

Elworth C of E Primary School



Phonics Policy

Date:	September 2025
Review Cycle:	2 Yearly
Reviewed By:	Mrs H. Harper
Approved By:	Mrs S. Buckley
Next review date:	September 2025
Reviewed by Governor:	Helen Jones

Mission Statement

'Love God, Love Learning, Love One Another.' Matt 22:36-39

At Elworth we embrace The Church of England's vision for education which is 'Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good.' When Jesus was asked which was the greatest commandment, he responded with *'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind' and 'Love your neighbour as yourself'* (Matt 22:36-39). These timeless words are at the heart of our vision, nurturing our community and shaping the ethos of our flourishing school.

School's theologically rooted Christian mission

At Elworth we create a stimulating and caring environment, grounded in Christian belief and practice, so that all members of our school community can flourish. We therefore aim to provide an education that provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of diversity within modern Britain. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding experience for everyone; it should be enjoyable. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. Our six Christian values underpin all that we teach : Courage, Community, Perseverance, Generosity, Compassion, Friendship. Our school rules are: To be Ready, To be Responsible and To be Respectful. These are embedded in each child's mind so that they are fully prepared for living each day successfully. We aspire that all our children are a blessing beyond the school walls, beyond their families, beyond their local community, as global citizens. To achieve this the children and adults at Elworth embark on an exciting and adventurous journey together joining in with God's redemptive work in our lives and throughout the world and learn to be advocates for change.

INTENT

The use of phonics is one of the many skills needed to be a reader and writer. At Elworth, our intention is to teach high quality phonics to ensure that the children have the best possible start in reading and writing, equipping them with the skills required to access the wider curriculum. Our children learn to read and write effectively and quickly using the Read, Write Inc. speed sounds phonics and reading programme. We teach fast paced and lively phonics sessions. We place early reading and writing at the heart of our curriculum so that children have multiple opportunities to help them practise and apply their phonics knowledge so that every child feels successful and has their success celebrated.

IMPLEMENTATION

In Read, Write, Inc Phonics, children:

- Decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills.
- Read common exception words on sight
- Understand what they read
- Read aloud with fluency and expression
- Write confidently, with a strong focus on vocabulary and grammar
- Spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words
- Acquire good handwriting
- Read books that are closely matched to their developing phonics ability.

We group children homogeneously in KS1, according to their progress in reading rather than writing. This is because it is known that children' progress in writing will lag behind progress in reading, especially for those whose motor skills are less well developed.

Children are taught phonics and reading for 40 minutes per day. Children are in small groups and led by a trained Teacher or Teaching Assistant. All staff are trained and empowered to deliver high quality phonics and reading sessions and receive regular professional development opportunities from the Phonics Lead. All staff follow a planned, systematic programme building on previous learning to secure progress. Children read daily as part of this small group, on a 3-day or 5 day structure. The first day focuses on using phonics to decode. The second day is based around building fluency and expression and on the third day the focus is comprehension. Children take home a Read Write Inc Book Bag Book that uses the same phonics sounds as the book in the reading session, so that children are able to make good progress by practising reading books that are familiar to them. In addition to the daily phonics session, we operate additional target groups for children who need additional support.

Reception

In Reception, we emphasise teaching the alphabetic code. The children rapidly learn sounds and the letter or groups of letters that represent them. Simple mnemonics help them to grasp this quickly. This is especially useful for children making slower progress. The learning is consolidated daily. Children have frequent practice in reading high frequency words with irregular spellings- exception words. The expectation is that children progress onto vowel digraphs and complete Set 1 and Set 2 phonics by the end of Reception.

We make sure that all children are given opportunities to apply their increasing phonics knowledge in reading and writing activities in the classroom. This is so that, early on, they experience success and gain confidence that they are readers. Alongside this, teachers read a wide range of stories, poetry and non-fiction texts; they are soon able to read these texts themselves.

Embedding the alphabetic code means that children quickly learn to write simple words and sentences. We encourage them to compose sentences aloud until they are confident to write independently. The expectation is that children leave Reception reading and writing simple sentences.

Key Stage 1

Children in Year 1 will continue learning phonics using the Read, Write Inc programme with the aim that Set 3 sounds are completed by the Summer Term. Once they have completed the programme they will move on to RWI Comprehension when they have reached the required expectations. Most children will move on to RWI Comprehension in the Spring Term of Year 2.

At Elworth CE Primary School, no pupil is held back or pressurised to move on before they are ready or confident to do so. The children in Key Stage 1 are taught at the correct level. We will continuously practise and revisit all sounds to ensure consolidation. Children in Key Stage One are encouraged and given opportunities to apply their phonic knowledge in both reading and writing activities across all subjects.

We also recognise that the teaching of phonics does not work for some children and incorporate different reading and spelling strategies in our teaching.

IMPACT

Assessment

Regular assessment is undertaken to ensure that all children are making progress in phonics and being taught at the correct level. This is through half termly Read, Write, Inc Assessments and in Year 1 through the phonics screening check. This gives us a very good indication of how well they are making progress relative to their starting points. Teachers ensure that the children in their classes are applying their phonics at the correct level in independent reading and writing activities by rating their phonics tracking sheet. Those children who are not making expected progress are given additional support through the use of targeted interventions.

Interventions

If a child is not progressing in their daily discrete phonics sessions and/ or not applying their phonics skills to independent reading and writing activities we would do some or all of the following (in the most appropriate order for the child)

- Provide appropriate support which may include 1:1 interventions, groups or class support using Fast Track phonics.
- Contact parents and offer suggestions for support and/ or other strategies at home
- Booster groups with the phonics leads.