



# NORTHSIDE

## Primary School

## Spelling Policy

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Spelling correctly is an essential skill for all school subjects as well as for life. Good spelling allows children to communicate their understanding of all curriculum subjects. Once spelling becomes automatic, pupils can concentrate on the other aspects of their writing, especially content and meaning. Confidence in spelling helps improve a person's self-image and has an important effect on the writing ability.

At Northside we want children to develop a love of language and the confidence to spell a range of challenging, ambitious words. By providing opportunities to develop a rich vocabulary, children become effective, independent communicators.

### Key Principles

By encouraging children to develop a process of investigation and learning to apply a range of strategies through structured progressive teaching of spellings, we aim to:

- enable children to develop an understanding of the origins, structure and meaning of words,
- ensure pupils are able to identify patterns, parts and shapes of words and spellings,
- help children apply and extend their knowledge of letter patterns,
- help children to use a range of spelling strategies and spelling rules,
- promote a positive and confident attitude towards spelling,
- encourage creativity and the use of more ambitious vocabulary in their writing,
- help children use a range of dictionaries and spell checks effectively,
- enable children to write independently,
- help children recognise that spelling is a lifelong skill,
- provide equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve success in spelling,

### Northside Values

**RESPECT** – children will show the same level of engagement and enthusiasm to revisiting spelling rules as to when learning new rules. They will value all words, spellings and sounds, equally.

**PRIDE** – children will show pride in learning new words by recording them on Word Walls and in their books. They will also use new words in their writing.

**INCLUSION** – spellings will be from the National Curriculum but children will also be encouraged and supported in learning new words from topics and areas of interest.

**CHALLENGE** – children will learn new strategies and different spelling patterns.

**CREATIVITY** – children will be encouraged to use new words to develop their writing and to use them in creative writing situations.

**RESILIENCE** – children will recap and revise spelling patterns, word families and different strategies so that they are secure before moving on and so that they will remember what they have learnt.

### Approaches to Teaching and Learning

## **EYFS – Nursery and Reception and Year 1.**

The Nursery concentrates on Phase 1 of the Revised Letters and Sounds Little Wandle programme, introducing Aspect 7 in the summer term of oral blending and segmentation. Phonics is embedded throughout the day in all activities. Phonics is taught through the Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) where resources and books match:

Reception reinforces Phase 1 in the Autumn, moving onto Phase 2. Work is embedded throughout the day, but is also carried out in group work. The higher ability children may join the Key Stage 1 groups when appropriate. Sight words and 'tricky' words are introduced in phonic sessions as the children learn the sounds.

Successful spelling depends on good phonological awareness. Children need to develop their listening skills, which is encouraged in EYFS through a range of contexts including: music, dance, PE, story and games. Children experience rhyme, rhythm and alliteration, encouraging them to listen to parts of a word.

In Year 1, daily phonics lessons are taught and these consist of decoding, prosody and comprehension.

## **Years 2 – 6**

Children in these years follow the guidance and programmes of study in the Primary National Curriculum. Children can read a larger number of words containing the grapheme-phoneme correspondences than they can spell, but learning to encode the words can also help to improve reading. Specific spelling sessions take place each a week (the amount varies from year to year and depending on the spellings taught), following the National Curriculum, using the Spelling Shed programme.

By the end of Key Stage 1 the children should be able to read and spell the first 300 high frequency words. Some children in Year 2 may need to continue to learn their phonemes. Keep Up sessions of Little Wandle may be delivered and the Spelling Shed lessons will be taught.

From Year 2 children learn about non-phonetical spelling, homophones, and silent letters. Through Key Stage 2 children learn about the morphology and etymology of words to support their spelling.

Children take home a spelling list with specific words to learn each week. Each child will sit a spelling test, weekly. These are based on the National curriculum lists, word patterns being studied and topic related words. Spelling games including these words will be set on the Spelling Shed website/app and the children will complete these, as a homework task, to help them to learn the words. Rather than just marking a word wrong, staff mark the letters that are incorrect, so a child can see exactly what they need to work on.

Amount of words given to the children to learn each week:

- Year 1: 5 words (from phonics lessons)
- Year 2: 7 words
- Year 3: 10 words
- Year 4: 10 words
- Year 5: 10 words
- Year 6: 10 words

Children will be encouraged to develop responsibility for checking their own work as well as teachers marking spellings to help them to learn from their mistakes:

- Children will identify words spelt incorrectly and use a dictionary or thesaurus.
- When writing, children will be concentrating on higher order skills and will be asked to 'have a go' at spellings, underline them and check them at the end when they are proof-reading their work.
- When teachers mark work, they will correct high frequency words, topic words, spellings already taught and those studied in spelling sessions.
- Staff will only underline up to three incorrect spellings and may write some of the letters out to help the children correct them.
- When words are identified, children write them out three times at the end of their work.

