



Threshfield Primary School

# Spelling Guidance for Parents and Carers

spelling

## Introduction

This booklet has been created to inform parents and carers, of the methods of teaching and supporting spellings across school. With the changes to the National Curriculum 2014 and expectations for spellings across the primary sector we have developed our practice to ensure we are meeting the high-expectations of the government and supporting all children within school.

Since the introduction of Letters and Sounds in 2007 the teaching of phonics and subsequently spelling have centered on a synthetic program of phonics. A synthetic program is where children are taught to read letters or groups of letters they represent - from here children can start to read words by blending the sounds together. This program is still used in reception and key stage 1 and is one of the most successful programs created by the government, however as only 12% of the words in the English language are spelt the way they sound other approaches need to be combined throughout learning to ensure children have many strategies in the acquisition of spellings and spelling patterns.

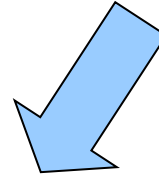
Read, Write, Inc Spell is a detailed spelling program that is used from year 2 onwards. The program focuses on a spelling pattern or a special focus each week to ensure complete coverage of the National Curriculum requirements. During the week the children will investigate words within the spelling patterns in a number of different ways: using the words in contextual sentences, splitting the words into sounds and syllables, changing the words by adding suffixes (e.g. -ed, -ing, -es) or prefixes (pre-, un-, mis-), playing games with the words and learning the meaning of the words.

Each half-term, your child/children will take home a Spelling Bee booklet which will have all the spelling for the pattern being taught that half-term. These spellings are to be learnt at home and then tested each week in school. There are many different ways you can support your children at home - these are outline further in the booklet.



# Spelling Bee Booklets

This is your child's spelling pattern focus for the week. They will be learning this in class.



Week Two Spelling Patterns: Special Focus 1 (-ough)

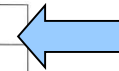
These spellings are linked to the spelling pattern being taught during the week. Different aged children have a different number of spellings.

Look,	Say,	Cover,	Write,	Check
borough				
though				
through				
thorough				
dough				
although				
cough				
enough				
tough				

These spellings will be either from the High frequency words for children in key stage 1 or from the spelling lists for children in key stage 2.

bruise				
language				
marvellous				
mischievous				

These spellings will change regularly. Sometimes they'll be words which have been spelt incorrectly in their literacy and Big Write Books, high-level vocabulary, days of the weeks, months of the year, etc.

## How can we help at home?

The English Language is one of the most difficult in the world. There are 21 consonants and 5 vowel letters but there are over 20 different vowel sounds which are made by the individual letters or by combining them together - so it is definitely not that easy! Therefore, the more strategies the children have - the better.



### 1. Look, Say, Cover, Write & Check

This is one of the most common ways to practise your spellings. The children look at the spelling, say it aloud, cover the spelling, try to write it correctly and then check their answer. It is a good method but is not guaranteed to help children learn spellings when used alone. Try doing this activity with some of the others too.

### 2. Segmentation (breaking down words)

Breaking larger words down into smaller sections or syllables is a really useful way of children playing with words and considering how each section might be spelt, e.g.

consideration

con - sid - er - a - tion

Clapping the words helps to identify the different syllables or parts. Another way is to place your hand under your chin as you say the word. Every time your chin moves down, it is a separate syllable.

Another method of breaking words down is to ask your child/children to think of the **root word**. This is where the word originally came from, e.g.

To spell **lovely**: root word = love + ly  
To spell **misunderstanding**: root word = understand + mis + ing

If the children are taught to spell the root words then they can just add the prefixes (e.g. pre-) and suffixes (e.g. -ing) to them.

### **3. Mnemonics**

If your child/children are really struggling to remember a certain word, try teaching them a mnemonic. This is where they make up a silly poem using each letter of the word in order, e.g.



### **4. Decorating or drawing the words in bubble writing**

This allows your children to have fun with their spellings. Research shows that a child needs to be introduced to a word at least 20 times before it becomes part of their memory, so keep encouraging your child to play with words.

### **5. Reading**

Regular reading with your child is one of the proven ways to improve their spelling skills. A child having regular exposure to a variety of different words is essential for spelling understanding and vocabulary acquisition. Reading more complex books, e.g. Roald Dahl, Harry Potter, to your child also provides the foundations and scaffolding of strong English skills.

# FAQ

## **1. My child is really struggling with these spellings. What can I do?**

Children are now given the spellings which match their year group and the spellings match the teaching taking place in class; this gives purpose and meaning to the spellings being learnt at home. Spelling interventions will be happening throughout school, throughout the year and if your child has large gaps within their knowledge these will be identified and activities will be put into place to close these gaps.

It may become frustrating if your child is constantly struggling with spelling but research shows that a child needs to be introduced to a word at least 20 times before it becomes part of their memory. So do not worry - the more access your child has to words the more confident and stronger they will become.

## **2. My child is really good at spelling and is finding these words easy. What should I do?**

In key stage 2 there is a pre-assessment in week 1 and post-assessment in week 2 which identifies progress made over each half-term. If your child is achieving full-marks in the pre-assessment then activities or alternatives will be put into place to ensure children are constantly stretched.

At home, if they are achieving easily, you can use the spelling pattern to challenge your child. The spelling pattern for each week is at the top of each page and you can find additional words to give to your child to ensure they've learnt the pattern and not just the list of words. Google is a really good resource for finding words! In Key Stage 1 repetition is important to enable pupils to recall the spellings confidently in their writing. Pupils could practice these words further and extend their understanding by using their spelling words in sentences or longer texts such as stories.

## **3. My child is a really high achiever. Why can't they do the spellings from the year above?**

As teachers we are required to teach the areas of the curriculum to the children. When children skip a year group gaps can be created in their learning which then cause problems later on. If your child is showing continuous success in spellings then there are many different methods of extending their learning without skipping the requirements they must be taught. Your child's progress will be constantly assessed in school.

## **4. My child already has lots of homework and we don't have time to practise the spellings. What should I do?**

We understand that there are a lot of time constraints on families, especially with out-of-school activities but spellings are essential to children's writing. After changes to the National Curriculum expectations, children need to show a certain level of spelling ability throughout their writing. Word lists, which are attached, show the lists of words which need to be successfully spelt in order for the children to achieve the expected level.

Children can use dictionaries to edit their words, so regularly using these at home will be extremely beneficial.