

## Policy for Spelling and Handwriting

At William Austin Junior School we aim to:

- enable children to develop effective strategies in order to acquire the skills and confidence necessary to make plausible attempts to spell new words;
- present spelling as an enjoyable learning process in which the children are actively involved. The children become confident in their own ability and perceive themselves as 'good spellers';
- give children the freedom to write what they want to write, and to be adventurous with vocabulary, rather than to express themselves within the confines of limited spelling abilities;
- enable children to develop a handwriting style that is joined, clear and fluent and, where appropriate, is adapted to a range of tasks;
- develop an understanding that good handwriting and good spelling go together.

### Spelling

The children need to:

- understand the principles underpinning word construction (phonemic, morphemic, and etymological)
- recognise how these principles apply to each word
- practise spellings in short lively session and undergo regular assessment
- build self-image as spellers

Specific teaching of spelling takes place three times at least once per week. Opportunities for teaching specific rules and patterns may arise as part of modelled or shared writing in English lessons. The spelling of key words, Tier 2 and 3 words are taught within all lessons across the curriculum.

A variety of approaches is encouraged involving pupils in investigative activities where appropriate.

Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 pupils follow the Spellzoo programme which incorporates a variety of exercises to help learners.

Children are encouraged to '**have a go**' when challenged with new words. This will involve them:

- segmenting the word in individual phonemes;
- thinking about the meaning of the word to see if it gives a clue to the spelling pattern;
- writing the word syllable by syllable, making sure that each sound is represented by a letter or letters;
- looking for words within words;
- identifying the root word and adapting as appropriate;
- looking carefully to see if the pattern looks right;
- checking using a dictionary;
- when unsure place dots underneath the word (T4W) to prevent limiting vocabulary;
- National Curriculum word lists are placed in pupils' books;
- R.E.S.C.U.E – a strategy used whereby words are identified, meanings and context understood to encourage wider vocabulary knowledge and improved spelling.

The **Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check** method is also used when learning words.

- LOOK at the whole word carefully.
- SAY the word quietly.
- COVER the word.
- REMEMBER the pattern of letters and shape of the word.
- WRITE the word from memory, saying the word softly as it is written.
- CHECK to see if it is correct.

Classrooms environments should aid children with spelling. Displayed in classrooms should be the following:

- Lightboxes with key weekly spellings
- Weekly from Spellzoo spelling list
- National Curriculum Statutory Word List
- Relevant word banks (linked to writing unit)
- Key vocabulary from across the Curriculum

### **Handwriting**

We use the Nelson Handwriting scheme. Good handwriting is important because good spellers are usually able to write with speed in a well-formed, flowing style of writing. It is the muscle memory of the moving pencil when writing words that promotes accurate spelling. It is expected that all children join their handwriting by the end of year 4.

All children should be encouraged to sit correctly when writing. If the child is left-handed, we need to ensure that we bear this in mind and they angle the writing paper in a different way from the right-handed child. If left-handed children's dominant hand is promoted, they will write as freely and fluently as right-handed children. Handwriting grips are available for any child who has specific problems holding pencils correctly.

Children receive regular handwriting lessons, based on the Nelson scheme books. Pupils can apply for their pen licence when their handwriting is legible and joined.

With constant practice, the handwriting skills the pupils learn should be evident in their everyday writing.

### **Resources**

- Nelson Coursebooks
- Exercise books ruled to assist sizing of letters
- Handwriting pens
- XCCW Joined 1a interactive whiteboard font

### **Fluent writing**

Pupils practice fluent writing at set points throughout the school year. The objective of this is to ensure learners can transcribe a substantial amount of text accurately, legibly and build writing stamina. The aim of fluent writing is to apply this raised competence and expectation in conceptual learning where learners are writing creatively and purposively.

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the English Subject Leader on an annual basis.

Policy updated: April 2020

Staff responsible: Lois Grey

This policy was ratified by the Governing body/Local Authority on:

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body: \_\_\_\_\_(signature)

\_\_\_\_\_(printed)