

## Epworth Primary Academy's Approach to Teaching Phonics and Reading

**Our intention for the reading curriculum we deliver is for the pupils in our school to become fluent, confident, lifelong readers. We aim to ensure that the pupils in our school develop a love of reading through a text-rich environment, which introduces them to a wide range of genres and authors. We further enhance our provision through access to library visits, author visits, visits to the theatre wherever we can as well as school events and days focussed around fostering a love of reading.**

Prior to beginning the teaching of phonics, our pupils are introduced to text through access to stimulating texts and drama activities to enhance understanding, while also ensuring that pupils are immersed in a vocabulary rich environment to prepare them for accessing books.

Throughout foundation stage and key stage one at Epworth Primary Academy, children have daily bespoke phonics sessions using the principles of Read, Write Inc as this best matches the needs of our pupils. These sessions run daily and are delivered by staff to pupils grouped by personalised need.

Those pupils, who have been identified as needing extra support in reading at any stage of their education at Epworth Primary Academy, will receive small group and one to one intervention to ensure they become fluent readers of age-appropriate texts and that any gaps are narrowed between them and their peers.

Throughout school (including KS2), phonics skills and reading skills, are reinforced in all lessons where appropriate, and pupils are encouraged to apply their phonic knowledge in all areas of the curriculum and in their independent work and in support of each other.

High quality systematic, synthetic phonic work makes sure that pupils learn:

- grapheme/phoneme (letter/sound) correspondences (the alphabetic principle) in a clearly defined, incremental sequence;
- to apply the highly important skill of blending (synthesising) phonemes, in order, all through a word to read it;
- to apply the skills of segmenting words into their constituent phonemes to spell;
- that blending and segmenting are reversible processes.

Our programme ensures that children are introduced to a defined initial group of consonants and vowels, enabling children, from the day they start in our school, to read and spell many simple CVC words.

Incremental progression in phonic knowledge and skills is regularly assessed by staff to track pupils' progress, assess for further learning and ensure that accurate intervention is implemented wherever necessary.

The school reading scheme begins early in the foundation stage; pupils take home picture books to encourage them to be able to tell a story using appropriate language, developing a growing bank of tier 2 and 3 vocabulary. When the children are ready to progress, they will take home books that have decodable words for them to practise their learning from class sessions.

As they progress through the EYFS, children take home reading books appropriate to their level of reading ability and containing simple, CVC words so that they can segment the sounds in simple words and blend them together independently. These books perfectly match the level of phonics being taught in their session so they are not accessing books which they cannot confidently decode.

Pupils are encouraged to apply their phonic knowledge when reading their books, using taught digraphs and trigraphs, as well as strategies needed to be able to decode a word.

Once pupils have met the year 1 phonics expectations, they progress to the Accelerated Reader book scheme which runs from year 1-year 6. As part of this scheme, the children participate in a baseline assessment which identifies their reading age and targets them with ability appropriate books for them to access. As they move through this scheme, they can take mini assessments after completing each book which enables staff to track their level of understanding and signpost them to further reading material best suited to their decodable and comprehension needs. This scheme has books at each level up to and beyond year 6, where the pupils are accessing a range of genres and texts including classics and modern texts and future classics.

Classes also have access to their own classroom libraries where they can borrow books in addition to their books on the school reading scheme; these are either for enjoyment or to consolidate skills learned across the curriculum, either to read independently or alongside an adult at home. These support in fostering the love of reading our pupils need.

Pupils at Epworth Primary Academy have daily timetabled sessions of class focussed guided reading. These sessions are based around a class novel and focussed on verbal discussion of a text followed by a series of activities to deepen their comprehension of the text. This supports pupils in developing and mastering the comprehension skills of retrieval, clarification of vocabulary, questioning, summarising and predicting, all of which are vital for becoming skilled at comprehension.

During these sessions, the teacher makes observations and assessments of the progress being made and identifies any areas that require more focussed teaching.

We promote and celebrate reading in school in a variety of ways:

- Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in developing their child's reading skills. The children are encouraged to take home their reading books and reading journals, which are shared with parents. We ask parents to comment and record every time they hear their child read, as well as read the comments made by school staff. Reading records are checked weekly by class teachers to ensure that they demonstrate at least three reads a week beyond the school day. These are fed back to pupils weekly with guidance and support for those pupils not completing the requisite amount of reads.

- Children are rewarded individually for regular reading at home through a class-based system of celebration. This encourages children to read regularly at home and provides additional motivation for our pupils.
- The book fayre takes place in school each autumn term to further promote reading. During the week, activities run which are designed to excite pupils to want to attend. This raises the profile of reading, while also ensuring that reading resources can be updated and improved across school.
- Celebration events take place throughout the school year, including visits to the local and central library, inviting authors into school for visits, access to theatre visits, world book day events, paired reading across classes and other class based enjoyment activities.

Parent workshops and parent guides are provided to support parents with their child's phonic and reading development and staff provide personalised one to one support, as required.

We value the involvement of our pupils in driving our reading curriculum and supporting each other in choosing and maintaining our reading resources across school. Because of this, we have a newly instated group of reading ambassadors whose role it is to lead reading initiatives across school and support other pupils in their reading progress and enjoyment.

We pride ourselves on the quality of our reading resources across school as we know that in order for pupils to value reading, they need access to quality reading materials. Because of this, regular substantial investment is made to ensure the library, class collections and the school reading scheme are renewed frequently with damaged and torn books removed from circulation. Pupils are involved in the purchasing of new books and these are celebrated and shared at a whole school level.