

## **Phonics Policy**

### **Introduction**

Phonics is a crucial part of the English National Curriculum, and is at the core of our teaching in EYFS and KS1. This policy outlines the intent of phonics at Ellingham and provides an overview of the skills and progression.

### **Intent**

At Ellingham, we value reading as a key life skill, and are dedicated to enabling our pupils to become lifelong readers. We are passionate that all children should develop a love of reading, and we believe reading is crucial to success. Reading is therefore at the heart of our curriculum, and we have a holistic approach to our teaching of the subject.

Studies have shown that explicit, systematic phonics teaching is the most effective way to support children learning to read. Being able to confidently segment and blend phonemes plays a vital role in children's ability to be successful readers and writers.

At Ellingham, phonics begins as soon as the children walk through the nursery doors. Regardless of starting points, all children are provided with a stimulating, practical experience of phonics in the Early Years, focussing on listening skills, rhythm, and sound awareness. As they move into Reception and then Key Stage 1, children become confident at blending and segmenting, which enables them to independently access a range of rich texts. We follow the Jolly Phonics, and Letters and Sounds schemes, and ensure that all children have access to comprehensive, well-structured and exciting daily phonics sessions. Stimulating lessons are planned across the whole curriculum, where children are given the opportunity to apply their growing phonics skills. Teachers draw upon observations and continuous assessment to ensure children are stretched and challenged and to identify children who may need additional support. We are committed to ensuring every pupil successfully acquires the necessary phonics skills to become independent, passionate readers. Children in Key Stage 2, who require phonics input, are given this. Furthermore, for children who join our school in Key Stage 2 and haven't had prior access to systematic phonics, we provide catch-up interventions.

## Whole School Overview - Units

Year group	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
3-4 year olds	Attention and listening skills Joint attention Enjoys rhyming and rhythmic activities		Phase 1 Phonics Aspects 1 to 7 Oral segmenting and blending skills, make own rhyming words (More Able- continue a rhyming string) Recognise rhyme and alteration in words		Recognise some letters and know the sound More able Phase 2 if appropriate in play	
R	Phase 2 (to begin as soon as children have settled in)	Phase 3	Phase 3	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 4
1	Phase 3 and 4 revision	Phase 5	Phase 5	Phase 5	Phase 5	Phase 5
2	Phase 5 revision Phase 6 spelling rules	Phase 5 revision Phase 6 spelling rules	Phase 6 spelling rules	Phase 6 spelling rules	Phase 6 spelling rules	Phase 6 spelling rules
3	'No-Nonsense' spelling scheme and 'Wordblaze' phonics intervention					
4	'No Nonsense spelling scheme and 'WordBlaze' phonics intervention where necessary					
5	'No Nonsense spelling scheme and 'WordBlaze' phonics intervention where necessary					
6	'No Nonsense spelling scheme and 'WordBlaze' phonics intervention where necessary					

## Whole School Overview – Skills and Knowledge Progression

Year group	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
3-4 year olds	Attention and listening skills Joint attention Enjoys rhyming and rhythmic activities		Phase 1 Phonics Aspects 1 to 7 Oral segmenting and blending skills, make own rhyming words (More Able- continue a rhyming string) Recognise rhyme and alteration in words		Recognise some letters and know the sound More able Phase 2 if appropriate in play	
R	Oral blending – phase 2 and 3  Common exception words	Blending and segmenting cvc words	Blending and segmenting cvc words containing digraphs and trigraphs	Blending and segmenting cvc words containing digraphs and trigraphs	Blending and segmenting longer words containing phase 3 phonemes	Blending and segmenting longer words containing phase 3 phonemes
1	Revision - Blending and segmenting longer words containing phase 3 phonemes Common exception words	Phase 5 – learning phonemes	Phase 5 – alternative phonemes	Phase 5 - Alternative pronunciations	Phase 5 - Alternative spellings	Revision of all of Phase 5 and a focus on spelling rules e.g. adding -ly, plurals
2	Revision of alternative phonemes. Spelling rules  Common exception words	Revision of alternative phonemes and pronunciations. Spelling rules	Continued revision of phase 5 (where necessary) Spelling rules	Continued revision of phase 5 (where necessary) Spelling rules	Continued revision of phase 5 (where necessary) Spelling rules	Continued revision of phase 5 (where necessary) Spelling rules
3	Spelling rules and common exception words					
4						
5						
6						

## Planning, assessment and monitoring

Regular phonics assessment by is used to inform the planning of phonics. The Letters and Sounds document is used for planning, and Jolly Phonics is used to support this in the Early Years. This planning must be personalised to target groups or individuals in order to meet their needs. There must be evidence of both whole class, and small group planning to ensure all children are working at the appropriate level, and gaps are being filled. The effectiveness of phonics teaching and learning is monitored through book looks, English/Spelling learning walks, formal teacher observations, teacher assessments, intervention data (found on SIMS), as well as the Year 1 phonics screening test results, and SATS results.

### Phonics Non-negotiables at Ellingham

These are the key principles embedded in our teaching of early reading;

**\*Phonological awareness** – this begins in Nursery but should not stop! This develops children’s abilities to listen to, make, explore and talk about sounds.

