

Spelling is an integral part of children's learning at Polegate School. It is taught daily across the school in literacy lessons and specific spelling lessons as well as discreetly through reading tasks, written work from across the curriculum and response to marking. Across the school we use a consistent scheme of work to teach spelling and consolidate children's understanding as they move through the key stages and between year groups.

### **Information about spelling and the ways that children learn**

Research shows that one in five children are thought to struggle with spelling. Those with a good visual memory are usually strong at spelling: these are the fortunate people who can see a word once or twice, memorise it and know how to spell it. Those who struggle with spelling always have a worse visual memory and rely more on breaking down words into manageable chunks or sounds. However, this doesn't always work well for such a highly unpredictable language as English.

Research shows that those who read widely are not necessary strong spellers as the skills involved are different. Reading is a process of decoding and finding meaning, spelling is a process of revisualising word and then reproducing it correctly. Instead, children need to be taught **why** words are spelt as they are.

Spelling matters – children's first question when attempting to spell a word should be "What does this word mean?" rather than "What sounds can I hear?" Responding in this way gives children a context and understanding of the word which helps significantly with then learning to spell the word.

Young children enjoy responding to stories about words and the meaning behind them. This understanding is key to building their spelling skills as well as own vocabulary range. This makes spelling become exciting by breaking the code, figuring out the meanings of words and discovering how learning about one word helps them to solve another one.

### **How do we teach spelling at Polegate?**

We use a teaching resource that has been written for the New Curriculum by specialist literacy advisors and this is embedded within all lessons. We teach spelling daily across all year groups – either through direct 15 minute spelling lessons or discreetly within other lessons (including science, history, geography, etc). Successful spelling should be about finding meaning. Research shows that children are more likely to spell correctly if they know the meaning of the words they spell. We teach children to find meaning and investigate how the words are constructed.

As well as this, all children from Year 2 to Year 6 have their own spelling journals. These are used alongside lessons as an opportunity for children to further practice key spellings **of their choice** that they have identified from their work. We strongly believe that children respond better to their spellings when they have ownership and responsibility for the words that are important to learn.

### **Why weekly spelling tests are counterproductive**

Research shows that if children learn spellings for tests but don't use those words regularly in their own writing then they are not going to remember them. The only people who benefit from spelling tests are the children who do well on them and this

relates to self-esteem rather than spelling ability as they are already strong spellers. Those who don't benefit from spelling tests are those who struggle with their spellings – they were already known to struggle before the test so the test only lowers their self-confidence and motivation with spelling. For this reason, we do not set weekly spelling tests at Polegate as research has proven that they are not productive or instrumental in supporting **all** children with their spelling. We do however have a column in the home school journals for children to record words they spell incorrectly at school so they can learn them at home with your support.

### **How can I support my child with their spelling at home?**

The greater exposure that children have to language and the importance of spelling, the greater responsibility and ownership they will have with understanding how to spell words. Draw attention to spellings in everyday life: on road signs, food packaging, notices, etc. Use this as a low-key way to discreetly identify and practice words together. Use the statutory word lists for your child and find examples of these being used in their life so they become familiar with the spelling and context of the word. Always remind your child that a word is never wrong, but nearly right.

### **Aged 5 – 7**

- When reading a story use your finger to follow words so that children can see the shape of the words being read.
- Use magnetic letters (letters for younger children then moving onto packs of words as they get older) and use these to create words and practise.
- Some children respond well to experiencing an exaggerated arm movement to help them to remember how a word is spelt. For instance, use a water pistol to spray the word on the wall, use a brush dipped in water to write on the ground or wall, use a torch on a dark wall to make the shape of the letters. This will help them to practise writing the word.
- Play fun spelling games – clap out the letters of a tricky word while chanting the letters. Say each letter aloud in silly voices. Use spelling snakes and ladders (a pile of cards with spellings written on them; to go up a ladder they must first spell the word, if incorrect then slide down the snake).

