

ST. ANNE'S C.E.(VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL



PHONICS AND SPELLING POLICY

'Together With God, Making Learning a Life Long Friend'

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We are a Church of England School and our policies are written with a commitment to our Christian Character, which is rooted in the Bible.

Start children off on the way they should go and even when they are old they will not turn from it (Proverbs 22:6)

1. Aims and objectives

Writing is a vital form of communication and children must value the importance of being a good speller in order to communicate their meaning effectively.

We want our pupils to become fluent and effective writers; accurate spelling is a means to that end. Competent spellers need to spend less time and energy in thinking about spelling to enable them to channel their time and energy into the skills of composition, sentence structure and precise word choice.

The two factors that make English such a rich language also define its complexity: the alphabetic system and the history of the language. The keys to supporting our pupils to become confident spellers lie in teaching the strategies, rules and conventions systematically and explicitly, and helping pupils recognise which strategies they can use to improve their own spelling.

A balanced spelling programme includes five main components:

- understanding the principles underpinning word construction (phonemic, morphemic and etymological);
- recognising how (and how far) these principles apply to each word, in order to learn to spell words;
- practising and assessing spelling;
- applying spelling strategies and proofreading;
- building pupils' self-images as spellers.

Our spelling programme gradually builds pupils' spelling vocabulary by introducing patterns or conventions and continually practising those already introduced. Experience has confirmed that short, lively, focused sessions are more enjoyable and effective than an occasional skills session.

Spelling strategies are taught explicitly and applied to high-frequency words, cross-curricular words and individual pupils' words. Proofreading is taught during shared and guided writing sessions and links are made to the teaching of handwriting.

2 Teaching and learning style

2.1 We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English. We do this through a daily lesson in Keys stages One and Two. During these lessons children experience:

- An oral starter which is whole-class focused word or sentence activity,
- A whole-class shared reading or writing activity,
- A guided session or paired, group or independent activity
- A whole-class plenary to review progress and learning as appropriate.

They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses and phonics fans to support their work. Children use ICT in English lessons where it enhances their learning, as in drafting their work and using multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum. All children will be asked to write for themselves to the best of their abilities.

2.2 There are children of differing ability in all classes. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use classroom assistants to support some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals. Many children are involved in small group intervention programmes which identify key skills which the children need to work on.

Read Write Inc. Phonics (R.W.I)

Read, Write Inc. Phonics is an inclusive programme for all children learning to read. It is aimed at child reading at Year 2 and below and teaches synthetic phonics. Children learn the 44 common sounds in the English language and how to blend them to read and spell. The scheme includes both a reading and a writing focus.

Reading is the key that unlocks the whole curriculum so the ability to efficiently decode is essential. The R.W.I sessions are expected to occur each day with no exceptions, as the continuity and pace of the programme is key to accelerating the progress of children's reading development.

Aims and Objectives:

To teach pupils to:

- Apply the skill of blending phonemes in order to read words.
- Segment words into their constituent phonemes in order to spell words.
- Learn that blending and segmenting words are reversible processes.
- Read high frequency words that do not conform to regular phonic patterns.
- Read texts and words that are within their phonic capabilities as early as possible.
- Decode texts effortlessly so all their resources can be used to comprehend what they read.

- Spell effortlessly so that all their resources can be directed towards composing their writing.

Teaching and Learning Style

This is based on the 5 Ps.

Praise - pupils learn quickly in a positive climate.

Pace - Good pace is essential to the lesson.

Purpose - every part of the lesson has a specific purpose.

Passion - This is a very prescriptive programme. It is the energy, enthusiasm and passion that teachers put into the lesson that bring the teaching and learning to life!

Participation - A strong feature of R.W.I. lessons is partner work and partners "teaching" each other.

It is important to remember to never give up! Every child can learn to read if you persevere.

Planning

Pupils work within ability groups which are defined by their performance on R.W.I phonic tests. Pupils are re - tested each term and the groups are reorganised accordingly. Teacher generated planning is minimized as the planning is integrated into the teacher's handbooks and follows sets routines.

Delivery of phonics

- Initial sounds are to be taught in a specific order.
- Sounds taught should be "pure" ie "b" not "buh" as this is central to phonic teaching and ability to recognise sounds in words.
- Pupils are to be taught that the number of graphemes in a word always corresponds to the number of phonemes. This greatly aids spelling.
- Set 2 sounds are to be taught after Set 1 (initial sounds)
- Letter names are to be introduced with Set 3.

2.3 In Foundation Stage R.W.I is fully implemented in Reception but the class will not be split into groups until the initial sounds have been taught. Once the sounds have been taught assessment will take place to determine groups. The sessions will occur daily for 30 minutes. Within this time a 10 minute speed sound session will occur with follow up handwriting sessions while pupils access continuous provision in line with the EYFS.

2.4 In Key Stage 1 the children will be set into groups following assessments carried out by Phonics lead, Teachers or Teaching Assistants. The session will occur daily for 30 minutes. These sessions will include a 15 minute speed sound session followed by Reading session. Once pupils "come off" the programme they will then move onto the R.W.I. Spelling programme. (see below)

2.5 Once children have completed the R.W.I. programme, spelling is taught in addition to the daily literacy lesson using R.W.I. Spelling. A spelling list incorporating different activities is given as homework weekly. (See Homework Policy) Intervention programmes are taught where necessary. Spelling objectives are taken from the 'National Curriculum 2014' and 'RWInc spelling programme.

2.6 Children's spellings are marked by the teacher and other adults and then the children add the correct spelling three times by responding to the marking. Children are encouraged to

edit and correct independently. However, if a child is unsure of a spelling during the writing process, they are encouraged to have-a-go. In KS1 correct spellings are written three times beneath the piece of work. This applies across the curriculum.

