

ULEY C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL



PHONIC AND SPELLING POLICY

SUMMER 2023

OUR SCHOOL VISION

Live – Learn – Flourish

- ✿ Live: at home, in school, and in our local community
- ✿ Learn: about self, others, and our ever-changing world
- ✿ Flourish: be the best we can be in all that we do

OUR SCHOOL MISSION

- ✿ We give all – pupils and staff – the opportunities and encouragement to be the best that they can be
- ✿ We create an environment that has the right balance of challenge and support
- ✿ We deliver a curriculum that is right for our school, inspiring and motivating all, and embracing new ideas
- ✿ We apply our School Core Values of Trust, Friendship, Compassion and Wisdom in all that we do
- ✿ We develop strong and effective partnerships between pupils, staff, governors, parents and the wider community
- ✿ We strive to ensure that all flourish within a moral framework built on Christian values and the Diocesan vision “I have come that they may have LIFE, and have it to the full”. (John 10:10)

Ethos Statement

We believe that everyone should be given the opportunity and encouragement to be the best that they can be. To this end, we strive to create the right environment, deliver the right content, and embrace new ideas. We apply our school values of trust, friendship, compassion and wisdom to enable every individual to flourish within a moral framework built on Christian values. We believe that this can only be achieved by developing partnerships between pupils, staff, governors, parents and the wider community.

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 and the 'No Nonsense spelling programme', 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

- Research tells us that Spelling tests are not always the best way to ensure spellings are learnt. It is essential that children apply spelling rules and patterns in to their writing rather than just rote learning spellings which are then forgotten the following week.
- 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 should 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 raise the profile of the teaching of spelling and to raise the overall standard of spelling across the school.

The Teaching of phonics in EYFS, Year 1, Year 2

The teaching of phonics across EYFS and KS1 is implemented using the Unlocking Letters and Sounds programme. ULS is a systematic synthetic phonics programme which follows the progression of the 2007 Letters and Sounds framework, with the addition of some KS1 National Curriculum objectives.

Through ULS children will learn the 150+ graphemes that are represented by the 44 phonemes of the English language along with common exception words (CEWs) in a planned, progressive way. This is achieved through daily phonics lessons, reading practice using fully decodable books matched to the child's phonic knowledge and daily handwriting practice.

The children learn phonics in phases and some of these are subdivided into mastery and revision as outlined below. The phases take 80 weeks to complete.

Phase 2

Phase 3

Phase 3 mastery

Phase 4

Phase 4 mastery

Phase 4 revision (including year 1 NC requirements)

Phase 5a

Phase 5a mastery (including year 1 NC requirements)

Phase 5b

Phase 5c

Phase 5a (spellings recap and 5b mastery)

Phase 5c mastery

ULS ensures successful learning with rigorous daily lessons. It has six keys to success. These are as follows:

1. Fidelity to the programme and consistency

- Unlocking Letters and Sounds is followed with rigour and fidelity
- There is no mixing and matching with other schemes
- The progression is followed exactly to ensure there are no gaps in learning
- There is no mixing and matching of resources (all the resources needed to teach the programme are included)
- Consistency is demonstrated in all year groups across the school
- There is no other route to teaching decoding (word recognition models are not an effective way to teach reading and is a confusing strategy)

2. Highly valued

- Reading is highly valued by the Head Teacher and all staff
- Reading is a priority at every level
- Senior leaders understand what strong practice looks like across the school
- Reading underpins the entire curriculum

3. Quality CPD and coaching

- All staff, including the Head Teacher and senior leaders, have been trained in Unlocking Letters and Sounds by an accredited trainer
- Training is built into the school's induction programme and new staff are upskilled quickly to ensure consistency
- The English team identifies any issues and regularly coaches staff
- Staff feel confident to ask for advice
- Staff will know where to seek guidance

4. Daily story times

- Staff read to children every day to develop a love of reading and expose them to high quality literature and a wealth of ambitious vocabulary
- Children see the passion and enthusiasm teachers have when they are reading
- A breadth and depth of texts are read, including non-fiction, poetry and a range of different genres

5. Strong leadership

- The school has an English team with the knowledge and skills to support others
- The English team is well supported by the Head Teacher

6. Expert staff

- All staff involved in the teaching and monitoring of phonics are fully trained in the programme, including the leadership team
- Direct whole class teaching of high quality phonics

Children are assessed on their phonic knowledge 6 times a year to ensure there is progress and children who have gaps in their phoneme or blending will be given daily interventions through the ULS programme.

The Teaching of Spelling in EYFS, Year 1 and 2

Spelling within EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 is linked to the children's phonic programme – the 'Unlocking Letters and Sounds' document. The primary skills for reading and spelling which 'Unlocking Letters and Sounds' highlights are blending and segmenting. These skills are integral throughout the phases. During phonics sessions, children will have opportunities to learn strategies for spelling, including spelling patterns linked to the phases. This is done through recall of phonemes and graphemes, blending for reading, common exception word recognition, learning the new phoneme by reading and writing. It is essential that children apply their knowledge of spellings, and practise the skill of segmenting through a variety of writing opportunities across a range of curriculum areas. In Reception, parents are encouraged to support their children with their initial sounds.