### **Aged 8-11**

- Help them understand where they're going wrong – identify together the error rather than just giving the correct spelling. Is there a rule they don't understand? Is there a letter pattern that they are missing?
- Focus on three spellings which the child thinks are the most important to practice (these can be linked to words that you have noticed, or words that the child has identified in school from their work). Keep practising them — shout them out in the car, write them on magnetic letters on the fridge, find ways to use them regularly in writing.
- Play games such as Scrabble, Boggle as a family.
- Use spelling websites such as [http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/spellits/home\\_noflash.shtml#](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/spellits/home_noflash.shtml#)
- Invent mnemonics – some children respond really well to this and it also helps their memory skills. (e.g. Never Eat Cake Eat Salmon Sandwiches And Remain Young for “necessary”).

- Use a highlighter pen. Highlight all the correctly spelt words in your child's sentence, then tick all the correct letters in the misspelt word so they can see that what they have got wrong is a small part of the whole sentence.
- Just as modern maths uses chunking to work out complex sums, break a troublesome word into chunks. Write the word on a piece of paper, then use scissors to cut it up into syllables, jumble them up and get the child to put it back together. When they see how it fits together, they should write the word on a piece of paper without looking at the clues.

Here are some further activities that you can carry out with your child to help them. The activities are meant to be fun ways of playing with words:

### Spelling flashcards

- Pairs: Create a double set of the words your child is finding tricky. Pick up two cards at a time until they find a pair. Can they verbally spell it out to you?
- Flip, Read, Letters and Write: Your child can learn their spellings in 4 quick steps. Have the child flip over a card, read it, spell out the letters and then write it down.
- Trace, Copy, Recall: Fold a piece of paper into three columns and label them trace, copy and recall. Write the word in the first column and have your child trace it. Next, get them to copy the word in the next column by looking back at the letters. Finally, get them to fold and hide the first two columns and practise writing the word in the final column.
- Pocket Cards: Make small cards to keep in your pocket or bag and when you are walking to school, making breakfast or sitting in the park ask the children to spell the words to you.

### On paper:

- Spelling Word Race: Create two teams with a player from each team taking the 'pen' at a time. Someone calls out the word and the two players race to write the word first.
- Spelling Puzzle: Make a home-made puzzle by writing the words in large on a piece of card.
- Get your child to cut it up and then can they piece it back together again?
- Stairs: Write the words as if they are stairs, adding one letter each time:
  - S, Sp, Spe, Spel, Spell
- Tic-Tac-Toe or Os and Xs: Using the spelling words the child needs to make get three in a row of the words spelt correctly. They can compete with you or a friend.
- Chalk: If you have any chalk (and don't mind getting your paving a bit messy) get the child to write the words on the ground and then the rain will wash it away.
- Water Paint: Use water and a paintbrush to water paint the spelling words. On a hot sunny day the words disappear quickly so they need to paint fast!

