



## **BROCKHURST & MARLSTON HOUSE SCHOOLS**

Including all of the Pre-Prep Department and Early Years Foundation Stage

### **SPELLING POLICY**

**Brockhurst & Marlston House Schools (the School) is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils, and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. This policy is written with that commitment in mind, and in accordance with KCSIE September 2025.**

**Reviewed: September 2024**

**Next Review: September 2026**

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, 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 Aims and Objectives**

Spelling is a developmental process. The stages through which children pass as they develop as spellers are the following: pre-communicative, pre-phonetic, phonetic, transitional and 'correct'.

An understanding of the developmental spelling stage of each child will aid teachers in their teaching. Spelling is a visual-motor skill and children will therefore need to develop visual strategies in order to spell correctly. Phonic knowledge alone will be inadequate.

As a school we aim to:

- Raise the profile of the teaching of spelling and to raise the overall standard of spelling across the school;
- Encourage children to look carefully at the words;
- Provide opportunities to review and recall their learning: Teachers must provide opportunities to consolidate learning throughout each week;
- Teach spelling in context: Links to the oral use of the word and the formation of the word as a whole (handwriting);

- 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: Accurate spelling and accurate letter formation go hand-in-hand;
- Help and encourage children, developing their confidence as competent spellers, because the ability to spell the most words correctly is often closely associated with good self-esteem which affects performance in other areas of the curriculum;
- Develop and extend the children's vocabulary through shared, guided and independent spelling activities;
- Help children enjoy spelling and recognise its value;
- Test children on their spellings. Spelling tests are a good way to ensure spellings are learnt but it is essential that children apply these skills to their writing.

### **Teaching and Learning: (Early Years and Year 1)**

Teaching and learning of spelling in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is underpinned by the use of a high quality phonics programme, alongside the new National Curriculum requirements for spelling in Years 1 and 2.

- Letters and Sounds will be used to deliver daily phonics sessions.
- A discrete period of 20 minutes approximately will take place daily within EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 (where appropriate).

Children will be taught:

- The grapheme- phoneme correspondence in a clearly defined sequence, using Letters and Sounds as a basis for this sequence.
- The skill of segmenting words into their basic phonemes to spell.
- Blending and segmenting are reversible processes.
- Children in EYFS and KS1 may be taught in smaller key groups led by both teachers and/or teaching assistants.
- 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, for example: topic activities and child initiated play.
- Throughout each phase children will be taught to read on sight and spell high frequency words for the phase they are at. These words will be a mixture of decodable and tricky words.

### **Teaching and Learning (Year 2 and Key Stage 2)**

The spelling objectives for Year 2, which work in conjunction with Phase 6 of the 'Letters and Sounds' document, ensure that children have knowledge and understanding of alternative spellings for each phoneme.

Children in Years 2 to 8 will be set spellings each week to take home and learn, ready for a weekly spelling test. Children from Year 2 to Year 6 follow the school's spelling scheme. read, write inc. Teaching of spellings will also take place during the English lesson.

### **Learning and practising spelling (across the whole school)**

Strategies for spelling:

- Sounding words out: breaking the word down into phonemes (e.g. c-a-t, sh-e-ll) – many words cannot be sounded out so other strategies are needed;
- Dividing the word into syllables, say each syllable as they write the word (e.g. re-mem-ber);

- Using the Look, say, cover, write, check strategy: look at the word and say it out aloud, then cover it, write it and check to see if it is correct. If not, highlight or underline the incorrect part and repeat the process;
- Using mnemonics as an aid to memorising a tricky word (e.g. people: people eat orange peel like elephants; could: O U lucky duck);
- Finding words within words (e.g. a rat in separate);
- Making links between the meaning of words and their spelling (e.g. sign, signal, signature) – this strategy is used at a later stage than others;
- Working out spelling rules for themselves – a later strategy;
- Using a dictionary as soon as they know how to.

### **Application of spelling in writing (across the whole school)**

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 the 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 their ability to understand and apply what has been taught, then identify targets for further improvement;
- Teaching and practising handwriting: learning and practising a fluent joined style, (continuous cursive), will support the children's spelling development.

### **Using dictionaries (Key Stage 2 and 3)**

In Key Stage 2 each class has dictionaries and thesauruses appropriate to the age range. Dyslexia-friendly dictionaries are also available. Children should be taught to use a dictionary and to use them to check tricky spellings.

### **Inclusion (across the whole school)**

Some children, who may be experiencing difficulties, will be given additional support in small groups or one to one led by teachers or teaching assistants. Their progress will be closely monitored by the class teacher, and regularly reviewed with the LDC.

### **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. (See handwriting policy)

### **Assessment and Monitoring**

It is important that the assessment of children's spellings is meaningful for the child but also for the teacher when planning the teaching of spelling. Assessing spelling should not just be about identifying words that children spell correctly and incorrectly in a test, but consistently within their writing. For example, do they have a lack of phonetic knowledge, or are they confusing rules for spelling? Teachers should then use this assessment information to plan subsequent phonics/spelling sessions.

Additionally, children can record correct spellings for misspelt words in their own spelling journal or in the back of exercise books. This will enable them to revisit and practise words when writing, through multi-sensory approaches – for example: looking, saying, hearing and writing words.

Self-assessment of pupils' own spellings is also essential as it encourages independence in learning and reflection on their writing. We should encourage children to proof-read and spot their own errors in written work, with reference to their spelling journals, spelling displays within the classroom, spelling strategy prompts and, when ready, dictionaries.

### **Marking of Work (Years 2-8, Year 1 – where appropriate)**

When focusing on spelling within writing, children should firstly be given the opportunity to write freely and be encouraged to use spelling strategies they know. This ensures that the child is still motivated to write and promotes independence when spelling.

However, at the proof-reading stage, time should be given for checking any words the child is unsure of or unfamiliar with. When writing, children could be encouraged to highlight these words by underlining them so that they remember to revisit them later. They may then use their spelling journal and any other spelling strategy prompts that are available within the classroom environment.

During the proof-reading stage, the teacher should identify an appropriate but manageable selection of incorrect spellings. These words could be written correctly on the page for the child to see and then can be transferred to their individual spelling journal.

### **Homework (Years 1-8)**

Spelling lists:

As part of assessment and monitoring, children will regularly be given a spelling list to learn, as part of their English homework, which will be linked to the spelling patterns and objectives they have been learning in their spelling sessions, or from the phase they are working on in Letters and Sounds. Spellings may also be linked to the high-frequency words or words from their spelling journal. The number of spellings they are given will be dependent on their year group and may be personalised to the individual child.

### **SEND**

There may be occasions when it is not appropriate for a child to follow our spelling policy. In these cases the aim would be to adapt the programme to fit with the child's individual needs. There should be collaboration between the class teacher, parent and the school's SENCO to ensure we are meeting the needs of the individual child.