



Curriculum Handbook
Early Years and KS1
Early Reading and Phonics



Curriculum Statement

Reading is one of the most important skills a child will learn at school. We are committed to helping every child read fluently and develop a love of reading.

At Eynsham Primary School we will:

- Ensure staff have a confident, fluent and coherent understanding of phonics and the effect this will have on a pupil's progress, both inside and outside of the school environment.
- Deliver high-quality phonics teaching to help children quickly develop the word reading skills that form the foundation for successful and enjoyable reading.
- Make sure all staff understand the planning, assessment, teaching, and learning requirements of the national curriculum to teach children how to use phonics knowledge and skills to decode words.
- Ensure staff understand how a strong grounding in word reading skills will impact the future learning and

development of a pupil in all aspects of their life.



Intent

Phonics

We understand that reading is a fundamental skill which underpins all other learning, and at Eynsham Community Primary School we want all our children to achieve fluent, passionate, lifelong literacy skills. We believe that phonics is the most effective way to teach the skills needed for these and we do so using a DfE validated SSP programme **Rocket Phonics** programme.

Comprehension

At Eynsham, we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose.

Implementation

Our teaching of phonics at Eynsham follows the **Rocket Phonics Systematic Synthetic Phonics Teaching Principles**. These principles are the specific knowledge and skills children need to be able to read and

write in the English language. They are broken down into these smaller steps:

Knowledge of the English Alphabetic Code (150+ graphemes that represent 44 speech sounds)

- see the letters, say the sounds for reading to automaticity
- hear the sounds, recall the letters for spelling to automaticity (these are reversible processes)

Skill of blending for reading

- oral blending
- modelled blending
- supported blending
- independent blending at word, sentence and text levels

Skill of segmenting for spelling

- oral segmenting
- modelled segmenting
- supported segmenting
- knowing which spelling alternative to use

Skill of handwriting

- pencil hold
- letter formation
- positioning on a writing line
- print before cursive

At Eynsham we follow the **Rocket Phonics** fundamental concepts:

- Phonics is overseen by a dedicated phonics leader.
- Phonics is taught daily.
- All staff are supported with regular phonics professional development training.
- A clear pathway is followed through the alphabetic code.
- Children are not asked to read texts by themselves that they can't yet read.
- The Systematic Synthetic Phonics Teaching Principles are taught explicitly.
- The Teaching & Learning Cycle (revisit and review, teach, practise, apply) is followed.
- Children are supported to keep up, so they do not need to catch up.
- Phonics is taught at letter-sound, word, sentence and text levels.
- Core phonics provision is distinguished from phonics enrichment activities.
- Teachers have clarity about what, why and how they are teaching.
- Teachers focus on details, such as accurate modelling and pencil hold.

We begin teaching phonics as soon as our children join school in Nursery and follow the [Rocket Phonics Progression Map](#) which ensures children build on their growing

knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

Foundations for phonics in Nursery

We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and language' and 'Literacy'. These include:

- sharing high-quality stories and poems
- learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
- activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
- attention to high-quality language.

We follow **Rocket Phonics First Steps** nursery phonics and language programme. Phonemic awareness and early phonics development are entwined with vocabulary and language models. This phonics and language development programme for children aged 3–4 years develops children's speaking and listening skills, phonological awareness and oral blending and segmenting. We are laying the foundations ready for reading and writing by ensuring

children can hear and say sounds. We are developing children's ability to:

- Listen attentively
- Enlarge their vocabulary
- Speak confidently to adults and other children
- Discriminate phonemes
- Develop an understanding and enjoyment of books
- Reproduce audibly the phonemes they hear, in order, all through the word
- Use sound talk to segment words into phonemes

Daily sessions have a recommended structure, pace and progression, gradually increasing in duration throughout the year. The Teaching and Learning Cycle (Revisit and Review, Teach, Practise, Apply) is followed through the week, with flexibility to support the development of children's recall skills.

