

Approach to spelling & handwriting

Spelling and handwriting (transcription) are the skills that enable pupils to be fluent writers. To support pupils further, 'writing fluency' is considered in a similar way to 'reading fluency'; it requires explicit and protected teaching within the writing curriculum to ensure good outcomes.

Spelling provision

Spelling is taught systematically using the 'Head Start' materials. A short session (as part of a writing lesson) delivered on a Monday covers a spelling rule or pattern which is then practised throughout the week. Pupils practise the spelling rule as registration activity and a 'do now' starter/game at the beginning of writing lessons. This time is also used by pupils to practise words that they have misspelled recently or new terminology that will be necessary for learning in any area of the curriculum. Spelling jotters are used for practising; these are 'rough books' where pupils use various strategies e.g. highlighting words in words, using different coloured pens, etc. to help transfer accurate spellings from short into long term memory.

Spelling errors

Teachers address spelling errors appropriate to each child in terms of the age and stage of their development. As a general rule, this includes all tier 1 and tier 2 words that pupils should know and new tier 3 words that have been explicitly taught (or provided on word mats and displays). Teachers should also address spelling errors where the corresponding spelling rule/ pattern has been previously taught.

Personal dictionaries Pupils add words that they have spelled inaccurately to their personal dictionary. These are small books with alphabetised pages that pupils have with them during writing lessons. Words that are in their personal dictionaries are practised in spelling jotters to support transference into long term memory. There is the expectation that words that have been added to personal dictionaries should be spelled accurately moving forward.

Handwriting provision (including use of pens) updated may 2022

In EYFS and KS1, pupils learn to form letters (no lead) in alignment with 'Little Wandle' (our chosen scheme for systematic synthetic phonics). This is supported by the use of mnemonics for each letter "Down the jellyfish's body with a dot for the head". In year 2, pupils begin to learn exit joins for each letter and it is expected that y3 pupils will begin to apply a joined style in their writing, becoming more confident by the end of lower KS2. By the start of upper KS2, it is our intention that pupils should use a joined script confidently and consistently, but be able to make decisions about when to select it and when to opt for printed formation instead e.g. when completing a form/ template. *

Handwriting is taught as a discreet lesson (weekly), as well alongside other aspects of the writing curriculum. This is often as part of the teaching and practising of spelling rules/ patterns as it further supports pupils to add spellings into long term memory. It is also delivered as a 'Do now' starter activity at the beginning of a writing lesson. Teachers use the "Letter join" resource to ensure consistency.

Pupils begin to use handwriting pens from the beginning of KS2 and it is expected that all published pieces will be written in handwriting pen.

****NB for pupils who have an embedded cursive style (y3 onwards), they will be supported to continue developing this style through teacher modelling of cursive joins.***