



Spelling Policy

- a) Policy drawn up by Literacy Leader and staff in consultation with *Governors* (L. Wood - Literacy Leader)
- b) Date drafted: March 2011
- c) Date adopted:
- d) Review date: March 2015
- e) Reviewed: Nov 2016
- f) Next: September 2017

Spelling Policy

RATIONALE

The ethos at St Francis Primary School is to provide every child with a happy, caring, learning environment in which he or she can develop to their full potential - whatever their needs and irrespective of ability, race or gender.

At St Francis, we believe that the ability to spell with confidence and accuracy is an essential skill. Spelling is a complex process which draws upon a specific working knowledge of patterns within the English language. The ability to spell is an aid to understanding and meaning. Children who are able to employ a good range of spelling strategies and techniques will attempt more complex or technical words to express their ideas.

We believe that:-

- Children need to be active in developing their own spelling strategies.
- Effective spellers may use a number of strategies in order to spell accurately.
- Spelling activities must be differentiated.
- The exploration of words and vocabulary development are an important part of learning to spell.
- Independence and self evaluation are essential in spelling development.

AIMS

- To enable all pupils to be confident, accurate spellers.
- To enrich and support learning through the use and application of spelling skills.
- To give accurate spelling status in an increasingly multi media world.
- To ensure continuity and progression through a consistent whole school approach to the teaching of spelling.
- To ensure that children develop the key skills, knowledge and understanding of spelling whilst at St Francis.
- To foster progression, which acknowledges the developmental nature of learning to spell.
- Children are taught to recognise the range of social functions that spelling can support, such as the use of abbreviated spelling in text messages.
- Children should have a clear understanding of the structure and features associated with spelling.
- Children can make phonetically plausible attempts at unknown words.

- Children should be taught to choose the appropriate spelling.
- Children are taught to check their spelling, identify and then correct errors.
- Children are able to use their dictionary skills to support their spelling skills.
- Teachers have sound subject knowledge and high expectations of what children can achieve.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, spelling ages will be in line with the child's chronological age.
- Children enjoy the process of spelling.

STRATEGIES FOR THE TEACHING OF SPELLING

The Foundation Stage builds upon children's previous pre-school language experiences to develop essential spelling skills. Children work within the Communication, Language and Development Literacy element of the Early Learning Goals which lay the foundation for further spelling progress. Single sounds are taught using the Letters and Sounds programme. Single sounds are blended together to build simple vowel consonant words e.g. is, on, at, and then consonant vowel consonant (CVC) words e.g. mat, pin, lot, moving on to CVCC and CCVC words (phase 4 from Letters and Sounds). Individualised phonic ability is assessed at the end of each term. At the end of Term 6, pupils are assessed on their ability to spell high Frequency words ensuring continuity and progression between the Foundation Stage and Year 1.

At St Francis School, spelling is taught systematically using the Letters and Sounds and Spelling Bank initiatives. Letters and Sounds focuses on the auditory recognition, visual recognition, blending (reading) and then segmenting (writing) of separate sounds (phonemes) in words. The phonemes and graphemes taught are divided into six progressive phases. Spelling Bank focuses on the recognition and learning of spelling rules, applying them, and learning exceptions to the rules (rules divided into year groups and terms).

Through this systematic teaching of spelling, children learn that letters are used to represent different sounds, that each sound can be represented by one or more letters, that sounds may be written in more than one way and that some letters may represent more than one sound. Children will learn how to:

- blend sounds together to build words e.g. ca....t...(cat)
- segment the different sounds in words e.g. pigp....i....g
- manipulate phonemes by inserting and deleting sounds out of words e.g. does the letter o make an 'o' sound as in hot or 'oe' sound as in no.
- We will encourage children to spell independently from an early age, using their phonics to attempt spelling and check words they are unsure of, in order to help them develop as independent learners and thinkers.

