



ST MARY'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

St Mary's Catholic Primary School
Spelling Policy
September 2015

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Spelling Policy

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 'Support for Spelling' document, 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

- ✦ Spelling tests can be a way to ensure spellings are learnt but it is essential that children apply these skills to their writing.
- ✦ 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 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. 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

1. To explain the expected practices, to ensure that children become successful spellers.

2. To provide a point of reference for teaching and support staff, for when they are planning the delivery of spelling skills/rules.
3. To ensure continuity in practices and progression in spelling skills.
4. To clarify the responsibilities of staff, parents and children.
5. 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 teachers plan 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 1

Spelling within Reception and Year 1 is linked to the children's phonic programme – the Read, Write Inc. The primary skills for reading and spelling which Read, Write inc 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, spellings lists are not given out. However, 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 Read, Write inc. programme. Parents' are encouraged to support their children with these at home.

In Year 1, children have four phonics sessions each week.

The Teaching of Spelling to children beyond Read, Write inc. to Year 6

Transition of spelling from Year 1 to Year 2

Children will have followed a programme of phonics teaching in Reception and Year 1. By the end of Year Reception, the expectation is that most children will be secure at Set 2 RWI and by the end of Year 1, all children will be secure at Set 3 RWI

5. The spelling objectives for Year 2, which work in conjunction with Phase 6 of the 'Letters and Sounds' document, ensure that children have knowledge and understanding of alternative spellings for each phoneme. For those children who are not yet secure at Set 3 RWI, it will be necessary to continue with this phase before moving on to the Year 2 objectives.

Spelling in Year 2 and Key Stage 2 will follow the 'Support for Spelling' publication. This outlines the objectives taught in each year group, each term. The expectation is that two twenty minute spelling sessions will be taught each week. There is flexibility in how this is delivered and managed within the curriculum. For example, teachers may want to teach four ten minute sessions during the week instead of two twenty minute sessions. Homework will also be set each week (see homework section).

Within the teaching of spelling, there should be opportunities to:

- Revisit, explain, use
- Teach, model, define
- Practise, explore, investigate
- Apply, assess, reflect

Spelling Handbook

The spelling objectives for each year group are taken from the 'Support for Spelling' publication and are outlined in each teacher's spelling handbook. Examples of planning and resources for each term are included, with a progression of objectives from year to year. Children who are not able to access their year group's objectives should be focusing on the objectives from the previous year. Similarly, those children who are working above their age's objectives should work towards those for the year above.

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 will be given a spelling journal which will move with them throughout the school. 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 'Support for Spelling' 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

Proof-reading/editing 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 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.

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. 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.

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 their knowledge of phonics 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 and any other spelling strategy prompts and wordbanks 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.

Spelling patterns

In some cases, instead of a list of spellings to be learnt, a spelling pattern with an example may be given, which will be tested the following week - for example, when to double a consonant when adding a suffix.

hot + er = hotter
bag + ful = bagful

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.

Spelling Challenges

A spelling challenge will generally last over the course of a number of lessons and will be linked to the objectives which the children are being taught. For example, the challenge could involve children collecting words ending in both 'able' and 'ible'. It involves the children actively collecting words both at home and at school and it can be used each half-term as an alternative to the children having a weekly spelling list to learn. Children can search for words in dictionaries or on the internet and can ask family members, friends and teachers. The data gathered would then be used in spelling lessons.

Overview of spelling objectives

Objectives for Years 2 to 6

Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
<p>To secure the reading and spelling of words containing different spellings for phonemes</p> <p><i>To understand and begin to learn the conventions for adding the suffix -ed for past</i></p>	<p>To consolidate knowledge of adding suffixes and to investigate the conventions related to the spelling pattern -le</p> <p><i>To spell regular verb endings and to learn irregular tense changes (e.g. go/went)</i></p>	<p>To distinguish between the spelling and meaning of homophones</p> <p><i>To investigate, collect and classify spelling patterns related to the formation of plurals</i></p>	<p>To spell unstressed vowels in polysyllabic words</p> <p>To spell words with common letter strings and different pronunciations</p>	<p><i>To embed the use of independent spelling strategies for spelling unfamiliar words</i></p> <p><i>To investigate the meaning and spelling of connectives (e.g. furthermore, nevertheless)</i></p>

<p><i>To split compound words into their component parts and use this knowledge to support spelling</i></p> <p><i>To learn how to add common suffixes to words</i></p>	<p><i>To know what happens to the spelling of nouns when s is added</i></p> <p><i>To understand how words change when the suffixes are added</i></p>	<p>To investigate and learn to spell words with common letter strings</p> <p><i>To understand how suffixes change the function of words</i></p>	<p>To explore the spelling patterns of consonants and to formulate rules</p> <p><i>To explore less common prefixes and suffixes</i></p>	<p>To revise and extend work on spelling patterns, including unstressed vowels in polysyllabic words</p> <p><i>To use what is known about prefixes and suffixes to transform words (e.g. negation, tense, word class)</i></p>
<p><i>To add common prefixes to root words and to understand how they change meaning</i></p> <p>To discriminate syllables in multisyllabic words as an aid to spelling</p>	<p>To embed the correct use and spelling of pronouns (Note: phonemic and morphological)</p> <p><i>To develop knowledge of prefixes to generate new words from root words</i></p>	<p><i>To understand the use of the apostrophe in contracted forms of words</i></p> <p><i>To revise and investigate links between meaning and spelling when using affixes</i></p>	<p>To investigate and learn spelling rules for adding suffixes to words ending in e or words ending in -y and words containing ie</p> <p><i>To identify word roots, derivations and spelling patterns as a support for</i></p>	<p>To spell unfamiliar words by using what is known of word families and spelling patterns</p> <p><i>To revise and use word roots, prefixes and suffixes as a support for spelling</i></p>