

**St Ignatius Primary School**

**Spelling Policy**

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| Status | Non Statutory |
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| Date of policy review | JUNE 2025 |

English Curriculum Policy – Spelling

## Aims of Spelling Teaching at St Ignatius Catholic Primary School

First and foremost, our pupils are given opportunities to explore and investigate the English language and its patterns through speaking and listening. As pupils move through our key stages, they develop, consolidate and secure the skills needed to read, share, enjoy and interpret a wide variety of literature. Our pupils learn to handwrite fluently and apply their spelling, grammar and punctuation skills to a variety of purposes in a range of thematic, cross-curricular contexts. Our pupils are encouraged to think creatively, to be adventurous with their use of language and to write with clear purpose. When spelling, our pupils:

* use their phonic skills effectively when blending phonemes for reading and when segmenting phonemes for spelling
* have an interest in words, their meanings and their origins, developing a growing vocabulary both for speaking and writing
* write with confidence and creativity, while developing the skills to self-edit, correct and improve
* be imaginative, creative and challenge themselves

## Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum (2014) and in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework.

## Governing Body

Regular reports on the progress of our English curriculum are made to the Governing Body via the English Curriculum Link Governor and through the English Curriculum policy.

## Approaches to spelling

**EYFS and Year 1**

In EYFS and Year 1 and our pupils follow a high-quality, systematic programme of phonics teaching following the Little Wandle phonics scheme. Our phonics teaching makes strong links between blending for reading, segmenting for spelling and handwriting. We encourage all of our pupils to apply their phonic knowledge when spelling.

By the end of Year 1, it is our expectation that the vast majority of our pupils will be secure at spelling Phase 5 words. Pupils who do not secure Phase 5 by the end of Year 1 are given additional support and intervention. The National Curriculum spelling objectives for Year 2 work in line with Phase 6 of Little Wandle (Letters and Sounds)*.*

From Year 2 onwards, pupils are taught the age related spelling content using a published scheme ‘No-Nonsense Spelling’. This scheme of work provides us with a manageable tool for meeting the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum, has a clear progression through blocks of teaching units across the year and supports our teachers with the teaching of spelling.

Organisation of No-Nonsense Spelling:

* In Year 2, pupils participate in five spelling sessions per week
* In KS2, pupils participate in five spellings sessions across two weeks

Our pupils are also given daily spelling practice opportunities during registration, through access to displays of weekly spellings, cross-curricular word banks and discussions during destination reader and shared writing.

A typical learning sequence is as follows:

## Revise

Activate prior knowledge Revisit previous linked learning

**Teach**

Introduce the new concept Explain

Investigate Model

**Practise**

Individual/group work

Extend/explore the concept

Investigate Generalise

**Apply/Assess**

Assess through independent application Explain and demonstrate understanding

## Strategies for Learning Spellings

The following strategies are introduced incrementally through the ‘No Nonsense Spelling’ programme and can be used to support pupils’ spelling across school and at home. A more detailed description of each strategy can be found in the ‘No Nonsense Spelling’ teachers handbooks.

* Look, say, cover, write, check
* Trace, copy and replicate (then check)
* Segmentation strategy
* Quick write
* Drawing around the word to show the shape
* Drawing an image around the word
* Words without vowels
* Pyramid words
* Rainbow writing
* Memorable ‘silly sentences’
* Clapping and counting syllables

## Approaches to Teaching Spelling

Our focus on teaching spelling embraces the knowledge of spelling conventions, patterns and rules. Moreover, we promote the *learning* of spellings, through the use of multi-sensory strategies, including combining the teaching of spelling and handwriting. Our teaching of spelling includes common exception words, high frequency words, statutory words and personal and topic spelling.

Whilst the overview gives a suggested pathway through, it is to be used flexibly. There are suggestions for lesson plans which are ideas and triggers for lessons so teachers can make decisions on how best to teach them according to the needs of the children in the class.