EYFS and Year 1 Daily phonics lessons

We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In EYFS, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Through Rocket Phonics we teach one

letter-sound correspondence over two days. The first day focuses on blending skills and the second day focuses on segmenting skills. Reading and writing are interlinked so there will naturally be overlap, but by separating the skills and spreading them across two days the teacher has greater clarity over which skill is being taught, practised or applied. The children have more time and more opportunity to learn, practise and apply the skills using the new letter-sound correspondences before moving on. The two-day pattern is repeated twice through the week, leaving the fifth day as an opportunity for further consolidation, assessment, enrichment activities or as a focus lesson on common exception words.

Rocket Phonics Sounds Mat 2	zz fizzy 	qu queen 	ch chick 	sh sheep 	th thumb feather 
ng ring 	ai train 	ee bee 	igh light 	oa boat 	oo book moon 
ar car 	or fork 	ur purse 	ow owl 	oi coin 	ear ear 
air chair 	ure manure 	er hammer 	wh wheel 	ph dolphin 	ay crayon 
a-e cake 	a acorn 	e-e scene 	ie shield 	ea peach 	

Year 2 Daily phonics lessons

We timetable daily phonics lessons for children in Year 2 following **Rocket Phonics Next Steps**, revisiting letter-sound correspondences, and introducing new spelling content such as suffixes, using a layered approach that focuses on the following elements

- knowledge of the complex part alphabetic code
- independent blending at word, sentence and text levels
- knowing which spelling alternative to use
- cursive handwriting.

In Year 2 **Rocket Phonics**, teaching is through a 'dual aspect'. In class teaching (shared whole-class reading) the adult uses the Year 2 colour-banded books, but low attainers can use the Blue, Green and Orange Target Practice Readers as their book band individual book to link to the phonics being revisited. Low attainers are getting a gap-closing revision year to prepare them for Year 3. Phonics screening results, teacher assessment and Rocket Phonics Assessment baseline/half termly tools enable gaps to be identified and targeted keep-up sessions implemented.

If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics 'catch-up' lessons and use

interventions, such as precision teaching and PiXL resources, to address specific reading/writing gaps. These short, sharp interventions will take place on a weekly basis and are monitored by the English lead, SENDCo and KS1 Early Reading and Phonics Intervention specialist.

Ensuring reading for pleasure

'Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's success.'
(OECD 2002)

'The will influences the skill and vice versa.'
(OECD 2010)

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy. **Rocket Phonics** combines the alphabetic code knowledge and skills that are needed to learn to read and write, with language-rich children's literature. This approach embeds phonics in context, and supports a love of reading and writing from the outset. At the heart of the programme are the digital-only 'Big Books', which consist of language-rich stories to teach all the target letter-sounds in context.



Alongside our daily phonics sessions, we read to children every day in all classes. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at Eynsham Community Primary School as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.

Every classroom has an inviting book corner that is regularly maintained, updated with 'Hot Books' and encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books. Children have access to the reading corner every day, as well as the school library

Home reading

A decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family. Every child in the school is expected to read at home at least 3 times a week and this should be recorded in their reading diary. Every class teacher keeps a running record of how many times a week children are reading at home. This allows teachers to track which children need more support in school and which children need to be exposed to different genres. We celebrate reading achievements in celebration assembly on a weekly basis. Classes are excited and enthused by this and love earning a reading celebration treat. 'Reading for pleasure' books also go home for parents to share and read to children. This might be a more difficult chapter book which can be accessed via paired reading or shared by parents/carers to the child for enjoyment. To support reading at home we use [Rocket Phonics Parent Support](#)



[Rocket-Phonics-Parent-Guide.pdf](#) [Rocket Phonics | The English Alphabetic Code | A guide for parents, carers and families](#)

to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through Stay and Learn sessions. Teachers have an open door policy and we are very happy to speak to parents on a regular basis about their child's reading ability and how reading sessions are facilitated at home.

Impact

Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it. We strive to ensure all our children can keep up.

