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Spelling Policy

The Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to support our pupils to become confident spellers by teaching them a range of strategies, rules and conventions systematically and explicitly. By becoming confident spellers, pupils will be able to focus on the skills of composition, sentence structure and precise word choice within their writing. It is important that all members of staff are fully aware of, and understand, the way in which spelling is taught, so that our approach is implemented consistently to ensure continuity and progression in children's learning. Although guidelines for the teaching of spelling are outlined in this policy, it is essential that these are adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils, taking into account the ways in which they learn best.

The Principles behind this Policy

- Spelling tests are a good way to ensure spellings are learnt but it is essential that children apply these skills to their writing.
- Spelling is the application of visual memory. As teachers, we must strengthen pupils' visual memories before we can expect them to become successful learners.
- Spelling must be taught in context – linked to the oral use of the word and the formation of the word as a whole (handwriting).
- Accurate spelling and accurate letter formation go hand-in-hand. As teachers, we must ensure that letter orientation and direction is accurate so that children can concentrate on the order of the letters, rather than the formation of them.
- Successful spelling takes place through a VAK (visual, aural and kinaesthetic) approach. As teachers, we need to ensure that spelling is taught using a combination of methods.
- Successful spelling takes place when children have an opportunity to review and recall their learning. Teachers must provide opportunities to consolidate learning throughout each week.

Aims of this Policy

- To explain the expected practices, to ensure that children become successful spellers.
- To provide a point of reference for teaching and support staff, for when they are planning the delivery of spelling skills/rules.
- To ensure continuity in practices and progression in spelling skills.
- To clarify the responsibilities of staff, parents and children.
- To raise the profile of the teaching of spelling and to raise the overall standard of spelling across the school.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Staff

- To ensure that teachers plan for the teaching of spelling every week and that planning is shared with members of support staff, who are also responsible for delivering spelling programmes to targeted groups of children.
- To ensure that spellings are set at an appropriate level for the child and build on what they already know and can apply.
- To teach a range of approaches to learn spellings.
- To provide children with a range of strategies to help them become secure with spelling rules.
- To ensure children's spelling is assessed on a regular basis and that this is used to inform future planning.
- To ensure that everyone shares good practice, reviewing this on a regular basis, to ensure there is continuity.

The Pupils

- To use the strategies taught to them, to help secure spelling skills.
- To be able to identify the most effective methods to help them to learn and recall spelling rules.
- To practise, at home, the spelling rules which have been taught at school, to consolidate their learning in line with the homework policy.
- To transfer skills to their written work, correctly spelling words that have been learnt.

The Parents

- To support their children in the learning of spelling.
- To be familiar with the strategies that the children are encouraged to use to help them to learn their spellings.

The Teaching of Spelling in Reception

Early Learning Goal

Children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

Reception are taught phonics five times a week for a minimum of 20 mins per session, linked to the phonics program Read Write Inc. At the end of each six week block, the children's progress is assessed and reviewed. The primary skills for reading and spelling, which Read Write Inc highlights are blending and segmenting. The program also concentrates on letter formation alongside the phonic sounds used for blending. The children are firstly taught to recognise 31 phonemes (the alphabet plus sh, ch, th, ng and nk) progressing up to 44 when the children are ready, alongside hearing the individual phonemes in cvc words. This progresses into writing the corresponding grapheme for each sound. This is called encoding. They will also recall key/tricky words and begin to learn to spell them. The children will apply their knowledge of spellings and practise the skill of segmenting through a variety of writing opportunities across the curriculum.

The Teaching of Spelling in KS1

Spelling within KS1 is linked to the children's phonic programme –Sound Discovery. This is a synthetic phonic programme. The primary skills for reading and spelling which Sound Discovery highlights are blending and segmenting. These skills are integral throughout the steps. During phonics sessions, children will have opportunities to learn strategies for spelling, including spelling patterns linked to

the steps. They will also practise recalling key/tricky words. It is essential that children apply their knowledge of spellings, and practise the skill of segmenting through a variety of writing opportunities in other curriculum areas.

In KS1, children have phonics sessions three times a week. The lessons are differentiated according to the children's ability rather than age. Each week they will be given a list of spellings which are linked to sound patterns and tricky words. These will be specific to the Sound Discovery steps and the needs of the children. When appropriate, spelling lists may include proper nouns such as months of the year and days of the week and other key words.

Assessment and Monitoring in KS1

In Key Stage 1 children's progression of the phonic programme is reviewed every term using the Sound Discovery assessment. The results of this informs the next term's spelling groups. The children are also assessed using the Schonell programme to determine each individual's spelling ages. This is carried out termly.

Transition of spelling from KS1

Children will have followed a specific programme of phonics teaching in KS1. By the end of this stage, the expectation is that **most** children will be secure at Step 3A. The spelling objectives for Year 2, which work in conjunction with the Sound Discovery programme ensure that children have knowledge and understanding of alternative spellings for all phonological groups. For those children who are not yet secure at Step 3A, it will be necessary to continue with this step before moving on.

