



St Gilbert's R.C. Primary School **Policy-Spelling-September 2017**

St. Gilbert's R.C. Primary School Spelling Policy

To be able to spell correctly is an essential life skill. When spelling becomes automatic, pupils are able to concentrate on the content of their writing and the making of meaning. Children who are able to employ a good range of spelling strategies and techniques will attempt more complex or technical words to express their ideas. Whilst we note that spelling is not the most important aspect of writing, confidence in spelling can have a profound effect on the writer's self-image.

Spelling must be taught. Wordlists and tests are not enough. We want to equip children to write fluently through a developmental process of investigating patterns and learning to apply a range of strategies appropriately. We aim to use explicit, interactive teaching which draws children's attention to the shape and sounds of words, the letter patterns within them and the various ways they can learn these patterns. In order to study words like this we have to take them out of context for the specific teaching of spelling. We believe that this is best achieved little and often (daily) and through fun, stimulating and multi-sensory activities.

Aims

- To enable all pupils to be confident, accurate spellers.
- To ensure that children develop the key skills, knowledge and understanding of spelling.
- To enrich and support learning through the use and application of spelling skills.
- To give accurate spelling status in an increasingly multi media world.
- To ensure continuity and progression through a consistent whole approach to the teaching of spelling across the school.

Objectives

- Spelling is seen as purposeful.
- Children should have a clear understanding of the structure and features associated with spelling.
- Children can make plausible attempts at unknown words.
- Children should be taught to choose the appropriate spelling.
- Children are taught to check their spelling, identify and then correct errors.
- Children are able to use their dictionary skills to support their spelling skills.
- Teachers have a sound subject knowledge and high expectations of what children can achieve.
- Children enjoy the process of spelling.

How do we teach spelling?

In the Foundation Stage and KS1, much of the teaching of spelling is delivered through the 'Read, Write, Inc.' phonics programme. In KS2, 'Support For Spelling' is used.

Foundation Stage

The emphasis at this stage is multi-sensory; linking the teaching and practising of letter shapes and patterns with the development of pupils' ability to listen to, and discriminate between, the constituent sounds which make up a word. At first, much of this occurs through games and activities which encourage focused listening in many areas of the curriculum, as well as literacy activities where there is a focus on rhyme, rhythm and alliteration. In the Foundation Stage, children are given opportunities to draw and write freely. Imaginative play situations provide different purposes for writing and encourage children to 'have a go'. Children are formally taught to match sounds to symbols and symbols to sounds in order to develop writing, reading and ultimately spelling skills. This is now taught through the 'Read, Write, Inc' scheme, which begins in Nursery. As children develop phonic knowledge, they are encouraged to use their sound knowledge to help spell words. Practical, fun activities are used to



St Gilbert's R.C. Primary School

Policy-Spelling-September 2017

encourage recognition of high frequency words. Developmental writing is encouraged to give pupils confidence. It is crucial that pupils at this stage in their development as writers do not become over-concerned with spelling accuracy. Support is given to spelling by providing writers with aids such as letter charts and simple word mats to stimulate interest in, and enthusiasm for, words. About half-way through the Reception class, the children begin to take 'High Frequency Word' spellings home to learn.

Key Stage 1

'Read, write, Inc.' continues to the end of Key Stage 1 & into Key Stage 2 if necessary. The children learn all the sounds in Sets 1, 2 & 3 of RWI. For spelling purposes, the emphasis is on the children's ability to segment words into phonemes and then match the most likely letter or letters to each sound by accessing the alphabetic code. In their RWI lessons they have daily opportunities to practise their spellings. In addition, they learn how to spell a number of sight words, high frequency words and common irregular words as listed in *Letters and Sounds* to enable them to write fluently. Children take words home on a weekly basis to learn to recognise them on sight and begin to learn to spell them. They also take home words containing spelling patterns they have been learning in school.

Key Stage 2

At KS2 new strategies, word families, root words, suffixes, prefixes, rules and word derivations are introduced, practised and revised. There is an emphasis on developing confidence and independence and it is expected that children assume increased responsibility by identifying their own spelling errors, making reasoned choices about likely alternatives and using dictionaries and word banks. When actually writing, children should be concentrating on higher order skills and therefore should simply 'have a go' at spelling and underline words they are unsure of. These should be self checked at the end or in a natural break in composition.

It is recognised that some children will need to consolidate the phonic knowledge and skills from KS1. Some will still need to follow the RWI scheme.

In the Foundation Stage, children spend 15/20 minutes a day doing Phase 1 'Letters & Sounds' activities. In the second term they are introduced to RWI in groups.

In Reception, children have a 30 minute RWI session Monday to Thursday.

In KS1 (and later in the Reception year for some children) there is an hour's RWI session Monday to Thursday.

In Key Stage 2 10-15 minutes a day should be dedicated to the teaching of spelling.

Homework

Children begin to take spellings home to learn in Reception. This continues to Year 6. These spellings are differentiated and contain both words with a spelling pattern being studied in class, as well as 'High Frequency Words.'