**\*Phonics** – taught daily in Reception and KS1 following the Letters and Sounds document

**\*Vocabulary enrichment** – introducing new vocabulary in phonics lessons, as well as through Guided Reading, and English lessons using high quality texts taught through ‘Power of Reading’ teaching sequences

**\*Fluency** – taught/practised through Guided Reading, Phonics, and English lessons, as well as during one to one reading, and cross curricular reading opportunities throughout the day

**\*Comprehension** – taught/practised through Guided Reading, Phonics, and English lessons, as well as during one to one reading, and cross curricular reading opportunities throughout the day

All phonics lessons must follow the same structure;

- **Revisit and Review** (opportunity to recap previous learning, through flashcards, word/ sentence reading). This must be incidental and several times a day.
- **Teach** (introduce new phoneme using an exciting ‘hook’. Use real life objects, puppets, feely bags, stories with props etc.)
- **Practise** (usually through a game where children have to blend and segment words containing new phoneme)
- **Apply** (children to be reading and writing words and sentences containing new phoneme). Children should be given opportunities to apply their phonics knowledge across all subjects throughout the day.

*All lessons must be engaging and interactive. The structure of each lesson to be consistent but games and activities within the lesson must be varied to maintain engagement and motivation.*

Handwriting must be clearly modelled by the teacher/TA, and children must be given the opportunity to practise forming the new grapheme (either in the air, palm of hand, other children's backs, or on whiteboards/paper).

Children should be initially blending and segmenting orally, and then applying their knowledge in decodable words and sentences.

Displays and visual aids must be purposeful, engaging, and accessible for all children. These must also be consistent across the key stage/school.

Parental involvement encouraged through phonics workshops (in Reception and Year 1), and letters with resources sent home to support children at school.

Children must be given **fully decodable** reading books which match their phonics ability, in order to apply their new phonics knowledge.

## Glossary

**Phoneme** – The smallest unit of sound. There are approximately 44 phonemes in English. Phonemes can be put together to make words.

**Grapheme** – A way of writing down a phoneme. Graphemes can be made up from 1 letter e.g. 'p', 2 letters e.g. 'sh', three letters e.g. 'tch', or 4 letters e.g. 'ough'

**GPC** - This is short for Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence. Knowing a GPC means being able to match a phoneme to a grapheme and vice versa.

**Digraph** - A grapheme containing two letters that makes just one sound (phoneme).

**Split digraph** – For example; **bone, name, fine, cube, eve**

**Trigraph** - A grapheme containing three letters that makes just one sound (phoneme).

**Oral Blending** - This involves hearing phonemes and being able to merge them together to make a word. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to blend written words.

**Blending**- This involves looking at a written word, looking at each grapheme and using knowledge of GPCs to work out which phoneme each grapheme represents and then merging these phonemes together to make a word. This is the basis of reading.

**Oral Segmenting** - This is the act hearing a whole word and then splitting it up into the phonemes that make it. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to segment words to spell them.

**Segmenting** - This involves hearing a word, splitting it up into the phonemes that make it, using knowledge of GPCs to work out which graphemes represent those phonemes and then writing those graphemes down in the right order. This is the basis of spelling.

**Common exception word** – A word which cannot be read using phonics (e.g. said)

For overview of Letters and Sounds phases, see separate document.

## Resources

### Displays

All classrooms must be language rich, and be supportive of the children's learning. There must be a display of all phonemes the children should know, which can be added to as new ones are taught. Common exception words must also be displayed in an appropriate space, where children can easily see.

### Sound mats

All classrooms should have sound mats available for children to use throughout the day (EYFS to have phase 2 and 3 mats, KS1 to have phase 3 and 5 mats).

### Phonics 'toolkit'

All staff who teach phonics (either whole class or small group) to build up a phonics 'toolkit' which will have all the resources they will need to successfully deliver a lesson. This could include

- Flashcards of the phoneme
- Flashcards of words
- Sound mats
- Small whiteboards, pens and rubbers
- Decodable book (these will need to be changed regularly depending on which phoneme is being taught)

### Example structure of a phonics lesson/intervention

**Recap 1.** Speed sounds (children see a flashcard and respond with appropriate phoneme) and words (children to be shown a word with previously learnt phonemes and must sound out and then blend)

**Recap 2.** Oral blending and segmenting – ‘The Circle Game’ (children must stand in a circle. Adult says a word, and then each child in the circle must say one sound at a time. The child who blends the sounds together to say the words is out and must sit down. A new word is then said by the adult, and this is repeated until there is only one child left standing.)

**Recap 3.** Reading words/ sentences/questions containing previously learnt phoneme. Either show children one question at a time and they must read it and then decide if the answer is yes or no and show thumbs up/down. E.g if previously learnt phoneme is ‘ee’, children could read ‘Have you ever seen a green bee?’ Alternatively, read a page from a book containing the ‘ee’ phoneme

**Teach** – introduce new phoneme. This must be either using props, pictures, or a story. Spend some time looking at the phoneme, use correct vocabulary (e.g. ‘this is a digraph because it is two letters which make one sound’). Model writing the new phoneme and allow children some time to write it with just their fingers in the air, on their hands, their partners back, the classroom walls etc.

**Practise** – play a game e.g. Obb/Bob Children to select a ‘snack’ and read the word on it. They must decide if it is real or fake and give it to the correct alien. For other game see list in appendix.

**Apply** – Children to write a word/sentence containing the newly learnt phoneme