics for children is an important feature of the curriculum. The Department of Education establishes the core criteria for effective systematic synthetic phonics teaching programmes used in primary schools. At Ely St. John's Primary we follow the Twinkl Phonics programme and its associated decodable reading scheme, Rhino Readers. The Twinkl Phonics approach combines rigorous progression with engaging learning materials that follow a clear and systematic approach that builds on children's skills daily.

Intent of Phonics & Early Reading Policy

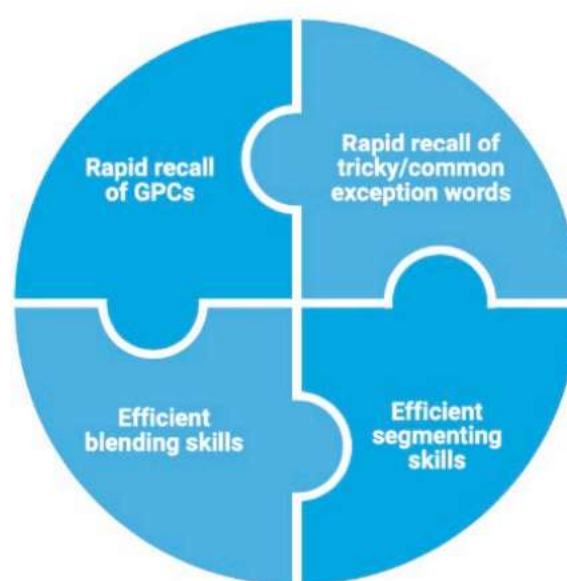
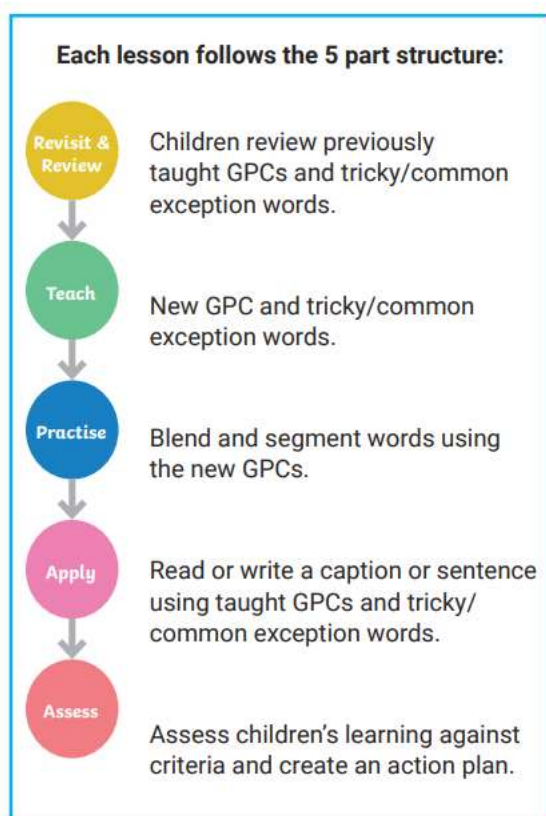
- To establish a cohesive whole-school approach with progression and continuity in the teaching and learning of phonics throughout the school with a focus on quality first teaching.
- To ensure that systematic synthetic phonics (following the Twinkl Phonics programme) is the first approach pupils use to help with their reading and spelling.

- To ensure children learn to read and write all 44 graphemes in the English language.
- To ensure children have specific strategies to identify and decode common exception words (tricky words).
- To have robust assessment procedures to check progress and identify pupils in need of intervention.
- For pupils to apply their phonic knowledge in their reading and writing across the whole curriculum.
- For pupils to develop a love of reading and enjoy reading for pleasure confidently across a range of genres.

Implementation

Teaching

The structure of every Twinkl Phonics lesson follows a set five-part structure to ensure that the four cornerstones of phonics are covered. During our phonics lessons, children will repeat the elements from the four cornerstones of phonics to ensure that they have rapid and automatic recall of GPCs and tricky/common exception words; each day, they will experience blending and segmenting activities to allow regular practice of these core skills.



Four Cornerstones of Phonics

Stories are used to provide a stimulus and context for phonics teaching in our Twinkl Phonics lessons. The story content also integrates games to practise the skills taught. In addition, we use actions to help the children remember phonemes; this kinaesthetic, visual and auditory approach helps the children to retain the phonemes and supports children with SEND.

Strategies used in the teaching of phonics are consistent across the school, ensuring continuity from one level to the next (see Appendix A).

