

Spotlight on a Suffolk school

Elveden C of E Primary Academy (Part of The Elveden Schools Trust)

London Road, IP24 3TN

Elveden C of E Primary Academy is a rural Church of England School in Elveden on the outskirts of Thetford on the Suffolk border. Elveden has 104 children on roll with 15% Pupil Premium and 34% of children on the SEND register. 7% of children have English as an Additional Language.



We teach the children in four classes: Reception (15 children); Year 1 and 2 (29 children); Year 3 and 4 (30 children); and Year 5 and 6 (30 children).

Elveden's KS2 data has been consistently above national averages, with a higher percentage of GDS across Maths and Reading. Last year reading, GPS and maths were significantly above national. In KS1 the data has been higher in reading and maths. We have chosen writing as our focus area with a particular focus on developing greater depth writers. Attendance is above the national and local authority average after working supportively with families and the school attendance service EWO.

What is the school's vision?

'Let Your Light Shine'

We celebrate the uniqueness of every child and encourage them to shine before others in turn giving glory to the heavenly father and preparing them for life's journey. 'Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your father in heaven'

Matthew 5:16

It is our aim at Elveden C of E Primary Academy for our children to have a lifelong love of learning and to be confident articulate individuals, with both a positive attitude to work and a social conscience: everything we do is of significance and part of our Christian mission. Our vision statement outlines the aspirations we have for our school and its children. At Elveden Academy, our vision is embedded in everything we do and is the foundation of our practice. We believe in providing a culture of opportunity for all of our children so they are prepared for their life ahead. We aim for profound personal development of all. Our R.E. contributes to the spirituality of our children, it builds community cohesion and our Christian Distinctiveness is threaded right through the heart of our school and the rich, broad, beyond expectation curriculum we provide.



As a Church of England school, all of what we do is shaped by our Christian values of Hope, Trust, Respect and Forgiveness. These underpin all we do and we believe this is fundamental to our children growing into active citizens ready for life in the 21st Century. We prepare all children to make exceptional contributions to the global society and our curriculum enriches lives spiritually, culturally, socially and morally. It is important that our clearly communicated and lived out values are also understood at home, with the potential for our whole school community to be influenced and changed by them. It is this living out of our values which genuinely defines our school and makes us distinctive.

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Curriculum and pedagogical approach

At Elveden, we believe in giving all of our children the opportunity to shine and feel valued in our environment. We highly value an inclusive education and are incredibly adaptive to the needs of our students using evidence based practices. For example, due to the higher number of SEND, summer birthdays and emotional needs in our KS1 class, we made the decision this year to introduce Early Excellence Continuous Provision in our Key Stage 1 class. We feel that this approach will give the children valuable opportunities to develop their speech and language, social skills, engagement within the classroom and their independence skills.

We aim to be inclusive in all areas, including our residential, school fundraising events and school trips. We recently had a 'Silent Disco' to ensure that all our children felt happy to attend, as many of our SEND children can struggle with loud noises. We try and ensure that every child leaves with enhanced cultural capital and experiences opportunities they may not have otherwise. We have had the opportunity to, 'Kip on a Ship,' on the HMS Belfast, glamped on our school field and this year we are off to Yorkshire for caving adventures! We have been to watch Matilda and ensure we visit a number of museums and art exhibitions as well as places of worship through our, 'Elveden Explorers,' initiative.



We are continually reflective on ways to improve our writing across the school and have also recently begun to develop, 'Drawing Club,' in Early Years Foundation Stage and have already noticed a dramatic change in the culture with our boys in particular, being very engaged in writing activities.

Our curriculum is based largely on our locality and ensuring that the children gain knowledge and feel connected to where they live and where they attend school. We are very fortunate to work closely with the Ancient House Museum in Thetford and to have the rich history of the Duleep Singh family and also Elveden's uses in the War. We have found the children to be more engaged in the learning when they understand how it relates to and has impacted their lives.

We also are extremely focused on early intervention and identification of children's needs through WELCOMM and the Lexplore programme. Furthermore, we work closely with our families and have a dedicated ELSA, Nurture and Thrive TA in the afternoons, who runs amazing activities to help our children face all numbers of difficulties that affect their mental well-being. We value our Zones of Regulation system, which enables the children to check in and alerts the staff if any children are feeling dysregulated. We have found the introduction of, '5 minutes peace,' after lunch to be extremely effective in helping ground our children after lunchtime.

We are very focused on being outside as much as possible and strive for all our children to have regular opportunities to attend our Forest School Site. There children get the opportunities to forest bathe, learn



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knife skills, make dens and take part in team building activities that enable our children to connect more with the world around them.

Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL)

OPAL play has been completely transformative to all children and staff at Elveden C of E Primary Academy. We have been lucky enough to gain the Platinum Award and to be a flagship school for Outdoor Play and Learning with many other schools coming to Elveden for OPAL open days to see our children's exemplary play.

Elveden C of E Primary Academy began the journey of improving Outdoor Play and Learning for all our children with the OPAL programme in October 2021. Recognising that outdoor play is an integral part of our school day and that through outdoor play our children get to encounter, explore and make sense of the world and their place within it, was really the determining factor for us implementing it. The benefits of outdoor play are comprehensive; they help our children to build imagination and creativity, foster their cognitive growth, emotional and mental health wellbeing and has proven behavioural benefits. Also outdoor play improves literacy and encourages greater independence through learning about risk and encountering challenge, it also supports social and spiritual development and promotes physical activity and fitness. Outdoor play helps with language, arts, culture, science, maths, technology and supports self-regulation, all key areas of personal development that we at Elveden, believe are fundamental to a child's education.

OPAL at Elveden C of E Primary Academy follows the Playwork definition of a process which is, freely chosen by the Child, self-directed by the Child and intrinsically motivated by the Child and our children are given the time, space and permission to play. Our OPAL sessions comprise of two play sites encompassing four zones within the schools grounds and take place every day at lunchtimes. Our children are able to freely choose which site they would like to play in and to free flow between zones, our children are able to play with whomever they choose and are therefore able to play and interact with peers of all ages. This encourages solid relationships to be built and social connections to be made across our whole school. Our OPAL offers a stimulating, flexible, challenging and diverse environment to our children through the use of playful resources and the integrated use of loose parts, supporting varied and complex play opportunities.