Our pupils use a Spelling Journal which provides the opportunity for pupils to record their learning, refer back to previous spellings and enables us to share our pupils’ learning with their parents. Within these spelling journals there will be ‘have a go’ sheets.

## Dictionaries

Our pupils are taught explicitly how to use a dictionary in order to investigate word meaning, origins and spellings. We currently use four different editions of the Oxford English Dictionary. This ensures that our pupils make progress in their dictionary skills from EYFS through to Year 6 and beyond.

**EYFS and Year 1:** Oxford First Dictionary

**Year 2:** Oxford Junior Illustrated Dictionary

**Year 3-6:** Oxford Primary Dictionary

## Applying the Learning

We teach our pupils a range of strategies to use when spelling words independently. These strategies include:

* Segmentation (using phonic knowledge)
* ‘Have-a-go’
* Personal spelling journal
* Dictionaries

Through the teaching of spelling children will learn a range of strategies for learning spelling, that will build up over time. The following strategies are taken from the ‘No Nonsense Spelling’ programme:

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| **Look, say, cover, write, check** | This is probably the most common strategy used to learn spellings.  **Look**: first look at the whole word carefully and if there is one part of the word that is difficult, look at that part in more detail.  **Say**: say the word as you look at it, using different ways of pronouncing it if that will make it more memorable.  **Cover**: cover the word.  **Write**: write the word from memory, saying the word as you do so.  **Check**: Have you got it right? If yes, try writing it again and again! If not, start again – look, say, cover, write, check. |
| **Trace, copy and replicate**  **(and then check)** | This is a similar learning process to ‘look, say, cover, write, check’ but is about developing automaticity and muscle memory.  Write the word out on a sheet of paper ensuring that it is spelt correctly and it is large enough to trace over. Trace over the word and say it at the same time. Move next to the word you have just written and write it out as you say it. Turn the page over and write the word as you say it, and then check that you have spelt it correctly.  If this is easy, do the same process for two different words at the same time. Once you have written all your words this way and feel confident, miss out the tracing and copying or the tracing alone and just write the words. |
| **Segmentation strategy** | The splitting of a word into its constituent phonemes in the correct order to support spelling. |
| **Quick write** | Writing the words linked to the teaching focus with speed and fluency. The aim is to write as many words as possible within a time constraint.  Pupils can write words provided by the teacher or generate their own examples. For example, in two minutes write as many words as possible with the /iː/ phoneme.  This can be turned into a variety of competitive games including working in teams and developing relay race approaches. |

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| **Drawing around the word to show the shape** | Draw around the words making a clear distinction in size where there are ascenders and descenders. Look carefully at the shape of the word and the letters in each box. Now try to write the word making sure that you get the same shape. |

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| **Drawing an image around the word** | This strategy is all about making a word memorable. It links to meaning in order to try to make the spelling noticeable.    You can’t use this method as your main method of learning spellings, but it might work on those that are just a little more difficult to remember. |
| **Words without vowels** | This strategy is useful where the vowel choices are the challenge in the words. Write the words without the vowels and pupils have to choose the correct grapheme to put in the space. For example, for the word *field*: |

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| **Pyramid words** | This method of learning words forces you to think of each letter separately. |
| **Other strategies** | Other methods can include:   * Rainbow writing. Using coloured pencils in different ways can help to make parts of words memorable. You could highlight the tricky part s of the word or write the tricky part in a different colour. You could also write each letter in a different colour, or write the word in red, then overlay in orange, yellow and so on. * Making up memorable ‘silly sentences’ containing the word * Saying the word in a funny way – for example, pronouncing the ‘silent’ letters in a word * Clapping and counting to identify the syllables in a word. |

## Marking and Feedback

In addition, we place a strong focus on spelling in all marking and feedback. During the marking of written work, up to three misspellings of high frequency words are identified. SP is written in the margin and the word is underlined with a squiggly line. When returning to look at feedback, our pupils are asked to practise each correct spelling three times. Class teachers ensure that common misspellings from a prior year group are revisited and learned with utmost urgency when misconceptions are identified.