Our phonics lessons are also supported by weekly decodable mini-books and a variety of other activities planned according to children's needs. In conjunction with the teaching of phonics, we also give our children phonics-based activities to take home at the appropriate level. These include parent information sheets, home learning booklets and spelling bookmarks. This helps to consolidate what has been taught in school and encourages a cohesive whole-school approach.

We use both individual and group reading session to teach reading alongside discrete phonics teaching lessons. Decodable reading books are used, matched to the children's phonic level. In school, we use the Rhino Readers books. For reading at home, we provide access to a mix of decodable eBooks and physical books.

Timetabling

Phonics is taught daily to all children in EYFS and Key Stage 1. Within reception, phonics sessions will increase in length over the year. By the end of Reception, children spend about an hour a day consolidating previous learning, learning new content and practising and applying what they have learnt. This will consist of a mixture of whole class teaching and follow-up activities. Phonics will also form part of their continuous provision for children to access following their discrete phonics lesson. In Years 1 and 2, lessons with a phonics and early reading focus will last about an hour each day. This consists of direct phonics lessons, guided reading, and other follow-up activities.

Some children may continue to need discrete phonics sessions in Key Stage 2. If this is the case, they will receive a daily 20 minute intervention session, delivered using the Twinkl Phonics Codebreakers interventions. This is a comprehensive and scripted intervention programme, specifically designed for KS2 pupils to close the gap and develop essential reading and writing skills.

Progression

End of Year Expectations:

Twinkl Phonics Level	Reception	Year 1	Year 2
Level 1	Level 1 runs throughout the teaching of Phonics Levels 2-6.		
Level 2			
Level 3			
Level 4			
Level 5			
Level 6			

By the end of Level 2, children should be able to:

- give the phoneme when shown any Level 2 grapheme;
- find any Level 2 grapheme, from a display, when given the phoneme;
- orally blend and segment CVC words;
- blend and segment in order to read and spell VC words, such as if, am, on, up and nonsense words, such as ip, ug and ock

By the end of Level 3, children should be able to:

- give the phoneme when shown all or most Level 2 and Level 3 graphemes;
- find all or most Level 2 and Level 3 graphemes, from a display, when given the phoneme;
- blend and read CVC words (single-syllable words consisting of Level 2 and Level 3 graphemes);
- segment and make a phonetically plausible attempt at spelling CVC words (single-syllable words consisting of Level 2 and Level 3 graphemes);
- read and spell some two-syllable words using Level 2 and Level 3 graphemes;
- read the tricky words - he, she, we, me, be, was, my, you, her, they, all, are;
- spell the tricky words - the, to, I, no, go;
- write each letter correctly when following a model.

By the end of Level 4, children should be able to:

- give the phoneme when shown any Level 2 and Level 3 grapheme;
- find any Level 2 and Level 3 grapheme, from a display, when given the phoneme;
- be able to blend and read words containing adjacent consonants;
- be able to read and spell polysyllabic words containing adjacent consonants and words containing three-letter adjacent consonants;
- be able to segment and spell words containing adjacent consonants;
- be able to read the tricky words – said, so, have, like, come, some, were, there, little, one, do, when, out, what;
- be able to spell the tricky words – he, be, we, she, me, was, you, they, are, all, my, here;
- write each letter, usually correctly.

By the end of Level 5, children should be able to:

- give the phoneme when shown any grapheme that has been taught;
- for any given phoneme, write the common graphemes;
- apply phonics knowledge and skills as the prime approach to reading and spelling

unfamiliar words that are not completely decodable; read and spell phonically decodable two-syllable and three-syllable words;

- form each letter correctly;
- Use alternative ways of pronouncing and representing the long vowel phonemes.

By the end of Level 6, children should be able to:

- read accurately most words of two or more syllables;
- read most words containing common suffixes;
- read most common exception words;
- read most words accurately, in age-appropriate books, without overt sounding and blending, and sufficiently fluently to allow them to focus on their understanding rather than on decoding individual words;
- sound out most unfamiliar words accurately, without undue hesitation;
- segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes, spelling many of these words correctly and making phonically-plausible attempts at others; spell most common exception words correctly.

See 'Twinkl Phonics at ESJ Progression Map' for additional detail.

Home Learning Expectations

Parental involvement is key in the acquisition of phonics and supports us in developing a cohesive whole-school approach. Information evenings are held for Reception parents in the Autumn and Spring terms and there are also information evenings for Year 1 and Year 2 parents during the year. During these sessions, we share information on teaching strategies, key vocabulary, and opportunities for embedding knowledge at home.

