

Grendon CE Primary School

PHONICS & SPELLING POLICY

At Grendon CE Primary School, we encourage our pupils to think and write creatively, be adventurous with their use of language and write with a clear purpose and for pleasure. In order for these aims to be realised, it is essential that our pupils learn to spell accurately. Our expectation is for children to learn and apply a wide range of spelling strategies in their independent writing.

Key Principles

Our policy on phonics & spelling has at its core a number of principles:

- spelling should be taught systematically in all phases of the school
- children's acquisition of phonic/spelling knowledge should be sequenced within an agreed framework with clearly defined end points
- Pupils should follow a structured phonics scheme in Key Stage 1, followed by the systematic teaching of spelling rules, patterns and strategies in Key Stage 2
- Pupils should routinely apply their knowledge of spelling strategies in independent written work across the curriculum so that their work is fluent and accurate and includes adventurous vocabulary choices
- Children's independence should be fostered by equipping them with strategies to tackle unknown words independently

Teaching and learning

EYFS and KS1

Phonetic knowledge underpins the teaching of spelling in EYFS and KS1. At Grendon CE Primary School, we use a bespoke phonics scheme to support children in developing their phonetical understanding; this is taught daily and consolidated when writing across the curriculum.

KS2

It is expected that in Key Stage 2, the majority of children will have a secure understanding of phonics and will increasingly use morphology and etymology to support their spelling, alongside dictionaries and spell-checkers. Phonics is not taught explicitly (unless as an intervention) but is still consolidated through the teaching of spelling, which takes place at least twice a week as a structured, teacher-led session within the wider Literacy provision.

Phonics & Spelling Ladder

With due regard to the spelling requirements of the National Curriculum and the school's chosen approach to phonics, the school has created a Phonics & Spelling Ladder (Appendix 1). This document carefully sequences the phonics and spelling progression across the school from EYFS to Year 6, with clearly identified end points that children are expected to achieve by the end of each phase in the school.

Following an initial assessment of phonic/spelling knowledge, all pupils are placed on the appropriate position of the Phonic & Spelling Ladder to ensure that subsequent work is carefully matched to the ability of each child.

The Phonic & Spelling Ladder is a working document that logs each pupil's achievements throughout their time in school. This important evidence trail ensures a high level of consistency and challenge for all learners.

The school expects children to be aware of their prior achievements and next steps and to support this, the relevant section of the ladder is displayed and annotated in a way which is easily accessible to pupils

Additional Support and SEN

Some children require additional support to acquire phonic and spelling knowledge and these will be identified in line with the outcomes of statutory assessments at EYFS and KS1 and through the internal monitoring of pupils' progress along the Phonics & Spelling Ladder. Additional support will be detailed on the school's provision map and shared with parents via the Pupil Profile.

Teachers will use assessment data and their own professional judgement to decide whether pupils require additional support. Interventions will mirror the content and format of the main teacher-led input but will be delivered on an individual or small group basis and with supplementary resources.

Pupils who are identified as having significant difficulty in their acquisition of spelling and phonic knowledge will receive further input using the principles of 'precision teaching'.

Assessment

Statutory assessments of phonics/spelling take place in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 6.

The school believes that the most effective way to assess pupils' phonic and spelling knowledge is through its routine application in written work. The Phonics & Spelling Ladder will be updated when a pupil routinely demonstrates in their written work that a new spelling rule or pattern is secure. Replacing weekly spelling tests will be periodical assessments of the spelling rules and patterns taught in the preceding block of work.

Class teachers will be discerning in their marking of spelling errors. For spellings that a child has previously demonstrated as knowing and which are then carelessly misspelt, the expectation is that the child will correct these independently. At the same time, teachers will encourage the use of unknown and more adventurous vocabulary and will support children by annotating the work with the correct spelling.

Termly updates of the Phonic & Spelling Ladder will be transferred to the relevant section of Pupil Profiles and shared with parents.

Glossary of terms

Morphology - The study of the forms of things e.g. how a word is formed.

Etymology - the study of the origin of words and the way in which their meanings have changed throughout history.

Monitoring

The Phonic & Spelling Policy will be monitored as part of the school's curriculum monitoring process, which includes lesson observations, work scrutiny, discussions with pupils and assessment data.