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**KS2 Spelling at UPS**

Dear Parents and Carers,

As most of you will be aware, at the beginning of last year we reduced the homework tasks that we set our children here at Urmston Primary School, to allow for a real focus on progress in keys skills of reading, spelling and times tables. Following on from the completion of our initial assessments, we are now ready to introduce weekly spellings and spelling patterns for each year group.

Spelling has always been a key focus with children across the country, and not just here at Urmston Primary School, with many children needing to work really hard to remember the numerous spelling patterns needed within the English language. This, coupled with the recent lockdown, has meant that many children may now need to recap various core spelling strategies from previous year groups at school.

To allow for a consolidation of understanding of these strategies, alongside learning of new rules, spelling in the juniors is now split into two key elements within the school day:

**Core Spelling Strategies**: Each day, all children in the infants and juniors take part in a session that looks at spelling patterns and rules, in which children are grouped depending to their needs from the initial assessments, ensuring support and challenge for all pupils. This may include focussing on alternative spelling patterns, where one phoneme (sound) can be represented in the written form (grapheme) in numerous ways. The focus may also be on a spelling rule, such as adding –ed to a verb to turn it into the past tense, knowing when to double the final consonant.

**Spelling within the English lesson**: As well as recapping on previously taught spelling patterns and rules, each week there will be a year group spelling pattern or rule. This is specific to that age range and is in line with the English Programme of Study for the National Curriculum. The new spelling rule or pattern will be introduced on a Monday and then reinforced throughout the week in starter activities and through the main body of the English teaching, where words containing this pattern will be a focus. On a Friday, the children will then take part in an activity to test their understanding of the spelling rule and their ability to spell words using that rule. Teachers will use their knowledge of children’s understanding to gauge whether a spelling pattern needs to be focused on for a little longer, or, indeed, where less focus is needed and so can be completed a little quicker.

**How will I know what the rule of the week is?** Each week, your class teacher willpost on their class blog which rule they are currently learning and the ***spellings that they should learn at home***. If you find that your child is finding the spellings really difficult, do remember that it is the core rule that that they’ll need to remember. For example, the word ‘consciousness’ is a very tricky word...the focus here would be on the spelling of the ‘shus’ sound rather than getting the whole word right! On the other hand, if you feel that your child already has a firm grasp of this spelling rule, then you can always look at the other rules for that half term as children may struggle with some rules more than others. These can be found on our website under the ***‘Parents’*** tab, then ***‘Resources for Parents’.***

**How can I help my child with their spellings?** Last year, each child was giving a yellow exercise spelling book and a sheet with a list of suggested activities to help them commit those spellings to memory. Please continue to use this book and activities with these new class spellings. If you have lost your little yellow book, then don’t worry because you can use any paper or book to practise in. The activity help sheet is also attached to this letter.

**Why aren’t the juniors doing the coloured spelling sheets anymore?** Due to Covid, it is no longer possible to run the spellings in the way we previously did. We are taking every step to ensure our children stay within their bubbles to prevent any spread of the virus throughout the school. We do acknowledge that this system was very effective and children could progress at their own rate. We will endeavour to go back to our previous system when it is appropriate to do so.

Thank you once again for your continued support in these strange times and in particular with supporting your children with their learning of reading, times tables and spellings at home. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact your class teacher, or me, and we’ll be pleased to help.

Best wishes,

***Mrs Hall***

English Lead