Formative assessment is used daily within class to identify children needing Keep-up support. Teachers will then use Teaching Assistants or support from the weekly 'In the Review' lesson to assess gaps; addressing these immediately and securing fluency.

Summative assessment is used every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional

support and to plan the keep-up support that they need. All phonics assessment data is tracked by teachers and centrally stored on the Phonics Tracking Shared Drive.

The English Lead regularly monitors and observes teaching, discusses progress from analysing termly data and identifies children who need additional support due to gaps in learning. The bottom 20% of children is also tracked across the school in Reading and Writing, with all teachers ensuring they are monitoring progress and planning interventions and quality first teaching accordingly.

Statutory assessment is carried out when children in Year 1 sit the Phonics screening check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2. Any child who does not pass their screen in Year 2 is tracked as they move into KS2 and other interventions are used to aid closing the gaps, such as precision teaching, PiXL therapies and the use of Astro Books - high interest/low reading level.



Working Walls

These are an extremely important part of the learning process as they provide children with a form of continuous provision they can keep referring to throughout the journey. The appropriate frieze will be displayed and the weekly phonemes, graphemes and words will be displayed in all classes.



Inclusion

Our aim and expectation is that almost all children have the capacity to read and write well when taught with phonics and we follow the ethos of 'keeping up, not catching up'. Through the use of steady pace and progression, whole-class teaching and consistent daily phonics practice we aim to support all learners, and we take steps to support those needing further time. At Eynsham we:

- Ensure every adult working with the class knows who these children are, e.g. discuss formally and informally; keep a brief 'profile' record electronically or in a class reading management folder in order to be able to share information easily.
- Assess, observe and evaluate the possible reasons for slower progress, e.g. weak memory; weak concentration; slower processing; hearing or sight difficulties; impoverished vocabulary; SEBD (Social, Emotional or Behavioural Difficulties).
- Discuss significant concerns with the SENDCo - Hayley Davis.
- Do not use a different intervention programme. Continue to expose the child to the main class teaching but adjust the expected outcomes, e.g. the child may achieve some but not all of the Pupil Practice Booklet activities, (however, they may return to complete the activities with adult support later in the day and week).
- Strategically position the children where they have a clear line of sight to the teacher and can be supported during the lesson, e.g. at the front of the class.
- Pinpoint the specific difficulty, e.g. letter-sound retention; ability to blend/segment; letter reversals.
- Build in additional sessions targeted to specific needs, e.g. an afternoon session revisiting content at a slower pace or focusing on one skill at a time.
- Build in opportunities for 'little and often' practice through the day, e.g. flashcards whilst lining up for lunchtime; five minute 1:1 targeted intervention sessions.
- Provide children with their own pack of materials that can be taken home, e.g. their own sets of flashcards; Pupil Practice Booklets for use at home; additional decodable reading books.
- Work as closely as possible with parents and carers.
- Be specific about small measurable targets, e.g. This week we will make sure we know the letter-sounds p, n, m.
- Provide additional support during sessions, e.g. use individual sets of selected grapheme tiles to enable children to select graphemes rather than writing them.
- Print and laminate Sounds Mats in A4 and A3 sizes for support during

phonics lessons and during wider curriculum lessons. These can be found in all classes.

- Check that visual displays are accessible, e.g. large enough, at a suitable height.

Extending and challenging

At Eynsham we 'lift the ceiling' off our teaching and learning. This means that lessons are designed to be ambitious and all children are exposed to the same content and materials. Every child deserves to experience open-ended extension and challenge. At Eynsham we:

- Ensure that adults understand that children may be ready for extension and challenge in some but not all areas, e.g. a child may read at a level beyond the main class teaching but may have gaps in code knowledge or be weak in any of the phonics skills or sub-skills.
- Rocket Phonics lessons already contain content to cater for faster-to-learn children, e.g. the very first Pupil Practice Booklet lessons include words and sentences that they can use for decoding and segmenting despite most children focusing on

phonemic awareness and letter-sound correspondences at that point. Lessons stretch beyond letter-sound and word levels to include sentence and text level activities. Lessons also contain ambitious vocabulary and word structures.

