

ULEY C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL



PHONICS AND SPELLING POLICY

Our School Vision

Live – Learn – Flourish

- ✿ Live: at home, in school, and in our local community
- ✿ Learn: about self, others, and our ever-changing world
- ✿ Flourish: be the best we can be in all that we do

Our School Mission

- ✿ We give all – pupils and staff – the opportunities and encouragement to be the best that they can be
- ✿ We create an environment that has the right balance of challenge and support
- ✿ We deliver a curriculum that is right for our school, inspiring and motivating all, and embracing new ideas
- ✿ We apply our core Christian Values of Trust, Friendship, Compassion and Wisdom in all that we do
- ✿ We develop strong and effective partnerships between pupils, staff, governors, parents and the wider community
- ✿ We strive to ensure that all flourish within a moral framework built on Christian values

ETHOS STATEMENT

We believe that everyone should be given the opportunity and encouragement to be the best that they can be. To this end, we strive to create the right environment, deliver the right content, and embrace new ideas. We apply our school values of trust, friendship, compassion and wisdom to enable every individual to flourish within a moral framework built on Christian values. We believe that this can only be achieved by developing partnerships between pupils, staff, governors, parents and the wider community.

The Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to support our pupils to become confident spellers by teaching them a range of strategies, rules and conventions systematically and explicitly. By becoming confident spellers, pupils will be able to focus on the skills of composition, sentence structure and precise word choice within their writing. It is important that all members of staff are fully aware of, and understand, the way in which spelling is taught, so that our approach is implemented consistently to ensure continuity and progression in children's learning. Although guidelines for the teaching of spelling are outlined in this policy and the "No Nonsense spelling programme", it is essential that these are adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils, taking into account the ways in which they learn best.

The Principles behind this Policy

- Research tells us that Spelling tests are not always the best way to ensure spellings are learnt. It is essential that children apply spelling rules and patterns in to their writing rather than just rote learning spellings which are then forgotten the following week.
- Spelling is the application of visual memory. As teachers, we must strengthen pupils' visual memories before we can expect them to become successful learners.
- Spelling should be taught in context – linked to the oral use of the word and the formation of the word as a whole (handwriting).
- Accurate spelling and accurate letter formation go hand-in-hand. As teachers, we must ensure that letter orientation and direction is accurate so that children can concentrate on the order of the letters, rather than the formation of them.
- Successful spelling takes place through a VAK (visual, aural and kinaesthetic) approach. As teachers, we need to ensure that spelling is taught using a combination of methods.
- Successful spelling takes place when children have an opportunity to review and recall their learning. Teachers must provide opportunities to consolidate learning throughout each week.

Aims of this Policy

- To explain the expected practices, to ensure that children become successful spellers.
- To provide a point of reference for teaching and support staff, for when they are planning the delivery of spelling skills/rules.
- To ensure continuity in practices and progression in spelling skills.
- To raise the profile of the teaching of spelling and to raise the overall standard of spelling across the school.

The Teaching of Spelling in the Foundation Stage and Year 1

Spelling within Reception and Year 1 is linked to the children's phonic programme – the 'Letters and Sounds' document. The primary skills for reading and spelling which 'Letters and Sounds' highlights are blending and segmenting. These skills are integral throughout the phases. During phonics sessions, children will have opportunities to learn strategies for spelling, including spelling patterns linked to the phases. They will also practise recalling key/tricky words. It is essential that children apply their knowledge of spellings, and practise the skill of segmenting through a variety of writing opportunities across a range of curriculum areas - for example: topic activities. In Reception, parents are encouraged to support their children with their initial sounds. In Year 1, children have daily phonics sessions. Phonic and spelling activities may be sent home for homework. Also, there is a statutory key word list for Year 1 which parents have been given. Parents are encouraged to support their child with the reading and spelling of these words. Next, the children should be encouraged to apply these words into sentences.

The Teaching of Spelling in Years 2-6

We follow the No Nonsense Spelling programme. The *No Nonsense Spelling* Programme was devised to offer teachers a comprehensive yet accessible progression in the teaching of spelling. Guidance, rather than prescription, is provided on how to teach the strategies, knowledge and skills pupils need to learn.

