

Castleton&Glaisdale Federation

Spelling Policy Statement

June 2015

Introduction

Spelling is an integral part of the writing process. Children who spell with ease are able to concentrate on the content of their writing. Whilst it is important to remember that spelling is not the most important aspect of writing, confidence in spelling often has a profound effect on children's self-image as a writer. Accurate spelling, then, is important because it gives children the confidence to write freely and builds self-esteem.

Being able to spell correctly is an important skill which all children are taught in a systematic and effective manner that aims to develop an understanding of common representations of the spoken word and awareness that words are composed of letters, set out in particular combinations, to correspond with these spoken sounds.

Statutory Requirements

The school's approach to spelling is structured and progressive, following National Curriculum 2014 statutory requirements whilst relating to the needs of the individual with teachers using their professional judgement in order to pitch the teaching at the appropriate developmental level. (See Appendix 1)

Most people read words more accurately than they spell them. The younger pupils are, the truer this is.

Teaching spelling in the Foundation Stage follows QCA Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage, Developing Early Writing and Letters and Sounds.

In the Foundation Stage children should be taught to:

- Extend their vocabulary, exploring the meanings and sounds of new words
- Link sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet
- Use their phonic knowledge to write simple regular words and make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words
- Explore and experiment with sounds, words and texts

By the end of year 1, pupils should be able to read a large number of different words containing the GPCs that they have learnt, whether or not they have seen these words before. Spelling, however, is a very different matter. Once pupils have learnt more than one way of spelling particular sounds, choosing the right letter or letters depends on their either having made a conscious effort to learn the words or having absorbed them less consciously through their reading. Younger pupils have not had enough time to learn or absorb the accurate spelling of all the words that they may want to write.

This appendix provides examples of words embodying each pattern which is taught. Many of the words listed as 'example words' for years 1 and 2, including almost all those listed as 'exception words', are used frequently in pupils' writing, and therefore it is worth pupils learning the correct

spelling. The 'exception words' contain GPCs which have not yet been taught as widely applicable, but this may be because they are applicable in very few age-appropriate words rather than because they are rare in English words in general.

The word-lists for years 3 and 4 and years 5 and 6 are statutory. The lists are a mixture of words pupils frequently use in their writing and those which they often misspell. Some of the listed words may be thought of as quite challenging, but the 100 words in each list can easily be taught within the four years of key stage 2 alongside other words that teachers consider appropriate.

The rules and guidance are intended to support the teaching of spelling. Phonic knowledge should continue to underpin spelling after key stage 1; teachers should still draw pupils' attention to GPCs that do and do not fit in with what has been taught so far. Increasingly, however, pupils also need to understand the role of morphology and etymology. Although particular GPCs in root words simply have to be learnt, teachers can help pupils to understand relationships between meaning and spelling where these are relevant. For example, understanding the relationship between *medical* and *medicine* may help pupils to spell the /s/ sound in *medicine* with the letter 'c'. Pupils can also be helped to spell words with prefixes and suffixes correctly if they understand some general principles for adding them. Teachers should be familiar with what pupils have been taught about spelling in earlier years, such as which rules pupils have been taught for adding prefixes and suffixes.

In this spelling appendix, the left-hand column is statutory; the middle and right-hand columns are non-statutory guidance.

The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is used to represent sounds (phonemes). A table showing the IPA is provided in this document.

Rationale for teaching spelling

Spelling is an important aspect of writing but it must not be allowed to dominate our responses to children's writing. Very good efforts at writing can often be dismissed because of basic spelling errors and this can damage a child's perception of him or herself as a writer. The school believes that a positive and interactive approach to spelling will encourage children to recognise their achievements in spelling rather than allowing spelling to be associated simply with mistakes and corrections. Through careful teaching and using specific strategies to develop spelling through its stages, we can encourage children to investigate and overcome spelling problems, thus becoming more confident writers.

The Use of ICT in teaching spelling

Teachers vary their approaches in the direct teaching of spelling using both the conventional whiteboard and the Interactive Whiteboard to demonstrate correct spelling patterns and rules either to the whole class or to groups. Demonstration and support is also afforded to individual children as needed.

The number of ICT activities and resources to support spelling development is vast and, as such, teachers make judgements about when and why it is appropriate to be used and the benefits it provides to teaching or learning. Activities include: sorting letters; sorting words; matching words to pictures; building words and word banks; and using the speech facility so that children can hear as well as see words. Spellcheckers in word-processing programmes help children to identify spelling errors and give them the opportunity to correct them.

Cross-curricular Literacy Opportunities

Handwriting lessons and shared and guided reading sessions, particularly during the teaching of word building skills for decoding texts, provide many opportunities for talking about spelling and revisiting and practising strategies and learning. Speaking and Listening skills are also integral to learning spelling patterns.

Clear and distinct speech and good grammar are actively modelled and encouraged throughout the school.

The teaching of spelling of subject specific vocabulary occurs in all subjects.

Teaching Approaches and Organisation of spelling

Teachers aim to establish consistent practice, progression and continuity in the teaching and learning of spelling throughout the school. Differentiated spelling work, according to the needs of the children, is used so that they are all given sufficient challenge at a level at which they can experience success. Word work strategies are taught to enable all children to become fluent readers and confident writers.

