ELTHAM
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL
SINCE 1814

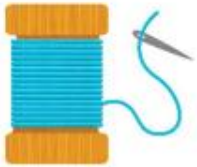
Phonics Information Workshop EYFS Eltham CE Primary

Monday 14th September 2026



What are we going to cover?

- What is Phonics?
- What is Essential Letters and Sounds?
- How we teach phonics
- Getting children ready to read
- Supporting your child with reading at home
- Pronouncing pure sounds
- Using the letter formations and spelling sequence to support writing at home

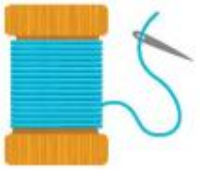




What is Phonics?

A method of teaching beginners to read and pronounce words by learning to associate letters or letter groups with the sounds they represent.

There are 44 main sounds in the English Language. Each sound is represented by a grapheme (the written representation of a sound).





What is Phonics?

Phoneme: the smallest single identifiable sound in a word. For example, in the word 'cat' there are three phonemes c/a/t.

Grapheme: the written representation of a sound.

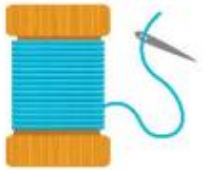
Digraph: two letters making one sound. For example, /sh/ in the word 'shop'.

Trigraph: three letters making one sound. For example, /igh/ in the word 'night'.

Split digraph: two vowel letters split but are split by one or more consonants. For example, /a-e/ in the word 'cake'.

What is ELS?

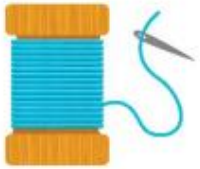
Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) is our chosen phonics programme. It teaches children to read by identify the phonemes (smallest unit of sound) and graphemes (written version of the sound) within words and using these to read words.
Children experience the joy of books and language whilst rapidly acquiring the skills they need to become fluent independent readers and writers.





How do we teach phonics?

- We use a simple, consistent approach to teaching phonics.
- Your child will experience the same classroom routines within each lesson which reduces cognitive load and maximises the chances of success.
- All children are supported within the lesson to use their new phonic knowledge independently.
- In every single ELS lesson, your child will make the direct application to reading.

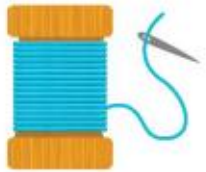




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How do we teach phonics?

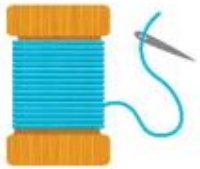
- Daily Phonics sessions- these start from the beginning of Reception
- Phonics throughout the day to review new sounds & graphemes taught
- Lots of opportunities for oral blending- c/oa/t
- Main focus is on word recognition. However, new vocabulary is also given and explained in every lesson.
- Opportunities for writing- new grapheme, words and sentences.





ELS Progression

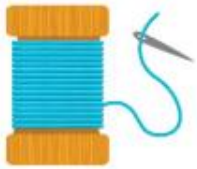
Phase 1*	Phase 2	Phase 3**
Nursery/Pre-School Seven aspects: • Environmental sounds • Instrumental sounds • Body percussion • Rhythm and rhyme • Alliteration • Voice sounds • Oral blending	*Reception Autumn 1* • Oral blending • Sounding out and blending with 23 new grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) • 12 new harder to read and spell (HRS) words	*Reception Autumn 2, Spring 1 and Spring 2* • Oral blending • Sounding out and blending with 29 new GPCs • 32 new HRS words • Revision of Phase 2





ELS Progression

Phase 4**	Phase 5 including alternatives and lesser-known GPCs	Beyond Phase 5
Reception Summer 1 • Oral blending • No new GPCs • No new HRS words • Word structures – cvcc, ccvc, ccvcc, cccvc, cccvcc • Suffixes • Revision of Phase 2 and Phase 3	*Reception Summer 2* • Introduction to Phase 5 for reading • 20 new GPCs • 16 new HRS words *Year 1 Autumn 1 and 2* • Revision of previously taught Phase 5 GPCs • 2 new GPCs • 9 new HRS words *Year 1 Spring 1 and 2* • Alternative spellings for previously taught sounds • 49 new GPCs • 4 new HRS words • Oral blending • Revision of Phase 2, Phase 3 and Phase 4	*Year 1 Summer, Year 2 and Key Stage 2* • With ELS, phonics teaching does not stop at the end of Year 1, but continues as children move through the school, with links being made between their GPC knowledge and spelling • Revision of all previously taught GPCs for reading and spelling • Wider reading, spelling and writing curriculum



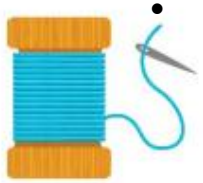


Supporting **all** children to read

- ELS is a whole class based scheme with the mission that children ‘keep up not catch up.’
- To support this, during the independent ‘workbook apply’ section, children who need further consolidation work with the teacher on the carpet to reinforce the day’s sound.
- Children who need further consolidation, still, revisit the sound again for 5 minutes each afternoon with a trained teaching assistant in a short intervention session.
- More confident readers are challenged to read demanding texts during the workbook apply section; to use new and aspirational vocabulary in context and through targeted questioning during phonic sessions as well as during 1:1 reading (Reception) and guided reading sessions (in Y1).

Supporting your child with reading at home

- Only 1 in 3 children are read a bedtime story night
- Reading a bedtime story every night to your child improves their outcomes
- If your child views themselves as a 'good reader' when they leave Primary School they are more likely to earn a higher salary in their 40s.



