

Medlock Primary School



Spelling Policy September 2021

Review Date: September 2023

Aims and Expectations.

At Medlock Primary School we believe that all children have the right to receive high quality teaching and learning and we will strive to provide this at all times. Quality first teaching is essential for children making progress (physically, socially and emotionally as well as academically) and where appropriate interventions will be put in place to support children's individual needs. Communication: both with each other and with their parents is crucial to ensuring the same strategies are used and continued in all areas where learning takes place. Well planned lessons and high quality resources coupled with the before mentioned teaching and communication methods are imperative to ensuring children's next steps are built upon and therefore make as much progress as possible.

In all areas of the curriculum promoting oracy is at the heart of our teaching and learning. During all lessons and activities planned there will be opportunities for children to verbally share their ideas with each other and the whole class / group; ask and answer questions as well as being encouraged to extend their responses.

We aim for all children to leave Medlock Primary School as confident spellers who can apply all spelling rules from phonics phases 2-5; apply all spelling rules taught in the scheme "No-Nonsense Spellings" and be able to use a spell checker on a computer or a dictionary (when appropriate). In all instances, this should be done independently.

Spelling Programme for Years Nursery to Year 1.

Years Nursery to Year 1 have daily phonics lessons inline with the scheme 'Letters and Sounds'. More detailed information about how and when this is taught can be found in the reading policy.

We aim for children to complete the programme (Phases 1 – 5) and progress onto 'Babcock Spelling Scheme – No Nonsense Spelling,' in Year 2. For spelling purposes, the emphasis is on the pupils' ability to segment words into phonemes and then match the most likely letter or letters to each sound when writing. In addition to this, pupils learn how to read and spell High Frequency Words and Tricky Words, as listed in the 'Letters and Sounds' document; this will enable them to write fluently. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils should be ready to learn and investigate how to use common spelling patterns and frequently used prefixes and suffixes in their writing. Pupils will, as a consequence, become increasingly more independent and be able to begin to identify reasons for misspellings in their own writing.

Spelling Programme for Years 2-6.

Years 2-6 receive spelling lessons at least 3 times a week, lasting around 15 minutes. This can be done on white boards, spelling journals or on other materials. Using a mix of resources maintains the children's interest and therefore engagement in the sessions. Research shows that using whiteboards allows children to make mistakes more comfortably, as it's not a material which will be kept and referred back to. This ensures children are more likely to have a go at things.

All spelling lessons should follow a similar sequence which is familiar to children from their phonics sessions whereby, across a series of lessons, each new concept is taught, practised, applied and then assessed. Frequently there is also a 'Revise' session before the teaching session.

A typical teaching sequence is as follows:

1. Revisit , explain , use: The first part of the sequence consists of lively oral and quick-write activities with two purposes: to revise and secure prior learning and to introduce and explain new learning. An important aspect of this part of the sequence is that children use the words orally, in context, so that they have a clear understanding of what they are learning. For example, in a unit related to learning the correct spelling of verb endings, the children need to have a clear understanding of the concept of tense.
2. Teach, model, define: Provide a range of direct teaching activities, including teacher modelling and involving the children in new learning. For example, after an introductory activity based on the spelling of plurals, the teacher and children define the categories and generalize the rules for their formation.
3. Practise, explore, investigate: Provide the children with the opportunity to work independently, in pairs or small groups, using a range of strategies to practice and consolidate new learning.
4. Apply, assess, reflect: Revise new learning Apply the words orally and in writing Reflect and assess progress Ask children to apply their learning in writing, both through a short dictated piece and by composing their own sentences for their partner to transform by adding affixes to selected words

Spelling Displays/Working walls.

All classes from **Reception to Year 6** should have a spelling display either relating to the phonics phase they're working at or the words/ spelling rules they're working on as well as previously taught sounds, words and spelling rules. This display should be referred to constantly in all lessons where reading and writing is taking place, not just during spelling lessons. In the **Nursery classes**, activities and resources, such as musical instruments and CD's of songs and rhymes, linked to aspects of phase 1 phonics should be available in the indoor and outdoor environments.

