

Pinchmill Primary School

Spelling Policy

Intent

Our aim is to **produce capable and independent spellers** through an engaging and challenging whole school approach. The best spelling sessions are investigative. If children have explored the patterns, 'tricky bits' and history of words, they are far more likely to make informed decisions about how to spell a word when writing it independently.

Through our teaching of spelling, our intention is that children will:

- Learn to look carefully at words.
- Learn spelling rules and then use these within their writing.
- Have an understanding of the English Spelling system and how the history of words has influenced our spelling.
- Develop confidence and become competent spellers, having the skills and knowledge to be able to spell most words correctly.
- To have a positive attitude towards spelling and recognize its value so that they have good self-esteem, which enables them to be successful in all areas of the curriculum.
- To use a variety of spelling activities to develop and extend their vocabulary.

In Pre-school we believe it is important to focus on developing listening and speaking skills whilst also developing an awareness of the sounds individual letters spell.

In Reception and Key Stage one we aim to :

- Provide children with a wide range of spelling strategies (Blending, segmenting and manipulating) to enable them to be confident, competent and independent spellers.
- Provide a wide range of auditory, visual and kinaesthetic activities and experiences in spelling, in order to meet the learning styles of all children within the classroom.
- Wherever possible, to link spelling with other areas of the curriculum, in order to make it more meaningful and relevant to the children.

In Key stage two we aim to :

- Continue to strengthen the knowledge and understanding of the relationships between letters and sounds, even when this relationship is unusual.
- Enable children to further develop their spelling knowledge and improve their accuracy.
- Use their phonemic knowledge to spell new and unfamiliar words
- To continuously develop their vocabulary.

Implementation

Recommended Strategies

SoundsWrite

SoundsWrite is effective in teaching pupils to read, spell and write because it starts from what all children know from a very early age – the sounds of their own language. From there, it takes them in carefully sequenced, incremental steps and teaches them how each of the 44 or so sounds in the English language can be spelt.

The words used in the teaching process and the conceptual knowledge of how the alphabet code works are introduced from simple to complex, in accordance with the fundamental principles of psychological learning theory. For example, at the start, simple, mutually implied (one sound, one spelling) CVC words (consonant, vowel, consonant) only are introduced. Pupils quickly learn to read and spell words such as 'mum', 'dog', 'jam' and 'sit'. When all the single-letter sound-spelling correspondences have been introduced and established, Sounds-Write initiates the concept that the sounds '<f>', '<l>', '<s>' and '<z>' can be spelt with the two letter-spellings '<ff>', '<ll>', '<ss>' and '<zz>', respectively.

As the programme progresses, the complexity of one-syllable words is carefully increased through a variety of VCC, CVCC, CCVC, CCVCC and CCCVC words, such as, for example, 'elf', 'hand', 'swim', 'trust' and 'scrub'.

After this, pupils' understanding of the concept 'two letters - one sound' is further developed through the introduction of the most common consonant two-letter spellings: '<sh>', '<ch>' and '<th>', in words like 'shop', 'chimp' and 'thin', for example.

Finally, two, three and four letter spellings of the vowels are introduced and pupils are taught how to read and spell polysyllabic words, starting with simpler words (such as 'bedbug') and gradually moving to the more complex (such as 'mathematical').

All of this is taught within a well-structured, incremental and coherent framework based on the knowledge - both conceptual and factual (see below) – on which the alphabet principle and thus the writing system is based and the three key skills needed to enable learners to use the principle effectively.

Multi-Sensory Teaching

Spelling involves a number of sense skills. Pupils must learn to **look** at words and to use visual techniques to help memorise tricky spelling. Many children need help to **listen** to the sounds of words; clear articulation will help here. Pupils must also learn to **think** about words so that they can use their prior knowledge about words to help them to learn new ones e.g. linking words by appearance. **Kinaesthetic** approaches, often simply writing out the words as described above, are important as writing and spelling are intertwined. Some pupils are stronger on one strategy than on others but all pupils need to develop the full range of strategies to become good spellers.

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 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.

SEND Support

For those children who are struggling with spelling an in-house dyslexia assessment will be carried out. The teacher make reasonable adjustments as detailed by the Bedford Borough 'Literacy difficulties and dyslexia guidance'. The teacher and the SENDCo will work with the parents and child to assess whether and further assessment is needed. Any child with SEND will have available to them coloured overlays, a Nessy App login.

Homework

Spelling is probably the most commonly assigned homework along with reading. The danger is that without all of the above pupils' approaches are likely to become sloppy and it is important that parents are made aware of these approaches so that they can support their children at home. Spelling must never be regarded as a filler for homework or for the daily programme - it is much too important for that. All homework should reinforce the SoundsWrite method and the work that has been carried out in SoundsWrite sessions.

Resources

All staff delivery SoundsWrite will be SoundsWrite trained and accredited.

Each member of staff delivering SoundsWrite will have their own SoundsWrite file. A selection of additional phonics books (Ruth Miskin) can be found on the shelves outside Squirrels classroom.

Initial and Extended code interactive programmes can be found in the teacher Curriculum files.

Each member of staff has their own white boards, pens and board rubbers for their group.

Various different practical resources can be found in each classroom and these are detailed on the class resources lists.

All classes will have a word wall that includes keywords difficult words and words that are relevant to the current topic.

All classes will display the SoundsWrite posters.

Jane Considine resources.

Impact

Every Friday the children will attend a ten-minute assessment session in which, Year 1 will carry out a Seek the sound activity to clarify whether they can identify the different spellings of one sound when reading.

Year 2 and above will complete a simple dictation to assess whether they can spell words that have been covered during that week's activities and include different spellings of the same sound.

A teacher will complete a phonics record for each child, highlighting those words they can read and ticking those words that the children can spell.

Spelling will also be assessed every half term when the children complete their independent writing activities.

Every term the children will complete a formative spelling test that will assess the children's spelling age through different contexts.

Any pupils who are identified as struggling with their spelling will receive additional spelling support.

Signed:

Date: February 2024