- As children progress through the school and develop their spelling skills, they will be encouraged to use dictionaries or electronic spell checkers to check spellings independently.
- Planning will reflect visual, kinaesthetic and auditory spelling activities, to ensure individual learning styles are being addressed. Spelling will be taught discretely and as part of another focus.
- Spelling activities/tasks will be appropriately matched to individual abilities in the classroom (differentiation).
- Spelling is delivered in ability groups from Years 1-3 (a Phase 3 intervention group, a Phase 4 Group, a Phase 5 group, a Phase 6 group, and a Spelling Bank and Tricky Words group).
- Opportunities to spell and check spelling will be provided across all areas of the curriculum.
- Teaching is well paced and engaging, based on a clear understanding of the objectives.
- The opportunities for spelling are based upon a variety of stimuli and experiences, taking into account the visual, auditory and kinaesthetic needs of the children.

Spelling is taught predominantly through Literacy, in the following ways:-

Shared and Guided Reading - Reminders of spelling patterns previously taught. Incidental words of interest. Dictionaries should be readily available on tables during Guided Reading, especially in Key Stage 2.

Shared Writing - Modelling strategies are demonstrated to construct unknown words, using phonemes.

Word Level Work - Learn spelling rules. A variety of investigations of spelling patterns are provided to aid the learning of spelling rules, which can be applied in independent writing.

Guided Writing - Children are encouraged to apply strategies to unknown words, in order to embed spelling rules. They are given personal guidance about specific spelling problems.

Independent Work - Using self-help strategies e.g. dictionaries, electronic spell checkers, visual reminders. Peer support to learn, revise and test spellings. Using the: Look, Say, Cover, Say, Write, Look, Check (LSCSWLC) method to learn spellings. Spelling games and activities are offered.

Plenary - The presentation of investigation results.

Handwriting - Spelling patterns and conventions are generally linked to handwriting and these are reinforced in handwriting sessions where appropriate. Children are taught the correct letter formation in the Foundation Stage, where the cursive style is taught.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

In the Foundation Stage, children begin to recognise the high frequency words identified in the Letters and Sounds. Each child takes home words to learn to read. The children are tested on these words three times a year, with the aim of recognising the first 100 words.

In Year 1, spellings are given as part of the children's homework and are assessed on a weekly basis. Children continue to learn the high frequency words outlined in Letters and Sounds and to learn the spelling patterns taken from phase 4 & 5. They take home 5 words per week and are tested weekly on these spellings, with the word used in a sentence. Key word assessments continue to be carried out each term.

In Year 2, children continue to take 5 spelling words home per week, taken from phase 5 & 6 of Letters and Sounds. They are tested weekly through short sentence dictations. By the end of Key Stage 1, the children should be able to read and spell the first 200 high frequency words.

From FS1 through to Year 2, the children are assessed three times a year using the letters and Sounds Phonic Progress tracking Sheet. The results are then analysed and are used to support planning for the next term.

In Key Stage 2, spellings are given out on Monday ready for a test on Friday. The spelling word is often used within a sentence to give it context. Furthermore, a few extra words may be added to assess the use of the spelling rule. Children will also be given a dictation once a term to assess the application of spelling rules within context. All children will keep a spelling log of words they have misspelt in their writing. These could include high frequency words that are still not secure, or more tricky technical words. Four words are tested each week as a personal activity.

Children in Year 3 will be given ten spelling words each week to learn, taken from Letters and Sounds or from the new curriculum (2014). Year 4 children will learn 10 spellings per week, taken from the Spelling strategy and will be tested weekly on these. Year 5 and Year 6 children will learn 12 spellings per week taken from the new curriculum spelling appendix. Children across KS2 will be tested on the year group bank of words periodically.

Statutory SAT papers take place in May for Yr2 and Yr6 children. All children from Year 2 upwards, take a spelling test (SWST) to determine their spelling age at the beginning and end of each academic year. Standardised scores are calculated to aid tracking of each pupil across the key stage.

PARENTAL SUPPORT AND HOMEWORK

A list of spellings based on phonemes/rules explored at school will be sent home alongside other homework tasks (Year 1-Year 6). Children are encouraged to learn these at home using a variety of strategies, such as, letter-by-letter; speed spell; Rainbow writing; writing sentences; highlighter; making a word search. The children are tested in school by the

teacher/teaching assistant/spelling partner. Alongside this, parents are also encouraged to work in partnership with the school, to play word games at home with their children to build upon visual spelling strategies. In Key Stage 2, children will also be encouraged to learn personal words taken from their spelling log.