The focus of the programme is on the *teaching* of spelling, which embraces knowledge of spelling conventions – patterns and rules; but integral to the teaching is the opportunity to promote the *learning* of spellings, including statutory words, common exceptions and personal spellings.

The programme

- delivers a manageable tool for meeting the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum
- has a clear progression through blocks of teaching units across the year
- comprehensively explains how to teach spelling effectively.

How No Nonsense Spelling is organised

The programme consists of the following elements:

- The requirements of the National Curriculum, which have been organised into strands and then broken down into termly overviews.
- Termly overviews that have been mapped across weeks as half termly plans. These follow a model of five spelling sessions across two weeks, except in Year 2 where sessions are daily.
- Daily lesson plans for each session, with Supporting Resources, including word lists and guidance on conventions.

The Lesson Plans

The lessons themselves then follow the structure below: **Lesson**

Reference to year group, block of lessons and lesson number in sequence

Lesson type

Revise/Teach/Learn/Practise/Apply/Assess

Lesson focus

The particular spelling focus for the day

Resources needed

A list of the resources that will be needed. These might be documents that are photocopied or printed in advance so that flashcards can be prepared, or presentations to display the task/activity on a whiteboard.

The resources are featured at the end of each book for reference. Editable versions are available on the USB stick, which can be copied and pasted into your own documents and edited.

Supporting Resources

The Supporting Resources include pictures and word lists, which can be photocopied and made into flashcards or used in classroom displays, and pictures. They also include games and quizzes. The Resources are featured at the end of each book for reference and as editable Word documents on staff shared, which can be copied and pasted to be used on classroom whiteboards and in other documents.

Teaching Sequence

The programme has been written broadly following a teaching sequence for spelling, whereby each new concept is taught, practised and then applied and assessed. Frequently there is also a 'Revise' session before the teaching session. A typical teaching sequence is as follows:

Within the lessons, the particular focus is identified, followed by suggested teaching strategies.

By integrating activities for handwriting, the benefit of making a spelling activity kinaesthetic is secured. The pupil acquires the physical memory of the spelling pattern as well as the visual.

You will find the following referred to in the lessons:

Modelling: An activity is described, and it is anticipated that the action expected of pupils is modelled to them first.

Spelling partners: Pupils are asked to work in pairs, often to 'test' each other. They will be asked to work with their spelling partner from time to time.

Learning strategies

The following learning strategies will be taught to the children - LSCWC (Look, say, cover, write, check), trace, copy and replicate (and then check), segmentation strategy, quick write, drawing around the word to show the shape, drawing an image around the word, words without vowels, pyramid words and other strategies listed in the programme.

Assessment

Pupils' learning is assessed throughout the programme. The 'Apply' part of the sequence regularly includes assessment activities to identify if pupils have learnt the key concept taught. These activities include:

- Testing – by teacher and peers
- Dictation
- Explaining
- Independent application in writing
- Frequent learning and testing of statutory and personal words.

Application of Spelling in Writing

Children's growing understanding of spelling rules is only valuable if they go on to apply it in their independent writing. Children should be able to spell an ever increasing number of words accurately and to check and correct their work. This process is supported through:

- Shared writing: the teacher demonstrates how to apply spelling strategies while writing, and teaches proofreading skills.
- Guided and independent writing: the children apply what they have been taught. This is an opportunity to think about the whole writing process - composition as well as spelling, handwriting and punctuation.
- Marking the children's work: the teacher can assess their progress and ability to understand and apply what has been taught and then identify targets for further improvement.
- Teaching and practising handwriting: learning and practising a fluent joined style will support the children's spelling development.

Spelling Journals

In Years 2 to Year 6, all children begin to use spelling journals. This journal will remain in school and children will use it to record the particular spellings they need to focus on in their work.

The spelling journal will be used in the following two main ways:

1. As part of the 'No Nonsense' teaching programme: a regular part of the spelling activities involves the children identifying specific words that they need to continue to work on. These could be words exemplifying a particular pattern, or convention, of high-frequency words. These words are put into the children's spelling journals with tips on how to remember the spelling.