Common exception words for Year 2

door floor

even

sugar

poor

great

eye

because

break

could

find

steak

should

kind

pretty

would

mind

beautiful

who

behind

after fast

whole

child

last past

any

children

father

many

wild

class

clothes

climb

grass

busy

most

pass

people

only

plant

water

both old

path

again

cold

bath

half

gold

hour

money

hold

move

Mr

told

prove

Mrs

every

improve

parents

everybody

sure

Christmas

Statutory word list for Years 3 and 4

<b>accident(ally)</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>possess(ion)</b>
<b>actual(ly)</b>	<b>forward(s)</b>	<b>possible</b>
<b>address</b>	<b>fruit</b>	<b>potatoes</b>
<b>answer</b>	<b>grammar</b>	<b>pressure</b>
<b>appear</b>	<b>group</b>	<b>probably</b>
<b>arrive</b>	<b>guard</b>	<b>promise</b>
<b>believe</b>	<b>guide</b>	<b>quarter</b>
<b>bicycle</b>	<b>heard(h)</b>	<b>question</b>
<b>breath</b>	<b>heart</b>	<b>recent</b>
<b>breathe</b>	<b>height</b>	<b>regular</b>
<b>build</b>	<b>history</b>	<b>reign (h)</b>
<b>busy/business</b>	<b>imagine</b>	<b>remember</b>
<b>calendar</b>	<b>increase</b>	<b>sentence</b>
<b>caught</b>	<b>important</b>	<b>separate</b>
<b>centre</b>	<b>interest</b>	<b>special</b>
<b>century</b>	<b>island</b>	<b>straight</b>
<b>certain</b>	<b>knowledge</b>	<b>strange</b>
<b>circle</b>	<b>learn</b>	<b>strength</b>
<b>complete</b>	<b>length</b>	<b>suppose</b>
<b>consider</b>	<b>library</b>	<b>surprise</b>
<b>continue</b>	<b>material</b>	<b>therefore</b>
<b>decide</b>	<b>medicine</b>	<b>though/although</b>
<b>describe</b>	<b>mention</b>	<b>thought (Phase 5)</b>
<b>different (Phase 5)</b>	<b>minute</b>	<b>through (Phase 5) (h)</b>
<b>difficult</b>	<b>natural</b>	<b>various</b>
<b>disappear</b>	<b>naughty</b>	<b>weight (h)</b>
<b>early</b>	<b>notice</b>	<b>woman/women</b>
<b>earth</b>	<b>occasion(ally)</b>	<b>perhaps</b>
<b>eight (h)/eighth</b>	<b>often</b>	<b>popular</b>
<b>enough</b>	<b>opposite</b>	<b>position</b>
<b>exercise</b>	<b>ordinary</b>	<b>extreme</b>
<b>experience</b>	<b>particular</b>	<b>famous</b>
<b>experiment</b>	<b>peculiar</b>	<b>favourite</b>

Statutory word list for Years 5 and 6

<b>accommodate</b>	<b>equip (-ped, -ment)</b>	<b>programme</b>
<b>accompany</b>	<b>especially</b>	<b>pronunciation</b>
<b>according</b>	<b>exaggerate</b>	<b>queue</b>
<b>achieve</b>	<b>excellent</b>	<b>recognise</b>
<b>aggressive</b>	<b>existence</b>	<b>recommend</b>
<b>amateur</b>	<b>explanation</b>	<b>restaurant</b>
<b>ancient</b>	<b>familiar</b>	<b>rhyme</b>
<b>apparent</b>	<b>foreign</b>	<b>rhythm</b>
<b>appreciate</b>	<b>forty</b>	<b>sacrifice</b>
<b>attached</b>	<b>frequently</b>	<b>secretary</b>
<b>available</b>	<b>government</b>	<b>shoulder</b>
<b>average</b>	<b>guarantee</b>	<b>signature</b>
<b>awkward</b>	<b>harass</b>	<b>sincere(ly)</b>
<b>bargain</b>	<b>hindrance</b>	<b>soldier</b>
<b>bruise</b>	<b>identity</b>	<b>stomach</b>
<b>category</b>	<b>immediately</b>	<b>sufficient</b>
<b>cemetery</b>	<b>interfere</b>	<b>suggest</b>
<b>committee</b>	<b>interrupt</b>	<b>symbol (h)</b>
<b>communicate</b>	<b>language</b>	<b>system</b>
<b>community</b>	<b>leisure</b>	<b>temperature</b>
<b>competition</b>	<b>lightning (h)</b>	<b>thorough</b>
<b>conscience</b>	<b>marvellous</b>	<b>twelfth</b>
<b>conscious</b>	<b>mischievous</b>	<b>variety</b>
<b>controversy</b>	<b>muscle (h)</b>	<b>vegetable</b>
<b>convenience</b>	<b>necessary</b>	<b>vehicle</b>
<b>correspond</b>	<b>neighbour</b>	<b>yacht</b>
<b>criticise (critic + ise)</b>	<b>nuisance</b>	
<b>curiosity</b>	<b>occupy</b>	
<b>definite</b>	<b>occur</b>	
<b>desperate</b>	<b>opportunity</b>	
<b>determined</b>	<b>parliament</b>	
<b>develop</b>	<b>persuade</b>	
<b>dictionary</b>	<b>physical</b>	
<b>disastrous</b>	<b>prejudice</b>	
<b>embarrass</b>	<b>privilege</b>	



**environment**

**profession**