The Teaching of Spelling in Years 2-6

We follow the No Nonsense Spelling programme. The *No Nonsense Spelling* Programme was devised to offer teachers a comprehensive yet accessible progression in the teaching of spelling. Guidance, rather than prescription, is provided on how to teach the strategies, knowledge and skills pupils need to learn.

The focus of the programme is on the *teaching* of spelling, which embraces knowledge of spelling conventions – patterns and rules; but integral to the teaching is the opportunity to promote the *learning* of spellings, including statutory words, common exceptions and personal spellings.

The programme

- delivers a manageable tool for meeting the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum
- has a clear progression through blocks of teaching units across the year
- comprehensively explains how to teach spelling effectively.

How No Nonsense Spelling is organised

The programme consists of the following elements:

- The requirements of the National Curriculum, which have been organised into strands and then broken down into termly overviews.
- Termly overviews that have been mapped across weeks as half termly plans. Class teachers then break these down and follow four/ five days of sessions. The class teacher will decide on the amount of words that need to be taught in-line with the half termly plan, this may increase or decrease.
- Daily lesson plans for each session, with Supporting Resources, including word lists and guidance on conventions.

The Lesson Plans

The lessons themselves then follow the structure below:

Day 1: Teach spelling pattern/ rule- modelling correct handwriting joins

Day 2: Practise- Look, Cover, Say, Write, Check

Day 3: Pyramid/ bubble/ rainbow/ curly/ fancy writing

Day 4: Dictation. (*In LKS2 starting with just writing their spelling word when they hear it, building up to writing the whole sentence.*)

Teaching Sequence

The programme has been written broadly following a teaching sequence for spelling, whereby each new concept is taught, practised and then applied and assessed. Frequently there is also a 'Revise' session before the teaching session. A typical teaching sequence is as follows:

Within the lessons, the particular focus is identified, followed by suggested teaching strategies.

By integrating activities for handwriting, the benefit of making a spelling activity kinaesthetic is secured. The pupil acquires the physical memory of the spelling pattern as well as the visual.

You will find the following referred to in the lessons:

Modelling: An activity is described, and it is anticipated that the action expected of pupils is modelled to them first.

Sentence work: Children will be asked to put their weekly spellings into a sentence. This gives the children an opportunity to demonstrate an understanding of the meaning of the word, as well as enhancing their sentence work.

Learning strategies

The following learning strategies will be taught to the children - LSCWC (Look, say, cover, write, check), trace, copy and replicate (and 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 and other strategies listed in the programme.

Assessment

Pupils' learning is assessed throughout the programme. The 'Apply' part of the sequence regularly includes assessment activities to identify if pupils have learnt the key concept taught. These activities include:

- Dictation
- Explaining
- Independent application in writing

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 proofreading 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.

Spelling Journals- 'SPAG Books'

In Years *2 to Year 6, all children begin to record their weekly spellings.

The spellings will be used in the following ways:

1. As part of the 'No Nonsense' teaching programme: 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. The children record these patterns with tips on how to remember these spellings.
2. Use of 'look, say, cover, write, check.' this forms part of pattern finding, rules, conventions, similarities in word families.
3. Use of dictionaries** - dictionaries will be used to check meaning of unfamiliar words.
4. Thesaurus- Thesaurus' will also be used to find synonyms enriching and widening their vocabulary.

****Using Dictionaries**

Children should be taught to use a dictionary to check their spellings. By Phase 6, the repeated singing of an alphabet song at earlier phases should have familiarised them with alphabetical order. Their first dictionary practice should be with words starting with different letters but, once they are competent at this, they should learn how to look at second and subsequent letters, as necessary. Children will sometimes require support with certain spelling patterns such as 'ph'.

Links with Handwriting

Developing a fluent and joined style is an important part of learning to spell and the teaching of spelling and handwriting should be closely linked. As children are taught how to join letters, they can begin practising letter strings and complete words, linked to the specific focus for teaching in the spelling unit.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is the responsibility of the English Team to develop good spelling practice in school and assist staff in this area with the support of the Head teacher and senior leadership team. The English Team will also monitor the impact of this policy and evaluate how it works in practice. This may be achieved through:

- Leading/organising staff meetings to give in-house Continuing Professional Development for staff, sharing new resources
- Talking to staff about spelling in their class, appropriateness of resources
- Talking to children about spelling – attitude and approach in all areas
- Book/work scrutiny to see spelling produced across all areas
- Book/work scrutiny to see the development and progression across the school from Reception to Year 6
- Lesson observations with a focus on phonics and spelling

Parental Involvement

To help parents support their children with spelling at home, a letter explaining the No Nonsense spelling scheme and statutory spelling lists for each year group have been sent home and are on the school website. In KS2 from the autumn term, weekly spellings will be sent out and can be practised at home using some of the activities listed below. From Spring term year 2 will also have their spellings sent home.

There is no requirement for any written spelling homework to be handed in- children will be able to apply their homework to their written work in school by spelling learnt words correctly.

Policy review
Spring 2019
Autumn 2021
Spring 2023