Ellison Primary Academy

Phonics Policy

At Ellison Primary Academy, we are committed to ensuring that children can speak, read and write confidently and fluently to enable them to communicate effectively across the curriculum and beyond.

Intent

At Ellison Primary Academy, we recognise that reading is a key life skill, which underpins access to the rest of the curriculum. We aim for children to be enthusiastic readers who can confidently read words and simple sentences by the end of Reception, to become successful and fluent readers by the end of KS1 and develop a lifelong love of reading as they move through the school. As children develop their knowledge of the alphabetic code and develop their blending, segmenting and fluency skills, our aim is for all children to be successful readers who enjoy the positive experience of reading.

Implementation

At Ellison Primary Academy, we teach Phonics following the Rising Stars programme; Rocket Phonics. The children are taught the essential skills needed for reading and writing through the delivery of this validated Systematic, Synthetic Phonics programme.

Phonics Lessons

Phonics is taught daily to all children in Reception and Key Stage One.
Each phonics session has the following elements:
- **Revisit and review** – revisiting, consolidating and retrieving previous learning.
- **Teach** – introducing new learning using high quality modelling and 'Big Books'.
- **Practise** – a range of activities to practise the new learning.
- **Apply** – using the learning (e.g. applying it to a text, dictation or sentence writing).

Our teaching of phonics aims to build pupils' speaking and listening skills, as well as prepare pupils to learn to read and write, by developing their knowledge of the alphabetic code and blending and segmenting skills. At the heart of the programme are 'Big Books', which consist of language-rich stories to teach all the target letter-sounds in context. All children have their own Pupil Practice Booklet to enable children to practise and apply blending and segmenting skills at letter-sound, word, sentence and text levels as well as an additional phonics book for challenge and further learning.

In Reception and Year 1, we teach one letter-sound correspondence over two days to ensure this has been secured. The first day focuses on blending skills and the second day focuses on segmenting skills. Reading and writing are interlinked so there will naturally be overlap; however by separating the skills and spreading them across two days, there is greater clarity over which skill is being taught, practised or applied. In addition, children have more time and more opportunity to learn, practise and apply the skills using the new letter-sound correspondences before moving on and teachers are able to carefully monitor children's understanding and provide early intervention if required.

The two-day pattern is repeated twice through the week, leaving the fifth day for a focus lesson on common exception words, further consolidation or assessment.

All children are engaged in the whole class phonics teaching and the majority of the children take part in the whole class practise and apply. However, in Reception, the children practise and apply their skills in smaller guided groups and in Key Stage 1, smaller guided practise groups may be used to target key children and focus on their specific needs based on assessments.

Additional Support

Children have regular opportunities to practise their skills in guided reading sessions with adults. Children requiring additional support, including the bottom 20% of readers, read daily with an adult (often the class teacher).

Children may also receive an additional support from the list below based on their needs:
- Precision teaching of phonics gaps/common exceptions which are identified

- Phonic key rings/flashcard used to revisit learning at home and school
- Rocket Phonics booklets used to plug gaps and reinforce previous learning
- 'I can blend' intervention sheets using at home and school
- Further chance to embed learning from phonics at a later point in the day
- Lilac Lift off First Word books used to support early blending skills.

Reasonable adjustments for children with SEND

Our curriculum ensures that all lessons are accessible for all children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Through carefully a carefully planned progression, all children being involved in whole class teaching with specific focused guided sessions being adapted, all children are allowed to engage in age-appropriate learning and practice based on their own level of learning. Learning is scaffolded to ensure children are given the correct challenge within lessons with scaffolding removed as their understanding develops. Where specific needs are identified, including in Individual Education Plans (IEPS), targets are set and lessons are adapted or specific additional support (see above) is put into place.

Reading at Home

Children take home a phonetically decodable book which is carefully matched the needs of each individual child to ensure that they can experience success in their reading and develop their automaticity and fluency. Staff regularly check that children are access the correct home reading book and this is used in the triangulation of data when assessing if a child is on track. Children also take home a library book of their choice to share with an adult. This encourages the love of reading, exposes them to different texts and vocabulary.

Learning Environment

Alongside the teaching of Phonics, children have access to a language rich environment where they are able to apply their decoding skills and develop language comprehension in order to read. We also have a range of phonics mats for children to use alongside their writing, phonics wall displays in the classroom and key vocabulary walls relating to each year group's wider curriculum. A daily story time session is planned in Key Stage 1 with teachers.

Impact

Teachers regularly assess children in both a formative and summative way. Using AFL strategies, teachers assess children's ability to read fluently and apply the knowledge, skills and understanding that children have developed in their Phonics sessions.

Measured Impact:

- Year 2-6 PIRA tests once a term to give a scaled score and identify gaps
- Rocket phonics mini assessments are used each half term
- Year 1 phonics screening checks
- Progression through home reading books band
- Tests to identify reading speed are used when required in Year 2
- Reading diaries which show home reading
- Application of Phonics knowledge demonstrated in writing
- 1:1 reading assessments

Through the quality phonics teaching and wider provision, we expect all children to make good progress from their starting points and have high expectations that the vast majority of children will be ready for their next stage of their early reading and writing journey as they transfer through Reception, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. We firmly believe that reading is key to learning and we want children to leave Key Stage 1 successful and fluent readers who enjoys reading and take pleasure in exploring texts.