



## **HARVEY ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL** **SPELLING POLICY**

### **1. Introduction - The importance of teaching spelling**

The ability to spell early enables us to become more effective writers. The less thought we have to put into spelling, the more thought we can put into what is said.

Learning to spell is not just learning a list of words. It is a development process of learning to supply different strategies appropriately. Spelling strategies need to be taught explicitly as good spellers use a range of strategies.

*'Children need explicit interactive teaching' of spelling. 'Spelling is not a single skills – it involves bringing together information acquired through a range of senses'. These are visual, auditory/articulatory and cognitive. 'All children need to develop the full range of spelling strategies to become cognitive spellers'.*

Big Book of Spelling, Sue Palmer & Michaela Morgan, 2003

### **2. Aims of the Policy**

- to enable all children to become confident, independent and accurate spellers
- to give children confidence when attempting the increasing complexity of a wider vocabulary in their writing
- to monitor children's attainment to ensure continuity and progression
- to provide support for the development of key skills and to challenge the most able
- to help to raise the standard of writing in the school

### **3. Objectives**

#### **Teaching and Learning**

##### The stages of spelling development

Children are likely to pass through five stages on their way to becoming accurate, conventional spellers:

- The pre-communicative stage  
Children write down random letters to express meaning.
- The semi-phonetic stage  
Children attempt to represent letter-sound correspondence, but major sounds will still be omitted, especially vowels (eg *cts* for *carrots*). Letter names may be used to represent some words or syllables (eg *t* for *tea*).
- The phonetic stage  
A systematic attempt to represent all sounds (eg *sez* for *says*).

- The transitional stage

Children start moving from reliance on phonic strategies towards visual ones; knowledge of alternative ways of representing sounds in English is growing and children make analogies with word patterns they already know (eg *clime* for *climb*).

- The correct stage

Children use conventional spellings; knowledge of the English system is well established; children can visualise words in their mind's eye; they have a good knowledge of word structure and a large body of known spellings.

### Becoming an independent speller

A multi-strand approach to teaching is used in order to help children become competent and independent spellers. Using this approach, teachers:

- plan **short focused sessions to teach strategies** where children investigate and generate rules and patterns for themselves
- build **positive attitudes** about spelling in a classroom where there is complete trust to enable children to take risks
- promote an **on-going interest in words and language**
- stress the importance of **responding first to the writers' ideas** and then to the editing process, which includes spelling.

### A multi-sensory approach

- **Visual** – remembering common patterns; writing words down to check if they look right. Looking for words within words. Finding key words in reading books/text.
- **Aural and oral** – hearing and pronouncing words, emphasising or exaggerating. Pronunciation to aid learning (e.g. wed-nes-day) breaking words into syllables or phonemes
- **Kinaesthetic** – writing common patterns; tracing over words; sky writing as you say each letter; getting the feel of common handwriting joins
- **Cognitive** – knowing rules, conventions, possible and impossible combinations; identifying word roots, suffixes and prefixes; using knowledge of grammar and mnemonics

### Marking

A marking focus is essential where teachers mark to the lesson objective rather than identifying all the errors. Sympathetic, constructive marking increases 'risk tasking' in the use of more interesting vocabulary and gives pupils the opportunity to generalise about letter patterns learned and apply them to new words. It can be counter productive to insist on total correctness when children are still developing their fluency in writing. Experimentation is a necessary part of the process of learning to spell. Older children should become more independent in finding errors. Partner work can be used to look for mistakes and various codes introduced to indicate errors.

## **4. Implementation**

The structure for the teaching of spelling in the school is based on the outline provided in the 2014 National Curriculum English Programmes of Study Appendix 1

Spelling lends itself to a cross curricular approach. Teachers need to be aware of the spelling opportunities which constantly occur in a range of areas.

Dictation is now a statutory requirement.

#### Foundation stage and KS1:

- Role play provides many opportunities to experiment with writing, such as shops, hospitals etc. This 'mark-making with intent' imitates those they have seen writing. Children must be encouraged to 'have a go' rather than asking 'how do I spell...' All attempts at independent writing should be highly praised and celebrated with others. Incorrect spellings should not be pointed out to the youngest children.
- The Letters and Sounds Programme together with the Ruth Miskin Read Write Inc mnemonics are used as a basis for teaching children to write independently, by listening for the sounds in words (phonemes) and choosing letters to represent the sounds (graphemes).
- Children are taught to see the relationship between reading and spelling from Reception. Decoding (reading) and encoding (spelling) are treated as reversible processes, where encoding involves the skill of segmenting - breaking words down into their constituent phonemes to spell.
- Children's names and common words are taught by visually recalling the letters in a word. Many irregular (tricky) words are also taught in this way.
- Spellings are taught in a systematic way using the *Letters and Sounds Programme*. This starts in Nursery with phase 1. Children then progress through the remaining phases whilst phase 6 may be continued in Key Stage 2. Class work should be differentiated to allow an intervention group to work at a slower pace to reinforce their knowledge.
- Rhyming games are an important way to practise final letters and blends.

#### KS2

- The *Letters and Sounds Programme* is continued into Year 3 for many of the children and up to Year 6 for those who need further practice with spelling skills.
- We are currently using Read Write Inc spelling as a scheme across KS2 which uses a range of spelling strategies. This may change according to the needs of the children in our school and data analysis.
- There are several books in classrooms and a central resource in the staffroom for teachers to use. The internet also provides a wealth of resources that should be carefully selected.

#### Linking handwriting, phonics and spelling practice

Dry wipe boards are used to practise irregular spellings, underlining the tricky part of the word. When this is linked with handwriting, the whole word can be written as a joined unit eg *was, said*. From Reception onwards, the teaching of letter joins is directly linked with phonemes such as vowel digraphs. Regular practise of handwriting helps to consolidate the learning of common letter strings.

### **5. Assessment**

- There is regular assessment of spelling from Year 1 onwards. This takes the form of weekly dictation tests using high frequency words in the relevant phase of the National Curriculum as well as words in groups of graphemes corresponding to the particular phonemes being learnt in class, topic words and/or words commonly misspelt in children's

work. The quantity is dependent upon the age and ability of the child. These words should have been taught and discussed in class before being sent home for homework.

## **6. Special Educational Needs**

- Class teachers will support children with special educational needs in their spelling work by providing them with differentiated work and where possible, extra resources. Letters and Sounds Assessments are used for a targeted group of children in each class where there is concern about the need for specific/additional phonic support.
- Intervention programmes can be used in all years when there are specific learning needs.

## **8. Inclusion**

All teaching and learning of spelling is in line with the school's Inclusion Policy. Differentiated spelling lists are given as homework, to ensure that progression at an appropriate rate is provided for all children.

## **10. Parental involvement**

Parents are expected to be fully involved in supporting their children in the learning and practising of spellings as part of our Home/School agreement.

## **Review**

The policy will be reviewed every 4 years.

C Tustin 2019

Reviewed by Governors: 6 March 2019

Date of next Review: March 2023