

Learning and Teaching Spelling in the Early Years and Key Stage One at Morley Memorial Primary School



Children follow the spelling programme as outlined in 'Letters and Sounds' (for EY – Y2) , the word lists and statutory content of the National Curriculum 2014, and the No-Nonsense Spelling Programme. We cover spelling during daily phonics teaching sessions, as well as through guided group reading and writing and whole class English teaching.

If children are working at age-related expectations they will be secure at Phase 4 by the end of Early Years, and at Phase 5 by the end of Year 1. Details of the Phonics Phases have been communicated through the Phonics Workshops for parents, and further information is available in the 'Workshops' area of the School website.

Children are expected to be secure at Phase 6 by the end of Year 2 and moving beyond this phase. It is worth noting that not all children develop at the same time and in the same way. Some children may have developed their reading and spelling skills quickly and be beyond age related expectations, others may need more time and practice to reach them.

By the end of Phase 5 children are expected to be able to read automatically all the words in the list of 100 High Frequency words and spell most of them accurately. There is also a list of the 'Next 200' High Frequency and Common Exception Words, which is used as a resource for spelling.

In Early Years and Year One (throughout Phases 3, 4 and 5) children are taught to read, write and practise spelling the high frequency words as part of their usual, daily phonics lessons, in small group guided reading and writing sessions, while other topic-related words are taught as they occur in other curriculum areas, for example, through the use of word banks for independent writing and a print-rich learning environment: words, labels and captions on displays etc.

In Early Years and Year One children are given high frequency words weekly to practise at home, alongside the weekly homework. Individual target setting may also be used to support children's acquisition of spelling knowledge at a personalised level, and your child may be given specific words to learn as an individual target.

As they enter Phase 6 many children can read longer and less familiar texts independently and with increasing fluency. Children's spelling is usually phonically accurate, although it may still be a little unconventional at times. They can read hundreds of words using three reading approaches:

- reading the words automatically if they are very familiar
- decoding words quickly and silently because their sounding and blending routine is now well established
- decoding them aloud.

Spelling usually lags behind reading, as it is harder to master. This is because much of spelling requires recalling and composing the word from memory without seeing it. Reading and spelling become less easily reversible as children start working with words containing sounds (particularly vowel sounds) that can be spelled in more than one way, so work on spelling continues throughout this phase and beyond. During Phase 5 and Phase 6, the shift from learning to read to reading to learn takes place. Children read for pleasure and to obtain information. They become fluent readers and their spelling accuracy continues to improve.

In Year 2 (at Phase 6) we support children in moving from learning about the familiar phonemes used in English to learning about the structure of words and particular spelling patterns. For example, root or base words and the different prefixes and suffixes used with them or verbs in the past or present tense.

We encourage children to spell words accurately, to check and correct their own work and move towards independence. We also teach handwriting skills. The development and practice of a fluent, joined handwriting style also supports children's spelling development.

While we do not usually give weekly, whole class, formal spelling tests as many parents may remember from their own school days, we do check children's knowledge and understanding of spelling. This may be in a small group or individually, and the information is used to inform our planning, teaching and target setting.

Children will practise spelling strategies regularly as part of our systematic teaching of phonics, dictated words or sentences are part of regular phonics teaching. Spelling also forms part of the Year 2 SATs for English, so in Year 2 we do cover spelling in more formal ways (working without talking, only looking at your own work) in order that children are familiar with the atmosphere of a more formal test as the SATs will be.

Parents have received lists of high frequency words to go through at home. Attached is some guidance information about practising spelling which you should find useful to you. Please give some time each week to supporting your child with learning to read and spell high frequency words they are not secure with, just as you would hear your children read regularly.

We consider spelling to be an important part of a wide-ranging approach to learning to read and write, not a narrow aim in itself. It is often the case that a child may know how to spell a word in the context of a test and yet not be able to spell the same word consistently in independent writing until they are more proficient with their reading, recall and memory skills. We also consider home-school partnership to be essential in supporting children in their learning, and in achieving the best possible learning outcomes. Therefore, a coherent and shared approach to helping children learn to read, write and spell words is clearly crucial in ensuring that learning is effective and lasting.

Therefore, we hope that the above information is full, useful and clear. Please contact your child's class teacher if you have any questions or concerns.

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