STRATEGIES TO ENSURE PROGRESS AND CONTINUITY

Long-term, medium-term and short-term planning (reflecting the Letters and Sounds and the new curriculum spelling rules) need to show progress in knowledge, skills and understanding to ensure the continuity and development of spelling.

Children's spelling progress will be evaluated on an on-going basis by the teacher/teaching assistant, which will inform the planning of subsequent spelling tasks.

Oral and/or written targets will be set by the teacher to help children achieve their full potential in spelling.

Individual writing should be uninterrupted. Time should be given for the child to proof read and edit own writing, checking spellings and correcting where necessary. Mis-spelt words, that should be known, are written at the end of the writing by the teacher during marking and these words are then transferred into the spelling logs by the child. Key mis-spelt words are then tested by the teaching assistant, as a means of revising spelling rules and patterns.

CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS

Opportunities for spelling and teaching spelling skills should be integrated into all aspects of the curriculum. By utilising cross curricular links, we can give spelling a purpose and audience. Children are helped to see links between different areas of the curriculum and to appreciate how their knowledge, skills, understanding and enthusiasm in one area can inform learning in others. The quality of all work is enhanced through careful spelling and presentation. Other subjects are marked primarily for their content rather than spelling. A final draft of work for display purposes should be correctly spelt, with neat cursive handwriting. Sometimes, children's work is displayed without amendments, to celebrate their achievements.

ICT

This is a vital means of developing language in the context of the modern world. Pupils should:-

- Have opportunities to compose text directly on the screen
- Be taught how to use word processing and desk top publishing techniques.
- Be taught how to use spell check facilities.
- Become aware of the limitations of spell checkers (American spellings and homophones)
- Use available ICT programs to support spelling eg. Star Spell

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We recognise the right of all children to have access to high quality spelling teaching and learning opportunities regardless of disability, race, belief or social background. We aim to ensure that the needs of all our children are fully met within this area of the curriculum and that they are not disadvantaged in any way.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Any child whose spelling ability is significantly below the expected level for their age will be discussed with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and the Literacy Leader in order to determine the way forward. Testing for conditions such as dyslexia are carried out, where necessary, usually from Year 2 onwards. Additional advice may also be sought from the Educational Psychologist.

ABLE PUPILS

We ensure that children who have a particular spelling aptitude are challenged to extend this further and are given the opportunity to excel. This may be through additional targeted support, additional lessons, and differentiation within class or homework tasks.

RESOURCES

Teachers draw upon the literacy strategy and a variety of other resources to support engaging spelling activities. (Spelling appendix in the New Curriculum 2014, Letters and Sounds resources, KS2 DFES Spelling Bank, Support for Spelling, ELS, Spelling For Literacy publications)

The classroom environment should provide resources to support Word Level Work, related to the ability of the children in that class. These may include:-

- Dictionaries, thesauruses and electronic spell checkers
- Displays of vocabulary which is relevant to the current literacy unit for the children to actively use.
- Age related key spelling words, taken from Letters and Sounds, laminated for each table
- Spelling aids, such as pyramids, working wall, spelling mats,
- Word Level support materials e.g. toys, letter or word fans, card games, investigation cards, Letters and Sounds games.
- Editing key for self-correcting errors.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

We are committed to ensuring that all staff develop and maintain their skills in the teaching of spelling. Staff are encouraged to identify areas in which they feel they may benefit from further training. Training needs may also be identified by the subject leader or the key stage leader. Training may be provided in a number of ways including in school provision and attendances of courses. The subject leader will ensure that staff are aware of training opportunities.

MONITOR, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The role of the Literacy leader is to:

- Monitor the implementation of the policy.
- Use assessment data to monitor progress.
- Support staff with new ideas, resources and materials relevant to the policy.
- Monitor standards and to lead work sampling sessions where staff analyse, interpret and moderate spelling standards across the school.
- Observe phonics/spelling lessons carried out by teachers and teaching assistants.
- Carry out work scrutiny
- Provide appropriate and high quality resources.
- Make recommendations for further improvement.

Review

This policy will be reviewed biannually by the Literacy Leader, in consultation with the staff and Literacy Link Governor. Any alterations that come from this review will be discussed and ratified by the appropriate governing body sub-committee.

Ratified by Governors on

Chair of Governors

Date.....

Head Teacher

Date.....