Spelling in Key Stage 2

Spelling in Key Stage 2 will follow Mrs Day's spelling programme which is on the school system. Children are tested at the beginning of each term to ensure that they are at the correct differentiated level for their spelling age. There is one formal spelling lesson a week where the children will be given their differentiated spellings and tested on them.

Homework will also be set each week.

Within the teaching of spelling, there should be opportunities to:

- Revisit, explain, use
- Teach, model, define
- Practise, explore, investigate
- Apply, assess, reflect

Children whose spelling age falls below their chronological age will attend Sound Discovery intervention lessons. These children will be tested on this spelling program and the lessons are differentiated by ability across KS2.

Application of Spelling in Writing

Children's growing understanding of spelling rules is only valuable if they go on to apply it in their independent writing. Children should be able to spell an ever increasing number of words accurately and to check and correct their work. This process is supported through:

- Shared writing: the teacher demonstrates how to apply spelling strategies while writing, and teaches proof reading skills.

- Guided and independent writing: the children apply what they have been taught. This is an opportunity to think about the whole writing process -composition as well as spelling, handwriting and punctuation.
- Marking the children's work: the teacher can assess their progress and ability to understand and apply what has been taught and then identify targets for further improvement.
- Teaching and practising handwriting: learning and practising a fluent joined style will support the children's spelling development.
- In extended writing classes teachers will underline key words and spelling patterns that children should know but are spelt wrong. They will write the correct spelling next to it in green
- Children should be taught to look for evidence of correct spellings in their independent writing when they are self-editing.

Focused Spelling Lessons

As part of focused spelling lesson: a regular part of the spelling activities involves the children identifying specific words that they need to continue to work on. These could be words exemplifying a particular pattern, or convention, of high-frequency words. These words are put into the children's homework diary. The teacher and children work together to identify any words the children are unsure of the meaning and record these in their word log. Children are asked to learn the spelling pattern of their spellings for homework. They use their spelling words in context by writing them in sentences. The children will also use on a daily basis- a read, cover, write check sheet, to help consolidate their understanding of the spelling patterns.

Assessment and Monitoring

It is important that the assessment of children's spellings is meaningful for the child but also for the teacher when planning the teaching of spelling. Assessing spelling should not just be about identifying words that children spell correctly and incorrectly in a test, but consistently within their writing. It should be an opportunity to evaluate students' understanding of sounds and conventional spelling patterns. An awareness of the kinds of words that pupils find difficult, and the types of errors they make, is important when evaluating their spelling achievement and their understanding of language structures. For example, do they have a lack of phonetic knowledge, or are they confusing rules for spelling? Teachers should then use this assessment information to plan subsequent phonics/spelling sessions if needed. (For example 'The Sound Discovery' intervention for children whose chronological age falls below their actual age.)

Self-assessment of pupils' own spellings is also essential as it encourages independence in learning and reflection on their writing. We should encourage children to proof-read and spot their own errors in written work, within the classroom, spelling strategy prompts and, when ready, dictionaries.

Marking of Work

Marking is integral to how we assess the children's writing. It should be purposeful, constructive and support the child by showing them how they can improve. It should also assist the teacher in planning the next crucial steps for learning. When focusing on spelling within writing, children should firstly be given the opportunity to write freely and be encouraged to use spelling strategies they know. This ensures that the child is still motivated to write and promotes independence when spelling. However, at the proof-reading stage, time should be given for checking any words the child is unsure of or unfamiliar with.

As teachers, our initial responses to a child's piece of work, particularly at the drafting stage, should be related to the learning objective and content (Composition and Effect). We should be concentrating on the positive aspects of the writing. During the proof-reading stage, the teacher should identify an appropriate but manageable selection of incorrect spellings. These words could be written correctly on the page for the child to see and then transfer to their individual spelling journal.

Definitions

Knowing the definitions of words that children are learning to spell is very important. When appropriate, this type of activity may be given as homework. For example, children might be asked to write a short definition next to each of their spellings on the worksheet provided or in their own word log.

Parental Involvement

To help parents support their children with spelling at home, each week, spelling will be written in their homework diary and the score for that week's spelling test will be recorded on this for parents to discuss with their child. If a teacher is concerned with the progress a child is making in spelling, then he/she will contact the parents. If a parent is concerned, then they should make contact with the class teacher.

Spelling journals and spelling books (where tests are recorded) will remain in school but will be available at parents' evenings.

In Key Stage 1, parents will be given the opportunity to attend an information session on how they can support their children at home with spelling and the teaching of phonics.

This policy was adopted by	Silverhill School
Date	January 2018
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Name of signatory	Jenifer Capper
Role of signatory	Head Mistress