2. To record spellings arising from each child's independent writing: these words will be personalised to the individual child and will be those that frequently 'trip them up' as they are writing. These words can be identified as part of the proofreading process and children can be involved in devising strategies for learning them and monitoring whether they spell these words correctly in subsequent pieces of writing.

Children should have a manageable number of personalised spellings in their spelling journal at any one time and these should be reviewed each half term. Children should be taught to look for evidence of correct spellings in their independent writing and can then remove the word from the list once it has been consistently spelt correctly.

Along with spelling journals, the children will also use 'have a go sheets', Grapheme/Phoneme Correspondence choices chart, individual whiteboards and classroom working walls.

Using Dictionaries

Children should be taught to use a dictionary to check their spellings. By Phase 6, the repeated singing of an alphabet song at earlier phases should have familiarised them with alphabetical order. Their first dictionary practice should be with words starting with different letters but, once they are competent at this, they should learn how to look at second and subsequent letters, as necessary. Children will sometimes require support with certain spelling patterns such as 'ph'.

Links with Handwriting

Developing a fluent and joined style is an important part of learning to spell and the teaching of spelling and handwriting should be closely linked. As children are taught how to join letters, they can begin practising letter strings and complete words, linked to the specific focus for teaching in the spelling unit.

Assessment and Monitoring

It is important that the assessment of children's spellings is meaningful for the child but also for the teacher when planning the teaching of spelling. Assessing spelling should not just be about identifying words that children spell correctly and incorrectly in a test, but consistently within their writing. It should be an opportunity to evaluate students' understanding of sounds and conventional spelling patterns. An awareness of the kinds of words that pupils find difficult, and the types of errors they make, is important when evaluating their spelling achievement and their understanding of language structures. For example, do they have a lack of phonetic knowledge, or are they confusing rules for spelling? Teachers should then use this assessment information to plan subsequent phonics/spelling sessions. Additionally, children should record correct spellings for mis-spelt words in their own spelling journal (or on a shared spelling wall in Year 1). This will enable them to revisit and practise words when writing, through multi-sensory approaches - for example: looking, saying, hearing and writing words. Self-assessment of pupils' own spellings is also essential as it encourages independence in learning and reflection on their writing. We should encourage children to proof-read and spot their own errors in written

work, with reference to their spelling journals, spelling displays within the classroom, spelling strategy prompts and, when ready, dictionaries. (See marking section for more detail.)

Marking of Work

Marking is integral to how we assess the children's writing. It should be purposeful, constructive and support the child by showing them how they can improve. It should also assist the teacher in planning the next crucial steps for learning. When focusing on spelling within writing, children should firstly be given the opportunity to write freely and be encouraged to use spelling strategies they know. This ensures that the child is still motivated to write and promotes independence when spelling. However, at the proof-reading stage, time should be given for checking any words the child is unsure of or unfamiliar with. When writing, children are encouraged to highlight these words by underlining them so that they remember to revisit them later. They should then be encouraged to use their spelling journal/wall and any other spelling strategy prompts that are available within the classroom environment. As teachers, our initial responses to a child's piece of work, particularly at the drafting stage, should be related to the learning objective and content (Composition and Effect). We should be concentrating on the positive aspects of the writing. During the proof-reading stage, the teacher should identify an appropriate but manageable selection of incorrect spellings. These words could be written correctly on the page for the child to see and then transfer to their individual spelling journal.

Parental Involvement

To help parents support their children with spelling at home, a letter explaining the No Nonsense spelling scheme and statutory spelling lists for each year group have been sent home and are on the school website. Class teachers may send home phonic and spelling activities as part of the homework.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is the responsibility of the English Leader to develop good spelling practice in school and assist staff in this area with the support of the Head teacher and senior leadership team. The English Leader will also monitor the impact of this policy and evaluate how it works in practice. This may be achieved through:

- Leading/organising staff meetings to give in-house Continuing Professional Development for staff, sharing new resources
- Talking to staff about spelling in their class, appropriateness of resources
- Talking to children about spelling – attitude and approach in all areas
- Book/work scrutiny to see spelling produced across all areas
- Book/work scrutiny to see the development and progression across the school from Reception to Year 6
- Lesson observations with a focus on spelling