

Elstow School English Policy

May 2022

Review Cycle: Annual

Author/Owner Literacy Subject Lead.



Rationale

Our curriculum for reading, writing and phonics is designed to ensure all children at Elstow are able to decode, read and write at or above the age-related expectations. The curriculum is sequenced for progression and taught in a way that specifies the knowledge rich, high quality content the children are entitled to. Elstow teachers take account of how learning enters the long-term memory and incorporate spaced retrieval and links and connections between this and the wider curriculum.

Our policy is underpinned by the evidence of best practice from the education sector and as such is guided by the latest research published.

Phonics

Rationale

At Elstow we follow the Sounds Write phonics programme. We have a highly structured, incremental, code oriented instructional approach to teaching children to read and spell. We make sure children have the conceptual knowledge that letters are symbols that represent sounds, sounds can be represented in a number of ways and there is a link between sounds and spellings. We show children how to blend, segment and manipulate phonemes. By KS2 the teaching focusses further on polysyllabic words and teaching spelling happens through phonics lessons.

EYFS

One daily phonics lesson in which the children learn the sounds within the initial code including adjacent consonants and by the summer term, five sound words including CCVCC CCCVC patterns.

Y1

Depending on need, up to two daily phonics taught sessions. In Y1 we build on the pupils ability to blend segment and manipulate phonemes and then we introduce them to the extended code. In this teaching, the key learning is that many spellings represent more than one sounds and that many sounds can be represented by more than one spelling. Children are also introduced to polysyllabic words and they continue to rehearse and consolidate all previously taught skills and knowledge.

Y2

As year 1 plus introduction to further spellings. They revisit sounds and introduced to less common spellings such as: ei, ey, eigh patterns.

Y3 and Y4

We expect all children by Y3 to be able to decode fluently, Children who have not yet met this standard will continue to learn phonics appropriate to their ability or missed learning. The whole class learn polysyllabic words and have a more opportunities to extend their vocabulary using the conceptual knowledge in skills of blending segmenting and manipulating phonemes. This will include the most common 3,000 word families.

(reference: 3,000 words for Y2 – 6. Scope and Sequence for Sounds Write

Reading

Rationale

We believe that reading is the most important skill that Elstow pupils will learn. It widens the world and allows access to other lives, ideas, opinions and settings. We want our children to have access to a full range of high-quality books and other written material. Our philosophy is that should any of our children want to access higher education we want to build a path to enable them to achieve their goals and not limit their horizons.

Reading for pleasure is encouraged by all staff for all children. The texts in the reading curriculum have been carefully selected; they cover a wide range of genres, narrative and non-narrative styles and incorporate themes linked to the wider curriculum and wider world.

At Elstow we have developed a bespoke reading sequence and curriculum, which runs from EYFS to Y6. The journey at Elstow is learning to read which moves to reading to learn as their decoding and vocabulary

In EYFS, pupils are introduced to shorter texts and there is a daily 20 minute lesson which follows our reading sequence. It focusses heavily on vocabulary and encourages discussion, and children's response to texts.

Y1 – Y6

We have created a six-step sequence which is linked closely to Doug Lemov's Reading Reconsidered strategies. The step sequence is fixed in terms of content but is flexible in terms of days, according to the year group and text extract being studied. Teachers use professional judgement when deciding when the teaching sequence needs adapting. The sequence begins with teacher modelling fluent and expressive reading. Subsequently, children take over ownership of the reading in a process called 'Control the Game'.

Step One	Vocabulary
Step Two	Understanding the text context
Step Three	Predictions
Step Four	Literal meanings
Step Five	Understanding inference – deep text discussion
Step Six	Themes and the Big Question.

We believe in the power of shared reading, expanding their knowledge and experiences. We include social interaction and the shared experience of the text. The goal is to find the synergy between the following approaches.

Reading independently

All children at Elstow have a Go Read account. Reading is logged by parents and staff so there is a clear conversation about each child's learning journey.

EY – take home a decodable appropriate to their stage of learning so they can practise at home.

Y1 also take home decodable books and then we expand the selection of texts to extend their understanding of narrative, characterisation, plot and other different genres.

Y2 – Y6 – in addition to decodables for those who need it, they are encouraged to choose a high quality book or novel which they log in the Go Read app.

Reading aloud

We use a traffic light system which identifies children's needs. Red means children are working significantly below ARE and needs more support. When they read with an adult in school it is logged and these children are priority for

teachers and teaching assistants. Yellow means children are making or have made limited progress and may need further support. They will read more than once at least, a week, to an adult.

Our teaching sequence for reading includes specific opportunities for pupils to read out loud. This is carefully structured to ensure pupils who require more support are helped to enable them to gain confidence in front of their peers during reading lessons.

Listening to other readers

At the beginning of each reading sequence, adults model the best examples of expressive and fluent reading. We want children to enjoy the text and also to maximise the opportunities to understand the literal and inferred meanings.

Assessment

Formative assessment

This is during lessons using feedback sheets whilst teachers are listening to pupils read or during verbal or written responses to literal and inferential questions.

Summative assessment:-

Phonics Screen

Sounds Write diagnostics

PM Benchmarking (for specific EAL pupils if appropriate)

NFER end of term papers

KS1 and KS2 SAT's papers

Writing

Rationale

All children at Elstow write for a purpose with an audience in mind. Our vision is that children are exposed to high quality texts to achieve excellent written outcomes. Sequences are heavily influenced by and linked to the reading and wider curriculum in the school. A child's writing journey is mapped out from EYFS to Y6, building on the knowledge and skills for each year group. These are codified in the Teacher Assessment Frameworks and these cover written skills for a range of genres and text types.

To enable children to achieve their best quality writing, teachers plan backwards using a WAGOLL (what a good one looks like). We start with the intended outcome and include the appropriate skills specifically necessary for that genre as well as the 'non-negotiables' (e.g. basic punctuation, presentation, correct spellings where modelled). We target specific areas for teaching that teachers feedback post assessment in the DDI (Data Driven Instruction) meetings.

The progression of grammar is clearly mapped out and incorporated into lessons in each year group.

The teaching sequence.

This is based on a high-quality text with a clear outcome planned.

Teachers analyse the features of the text and then teach the knowledge and skills required within specific lessons.

Throughout the school there is a link between oral sentence construction and children have an opportunity to rehearse and then write this down. This is particularly evident in EYFS and KS1, and when children are using new vocabulary.

Children practice the skills taught within lessons (and then use them independently in their final written outcome).

Throughout the sequence, children are taught to review and edit their work (with purple pen in KS2).

Once children have applied and edited they then re-draft the final outcome.

Care is taken, through responsive actions, to ensure that the writing is scaffolded for pupils who need it during teaching the earlier lessons, but not overly supported in independent final outcomes.

Assessment

Writing is assessed formatively and summatively.

Formative assessment takes place within every lesson through 'Over the Shoulder' marking. Teachers comment verbally or using the Mark Code as appropriate giving feedback in the moment to enable maximum impact.

Teachers complete feedback sheets during the week, based on the teaching of specific skills and the lesson objectives. This is shared with the literacy subject lead.

At the end of each teaching sequence there is a final written outcome which teachers assess using the TAF (Teacher Assessment Framework). This is a secure fit not best fit model, and it informs the planning for the next sequence of writing.

The whole school uses Comparative Judgement throughout the year. This is useful because not only do we assess the writing uploaded against national comparators, but many teachers within the school judge each year group's work, enabling a thorough understanding of the progression of writing across the school.

Evidence of progression is modelled for all staff in a display in the Meeting Room, which shows end of sequence outcomes during the year.