

Phonics and Spelling



Learning happily together

Subject Intent

At Lowe's Wong Infant School our chosen Phonics programme is Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS). Essential Letters and Sounds is a systematic synthetic phonics programme which was validated by the Department for Education in June 2021.

The aim of our phonics programme is to get all children to read well, quickly. ELS offers a coherently planned sequence of daily sessions which children begin at the very start of Foundation 2, and this continues throughout Key Stage 1 (ELS Spelling begins in Y2) to ensure all children become confident, fluent readers. It teaches children to read by identifying the phonemes (the smallest unit of sound) and graphemes (the written version of the sound) within words and using these to read words. Through the programme's systematic, synthetic approach children will develop and apply blending and segmenting skills for reading and writing. It is also our intention that children will use their growing phonics knowledge to support them in other areas of the curriculum.

It is our aim to deliver high-quality first phonics teaching everyday through ELS, which will develop not only the children's phonic knowledge but also their confidence and enthusiasm for phonics learning. We will provide opportunities for challenge and support, so every child learns to read to the best of their ability.

Subject Implementation Plan

Timetabling

ELS Phonics/ELS Spelling in Y2 is explicitly taught in F2 and KS1 every day during a dedicated slot on the timetable.

It is a 20/25 minute slot in FS and 25/30 minute slot in KS1.

How Phonics is taught

We use 'Essential Letters and Sounds' DfE validated systematic synthetic phonics programme.

F2 covers Phase 2, Phase 4, and some Phase 5.

Y1 covers Phase 5 with a review of all phases in the summer term.

Y2 ELS Spelling covers all the statutory statements in the National Curriculum for Year 2.

This includes:

- Specific code (spellings)
- Suffixes
- Homophones
- Apostrophes for possession and contraction
- Common words

We begin by teaching the single letter sounds before moving to digraphs (two letters spelling one sound), trigraphs (three letters spelling one sound) and quadgraphs (four letters spelling one sound).

We teach children to:

- Decode by identifying each sound within a word and blending them together to read fluently

- Encode by segmenting each sound to write words accurately. The structure of ELS lessons allows children to know what is coming next, what they need to do, and how to achieve success. This makes it easier for children to learn the GPCs we are teaching (the alphabetic code) and how to apply this when reading.

The programme is delivered through whole-class lessons. The same teaching sequence is used in every session – Show, copy, repeat – until each child is independent. The teaching sequence is the same in all stages of the lesson, from whole class teaching to one-to-one intervention. Children are given the opportunity to hear and say each sound, first in isolation, and then within words and sentences. When introducing a new grapheme– phoneme correspondence (GPC), a mnemonic will be used or rhyme with an accompanying picture to ensure that children understand. Children then hear this sound in the context of a word, and a picture and/or definition is given to support their understanding. Practice and repetition are key.

Give, give, give

- Give the GPC – share the new sound or spelling being taught.
- Give the word – put it into context.
- Give the meaning – ensure children can use the vocabulary.

Key teaching features:

Me, then you - The teacher says something, and then the children repeat it exactly.

Provide opportunities - Practice and repetition are key. There is no 'down time' in the lesson – a consistent fast pace is maintained.

Children have many opportunities to:

- Hear the sound or word
- Say the sound or word
- See the sound or word
- Read the word
- Write the word
- Use new vocabulary.

Provide modelling - Every single aspect of the lesson is modelled for children.

Active teaching and learning - ELS lessons are active – children are engaged at all times, whether joining in with a 'drum roll' to introduce the new sound, using 'robot arms' or 'tracking the teacher' as you move around the room.

Spelling Sequence

- Say the word
- Stretch the word
- Segment the word
- Blend the word
- Count the sounds within the word
- Say the whole word

This sequence is used for any word, F2 to Y2, where the children have been taught the GPCs within the word.

In parallel classes, phonics teaching sessions will mirror each other.

Resources

Teachers have access to Oxford Owl website where all resources are available for the successful teaching of ELS – lesson plans, PowerPoints for each daily lesson and display resources.

ELS Workbooks are provided for each child.

Teachers also have access to ELS training website where they can access up to date training on how to teach ELS.

Teachers also have access to Phonics Tracker. This is an instant assessment and tracking program for phonics, high frequency words and the phonics screening check.

Marking, feedback and assessment

Teachers acknowledge work completed in workbooks with a tick.

Verbal feedback will be given to children as appropriate during the phonics session.

Assessment takes place using Phonics Tracker. Children complete assessments in Week 5 every half term. The data from these is then analysed by the English Lead and appropriate interventions are planned for.

Recording work

From F2 to Y2, children's work is mainly recorded in ELS workbooks at the end of the phonics teaching session.

The workbooks are not used in every ELS phonics session.

Whiteboards or jotters can be used to record work during a phonics session especially if there is no workbook page to complete.

High levels of presentation are encouraged with all work. High expectations for spelling and handwriting.

Y2 Spelling homework is given weekly in the Autumn term and every other week in the Spring and Summer (alongside Maths)

Learning Environment

All classrooms and teachers should have the appropriate ELS resources to compliment their year groups programme of phonics teaching eg ELS flashcards, wall poster, phoneme mats etc

F2 and Y1 have a phonics display in classrooms which are added too as the children are introduced to new phonemes.

Y2 to have the ELS Spelling poster displayed in the classroom.

Harder to Read and Spell words (HRSWs) may be on display as well along with possible High Frequency Words (HFWs) and/or Common Exception Words (CEWs)

Phoneme mats and HFWs / CEWs mats are also available to children to use in English lesson or in other lessons.

Equality and Diversity

With a range of tools and appropriately adapted resources all children have equal access to Phonics learning.

The Oxford Owl slides used to support phonics teaching depict a diverse representation of children.

Curriculum Enrichment

The learning from ELS phonics lessons is referenced by teachers when writing as part of the wider curriculum.

The ELS reading books that are used alongside the phonics scheme are a range of both fiction and non-fiction texts and are exciting and engaging to children. The children can

take these books home and experience the joy of books and language with parents and carers.

SEND

ELS is a whole class teaching model. This means every single child has the same opportunities when learning to read. Learning to read well, early, is a priority for every child.

Children who find it harder to learn how to read will be given extra support from their teacher or a TA through interventions within the lesson, on the same day or in small groups or as 1 to 1 support. These interventions should be short, specific, and effective.

We believe in the principle that children should 'keep up' rather than 'catch up'.

Visual prompts/phonics actions are used in every phonics session.

With a range of appropriately adapted resources, teaching aids, and pedagogy, all children have equal access to the teaching of phonics.

Behaviour

It is expected that all children should demonstrate the 3 things for good behaviour during Phonics lessons – good sitting, good listening, and good looking.

If whiteboards and pens are being used, it is expected that these will not be a distraction when not in use and will be placed on the carpet or in laps and will not be fiddled with when not in use.

During workbook time at tables, teachers will use the visual prompt cards – Whispering Whales or Silent Snails to determine the level of noise for the activity.

Good behaviour will be rewarded in line with the school's behaviour policy.

It is expected that teachers will respond to any misbehaviour promptly during phonics lessons by following the school's agreed behaviour policy of reminders, warnings, reflection and time outs.