## **SEN**

Some children will need interventions in KS1 and/or KS2 to continue to consolidate their phonic knowledge and skills. Teaching assistants may lead additional multi-sensory spelling activities involving small groups or individuals. Intervention programmes such as: Toe by Toe, Sound Linkage, Monster Phonics, Precision Teaching, Snip and spelling strategies may be put in place to support learning. Class teachers will liaise with the Inclusion Leader to plan the most suitable ones for each child.

## **Equal Opportunities**

All children will have an equal opportunity to learn to spell. Account will be taken of specific needs and where appropriate support will be accessed in line with the SEND policy.

## **Assessment**

Class teachers monitor the children's work- daily- in lessons, when marking and from the weekly spelling tests. Regular monitoring and book scrutiny will take place by SLT. Teachers will feedback to children through regular written or verbal comments. Individual targets may be given where appropriate. As part of the KS2 testing, Year 6 children will undertake the Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar test.

## Appendix 1: Spelling strategies

When children are spelling (and reading) words they need to think about two things:

1. The sounds in words, because many words can be broken into chunks of sounds which help to say and spell them, e.g. 'car/pet', 'ch/ur/ch'
2. The look of the word, because some words like 'the' and 'climb' do not sound the way they look.

Strategies to use:

Children need to have good phonological knowledge to help them to sound out the word and good visual memory of what the word looks like to help them to spell it and to self-check that it sounds and looks right. To be a good speller/reader a child needs to do both of these things at the same time.

All children learn in different ways, so to teach spelling and reading and help all children to develop these skills we need to teach in different ways, that is, by using '**multi-sensory**' teaching. This means using as many of the senses as possible - eyes, ears and hands to increase interest, enjoyment and memory. These strategies work well for learning to read, as well as to spell.

### **Strategies**

#### **Invented Spellings**

Invented spellings are perfectly normal and are the key to early reading success. Writing for purpose is more important in early reading and spelling development than flashcards and letters/graphemes of the week alone. When inventing a spelling the child is engaged in mental reflection and practice with sound structure of words, not just memorizing. This strengthens the neuronal pathways in the brain for recognising patterns in words.

Over time a word such as eagle that a child might wish to write might first be presented as random letters as children play with letter formation and writing,

such as **cfyfkj**

then as **E, e** or **eg**,

then as **egl**,

then as **egul**

and eventually **eagle**, with teacher scaffolding appropriate spelling instruction.

## Phonemic approach

Do not discourage invented spellings but you can support children to listen to the order of sounds in a word and represent these with a letter or letters in the correct sequence.

For short words you can map the sounds into *Phoneme Frame* for example, if your child asks for the spelling of *mend*, you can prepare a four box frame on paper or mini whiteboard to help the pupil fill in as many letters as possible.

You might ask:

- "What is the very first sound you hear?"
- "Do you know what letter can be used for that sound?"
  
- "In which box do you think it should be written?"
- What sound can you hear in the middle?
- What is the very last sound ?
- Some children may not hear the subtle /n/ sound, yet so you can model this sound if they are not at that stage of development.

## Patterns

Collect patterns to look at and listen to e.g. 

ark
-----

park dark bark shark

## Use colours/highlight

Write your words with different colours for different parts of the words. E.g

- Write all the vowels in each word in a different colour eg **paint**
- Use different colours to highlight different syllables or parts of a compound word e.g. **carpet**
- Highlight double letters or silent letters e.g. **Butter, knight**
- Highlight complex sounds e.g. **ugh, aigh**

## Try rainbow writing

Write the same word lots of times using a different colour each time  
**word** word word word word word ...

## Use picture association

Draw pictures to help the child to remember parts of the word e.g.



**Sunday**

or put into the letters of the word as visual spelling cues

**l**  **k**, **g**  **d**

## Say the word in a different way

Say each part of the word in a different way to help to remember the spelling e.g.

*'Wed...nes...day'*

or *'fri ...ends'*

Make up a **mnemonic**, a phrase or pattern to help to remember a tricky word

e.g. **because** › big elephants can't always use small exits

**know** › kangaroos never open windows

**rhythm** › rhythm has your two hips moving

For double letters create a saying – e.g. **desserts** are both **sugary** and **sweet**.

## Look for words within words

**What** has a **hat**

**hen** hiding in **when**

**a rat** hiding in **separate**

or split a word and annotate it, e.g. to spell 'heart' › he *loves* art › 'he♥art'.

## Does it look right?

You can encourage your child to have a go at spelling a word and ask themselves the question does it look right, rather than beginning with asking you "how do you spell...?" e.g. **Munday**    **Monday**

**Tuesday**    **Teusday**

If a child has made a mistake in a word, show them the correct spelling by writing it down and then tick all the individual letters that the child got right in his/her version e.g.

