



Phonics Vision Statement

At Beecroft Academy, we believe every child should have the chance to become happy, fluent readers. Therefore, Phonics is taught through a highly structured programme of daily lessons across EYFS and KS1. Each session gives an opportunity for children to revisit their previous learning, be taught new skills, practise together and apply what they have learned.

Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) is our chosen Phonics programme. The aim of ELS is to get all children to read well, quickly. 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. Essential Letters and Sounds is a systematic synthetic phonics programme and was validated by the Department for Education in June 2021.

All members of staff are trained to teach ELS to ensure that we have an expert team of reading teachers led by our Reading/Phonics Lead. As a staff team, we regularly meet to review our practice and to practise teaching together. This ensures that all children receive high-quality first teaching every day. Our classrooms are well resourced to ensure that every child has the resources required to learn to read well.

To ensure all children learn to read well, quickly, children learn phonics from the very start of Reception. It is explicitly taught every day during a dedicated slot on the timetable. Throughout the day, children use their growing phonic knowledge to support them in other areas of the curriculum and have many opportunities to practise reading decodable texts precisely matched to the phonic knowledge. This includes reading 1:1 with a member of staff, with a partner during paired reading and during whole class reading sessions. We know that reading is a fundamental life skill and ensure that all children leave our school able to read well. Daily Phonics lessons continue in Year 1 and further through the school to ensure all children become confident, fluent readers.

We follow the ELS progression and sequence. This allows our children to practise their existing phonic knowledge whilst building their understanding of the 'code' of our language. As a result, children can tackle any unfamiliar words that they might discover. We teach children more rarely used GPCs through the ELS progression. This means that they can decode and read more words with increased fluency.

ELS is supported by a wide range of completely decodable texts. These cover both fiction and non-fiction and are exciting and engaging for all our pupils. We match the home reading texts to each child's current phonic knowledge to ensure that they consolidate their most recent teaching and learning at home. Children experience the joy of books and language whilst rapidly acquiring the skills they need to become fluent independent readers and writers. ELS teaches relevant, useful and ambitious vocabulary to support children's journey to becoming



fluent and independent readers.

At our school 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. Where further phonic support is required in Key Stage 2, this is timetabled daily to ensure that any child rapidly catches up. Children are assessed in week 5 of each half term to ensure that any specific gaps can be targeted immediately.

We reinforce the link between reading and writing in every ELS lesson through the independent application of the children's understanding. We also ensure that all our teachers reference the learning from ELS lessons when writing as part of the wider curriculum.