



Evelyn Street Primary Academy & Nursery

Phonics

Intent

At Evelyn Street we believe that it is essential that children learn to read fluently and with good understanding.

We value reading as a key life skill that can unlock both the curriculum and the world around children. We want children to develop a love of reading both for pleasure and learning and become lifelong readers.

We are committed to the excellent teaching of phonics; Phonics provides the building blocks for successful readers and is the first step in learning how to read for children. It helps to ensure that all children become confident and enthusiastic readers.

Implementation

To support our children on their reading journey we have a high quality, systematic approach to the teaching of phonics. At Evelyn Street we use the “**Read, Write Inc.**” phonics programme which provides a systematic and rigorous approach to the teaching of phonics, sight words, segmenting, blending and decoding skills. Children are taught that individual letters and groups of letters make sounds and that these can be identified and blended together to make words, which can then be read and understood in books.

Phonics is taught explicitly and on a daily basis, either in whole class sessions or in smaller group sessions. Children are assessed regularly both during the lessons and at regular intervals throughout the year, this means that learning is targeted and challenging. Children work in phonic sessions tailored to their individual needs. Lessons are interactive, children are aware of what the intention of their lessons are and the pace of the lesson ensures that children are fully engaged.

Phonics is embedded in all areas of the curriculum and children experience regular, planned opportunities to practise and develop their phonic abilities.

Nursery

Nursery children develop their speaking and listening skills and become aware of the sounds around them. These sessions prepare them to begin developing sound and letter knowledge, which they will undertake near to the end of their time in nursery.

Reception

Reception children continue to build upon their knowledge of phonics. Reception children have discrete lessons where they are introduced to sounds made by single letters or small groups of 2 and 3 letters. They learn to identify the sound (phoneme) and the letter/s that can be written to represent it (grapheme). They learn the skills of looking at words and using their knowledge to segment the sounds in words for example m-a t and then they blend the sounds together to create a word, m-a-t says mat. This happens in word time lessons where

children develop their segmenting and blending skills and begin to read real words. A multisensory approach is used and children segment and blend words on cards, create them with magnetic letters and learn to write the letters to create these words on whiteboards and in books. Practising the reading of these words gives children success at reading at a very early stage of their reading journey. This then encourages them to read words in sentences.

Throughout the **Read, Write Inc.** programme children apply their phonic knowledge to the reading of words that can be decoded (green words) and they are introduced to words that do not follow the phonetic code (Red words)

With their growing phonic knowledge and abilities the children in Reception are introduced to decodable books from **Read, Write, Inc.** Decodable means that the words in the books can be segmented into sounds and then blended to make words. These are closely matched to the sounds that children are learning and can include books that just have single words on each page for the children to consolidate their skills and then they may bring home a decodable book that helps to consolidate the learning that has occurred in their phonics sessions. These books will have sentences in them, including both green and red words. All books are closely monitored by staff and matched to children's phonic abilities. Being able to read a book (decodable) means that children continue to feel successful as they continue their reading journey.

Year One

In year one, phonics is still taught daily and the children consolidate their phonic knowledge and practice their decoding. They are introduced to more complex sounds and alternative sounds that can be created by the same letters that they have already used, for example ay in the word play can also be in words spelt a different way, for example ai in snail. These letters make the same sound but are spelt differently. Recognising and being able to use these sounds allows children to read a wider range of words and texts. Children can also use this phonic knowledge in their writing and spelling activities.

Year one children undertake the government phonics screening test to assess their knowledge and application of phonics. The phonics screening check is a national assessment for all children in year one. It happens in June and is completed by the children one to one with a teacher. Whilst children learn phonics to help them with both word reading and spelling, the phonics screening assessment, tests their word reading skills (decoding) During the assessment children are asked to decode 40 words. Some of the words will be real words but some will be "nonsense" words. These are words that rely on children using their decoding skills and not just relying on the memory of words they may have read before. To indicate to children that a word is a nonsense word and to ensure they read using their phonic skills rather than trying to make it into a word that they think it may look like, a picture of an alien is alongside each word.

The following video provides a quick view of the screening test

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbKGLJPP6ww>

Year Two

In year two, if children still need some input with phonics, to help them achieve and develop their reading skills, they will participate in small groups to further consolidate their phonic knowledge. Children in KS2 who may still find phonics challenging, will be supported by daily one to one or small group sessions to help them acquire and apply their decoding and segmenting skills.

Children, who still need to develop their phonic skills, will continue to read decodable books both at school and home.

Impact

Phonics will improve children's reading accuracy as it provides them with the crucial skills of word recognition, this enables children to read fluently and accurately, children can then develop other reading skills, including comprehension of books and texts that are being read and understanding of new vocabulary. Comprehension will allow children to ask and answer questions about the fiction and non-fiction texts that they read and enjoy.