



## Our English Phonics Curriculum

### Intent

At Elveden C of E Primary Academy we are committed to providing a high-quality educational experience for all pupils.

### **Elveden Curriculum Rationale**

As a Church of England school, our six Christian values are inextricably intertwined throughout all areas of our curriculum. These values are clearly evident in English lessons and in the way children apply their learning in everyday school life through their social interactions, attitudes to learning and understanding of their own emotional wellbeing.

Throughout our English curriculum, we encourage our children to be:

- **Respectful** – showing respect for each other's ideas, opinions and creative contributions in speaking, reading and writing.
- **Trustworthy** – demonstrating honesty and responsibility in their learning and working independently or collaboratively with others.
- **Forgiving** – being aware of how words and actions can affect others, offering constructive feedback and learning to move on so everyone feels valued.
- **Hopeful** – having confidence and optimism in developing their reading, writing and communication skills.
- **Friendly** – being kind, supportive and attentive listeners during discussions and collaborative activities.
- **Persevering** – demonstrating resilience in English lessons, particularly when reading challenging texts or refining their writing.

In Phonics at Elveden we let our light shine by making sure every child is given the skills to recognise and decode their sounds successfully as these are fundamental skills in enabling children to become successful readers. We are aware that every child learns differently so we make sure we adapt for all needs so all children can meet and make progress and to promote inclusion.

The National Curriculum for English aims to ensure that all children:

- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- Use discussion to learn, elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas

At Elveden C of E Primary Academy, we are proud to deliver the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised Programme to enable our children to succeed with phonics and with their reading. Through the English Hubs Programme, seven key features have been identified as characterising phonics teaching in highly successful schools, no matter which validated programme is being used. These are:

- direct teaching in frequent, short bursts

- consistency of approach
- secure, systematic progression in phonics learning
- maintaining pace of learning
- providing repeated practice
- application of phonics using matched decodable books
- early identification of children at risk of falling behind, linked to the provision of effective keep-up support.

## **Implementation**

### **Phonics (reading and spelling)**

At Elveden C of E Primary Academy, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Nursery/Reception and follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression, which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school. As a result, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At Elveden C of E Primary Academy we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

**Comprehension** At Elveden C of E Primary Academy, we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose. Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading Leader who drives the early reading programme in our school. This person is highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support our reading team, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme.

**Implementation** Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1 we teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers. Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term. We follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress: Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy. Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read Any child who needs additional practice has daily Keep-up support, taught by a fully trained adult. Keep-up lessons match the structure of class teaching, and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning. We timetable daily phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 or 3 who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics Screening Check using the Rapid Catch up programme. These children urgently need to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen. We use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the Keep-up resources – at pace. If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics 'catch-up' lessons to address specific reading/writing gaps. These short, sharp lessons last 10 minutes and take place at least three times a week.

**Teaching reading:** we teach children to read through the Little Wandle reading practice sessions three times a week. These are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children and use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments and book matching grids on pages 11–20 of 'Application of phonics to reading' are monitored by the class teacher, who rotates and works with each group on a regular basis. Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children's working memory. The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills: *decoding*, *prosody*: teaching children to read with understanding and expression, *comprehension*: teaching children to understand the text. In Reception these sessions start in Week 4. Children who are not yet decoding have daily additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books. In Year 2, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books and then move onto the Fluency books to build up their stamina.

**Home reading:**The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family and for children to build up their confidence with reading. “Reading for pleasure” books/Essential reads also go home for parents to share and read to children. We use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised parents’ resources to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops.

**Additional reading support** for vulnerable children: Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 who are receiving additional phonics Keep-up sessions read their reading practice book to an adult daily. Ensuring consistency and pace of progress. Every teacher in our school has been trained to teach reading, so we have the same expectations of progress. We all use the same language, routines and resources to teach children to read so that we lower children’s cognitive load. Weekly content grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of the programme. Lesson templates, Prompt cards and How to videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson. The Reading Leader and SLT use the Audit and Prompt cards to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

At Elveden we ensure that we promote reading for pleasure ‘*Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child’s success.*’ (OECD 2002) ‘*The will influences the skill and vice versa.*’ (OECD 2010)

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy. We read to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at Elveden C of E Primary Academy and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures. Every classroom has an inviting book corner that encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books. Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, world book day, Shakespeare week as well as our school reading cafes).

## **Impact**

At Elveden C of E Primary we measure progress through regular monitoring and evaluation:

- Regular book looks, planning feedback, and lesson drop ins.
- Pupil voice discussions.
- Data tracking and assessment review half-termly via the Little Wandle assessment tracker and fluency wpm assessments.
- Termly Pupil Action Planning meetings.
- Staff and governor monitoring
- Staff CPD

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it. *Assessment for learning is used:* daily within class to identify children needing Keep-up support and weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings. *Summative assessment is used:* every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need. This is monitored through the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place straight away. *Statutory assessment:* Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2. *Ongoing assessment for catch-up:* Children in Year 2 to 6 who are still using the Little Wandle phonics scheme for interventions and support are assessed through their teacher’s ongoing formative assessment as well as through the half-termly Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised summative assessments.