

The *Framework for Teaching English (DfEE 0019/2001)* states that:

**“Language is the principal medium of learning in school, and every teacher needs to cultivate it as the tool for learning in their subject. Other subjects do more than simply police English across the curriculum, or nurse pupils with poor skills. Teachers have a genuine stake in strong language skills because language enables thought.”**

**In order to facilitate this, the English Department will:**

- ◆ Engage in explicit teaching about different text types
- ◆ Reinforce pupils skills in terms of sentence construction and grammatical terms
- ◆ Provide pupils with experience of formulating their ideas through mind-mapping, drafting and revision.
- ◆ Teach note-making and note taking skills
- ◆ Teach a range of reading strategies
- ◆ Assess students’ skills through internal summative and formative assessment
- ◆ Provide additional 1-1 support to students not yet at level 4.
- ◆ Support other curriculum areas in the development of literacy skills.
- ◆ Chair regular cross curricular literacy meeting.

All curriculum areas should:

- ◆ Teach correct spelling and use of key vocabulary and technical terms, with reference to the Whole School Spelling Policy, English framework and Cross Curricular Priorities
- ◆ Correct mistakes and encourage students to record personal errors
- ◆ Encourage and support a range of reading strategies
- ◆ Use talk to support reading and then use these skills to support writing.

## **Reading**

We will aim to give pupils a level of literacy that will enable them to cope with the increasing demands of subjects in terms of specific skills, knowledge and understanding. This applies particularly in the area of reading (including from the screen), as texts become more demanding.

We will build on and share existing good practice. We will teach pupils strategies to help them to:

1. read with greater understanding;
2. locate and use information;
3. follow a process or argument;
4. summarise;
5. synthesise and adapt what they learn from their reading.

## Writing

### It is important that we provide for co-ordination across subjects to recognise and reinforce pupils' language skills, through:

- Making connections between pupils' reading and writing, so that pupils have clear models for their writing;
- Using the modelling process to make explicit to pupils *how* to write;
- Being clear about audience and purpose;
- Providing opportunities for a range of writing including sustained writing.

## Spelling Policy

As part of our spelling policy we adopt the **Look/Say/Cover/Write/Check** method of learning spellings. Students have a list of words that their subject teachers have asked them to learn in the backs of subject exercise books. It would be helpful if all staff and parents could assist and encourage students to learn the correct spellings of words in this way:

**Look** at the word studying it carefully.

**Say** it and notice the beginning, middle and end e.g. par/tic/u/lar.

**Cover** the word and remind yourself how you will remember it.

**Write** the word. Say it as you write it.

**Check** you have written it correctly.

Repeat the process the next day.

It is often better to encourage students to learn thoroughly a few new spellings each day rather than expecting long lists to be mastered.

We recommend that every child has access to a dictionary at home in addition to a small pocket version for "instant reference".

When marking work, teachers in all subject areas need to draw attention to spelling errors. Whilst "improve your spelling" is unhelpful and vague, the identification of a particular spelling error e.g. doubling of letters before adding -ing is specific and presents the student with a target which can be addressed.

We should also aim to teach in a vocabulary-rich environment, making use of resources such as 'spelling toolkits', tablemats and bookmarks.

The following documents offer some more detailed suggestions.

## Advice for Teachers

### We should all try to:

- ❖ Encourage children to enjoy choosing and using new and more difficult words.
- ❖ Praise all attempts at a word and then help with the tricky bits.
- ❖ Encourage children to collect the words they want to spell and keep a list for reference.
- ❖ Encourage self-review. Expect students to self-correct but differentiate your expectations. Good spellers will highlight all suspected errors, poor spellers will pick out key words for the subject and/or high frequency words.
- ❖ Encourage children to take responsibility for their own spelling. Use the school correction code which helps pupils to proof-read their own work to search for errors.

When marking work put the first letter of the incorrectly spelt word in the margin and underline it in the text. If the initial sound of the word is mis-spelt, then the correct initial letter should be given above the relevant word. The student should use a dictionary or word list to find the correct spelling, which should be written into the exercise book and onto the student's spelling sheet. When a student corrects a word, encourage her/him to rewrite the whole word and not just the mis-spelled letters.

- ❖ Encourage children to take a note of the correct spellings of any mis-spelled words.
- ❖ Encourage the use of a dictionary and a Thesaurus - not just for spelling but for discovering the meanings of words. Every classroom should have an Adult Dictionary/Thesaurus, and a Spelling Dictionary/Children's Thesaurus - in addition to simplified Dictionaries.
- ❖ Encourage the use of electronic spellcheckers or word finders. Some will complete the word you have typed or give you options to choose from.
- ❖ Encourage discussion of the pronunciation and meaning of a word.
- ❖ Allow children to leave gaps for words they are uncertain about. These could be a basis for research and discussion.
- ❖ Encourage cursive handwriting, which is proven to aid good spelling, and discourage the use of block capitals as recognition word shape is impeded.
- ❖ Let the children mark and consult each other over their work.
- ❖ Encourage the breaking down of words into their syllables.
- ❖ Teach words in context - this helps the pupil to relate the word to its meaning.
- ❖ Keep a Lexicon of words used at each stage for pupils to access.
- ❖ Keep spelling in perspective. It remains of secondary importance to what the child is trying to say, although it can affect the reader's response to what is written.
- ❖ Encourage the student to use the 'Helpful Hints' document.