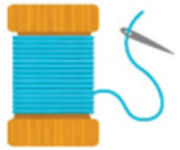
- Children who achieve their 'Good Level of Development' in Reading at the end of EYFS are **11 times** more likely to achieve standard in their Y6 Maths SATs- reading really does underpin everything!



Supporting your child with reading at home

- Children will only be reading from books which are fully decodable (except for a small number of HRS or topic/story words (these are listed on the inside front cover)
- We only use pure sounds when decoding word (no uuhh sound at the end)
- We will be changing books weekly. This is a change for those of you with older siblings but this is due to updated research around memory and retrieval which supports this approach.

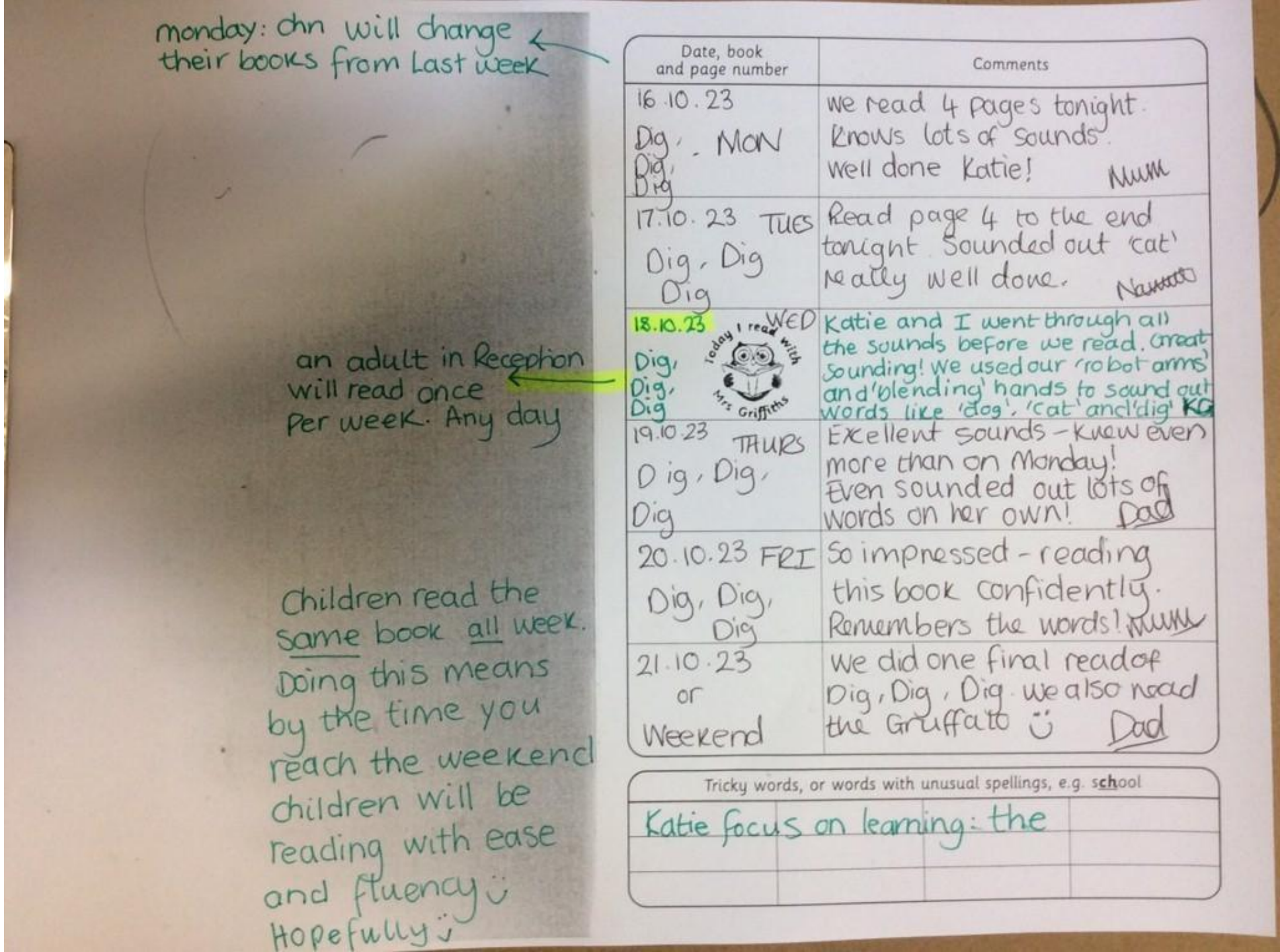
- We want them to practise reading their book 4 times across the week working on these skills:
  - decode
  - fluency
  - expression





Staged Books 1 to 6 containing the phonics taught in class so far. A phonics sheet will be given to support parents at home.

At the end of each term home work will be set outlining the children's gaps in their phonic knowledge.



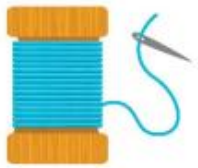
Pronouncing pure sounds

We must use pure sounds when we are pronouncing the sounds and supporting children in reading words.

If we mispronounce these sounds we will make reading harder for our children.

There are videos for this on our school website where you can hear the correct pronunciation of the sounds.

https://elthamcoeschool.co.uk/curriculum/literacy/



Curriculum, Literacy, scroll down to Phonics paragraph



Supporting your child with writing at home

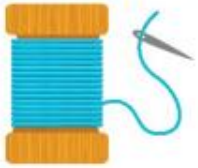


You can use the spelling sequence with your children at home to support them with their writing.

Let's try this with the word: rain

Fine Motor Skills first!

We also practise saying our sentences before we write them to make sure we write the sentence we have planned and to ensure it makes sense!





ELS Essential Letters and Sounds

Questions



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