2.7 There is a commitment to inclusive practice. Inclusion is the responsibility of everyone in the school. The Special Education Needs and Disability Act provides a statutory framework for inclusion. Within the school community, there are children with Special Educational Needs. Our Spelling Policy will strive to be fully inclusive for all children. Such children may need to learn the skill of spelling in a smaller group or on an individual basis. If appropriate, a spelling assessment will be undertaken to determine specific areas of difficulty. This will be then be detailed on an Individual Education Plan.

3 Curriculum planning

3.1 English is a core subject in the National Curriculum.

3.2 We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Curriculum details what we teach in the long-term, including identifying the key objectives required in spelling.

3.2.1 Our medium-term (termly) cards give details of the main teaching objectives for each term. These cards define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. The English subject leader is responsible for reviewing these plans.

3.2.2. Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. These plans identify the specific word level objectives and opportunities for spelling development and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of children will be learning. The class teacher includes references to cross curricular links and the integration of literacy through foundation subjects. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and subject leader is responsible for reviewing these plans.

3.3 All pupils will work on the phases of 'Read write Inc' which includes the high and medium frequency word lists.

3.4 Throughout Reception and Key Stage 1, phonics is the main focus of a 30 minute daily phonics lesson. Children continue to produce emergent writing using their phonics knowledge for some time. Gradually, they develop their visual memory to the extent that they use more complex words that do not use phonic patterns. Simple word books and dictionaries are consulted, where appropriate, to help children recognise sequences of letters from the alphabet. Towards the end of year 1, a phonics test is completed by each child, one to one. If they do not meet the required standard that year, they have to complete the test again towards the end of year 2.

In year 1 and 2, differentiated lists are also introduced.

By the end of year 2, it is anticipated that the teaching of phonics will be substantially accomplished. This will ensure that the essential skills, knowledge and understanding are established by the start of year 3.

3.5 In Key Stage 2, spelling may also be taught within the English lesson oral starter (word/sentence level work), or in addition to, where the emphasis is moved to the understanding of spelling conventions and word families. Those children who still need phonics support will continue to work on 'Read, Write Inc'.

All children in Key Stage 2 classes will receive spellings and/or topic words each week. The number of spellings given each week will depend on the ability level of each child. Spellings and rules/ patterns are revisited in writing sessions and reading and handwriting lessons throughout the week.

3.6 Spelling homework is issued in accordance with the Homework Policy.

4 The Foundation Stage

4.1 Literacy is taught in Reception as part of the 7 areas of learning, of which each area has equal importance. Phonics is taught daily as a discrete 30 minutes' session. Spelling using phonics, 'tricky' words and high frequency words are taught as part of this. Opportunities for the children to use and apply their phonics skills and spelling knowledge are created in both the indoor and outdoor environments, with appropriate stimulus and prompts throughout.

5 Equal Opportunities

5.1 We are committed to working towards equality of opportunity for all children regardless of age, ability, gender, race and social circumstances. All pupils are of equal value and have the same right to take part in the varied activities and opportunities wherever possible.

6 Assessment and recording

6.1 Children are assessed throughout every lesson. Every time partner work is used the teacher assesses the progress of the children. The teacher assesses how children:

- Read the grapheme chart
- Read the green and red word lists
- Decode the ditty/ story
- Comprehend the story.

Phonics

Formal assessment is carried out half termly by the phonics leader or class teacher using the RWI phonic checks. This allows for achieving homogeneity within each group. This assessment is also used to determine the correct access point and phonic group for new entrants to the school.

The Phonics Lead:

- Tests all EYFS and KS1 pupils and designates pupils to the correct groups.
- Assign teachers/ teacher assistance to groups.
- "Drops in" on "Read Write Inc" groups to give advice and to informally check that pupils are in the correct groups.
- Model teaching where necessary
- Attend "Read Write Inc" updates where appropriate and share information with Teachers and Teacher Assistants.

- Monitors the delivery of "Read Write Inc" and the progress of children through the programme.
- Have regular discussions with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher regarding groupings, teaching spaces and other pertinent matters.
- Is responsible for reporting to the governors about the quality of the implementation of "Read Write Inc" and the impact on standards.

Phonics

- Regular formative assessment of phonics knowledge.
- Assess phonics knowledge at the end of each phase of 'Read Write Inc' using the Schools agreed proformas
- Year one/ two standardised phonics test- one to one- in June.

High and medium frequency words

- Years 2-6 are tested on high and medium frequency words and results recorded on individual record sheets.
- HFW spellings from back of literacy books to be tested once every half term at least. Children to test one another in paired assessments - recorded in teachers record books.

Spelling patterns/ rules

- Weekly testing of spellings using the following formats:
- Dictation sentences/ Paragraph
- Spelling test
- Verbal paired testing
- Fill in the gaps eg SATs style.

These are carried out in the back of English books

Key Stage 1 SATs and Y3, 4, 5 Optional SATs and Key Stage 2 SATs are carried out every May/ June which includes testing of spelling.

7 Resources

7.1 There is a range of resources to support the teaching of spelling across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a range of age-appropriate small apparatus. Children have access to the Internet through their classroom computer. Access to the Internet is also available in the computer suite. In addition a range of interactive white board materials is available to KS2 and some of KS1.

8 Monitoring and review

8.1 Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in spelling is the responsibility of the English subject leader. He/she will work with other subject leaders to ensure spelling is a feature of work recorded in Foundation subjects, in order to establish better practice for the application of English skills. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of spellings, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.