Posters/records of any previous spelling patterns or rules can then be stored in a class display book for children to be able to refer to. On working walls for all foundation subjects there should be unfamiliar vocabulary displayed to support with spellings as well as definitions. Word mats should also be available to children at all times to support them with age appropriate statutory words and any topic specific vocabulary that you would expect to be copied and eventually learnt correctly.

Spelling Journals.

Spelling journals are given to **Years 2-6** and can be used amongst other resources (such as whiteboards and sugar paper) to practice and record spelling work. The work done in journals should be dated and a short title written to help the teacher keep track of what was taught and when but it doesn't need to be marked. Teachers and more

importantly pupils, have the freedom to use the journals in creative ways , as well as teaching spellings through art or music as well as through written activities.

Spellings Tests.

Research shows that if a list of spellings are sent home, children of all abilities are able to learn the spellings perfectly for the following test but then do not retain the spellings for future pieces of writing. If teachers wish to send work home relating to spelling rules, they should send an activity home where spelling rules can be independently applied, not a list of words to be sent home to learn for a test back in school. Low stakes testing and quizzing is still possible within a series of sessions to ascertain how confidently children are applying rules and patterns taught and is in fact continuously built into the structure of our phonics and spelling lessons.

Learning at home needs to be an extension of the practice in school. Consider

- limiting the number of words to five or less a week to ensure success and enable deeper learning
- making sure pupils and parents have access to the range of learning strategies which have been taught in school, to use in home learning
- assessing spellings in context, for example: learning spellings in a given sentence, generating sentences for each word, assessing through unseen dictated sentences
- keeping an ongoing record of words learnt and setting a very high expectation of correct application in independent writing once a spelling has been learned.

Have A Go Sheets.

Years 3-6 should be using the "Have A Go" sheets, where they write a word they're unsure of, then use their knowledge of spelling rules and the displays around the room to write it in different ways. If they're still unsure they can use a dictionary to check the final spelling or, once they have demonstrated that they have made attempts to independently spell the word, they can ask a peer or adult for support. It is expected that adults are also modelling the use of 'have a go' sheets when writing with the children. This is also supported by the children's use of 'Temporary spelling' where the children are taught to put a wiggly line under a word that they are not sure of, when they do not want to disrupt the flow of their writing, but then return later using the 'have a go sheets'. Teachers are again expected to model this during shared and guided writing as part of developing the writer in role with the children.

Dictionaries.

All classes from **Years 1-6** have a set of 6 dictionaries each, with the understanding that sets can be borrowed but returned the same day, if teachers want to teach a whole class dictionary based lesson. All children should be encouraged to apply the spelling rules learnt during phonics and spelling lessons though, before using a dictionary as the first port of call.

Linking spelling to handwriting

Where possible, handwriting sessions will be linked to letter strings being taught or children's personal spellings, particularly in years 4-6 where children are likely to have been taught all the correct joins in line with our handwriting programme.

Monitoring and Review

In Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, teachers monitor and assess the children's phonic progress on a regular basis. Data is gathered from a variety of sources including one to one assessments and from children's written work. More informal assessments also occur as part of daily teaching.

In addition to this, in Key Stage 2, pupils' learning is assessed throughout the spelling programme. The 'Apply' part of the sequence regularly includes assessment activities to identify if pupils have learnt the key concept taught. These activities include:

- Testing – by teacher and peers
- Dictation
- Explaining
- Independent application in writing
- Frequent (low stakes) learning and testing of statutory and personal words in journals / whiteboards. Any testing is used as a diagnostic tool to inform future planning and grouping of children, or interventions that may be needed, depending on their individual spelling needs.

Whenever possible, spelling errors are tackled with pupils present. In line with the marking and feedback policy, teachers are expected to use their professional judgement as to when to correct a spelling and when to identify miss-spelling for children to self-correct. There is an emphasis on developing confidence and independence. It is expected that pupils assume increased responsibility for identifying their own spelling errors, making reasoned choices about likely alternatives and using a range of resources for making corrections.

Proofreading and editing are also taught and modelled as discrete skills in English sessions and children should be encouraged to apply those skills taught consistently, when writing, across all areas of the curriculum.