A range of spelling strategies is employed in both key stages including:

- breaking words into sounds (d-i-a-r-y)
- breaking words into syllables (re-mem-ber)
- breaking words into affixes (dis + satisfy)
- using a mnemonic (necessary – one collar, two sleeves)
- referring to words in the same family (muscle – muscular)
- saying a word as it sounds (Wed-nes-day)
- finding words within words (Parliament – I AM parliament)
- refer to etymology (bi + cycle = two + wheels)
- Using analogy (bright, light, night, etc.)
- using a key word (horrible/drinkable for -able & -ible)
- applying spelling rules (writing, written)
- Learning by sight (look-cover-write-check)

Spelling in the Foundation Stage

Differences in learning styles, including visual, auditory and kinaesthetic, means that the emphasis at this stage is multi-sensory, linking the teaching and practising of letter shapes and patterns with the development of children's ability to listen and discriminate between the constituent sounds that make up a word. Children are introduced to a variety of activities to develop awareness of initial, final and dominant sounds in words including: reading the letters that represent sounds; writing letters in response to sounds, identifying and writing initial and final phonemes (sound units).

Children follow the daily phonics teaching sequence set out in *Letters and Sounds* which includes teaching sight words and high frequency and common-irregular words as listed in the NLS framework to enable them to write fluently. For spelling purposes, the programme concentrates on children's ability to segment words into phonemes and then match the most likely letter(s) to each sound by accessing the alphabetic code.

Teachers are aware that at this stage in children's writing development it is crucial that children do not become over concerned with spelling accuracy. Support is given to spelling by providing children with resources such as alphabet cards.

Spelling in Key Stage 1

During Year 1 children become increasingly independent and are taught how to use a simple dictionary, a range of word banks (including those on computers) and their knowledge of word families to attempt spellings.

Children are introduced to the skills which reinforce understanding of: the discrimination of all phonemes in cvc (consonant, vowel, consonant) words; the blending of phonemes into words for reading and the segmenting of words into phonemes for spelling. In addition to learning how to spell sight words and high frequency and common-irregular words, children investigate and learn to use common spelling patterns and frequently used prefixes and inflectional endings in their writing.

By the end of Year 1, children are expected to have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to spell a range of words with blends at the beginning and end and are encouraged to attempt their own spellings first before showing a word to an adult who then discusses any alterations that need to be made.

Year 2 is a period of revision and consolidation of the skills learned in Year 1, linked to greater awareness and confidence in employing a wide range of spelling skills in a variety of situations.

Spelling in Key Stage 2

Although there is a need for some children to consolidate their phonic knowledge and skills from KS1, the emphasis in KS2 is on: the recognition of letter strings; visual patterns and analogies; the application of spelling conventions; the use of a range of word sources and studying the form and structure of words (morphology).

Teachers use an investigative approach to the teaching of spelling which is supported by the NLS spelling bank booklet and which may be supplemented by accompanying worksheets to reinforce understanding. Spelling lists include common tricky words and mistakes derived from current work as well as words that reflect the word work currently being taught. As in KS1, "little and often" is the most effective method employed.

There is an emphasis on developing confidence and independence in KS2 with children being expected to assume more responsibility for identifying their own spelling errors, make reasoned choices about likely alternatives and use a range of resources for making corrections such as dictionaries and thesaurus.

As a regular homework activity children in both Key Stages are given spellings to learn. These are differentiated according to age and ability and are linked to the Letters and Sounds programme, the NLS spelling bank booklet and the NLS high frequency word lists. Parents are encouraged to work with their children at home to extend spelling confidence by practising these words. The children are tested weekly on their spellings.

Assessment and recording of spelling progress

Formative assessment is carried out regularly during everyday written work in order to monitor children's progress in spelling and diagnose specific problems.

Summative formal assessment in the form of SATs takes place at the end of both KS1 and KS2 (Years 2 and 6), and results form part of the overall English level awarded to each child. Years 3, 4 and 5,

children sit a spelling test as part of the Optional SATs tests and Year 1 undertake single word spelling tests. These take the format of lists and dictation sentences containing focused words.

During the first few weeks in school phonic assessments are carried out of Foundation Stage children to determine their entry level which is largely dependent on their level of pre-school experience.

Results from all summative spelling tests are used to help build a more focused picture of each child's ability in spelling and to inform future planning and literacy groupings. Each child's progress is recorded on individual spelling tracker grids which correspond to the end-of-year National Curriculum levels for each year group.

Expectations for children's achievement in spelling

See Appendix 2- Spelling progression

Equal Opportunities for spelling

Some children may need to follow a more structured phonics and spelling scheme in order to meet their specific learning needs in spelling. These children may be supported by a teaching assistant who will teach new spelling patterns, engage children in investigating words that contain the new spelling pattern and test new spellings according to the targets recorded on children's IEPs. Read Write Inc. Spelling programme is used to further support spelling in Key Stage two.

The governing body and spelling

Regular reports are made to the literacy governor and the full governing body on the progress of spelling provision in the school. The spelling policy is reviewed every three years or in the light of changes to legal requirements.

The Role of the Literacy Co-ordinator

The Literacy subject co-ordinator is responsible for improving standards of teaching and learning in spelling.

This involves

- Monitoring and evaluating progress and standards of attainment in both key stages
- Producing an annual action plan identifying targets for the year
- Developing and reviewing the spelling policy
- Developing guidelines for the teaching of spelling
- Providing support and advice for colleagues
- Keeping up-to-date with new initiatives put forward by the government and lea attending spelling courses to update knowledge of the subject and cascading this information to staff
- Reporting to the governors on the development of spelling progress within the school
- Ordering and organising resources for spelling
- Ensuring the provision of a quality learning environment