

Duddon Saint Peter's CE School



Spelling Policy

The policy aims to support 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.

Guidelines for the teaching of spelling are outlined in this policy and the 'Support for Spelling' document; these are adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils, taking into account the ways in which they learn best.

Principles

- Spelling tests are a good way to ensure spellings are learnt but it is essential that children apply these skills to their writing.
- Spelling must 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. Letter orientation and direction needs to be 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. Spelling is taught using a combination of methods.
- Successful spelling takes place when children have an opportunity to review and recall their learning. Opportunities to consolidate learning throughout each week are provided.

Aims

- 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 clarify the responsibilities of staff, parents and children.
- To raise the profile of the teaching of spelling and to raise the overall standard of spelling across the school.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Staff

- To ensure that there is planning for the teaching of spelling every week and that planning is shared with members of support staff, who are also responsible for delivering spelling programmes to targeted groups of children.
- To ensure that spellings are set at an appropriate level for the child and build on what they already know and can apply.
- To teach a range of approaches to learn spellings.
- To provide children with a range of strategies to help them become secure with spelling rules.
- To ensure children's spelling is assessed on a regular basis and that this is used to inform future planning.
- To ensure that everyone shares good practice, reviewing this on a regular basis, to ensure there is continuity.

The pupils

- To use the strategies taught to them, to help secure spelling skills.
- To be able to identify the most effective methods to help them to learn and recall spelling rules.
- To practise, at home, the spelling rules which have been taught at school, to consolidate their learning in line with the homework policy.
- To transfer skills to their written work, correctly spelling words that have been learnt.

The Parents

- To support their children in the learning of spelling.
- To be familiar with the strategies that the children are encouraged to use to help them to learn their spellings.

The Teaching of Spelling in the Foundation Stage and Year One

Spelling within Reception and Year One is linked to the children's phonic programme ('Letters and Sounds'). 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.

In Reception, children are given words to learn to read and parents are made aware of which words their child should be able to read and spell, based on the expectations in the 'Letters and Sounds' document. Parents are encouraged to support their children with these at home.

In Year Reception and Year One, children have daily phonics sessions. Each week they will be given a list of between 4 and 8 spellings which are linked to sound patterns and tricky words. These will be specific to the phase and the needs of the children.

Reception children will be given spellings to learn at home in the spring term.

Transition of spelling from Year One to Year Two

At the end of Year One and Year Two children are expected to spell words from the National Curriculum list. Spellings are corrected and children are asked to write out spellings five times at the bottom of the page or at the back of the book. Children are now given between 5 and 10 spellings rather than 4 and 8.

The Teaching of Spelling from Year Two to Year Six

Spelling objectives

The spelling objectives for each year group are taken from the National Curriculum.

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 proof-reading 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.

Using dictionaries

Children should be taught to use a dictionary to check their spellings. 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,

Self-assessment of pupils' own spellings is essential as it encourages independence in learning and reflection on their writing. Children should be encouraged to proof-read and spot their own errors in written work, with reference to spelling displays, word banks, spelling strategy prompts and, when ready, dictionaries.

Marking of Work

Marking 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 may be 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 strategy prompts that are available within the classroom.

Initial responses to a child's piece of work, particularly at the drafting stage, should be related to the learning objective and content, 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 practised by the child.

Homework

Children will be given weekly spellings which are linked to that week's spelling sessions.

Spelling lists

As part of assessment and monitoring, children will usually be given a spelling list to learn which will be linked to the spelling patterns and objectives they have been learning in spelling sessions. Spellings may also be linked to the high-frequency words or words. The number of spellings they are given will be dependent on their year group and may be personalised to the individual child.

Definitions

Knowing the definitions of words that children are learning to spell is very important. When appropriate, this type of activity may be given as homework. For example, children might be asked to write a short definition next to each of their spellings on the worksheet provided.

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