It is important that parents are made aware of the approaches used in school so that they can support their children at home.

A 'Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check' sheet is used for the children to take home their spellings. On this sheet they can practise writing their spellings daily. KS2 children are encouraged to use joined writing.

Children are tested weekly on their spellings and the results reported to parents.

Links with handwriting

Children need to form the letters correctly as they write so that they can visualise the spelling pattern of the word. 'Joining' handwriting improves the 'flow' of writing and so spellings practised using joined writing become automatic.

Spelling patterns and conventions are often linked to handwriting and these are reinforced in handwriting sessions where appropriate.

Dictation

Dictation passages that contain the words that have been learned are very good ways for the pupils to write the words in context. Dictation also develops listening skills and auditory memory as well as providing very good models for sentence structure and the use of punctuation. It is important to read the



St Gilbert's R.C. Primary School

Policy-Spelling-September 2017

whole passage through first so that the pupils may become familiarised with the context. Then dictate the passage in short sections slowly and clearly. Include punctuation marks and, especially in the initial stages of pupils formally learning spelling, say what the punctuation mark is and change your tone appropriately for each punctuation mark. As the pupils progress later start to cut down on declaring the punctuation marks and let the pupils use your tone as the only indicator for punctuation. Eventually the pupils should be able to punctuate mostly from intonation and sentence structure.

The classroom environment should provide resources to support children's spelling in their everyday work. These may include:-

- Dictionaries and thesauruses
- Displays of vocabulary associated to current topics
- Word banks
- Spelling rules

How do we assess and monitor spelling?

Spelling assessment and monitoring is on-going as part of the work sampling and levelling process. Children are given a 'Phonic' spelling test at the beginning of each year. This identifies children with spelling problems so that interventions can be put into place.

Equal Opportunities

We recognise the right of all children to have access to high quality spelling teaching and learning opportunities regardless of race, belief or social background. We aim to ensure that the needs of all our children are fully met within this area of the curriculum and that they are not disadvantaged in any way.

Special Educational Needs

Any child whose spelling ability is significantly below the expected level for their age will be discussed with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and the Literacy Co-ordinator in order to determine the way forward. Additional advice may also be sought from the educational psychologist.

Able Pupils

We ensure that children who have a particular spelling aptitude are challenged to extend this further and given the opportunity to excel. This may be through additional targeted support and differentiation within class or homework tasks.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The teaching and learning of spelling throughout the school is monitored, evaluated and reviewed. This is achieved in a variety of ways including reviewing planning, scrutinising work, discussions with staff and pupils, lesson observations, providing appropriate and high quality resources.

SPELLING STRATEGIES

Spelling strategy 1

Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check

The most important part of the process is *Look*. Pupils are told to look **closely** at the word and to identify any difficult or awkward parts. They are required to focus on these parts and remember that they are in that word. They are then required to focus on strings of letters. Research has proven that most people recognise strings of letters rather than single letters e.g. *committee*; when examining the word the pupils may identify the double m and double t as potential difficulties. The word can be learned as comm.-itt-ee. While focusing on the words the children repeat the spelling of the word aloud. The pupils then close their eyes and try to picture the word. If they are unable to picture it then they have to focus intently on the word again and try to picture the word when they close their eyes while repeating the spelling to themselves. After this interactive session the pupils' learning is reinforced by them looking, saying, writing, and checking the words themselves with the emphasis on **looking and picturing** the words. These sessions should not last longer than 10 to 12 minutes.

Spelling strategy 2

Mnemonics

Eg. said = silly ann is dancing



St Gilbert's R.C. Primary School

Policy-Spelling-September 2017

because = big elephants cry and upset small elephants/big elephants can always understand small elephants.

Spelling strategy 3

Words within words

Eg. one hear these many

In the same way as *look, say, cover, write and check* the pupils look closely at the word and identify any letter strings within the word that make up smaller words e.g. *business* is discussed as bus-i-ness.

Pupils only have to remember the two strings with 'i' in between them. *Appointed* can be discussed as ap-point-ed and so on. Whenever words that are being learned contain words within words then they should be taught as such because letter strings that make up words are easier to remember than other letter strings. Again pupils should close their eyes and picture the words before spelling them.

Reinforcement will involve the pupils writing the words and checking them with emphasis on **looking and picturing**.

Spelling strategy 4

Deliberately mispronounce – say it as it looks

Eg. Wed-nes-day

Wat-er

No-thing Pe-o-ple

Spelling strategy 5

Make the word visual

Eg. big small **thick** thin

Spelling strategy 6

Sound it out

Eg. sun-set yes-ter-day hos-pit-al

Spelling strategy 7

Trace a root word

Eg. know...knowing...knowledge

laugh...laughter...laughable

Spelling strategy 8

Use colour to highlight 'tricky bits'

Eg. b **eau** tiful

l **igh** t

Spelling strategy 9

Have a go until it looks right

Eg, lik lick like like

Spelling strategy 10

Practise proof reading your work, self-check and use a dictionary to help.

Be your own 'policeman'.