### We should try not to:

- ❖ Let the child come to believe that what (s)he has to say is unimportant and that all that matters in written work is spelling and handwriting.
- ❖ Tell the child (s)he is a bad speller.
- ❖ Question the child's choice of word because it is difficult to spell.
- ❖ Use spelling as a test or competition, with public results.

- ❖ Give lists of randomly chosen words for children to learn. Instead, work with words they want or need to use, or those with which they have constant difficulty.
- ❖ Allow a letter by letter copying of the word the child wants to spell.

## ***Advice for Parents***

The school will offer all the assistance it can with your child's spelling and you can help, too. Here are some suggestions which will help you reinforce the school's approach.

### **TRY TO**

- ❖ Encourage children to enjoy choosing and using new and more difficult words.
- ❖ Praise all attempts at a word and then help with the tricky bits.
- ❖ Encourage children to collect the words they want to spell and keep a list for reference.
- ❖ Encourage children to take responsibility for their own spelling. They must learn to proof-read their own work to search for errors.
- ❖ Encourage the use of a dictionary and a thesaurus. It is always helpful to have these for reference at home.
- ❖ Encourage the use of electronic spellcheckers or word finders. Some will complete the word you have typed or give you options to choose from.
- ❖ If a child corrects a word, encourage her/him to rewrite the whole word and not just the mis-spelled letters.
- ❖ Keep spelling in perspective. It remains of secondary importance to what the child is trying to say, although it can affect the reader's response to what is written.
- ❖ Read your child's 'Advice for Students' document and help them to use it.

### **TRY NOT TO**

- ❖ Tell your child (s)he is a bad speller.
- ❖ Tell your child that YOU were a bad speller and so (s)he is likely to have the same problem!
- ❖ Let the child come to believe that what (s)he has to say is unimportant and that all that matters in written work is spelling and handwriting.
- ❖ Question the child's choice of word because it is difficult to spell.
- ❖ Give lists of randomly chosen words for children to learn. Instead, work with words they want or need to use, or those with which they have constant difficulty.

**By adopting a positive attitude, you will reinforce the work of the college.  
Thank you for your support.**

### **Advice for students.**

#### **1. PROOF READ EVERY TIME**

With a pencil in one hand read through your work and underline any word which you think is

mis-spelled. You may know immediately what is wrong and be able to correct the spelling. If not, use any of the methods below which you find helpful.

## **2. ASK SOMEONE**

Ask your teacher, a friend or relative. Ask the person to write the word on a scrap piece of paper so that you can see the pattern of the word.

## **3. BRACKET - LOOK - READ -COVER -WRITE -CHECK**

Look carefully at the word to be written, can you see any pattern? Read the word and when you feel confident about writing it, cover it up and write it in your book. Now check that you have spelled the word correctly. If not start again.

## **4. SPLITTING WORDS**

Try splitting the word you want to write into parts that are meaningful to you.

e.g. particularly *par-tic-u-lar-ly* satisfaction *sat-is-fac-tion*

## **5. WORDS WITHIN WORDS**

Are there smaller words in the word you want to write?

e.g. yesterday, preach er, fash ion

## **6. SILLY PRONUNCIATIONS**

Sometimes a 'funny' way of saying a word can help you to remember how to spell it.

e.g. beautiful be-**A-U** -ti-ful friend **fri** -end

## **7. MNEMONICS**

Associate stories, rhymes etc. with the words and letters.

e.g. It's a sin to be in **business**

difficulty Mr. **D** , Mr. **I** , Mr. **FFI** , Mr. **C** , Mr. **U** , Mr. **LTY** .

stationery '**e**' for envelopes

## **8. PERSONAL DICTIONARY**

Compile a list of your own problem words.

## **9. SOUND PATTERNS**

Think of the sound you want to write. What letter combinations do you know which make that sound? Try them out. Which looks correct?

## **10. BASE WORD**

Very often longer words can be split up into *BASE WORD* + *PREFIX* / *SUFFIX*

e.g. unexpectedly

prefix - **un**

base - **expect** / **expected**

suffix - **ly**

## **11. USE A DICTIONARY/SPELLCHECKER**

If you know part of a word a dictionary can sometimes be a useful way to find the spelling.

Electronic spellcheckers or word finders work in the same way. Some will complete the word you have typed or give you options to choose from.

## **12. RULES**

There are many rules for spelling words. If you feel able to, try to learn some of the more common spelling rules.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

We will make use of available data/baseline to assess the standards of pupils' literacy. Senior managers, the Head of English and the literacy co-ordinator, will decide how to monitor progress in the school.

**Possible approaches are:**

sampling work – both pupils’ work and departmental schemes;  
observation – pupil pursuit and literacy teaching;  
meetings;  
pupil interviews;  
scrutiny of development plans;  
encouraging departments to share good practice by exhibiting or exemplifying pupils’ work.

**Spelling and reading of key words in each department: (2010 priority)\***

**Each department will:**

- *identify and display key vocabulary;*
- *revise key vocabulary;*
- *teach agreed learning strategies which will help pupils to learn subject spelling lists;*
- *concentrate on the marking of high-frequency and key subject words taking into account the differing abilities of pupils.*
- *test or revise high frequency words regularly;*
- *set personal spelling targets.*

*\*These would be updated annually*

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**English department.**