

Ettington C of E Primary School

ETTINGTON C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Reviewed November 2025



*Ettington Church of England
Primary School*

*Learning for Fullness of Life
Trust-Respect - Love*

EARLY READING POLICY

As a school, we aspire to live out God's plan for all to flourish.

We believe in providing our children with opportunities to use and develop the gifts and talents they have been blessed with, to ensure they embrace 'Life in its fullness' (John 10:10) following the teachings of Jesus.

Our vision is to place the child at the heart of everything we do, 'Learning for the Fullness of Life'. It is to work together, where everyone is a partner in learning; providing a safe, happy, caring and stimulating community, where children are given opportunities to reach their true potential.

At Ettington C of E Primary School, we are determined that every child will learn to read by the age of six. We have a consistent approach to the teaching of early reading throughout the school. We aim to develop a love of reading, to provide systematic synthetic phonics teaching that enables children to read rapidly and to give children opportunities to apply what they have learned across the curriculum.

Phonics

At Ettington C of E Primary School, early reading is taught using systematic synthetic phonics as the main approach to reading. The scheme we use for this is called Monster Phonics and this is taught from the beginning of Reception through to the end of Year 2. Pupils are systematically taught the phonemes (sounds), how to blend the sounds for reading, and how to segment the sounds in order to write words. Children are taught to use their phonic skills and knowledge as their first approach to reading, but are also taught how to read common exception words which do not completely follow the phonic rules.

Daily Monster Phonics lessons are fast paced and engage all children using a range of multi-sensory approaches where children learn to segment and blend phonemes. We promote all four interdependent strands of language in the lessons: speaking, listening, reading and writing.

All pupils are assessed using the Monster Phonics assessment materials and interventions are put in place to provide targeted support where needed to help prevent children from falling behind.

The school has clear expectations of pupils' phonics progress term by term from Reception to Year 2. All pupils who join the school are assessed to identify their phonics knowledge. The Reading Leader will monitor the progress of the lowest 20% of children.

Statutory Phonics Screening Check

At the end of Year 1, children undergo a statutory phonics screening check and any Year 2 children who did not meet the expected standard in the previous year, take the check again. The phonics screening check is designed to confirm whether or not individual children have learned phonics decoding to the appropriate standard.

Other Reading Strategies

Phonics is seen as one aspect of a rich literacy environment. Stories, poems, rhymes and non-fiction are chosen for reading to develop pupils' vocabulary, language comprehension and a love of reading. All classes have a daily story time every afternoon in order to become familiar with and enjoy listening to a wide range of quality texts. Reading is celebrated through the topics. Many topics are based on popular children's books and authors. Role play areas in Early Years are often focused on stories and familiar books. Teachers will use quality texts in literacy lesson to embed the vocabulary and enable children to become familiar with story structures. Parents and carers are informed of these books at the start of the term on the Curriculum Overview.

In Reception children have the opportunity to practise their reading skills throughout their day and in all areas of the setting including child-initiated play. Outside, children are encouraged to go on sound or letter hunts and practise writing using a multisensory approach.

Children are encouraged to read in the school holidays by being given a reading challenge record. Children receive a certificate if they show on the challenge record that they have been reading in the holidays. We also have a display in school called 'Caught Reading'. This consists of photos of children reading outside school in an interesting place or in an interesting way or simply enjoying their reading book.

To introduce our Reception children to the Monster Phonics scheme and to encourage their engagement with phonics, every year we have a Monster Phonics day. On this day, children in Reception and the staff, come to school dressed as one of the Monsters. The children then take part in some phonics activities and games during the day.

Reading Schemes

All Reception and KS1 children, read books from the Monster Phonics reading scheme. They read them in class with the teacher in a group reading session. Then they are sent home to read to parents and carers. The books will always reflect phonemes they have been learning in phonics lessons and are matched to the children's reading ability and phonic knowledge.

Children are grouped according to their reading ability. In group reading sessions, the children use their phonics skills to decode and blend new words and read known words fluently. The staff ask good quality questions to promote discussion and to ensure children are developing comprehension skills. Children who have been identified as needing extra

support/intervention and children who do not receive support from home also read regularly one to one with either the class teacher, teaching assistant or parent helper. Listening to these children read individually is used to develop a range of reading skills as well as reinforcing what has been taught during phonics lessons.

The children also take home a reading enrichment book which is read **with** adults at home who provide support where needed. This book provides an opportunity for the adult to model reading prosody and help develop the children's love of reading. Through this, the children gain an understanding of narrative and can develop the ability to discuss the text, demonstrate comprehension and are exposed to rich vocabulary. This may be a library book of their own choice often linked to their own interests or a familiar author.

A dialogue of communication with parents and carers is created with the class teacher in Reading Record Books to track their progress. The class teachers review all children regularly to ensure that books are matched accurately to the child's reading ability. Pupils are also given the opportunity to select a library book of their own choice often linked to their own interests or a familiar author.

Parental guidance and homework

Parents/carers of children who are in Reception are invited to a phonics and reading workshop early in the Autumn term to show how they can help their children read at home. In Reception, the children take home the phonics sounds each week to practise reading.

In Years 1 and 2, children are given a word list each week to reinforce their learning in class. They are expected to practise reading and writing the words and they are given a weekly spelling test when this has been completed.