We also share support resources regularly, such as the parent information sheets, as these can help ensure that parents and carers are using the same strategies at home as the children are learning in school. Phonically decodable reading books are sent home for parents to support their child's phonics/reading and e-book access to the Rhino Readers scheme is set-up for all families.

Assessment

In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, children will be assessed on their knowledge of GPCs and tricky/common exception words each half-term or at the end of a level, whichever is most appropriate within the teaching sequence. Blending and segmenting assessments will also be carried out to ensure that children have the skills securely in place for reading and spelling.

Regular assessment is vital to ensure the early identification of children who may need us to provide them with extra support, either through interventions or during daily classroom teaching. Structured, scripted interventions form part of the Twinkl Phonics programme and this provision is used throughout the school to close gaps in learning. These interventions are focused on recapping or relearning missing GPCs and tricky/common exception words, and practising blending and segmenting skills. Regular assessment also ensures the early identification of children who may need us to challenge them further, either through extension activities or during daily classroom teaching.

Year 1 Phonics Screening Check

In the summer term, all children in Year 1 will undertake the National Phonics Screening Check. This is an assessment carried out in school during which the children are assessed on their ability to segment and blend a range of 40 real and 'alien' words. Alien words are a selection of phonetically decodable nonsense words. The words in this assessment gauge the children's understanding of the phonemes learnt. If the children are not secure in recognising, segmenting and blending these words and therefore do not pass the assessment, they will be offered further support as they enter Year 2 and will be able to repeat the assessment in their next Summer term. If a child does not meet the expected standard in Year 2, phonics teaching and learning will be continued into Key Stage 2. At this point, the child's progress will also be discussed with the SENDCo to decide on next steps for support.

Impact of Phonics & Early Reading Policy

- The provision of consistent, high-quality phonics teaching that ensures all children have a strong foundation upon which to tackle the complex processes of reading and writing.
- Systematic and progressive teaching of synthetic phonics is embedded throughout the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 for those children needing interventions to support phonetic knowledge and understanding.
- Children develop strong phonetic knowledge, understanding and skills so that they can decode words confidently and engage with higher-order reading and writing skills.

Appendix A: Phonics Teaching Strategies at ESJ

Phonics Best Practice

- All adults consistently use pure sounds when teaching phonics and have high expectations that children will do the same.
- Phonics terminology is used consistently and correctly by all adults in school. This vocabulary is taught the children and also shared with parents and carers.
- All adults are consistent in differentiating between letter names and phonemes when working with children.
- EYFS & KS1 classrooms have clearly visible displays of current phonics being taught teaching.
- Children in all classes have access to supportive resources for phonics activities. These include sound mats and tricky word displays. Phonics teaching resources are in line with the Twinkl Phonics programme.
- Twinkl Phonic core provision is used in all EYFS & KS1 classrooms. This consists of lesson presentations, reading mini-books and age-appropriate use of weekly workbooks.

Use of Twinkl Phonics Lesson Presentations

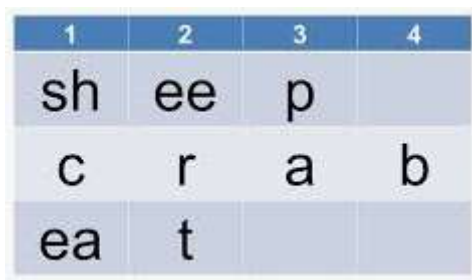
- Teachers to model tracking the story text from left to right.
- Draw attention to **tricky** (EYFS) and **common exceptions words** (KS1) in story text.
- Encourage children to support with the reading of **words containing focus and/or recently taught graphemes/spelling patterns**.

Blending for reading



- Main teaching strategy is **sound buttons**. We teach that the buttons can be short or long to show how many letters make up the grapheme.

Segmenting for writing



- Initial teaching strategy is **robot arms**, followed by the introduction of **phoneme fingers**.
- **Phoneme frames** are used to teach writing of words.

Tricky/Common Exception Words

- Children are taught explicitly which parts of the words can be decoded and which parts cannot.
- Letter names are used to spell tricky/common exception words.

Support for Teaching Pure Sounds

Twinkl Phonics Level 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0SzkjubQ-Ok&t=121s>

Twinkl Phonics Level 3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ZGwM48Wy5E&t=199s>

Twinkl Phonics Level 5: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BN4lVINcBf8&t=11s>