Child writes.... **makeing**

Adult writes.... **making**            ✓ ✓ ✓    ✓ ✓ ✓

Tick the letters the child got right    **m a k e i n g**

Talk about the letters the child got right (there is often more right than wrong) and about what the child needs to do to put the spelling right. In this case you can praise the child for getting 'mak' and 'ing' correct and point out that the only thing to remember now is that you don't need the 'e'

✓ ✓ ✓    ✓ ✓ ✓  
**m a k e i n g**

This helps children to develop their visual ability to spot when a word does or doesn't 'look right'

## Move it!

Write each letter on a separate piece of paper or card so that the child can move the letters around to spell the target word, muddle it up and make a funny word, then make the target word again

**c** **a** **t**      **t** **a** **c**      **c** **a** **t**

## Missing Letters

Write a word several times, each time missing one more letter to fill in. Fold the page to hide the word above, but you can peep if you get stuck! e.g. home    \_ome,  
\_\_me,    \_\_\_e,    \_\_\_\_.

## Give them some lines....

Give the child a line for each letter in the word e.g. look \_\_\_\_ The child copies each letter onto each line a few times, then does so again without looking at the word. After lots of practice you can ask questions like, 'what letter is on the last line, on the first line, which line or lines would the 'o' be sitting on?'

## Old way, new way (Lyndon, 1989)

This strategy is useful for words which are consistently spelt wrong, where the wrong spelling needs to be 'un-learned' and replaced by the correct spelling.

The child writes down their usual way of spelling a word e.g. 'sed', this is the 'old way'.

The adult then writes down the correct spelling, the 'new way', and the child and adult together identify the parts of the 'old way' word which need to be changed. The child then writes out the 'new way' several times; writing it big, small, with eyes closed, until it feels secure. The child then makes up a sentence with that word in it to help to remember it.

## Look at the endings

Using a base word as a starting point, you can build on it. Write a word on a small piece of card and some different endings (each on a different piece of paper or card) e.g.

help s ing ed ful less er

Using the cards, the child can put them together to form words.

This help the child to see how we can change the meaning of a word by building on the base

helps, helping, helped, helpful, helpless, helper

Then the child can think of a sentence to use each new word and write it down to help to remember the spellings and meanings.

## Three tries

Draw a grid like the one below. Write the target word in the far left box. Ask the child to look carefully at the word, saying each letter/sound out loud.

Then show the child how to fold this column over, so he/she has 3 boxes in which to try to remember the word from memory. This is not a test, so after each try encourage the child to check by unfolding the first column.

Target word	1	2	3
house			

*fold here*

## Letter detective

The child takes the role of being a letter detective. Adult writes the target word e.g. think

Give the child time to really look at the word, say each letter out loud, close their eyes trying to picture the word in his/her mind.

Then write the word with one letter missing, e.g. thnk. Ask the detective to name the

missing letter. Repeat this with a different letter missing each time, e.g. thin hink thik

Then swap roles and you become the letter detective. You could model for the child, thinking out loud e.g. thnk.

*Let me see, think begins with the sound 'th' and I can see 'th' at the beginning, so that's not missing. Think ends with 'nk' and I can see 'n' and 'k' together at the end, so that's not missing. But I can't see a vowel. I'll sound the word out again, 'th' 'i' 'nk', think. It's the middle sound that's missing, it's 'i'*

## **Exaggerated pronunciation**

This works well for remembering silent letters

Guh-nome for Gnome

Kah-night for Knight

Skizzers for Scissors

## **Body writing**

This is good for kinaesthetic learners as they remember what it feels like – muscle memory – write on the finger, palm or thigh (this is the best).

**Sing** the letters in a melody, rhythm - (Matilda – Mrs D, Mrs I, Mrs FFI, Mrs C, Mrs U, Mrs LTY)

## **Other Multi-sensory methods**

- Jumping jacks: Read the target word from a label, name the letters and repeat the word. Do the same again this time carrying out an action (jumping, hopping, clapping, jumping jacks)
- Use wooden, magnetic or plastic letters.
- Mould letters out of clay or plasticine for the target word and stand them upright so they can be seen from all angles. Then lay the letters down to encourage the transition from 3D to 2D.
- Incorporating taste, smell and touch into learning can also prove effective:
- Try —feely letters, sand trays and shaving foam on tabletops for tracing letters and words.
- Draw spelling words in glue, make sure it is correct, and then sprinkle over glitter. Once dried, feel the letters, see them, say the word aloud and write them out.
- A slice of toast could be used as a starting point for teaching the vowel digraph oa supported with the use of an —oa sound picture (graphemes)

## Remember

Vary the method depending on the pupil and the spelling: one method will not suit all words (a phonics approach would not be helpful for —yacht, or what),