

THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM AT WOODSTOCK PRIMARY SCHOOL: SPELLING AND PHONICS

SPEAKING AND LISTENING IN OUR SCHOOL

The National Curriculum says that most people read words more accurately than they spell them. The younger pupils are, the truer this is. By the end of Year 1, pupils should be able to read a large number of different words containing the letters/sounds that they have learnt, whether or not they have seen these words before. Spelling, however, is a very different matter. Once pupils have learnt more than one way of spelling particular sounds, choosing the right letter or letters depends on their either having made a conscious effort to learn the words or having absorbed them less consciously through their reading. Younger pupils have not had enough time to learn or absorb the accurate spelling of all the words that they may want to write. At Woodstock Primary School we follow a clear, structured spelling programme to ensure that children acquire these key skills.

We use the Ruth Miskin Read Write Inc. programme to deliver phonics in the Early Years and Key Stage One, including an early introduction when children attend our Nursery. This allows children to explore the sounds, recognise letter formation and begin to segment and blend sounds for spelling. Weekly spelling lessons then follow as children progress through the school, with a sharp focus on spelling patterns and rules in line with the National Curriculum expectations for each Year group or Phase. Included in these spellings are the 100 National Curriculum common exception words for each Year group or Phase.

Spelling lessons include aspects of the following:

- Dictation
- Dictionary work
- Paired and group work linking to word meaning and context
- Exploring prefixes, suffixes, root words, word origins and homophones
- Links to grammar
- Games
- Opportunities to learn the spelling list for the week through LSCWC (Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check)

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING IN SPELLING AND PHONICS AT HOME

The teaching and learning of phonics is a key focus, particularly in the Early Years, and lots of reinforcement at home is necessary in order to deepen this learning and embed this key skill. You can support the acquisition of phonics at home by doing any of the following:

- **Playing I-Spy, using the sound of the letter rather than the name**
- **Engage in conversation about sounds in words- phonics is often one of the most exciting early skills**
- **Encourage your child to hear sounds all around them, in the environment: birds, transport, etc**
- **Understand that children often hear just the initial sound first, developing to the final sound as they tune in more to phonics, and finally the medial sounds in the middle.**

Spelling patterns and rules are a focus from Year 1 upwards and this is taught weekly in class. Children then come into school and practise these in their spelling books as an early morning activity every day and are then tested at the end of this process. Spelling lists come home in Home-School Links Books and support at home can be done through any of the following:

- **Reading through the list of words with your child**
- **Checking understanding of each word- what does each word mean?**
- **Talking about the words, giving examples of how they can be used in a sentence, playing about with these sentences to make it fun**
- **Playing spelling games such as Hangman, making a word search or crossword using words on the spelling list**
- **Reading previous spellings to keep them in mind**

USING WEBSITES/GAMES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S LEARNING IN SPELLING AND PHONICS

- Read Write Inc. produce phonics sound cards which can be purchased in school and are useful for discussion and can be used in lots of different ways at home
- Games such as Boggle, Scrabble or Nab It can be a fun way of talking about spelling and words
- Apps such as Squeebles can be motivational for children who like technology, providing opportunities to record themselves saying each word as well as creating their own spelling lists and spelling checks

Spelling games can be simple yet effective. Try any of the following to liven things up:

- **Write the words in the spelling list out in alphabetical order**
- **Type the words on the computer using different colours and different fonts for each**
- **Make each word by cutting letters out of magazines and newspapers- like a ransom note in a film!**
- **Write each word out, using a different colour for the vowels and another for the consonants**
- **X words- write out two words with one letter in common, so that they cross over**