

Galley Common Infant School Spelling Policy

Introduction

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.

The Principles behind this Policy

- Spelling tests are a good 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

- To teach spelling systematically throughout the school.
- To teach phonological awareness, word recognition, graphic knowledge and spelling knowledge.
- To encourage children to develop and learn a personal bank of frequently used words.
- To equip children with a wide range of spelling strategies to enable them to be confident, competent and independent spellers.
- To make children aware of the writing process so that they can write fluently, confidently and independently, concentrating on spelling when and where it is appropriate.

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 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 spellings are 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.
- To transfer skills to their written work, correctly spelling words that have been learnt.

The Parents

- To support their children in their learning of spelling.
- To be familiar with the strategies that the children are encouraged to use to help them to learn their spellings. Parents are invited to attend a spelling workshop in school which is held annually.

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning of spellings in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is strengthened by the use of a high quality phonics programme, alongside the National Curriculum for English requirements for spelling in Years 1 and 2.

In the Foundation Stage children are taught using the Monster Phonics programme which covers 44 phonemes and simple spelling rules. Other early phonic work includes blending and segmenting. Throughout the year, children learn to read and then spell the tricky words.

In Key Stage 1 teaching and learning follows Monster Phonics programme which is in line with the National Curriculum and provides detailed guidance for the implementation and continuity and progression in the teaching of spelling.

Children will be taught:

- the grapheme-phoneme correspondence in a clearly defined sequence.
- the skill of segmenting words into their constituent phonemes to spell.
- that blending and segmenting are reversible processes.

Children in EYFS and Key Stage 1 are taught whole class. Teaching Assistants are used to stretch higher ability pupils and support lower ability pupils.

Common Exception and High Frequency Words

Throughout each phase the tricky high frequency words and common exception words will be taught. These will be referred to as tricky words (these are words which cannot be spelled using phonic knowledge alone at the phase they are introduced).

Each teacher will use a variety of methods to ensure correct spelling of the common exception and high frequency words appropriate to each phase plus subject specific vocabulary. Teachers should recognise worthy attempts made by children to spell words but should also correct them selectively and sensitively.

Transition from Year 1 to Year 2

By the end of Year 1, the expectation is that most children will be secure at phase 5, though further work will be required to ensure they have the knowledge and understanding of alternative spellings for each phoneme. For this reason, all children in Year 2 will continue with daily phonics sessions adapted to suit their ability.

Learning and Practising Spellings (across the whole school)

To become successful spellers, pupils need to be given opportunities for consolidation on a daily basis and should include the promotion of collaborative learning. The teaching of spelling should predominately be school based as the practice of giving lists of words solely to learn as homework has proven to be less than successful.

Children in Key Stage 1 have the opportunity to learn and consolidate the week's spelling pattern during spelling sessions in phonics each week.

- Spelling dictations will take place on a Friday during Phonics where the spelling pattern and common exception words from the week will be assessed and a new spelling pattern will be introduced for the following week.
- Daily, morning handwriting sessions will include spellings that the children are learning for the week.

Pupils will develop different strategies for memorising common exception and tricky words or subject specific vocabulary.

Other memory strategies to support learning of words:

- **Syllables** – to learn my word I can listen to how many syllables there are so I can break it into smaller bits to remember. (E.g. Sep-tem-ber, ba-by)
- **Base words** – to learn my word I can find its base word (e.g. smiling – base smile +ing, e.g. women = wo + men)
- **Analogy** – to learn my word I can use words that I already know to help me (e.g. could: would, should)
- **Mnemonics** – to learn my word I can make up a sentence to help me remember it (e.g. could – C O U Lucky Duck; people – People Eat Orange Peel Like Elephants)

Teachers will use the Spelling Games document (see appendix 1) to provide children with engaging and meaningful ways to practise their spelling 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 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 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.

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.

Assessment 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 pupil's 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 to plan subsequent phonics/spelling sessions.

In Years 1 and 2, children have an individual target card for writing which includes three personalised targets for them to focus on in their writing. One of the three targets will have a spelling focus for the individual child. These are reviewed termly.

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 focussing 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 their 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.

When marking teachers should not correct beyond what has been taught in spelling sessions. To raise the profile of good spelling, it has been agreed that in written work completed by a child, the teacher should, where appropriate, mark or correct spellings accordingly. Teachers should identify an appropriate but manageable selection of incorrect spellings. These words should be written correctly underneath other marking comments and children should be given marking and response time (MRT) to copy spellings three times in their books.

Homework

Children will be given weekly homework on Education City which is linked to that week's spelling pattern that the children have learned in phonics 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 will also include common exception and tricky words each week. The number of spellings they are given will be dependent on their year group and may be personalised to the individual child. Although we want pupils to be challenged, we don't want them to feel overwhelmed.

Reception

Spelling lists will be introduced to the more able pupils in the Spring term. They will be given 5 spelling words to learn to read and spell. During the Summer term this will extend to the core ability children also. In Reception, children's spellings will be assessed through either a spelling list or a spelling game each week.

Year 1

All children in Year 1 will be given spellings to learn at home. The more able will be given 10 spelling words to learn and the less able will be given 5 to learn. It is expected that half of the words given will be based on the week's spelling pattern taught in sessions and half of the words will be common exception words. In Year 1 spellings will be assessed initially through a spelling list read by an adult, moving onto a cloze spelling test when the teacher feels that the pupils are ready, later in the year.

Year 2

In Year 2 more able pupils will be given 15 words to learn and the less able will be given 10 to learn. It is expected that half of the words given will be based on the week's spelling pattern taught in sessions

and half of the words will be common exception words. In Year 2 spelling will be assessed in the form of a cloze procedure.

Children with Special Educational Needs

Wherever possible we aim to fully include SEN pupils in English lessons so that they can benefit from the emphasis on word-work, guided and independent spelling activities and in participating with other children in demonstrating and explaining their strategies for spelling.

Where necessary teachers will, in consultation with the SENCO, draw up an IEP for a child. If a child's needs are particularly severe they will work on an individualised programme written in consultation with the appropriate staff.

When planning, teachers will try to address the child's needs through simplified or modified tasks. Equipment may have to be adapted to meet special needs.

Where appropriate a Group Educational Plan may be developed with common objectives and learning targets for a group.

Able, Gifted and Talented

Because spellings are taught in phases children are differentiated for at their level of ability. However, some children may be given additional spellings from the spelling list if they are making significant progress.

Date: July 2016

Reviewed: May 2018

Reviewed: December 2020

Reviewed: March 2023

Next Review: March 2025

Written By: Leanne Jamieson (English Co-ordinator)