Spelling

Intent

We aim to provide children with the skills and confidence they need to become accurate spellers, reducing the cognitive load when writing, and allowing them to use ambitious vocabulary in their work. To do this we provide engaging lessons which build systematically and allow time for practise and reinforcement of spelling skills. Spelling is not only taught in stand-alone lessons but also as part of writing lessons through modelling and innovation of a text.

Implementation

Teaching

In EYFS and Year 1, children develop their spelling skills through our systematic, synthetic phonics scheme - Little Wandle. Children practise spelling during their daily phonics lesson, applying the new graphemes they have learnt and practising the spelling of 'tricky' or 'common exception' words. The curriculum is sequenced so that new learning builds on secure prior knowledge and provides regular opportunities for retrieval, practice and application. Within the lesson, spelling is scaffolded by the teacher, who models segmenting and applying the appropriate graphemes or tricky parts before the children are asked to write.

In EYFS, this learning is enriched within free play activities, through sharing rich and engaging texts and through interactions with adults. In Year 1, children take part in weekly spelling and dictation lessons. Children practise their segmenting skills and spell words with familiar graphemes taught the previous week. They also write sentences, dictated by the teacher, which practise these graphemes alongside common exception words.

In Year Two, children begin by consolidating their phonics knowledge, including the application of phonics to spelling. Once secure, they move onto Little Wandle 'Bridge to Spelling' which completes the alphabetic code and teaches the underpinning concepts of spelling. Children who are on-track begin the main spelling units in the spring term of Year Two. These units follow the familiar structure of Little Wandle phonics lessons, supporting children to make links to their phonics learning. Little Wandle Spelling teaches children to consider etymology, morphology and grammar when spelling new words and provides full coverage of National Curriculum spelling requirements.

In KS2 spelling is taught systematically using the **Spelling Shed** programme. Teachers follow the progression of the programme to ensure that pupils encounter and revisit the spelling knowledge and patterns expected across Years 3–6.
Spelling teaching includes:

- explicit teaching and modelling of spelling patterns and conventions;
- revisiting previously taught knowledge to support retention;
- investigation of spelling patterns and relationships between words;
- teaching of prefixes, suffixes and root words;
- exploration of morphology and, where appropriate, etymology;
- discussion of meanings and relationships between words;
- identification and investigation of common errors and frequently misspelled words;
- teaching and practising homophones and words that are often confused;
- opportunities to segment and analyse words to identify their spelling structure;
- regular opportunities to practise and apply new learning;
- opportunities to use spelling words in sentences and meaningful contexts;
- dictation and sentence-level activities to support accurate application;
- regular opportunities to apply spelling knowledge within independent writing.

Teachers model appropriate spelling strategies and encourage pupils to become increasingly independent in selecting a strategy when faced with an unfamiliar word.
Spelling Shed's digital resources are used alongside teacher-led teaching and practice. Digital activities provide additional opportunities for pupils to rehearse and consolidate learning but do not replace explicit classroom teaching.
Spelling is also reinforced through reading and writing across the curriculum. Teachers draw attention to interesting vocabulary and spelling patterns encountered in high-quality texts and subject-specific learning. Teachers encourage pupils to proofread their writing carefully and to identify, correct and learn from spelling errors.

Assessment

In EYFS and Year One, assessment of spelling takes place informally, through immediate feedback during phonics lessons so that misconceptions are corrected quickly. It also takes place through the marking of children's written work where teachers have high expectations that previously taught common exception words should be spelt correctly. Teachers will pick up to three incorrect spellings for a child to practise and ideally this 'live marking' will happen during the writing process to make the biggest impact. At the end of Year One children will complete the SWST spelling test to determine their spelling age.

From Year Two onwards, SWST spelling age tests are carried out during the first term in Autumn, Spring and Summer. These are used to track children's progress and identify those who need extra support.

In addition, weekly assessment or review activities provide opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their understanding of the words and patterns taught. However, assessment is not limited to weekly spelling tests. Teachers also consider whether pupils can apply their spelling knowledge accurately when writing independently. Pupils are encouraged to review errors, identify the reason for a misspelling and apply an appropriate strategy to remember the correct spelling.

Additionally, common exception words are taught explicitly throughout the year as part of spelling lessons. They are also planned into the wider curriculum, for example through adding them into model texts or focusing on their use in science, geography or history lessons.

Inclusion, adaptations and intervention

- The nature of the lessons and their structure helps to support all learners through the repetition of key knowledge, the reduction of cognitive load and effective scaffolding.
- Immediate feedback or support is given by teachers or teaching assistants within lessons.
- The seating of the children is an important consideration in spelling lessons. Those who need extra support are within the eye-line and easy reach of the teacher or TA so misconceptions can be addressed quickly.
- Pupils with identified gaps receive additional, focused practice matched to the precise spelling knowledge not yet secured. In KS1, 'keep up' happens daily – assessment during each lesson allows for children to have a targeted intervention in the afternoon and gaps to be closed quickly.
- Children who have larger gaps with spelling are supported using the SNIP intervention. This supports the teaching of common exception words using daily practise and regular assessment.

Impact

Our spelling curriculum will result in pupils who:

- spell accurately and confidently across a range of contexts;
- demonstrate secure knowledge of the spelling patterns and conventions taught;
- apply phonics knowledge alongside morphological and orthographic knowledge;

- recognise and use common prefixes, suffixes and root words;
- use knowledge of morphology and etymology to support spelling unfamiliar words;
- accurately spell an increasing number of common exception and frequently misspelled words;
- distinguish between common homophones and other commonly confused words;
- retain and apply previously taught spelling knowledge;
- use dictionaries and other appropriate resources independently to check spellings;
- identify and correct spelling errors in their own writing;
- apply spelling knowledge consistently across the curriculum rather than only during spelling lessons;
- demonstrate increasing automaticity in spelling, allowing greater focus on composing and communicating ideas;
- show resilience and independence when attempting unfamiliar vocabulary.

The impact of spelling teaching is evident not only through spelling assessments but through pupils' independent writing across the curriculum. We expect pupils to increasingly transfer taught spelling knowledge into authentic writing situations.

Subject leaders monitor the impact of the spelling curriculum through assessment information, pupil voice, lesson visits, work scrutiny and discussions with teachers. This enables the school to identify strengths, address gaps and ensure that spelling provision continues to meet the needs of all pupils.
Ultimately, our aim is that pupils leave KS2 with the spelling knowledge, strategies and confidence necessary to communicate their ideas accurately and effectively in their writing.