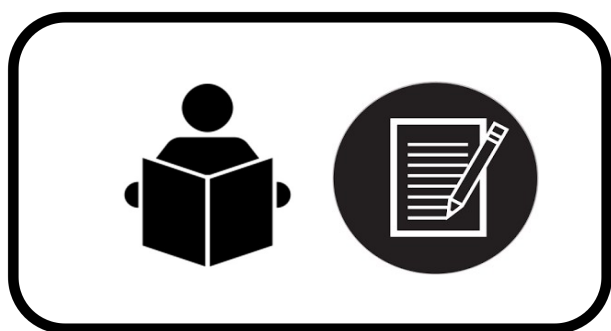
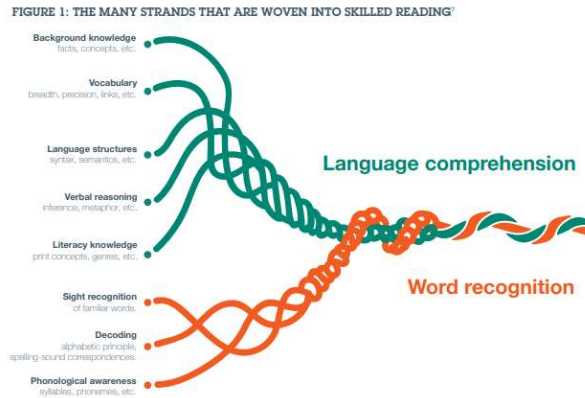


Phonics at Edale



Intent

At Edale, we recognise the importance of a systematic, synthetic phonics programme in teaching children the skills they need to become proficient readers and writers. This approach is particularly important for our younger learners in supporting them beginning to read and write in the early years and in improving literacy in KS1 (EEF Literacy guidance report, 2020). The phonics curriculum 'SoundsWrite' is used to complement and be embedded within our reading and writing curriculums in order to give children a complete literacy strategy.



The Scarborough Reading Rope, taken from EEF, that shows the importance of phonics in supporting children to become skilled readers.

The importance of practice (taken from Sounds Write)

We want beginning readers to become experts inasmuch as they know how the writing system works in relation to the sounds of the language and they are able to use that knowledge to become fluent readers and writers. For that to happen, beginning readers need practise: practise in connecting sounds to spellings and spellings to sounds; practise in performing the skills of segmenting, blending and phoneme manipulation; and practise in understanding the levels of conceptual understanding which underpin the writing system. Surprisingly, what the research is able to tell us quite convincingly is that measures of basic mental capacities, such as IQ tests and the like, are not accurate predictors of becoming highly adept at any given activity or skill in any specific area of attainment. We also know that the difference between high achievers and less proficient individuals in a domain is almost always attributable to the quality and length of their training (K. Anders Ericsson, et al, Cambridge Handbook of Expertise and Expert Performance, p 10).

What this means is that with high quality instruction and a great deal of practise, novices can become experts. The development of expertise in learning to read and spell can be achieved if pupils are given clear goals and are taught to understand what as well as why they are learning; feedback on the quality of their performance; the opportunity for repeated practise. Feltovich et al have pointed out that 'behavioral studies of skill acquisition have demonstrated that automaticity is central to the development of expertise, and practise is the means to automaticity.' (Ericsson, K.A., Feltovich, P., and Prietula, M.J., in K. Anders Ericsson et al, Cambridge Handbook of Expertise and Expert Performance, p 53).

Automaticity also allows individuals to perform tasks simultaneously: when decoding and encoding have reached the stage of automaticity, greater cognitive resources can be allocated to higher order processes of comprehension and text integration; on the other hand, when reading is a painstaking and laborious process, reading for meaning can be greatly impaired.

Implementation

At Edale, we follow SoundsWrite from F2 to year 2 for our core phonics offer. This is extended into year 3 and beyond for children who need additional phonics input. Pre-phonics skills are delivered in F1 by a SoundsWrite trained practitioner in order for children to be exposed to consistent approaches and language that they will encounter in F2 when they begin the initial code.

Children take part in whole class daily phonics sessions consisting of the sounds write scripted lessons and teachers ensure these scripts are followed with fidelity. Children in need of tier 2 and 3 interventions, as outlined in the SoundsWrite manual, are targeted in post-teach sessions throughout EYFS and KS1 daily.

There is a clear focus on developing children's understanding of the 4 key elements of conceptual knowledge of phonics:

- English speech is written in a visual code where symbols, known as spellings or letters, are used to represent individual sounds (one at a time, from left to right across the page)
- Each sound may be represented by a 1-, 2-, 3- or 4- letter spelling.
- Sounds may be spelled in more than one way
- Many spellings represent more than one sound

Children are taught all of the most common ways of representing English speech sounds in a systematic order, this is known as alphabet code.

Children also practise the skills of reading; blending, segmenting and phoneme manipulation. Speed and accuracy need to be achieved in these skills in order for them to become automatic.

In order to progress from reading phonetically decodable, isolated words to words within sentences and longer texts, children take part in guided reading sessions each week. These consist of a decoding session, a fluency and prosody session and a comprehension session. Teachers will use decodables linked to the previous weeks unit, as Soundwrite advocates, in order to ensure children are given every opportunity to recall, revisit, consolidate and apply their phonetic code learning. Children are assigned this initial/extended code phonics books each week via Showbie to ensure that all children can access the same phonics books at home with parents as well. This is then supplemented by a reading band book which includes some decoding and encoding as well as the other skills needed to become fluent and proficient readers, such as use of syntactic and semantic cues, picture cues and context.

The following table shows the progression through the SoundsWrite units according to year group:

Sounds~Write – progression & pace:

Initial Code – general points:

- Pupils aren't learning if they are getting everything right
- Move on when most children know 75-80% of the code knowledge
- Skills continue to develop throughout the units
- Skills should be perfect or near perfect before moving on to the Extended Code

Extended Code – general points:

- Spend two weeks per sound in general
- May need less time per sound if:
 - The sound is only spelled by a few spellings e.g. /ow/ (<ow> <ou>)
 - Later in the Extended Code, the pupils may have covered many spellings informally
- By the time you introduce /oe/, you should start teaching Polysyllabic level lessons

Year	Term	Content
Reception	autumn	Initial Code Units 1-7
	spring	Initial Code Units 8-11
	summer	Consolidation of Initial Code 8-11 Introduction of Extended code – 2 or 3 sounds
1	autumn	Consolidation of Initial Code 9-11 Extended code – start at Unit 1 again
	spring & summer	Continue Extended code At /oe/ introduce Polysyllabic level lessons <i>alongside</i>
2	All terms	Continue Extended code from Y1 end point, which is usually at around Unit 25 (units will consolidate known spellings and include <i>more spellings</i>) Continue Polysyllabic level lessons



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First Rate Phonics

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