## Assessment

The assessment of spelling is in line with the school’s Assessment Policy.

**Error Analysis**

Error analysis is completed once a term on an independent piece of writing for each pupil. All spelling errors are identified and recorded under one of the following headings (corresponding to the National Curriculum) as the pupil has spelt it:

* Common exception words
* GPCs (grapheme–phoneme correspondences) including rarer GPCs and vowel digraphs
* Homophones
* Prefixes and suffixes
* Word endings
* Other.

The teacher should quite quickly be able to see which aspect of spelling needs to be.

Pupils are given 10 spellings each week to take home to learn. They have to write a sentence for each word. Half termly pupils will be tested on the year group words lists, the results of these are also sent home for parents to see and to support pupils in working on the spellings they are unsure of.

We will also assess spellings in context. For example:

* Spellings in an unseen, dictated sentence
* Spellings in independent writing
* Evidence in Spelling Journals

In addition, we use half-termly, and an end-of-year test, published by NFER to support our teacher assessments in Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling.

## Inclusion

All of our pupils are provided with equal access to our English Spelling Curriculum. We provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

Our pupils are taught challenging age-related content and it is our expectation that the vast majority of our pupils will achieve age-related expectations at the end of each year and key stage. Where pupils have fallen behind their peers and cannot access age related content, class teachers will differentiate the curriculum to ensure those pupils are able to progress, succeed and catch up.

Rigorous, ongoing assessment for learning ensures that teaching and learning activities are aimed at the point at which these pupils can develop their understanding and skills

Our assessments enable us to quickly identify individuals or groups of pupils who are falling below age related expectations. Steps are immediately identified to improve the attainment and progress of these pupils. Our current suite of intervention programmes includes:

* Little Wandle- Keep up sessions
* Rapid Phonics

## Parental Involvement

We recognise and appreciate the huge part that parents play in their child’s progress in spelling and all of our pupils are given spellings to learn as part of their weekly homework. We believe that the learning undertaken at home should be an extension to the practise at school and in order to fully support their children, parents will be kept informed of our approaches to teaching spelling through our annual Key Stage meetings and through parental workshops.

In order to ensure success and enable deeper learning, we give our pupils no more than five words per week to learn at home. We encourage our pupils to spend some time every day learning these spellings. Spelling homework should reflect the strategies being used in the classroom.

Regular communication with parents, especially in relation to spelling is essential. In addition to our procedures for termly reporting, parents are kept informed of their child’s progress in reading through the use of an individual reading record, which follows each child from school to home each day. Should we have any concerns about a child’s progress in spelling, we speak to parents at the earliest opportunity to discuss how their child might best be supported.

The parent’s role in supporting their child’s progress in spelling is a key focus of our termly FLC Meetings. Additionally, over a period of time, we deliver parental information workshops on the subjects of reading, phonics and GPS.

## Role of the Subject Leader

The subject leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through monitoring, evaluation and by developing a strategic vision for the future. Activities to be regularly undertaken by the subject leader include:

* monitoring and analysis of pupil work samples, teacher’s plans and lesson observations
* analysis of data, both internally tracked and nationally published
* auditing, evaluating and monitoring CPD and its impact
* purchasing resources, ensuring effective use of the available budget
* supporting colleagues and identifying CPD
* keeping up to date with curriculum developments
* managing our school library
* provision of intervention
* monitoring and evaluating the quality and effectiveness of the learning environment
* reporting to the school’s Governing Body

## Conclusion

This policy should be read alongside other school policies including:

* Teaching and learning policy
* SEND policy
* Computing policy
* Marking and Feedback policy
* Talk for Writing Policy
* Single Equality Opportunity