- In general, we keep faster-to-learn children working at the same pace and progression as the rest of the class and extend them within the lesson with planned ambitious questioning.
- Provide early exposure to more of the alphabetic code through visual display of the **Rocket Phonics** frieze.
- Engage in discussion about vocabulary and the ways in which words are spelled.
- Use letter names to relay spellings when children are confident with letter names, e.g. That's right, you need the /ai/ sound in the word snail, and in that word it is spelled with the letter a and the letter i.
- Encourage children to sometimes practise independently without close supervision, thereby taking more responsibility for their own practice. This is fundamental to our continuous provision in EYFS.

- Encourage children to self-dictate by reading a sentence, holding it in their heads, then writing it down from memory.
- Encourage children to compose and write their own sentences in addition to those dictated to them.
- Be diligent about accuracy and attention to detail.

Provide additional enrichment reading books that may contain words beyond the taught code but are accessible to faster-to-learn children who can read them at a level of 95% independence, e.g. Reading Planet Galaxy and Comet Street Kids series.



Cultural Capital

At Eynsham, we take every opportunity possible to enhance the cultural capital of our learners and equip them with the knowledge and experiences needed for society. One way in which we promote cultural capital via reading is by providing and exposing our children to a range of high-quality texts, from different genres, that have been written by authors from a wide range of backgrounds.

Texts have been carefully chosen, in close liaison with class teachers and the English Lead, to link closely with and enhance the learning of the overarching topic for the term and should endeavour to inspire, engage and motivate all learners.



Children experience a range of text types, including fiction, non-fiction and poetry. We spend time looking and learning about authors of the books we read in English

lessons. Here are other things we have done, and continue to do, as a school, to promote cultural capital through reading:

All year groups, from Nursery to Year 6, have a text library in their class. It is a selection of books that have been hand picked by the class teachers and English Lead, to ensure a coverage of a variety of genres including non-fiction and poetry. The other texts have been specifically chosen because they have rich vocabulary, are written by famous authors, teach diversity or are recommended books from the Pie Corbett Reading Spine. All teachers read and re-read these texts to children throughout the year so that at the end of the school year, pupils have a breadth of knowledge and understanding about famous authors and literature. In the future, they can then build on this and eventually have the ability to engage with high culture literature.

To close gaps and to add to the cultural capital of our children, all classrooms have a vocabulary vault on display and is in use weekly to develop vocabulary knowledge and understanding at all times. Teachers will explicitly teach the word, which is often found in the high-quality text being used for guided reading, or the whole class reading for pleasure text. Teachers will then build a bank of words in the vocabulary vault throughout the year. Pupils are then exposed to the

words daily, using actions and stem sentences, to aid their recall and ability to use the words both when communicating and to enhance writing.

Each term, our Newspaper Club will write and produce a whole school newspaper. This gives our pupils the opportunity to talk about current, child friendly world affairs allowing them to expand their understanding of the world and add to their cultural capital. In our library, we have a very good collection of books which all our pupils can read for pleasure to enhance their understanding of inspirational figures. Not only does this support their cultural capital in reading, but could also support their learning in science and history.

In our whole school library, we have a very special collection of 'Little People Big Dreams' books which pupils can read for pleasure to enhance their understanding of inspirational figures. Not only does this support their cultural capital in reading, but can also support their fundamental learning in science and history.

We have a strong community link to the Eynsham Library. Our pupils have timetabled visits throughout the year get to experience reading in a different environment alongside getting to know the staff and how the library is ran so successfully.

As a school, we are committed to celebrating World Book on an annual basis and adapt this annually to ensure each year builds on our pupils' prior experiences and continues to develop their love and pleasure for reading.

Here at Eynsham, we strive to create a positive early reading culture where reading is celebrated, appreciated and respected.

Reading is the bedrock of the curriculum and we recognise that it is paramount to our pupils' personal, social and academic success, as well as their general wellbeing.

