



Copley Junior School



Guidance for Parent/Carers: Supporting Your Child at Home with Spelling

The aim of this document is to provide you with the guidance required to best support your child in developing into an accurate, efficient and confident speller. Your child will need help and encouragement with their weekly spelling home learning and this can be a fun, shared experience rather than a weekly chore.

Spelling Homework:

- * The most effective way to learn and secure spellings is through the 'look, say, cover, write, check' method. Your child's weekly spelling homework will involve learning a list of words relevant to their spelling ability, using this method. Your child should look at the spelling, then say each letter in the word as well as the whole word. Following this, your child should cover up the word, write it down and finally check they have spelt it correctly.
- * It is expected that your child should practise each of their spellings every day using this method which should take about 5 - 10 minutes in total.
- * A homework sheet with your child's spellings and space to practise each day will be sent home every week. The children will then be tested on these spellings a week later. Children in Years 3 and 4 will usually receive 8 words to learn a week and children in Years 5 and 6 will usually receive 10 spellings a week. If your child finds spelling very difficult, their teacher may feel it is appropriate to adapt the spelling homework to meet their needs more closely.
- * Your child's teacher will be following a whole school programme of study for spelling linked to what the national curriculum expects children in each year group to study and be able to spell. We understand that all children have different strengths and learn at different rates, therefore your child's teacher will aim to provide them with spellings at just the right level to challenge your child without being too difficult for them to learn. If your child is finding their spellings too easy or too hard over time, please feel free contact their teacher.

It is really important that parents/carers are involved in helping children to learn their spellings. Confidence in spelling allows children to write more freely and imaginatively. It has been found that children learn to spell better, quicker and more easily if they are given short but fun activities on a daily basis. Multi-sensory activities are always more effective at securing sounds and spellings. Try to engage your child in spelling activities that involve listening, speaking and doing. This will help your child really embed spellings in their long term memory.

Here are some games or ideas you could use at home. You could try a different one each night to keep it fun and interesting. Children learn best by: seeing it, saying it, writing/drawing it and listening to it - so making sure you have a variety of games and tasks is a great way to ensure the learning sticks!

- * **Sand Spelling:** Physically writing the word in sand, finger paint etc. helps the word stick in a child's memory.

- * **Back Spelling:** Ask your child to use their finger to spell out each of their words on your back. Then it's their turn to write the words on your back for you to feel and spell. Encourage your child to say each letter as they write it, and then say the whole word.

- * **Air Spelling:** With your index finger, write the word in the air slowly, saying each letter. Remind your child that they need to be able to 'see' the letters they have written in the air. When you have finished writing the word, underline it and say the word again. You could then ask your child questions about the word. For example you could ask, 'What is the first letter?' 'What is the last letter?' 'How many letters are there?' etc.

- * **Media Search:** Using a newspaper or magazine, give your child 15 minutes to look for their spelling words. Circle them in different coloured crayons. Which of their spellings was used the most times?

- * **Salt/Sand Box Spelling:** Pour salt/sand into a shallow box or tray and then children can practise writing their spellings in it with their finger.

- * **Scrabble Spelling:** Place the letters of a word in a bag and mix them up. Then time how long it takes your child to unscramble the letters. See if they can beat their time.

- * **Pyramid Power:** Help your child sort their words into a list from easiest to hardest. Write the easiest word at the top of the page near the middle. Write the next easiest word twice underneath. Write the third word three times underneath again until they have built a pyramid.
- * **Ransom Note:** Your child could cut the letters needed for their words from a newspaper or magazine and glue them down to spell the words.
- * **Tasty Words:** Children could find tasty things to spell their words with, like raisins. Then when you spell them right they get to eat them!
- * **Design a Word:** if there are tricky words that your child struggles to remember, write them in bubble letters. Colour in each letter in a different pattern and display them in the house for them to keep practising.
- * **Water Wash:** Use a paintbrush and water to write words outside on concrete or pavements. This can also be done with different coloured chalk.
- * **ABC Order:** Children could write their words out in alphabetical order then write them in reverse alphabetical order too.
- * **Story Time:** You could help your child write a short, funny story using all their words.
- * **Simple Sentence:** Your child could write a silly or funny sentence containing each of their words.
- * **Memory Game:** Make pairs of word cards then turn them all over and mix them up. Flip over two cards and if they match, you get to keep them; if they don't match you have to turn them over again. Try and match all the pairs.
- * **Ambidextrous:** Tell your child to swap their pen into the hand that they don't normally write with and then try writing out their spellings with that hand.
- * **Missing Letters:** Write out one of your child's words lots of times on a piece of paper, but each time miss out a letter or two. Then your child has to fill in the missing letters. After you have checked them all, try it again with another word.

* **Trace, Copy, Recall:** Fold three columns on a piece of paper and label one column 'trace', the next 'copy' and the last 'recall'. Write the word in the first column, and have your child trace the letters. Next, have them copy the word by looking at what they've just written. Finally, have them fold (and hide) the first two columns and recall the spelling on their own as they write the word independently.

* **Stair Steps:** help your child write out their words as if they are stairs, adding one letter at a time.

S
Sp
Spe
Spel
Spell

* **Window Writing:** All you need is special window-safe crayons to use, and window-writing makes learning spelling words a bit crazy and so much fun!

* **Rainbow Write:** Flip over a word card and your child can write the word in rainbow colours. Make the first letter red, second orange, third yellow, etc.

* **Type it Out:** Open up a Word document and have your child type the spelling words on the screen as you call them out. Enlarge the font, make it a cool colour, and they'll enjoy the activity.

* **Spell and Record:** Have your child spell the words using the voice recorder on your phone or computer. They could do this in different, strange and silly voices, then you can have fun listening when you play it back.

* **Video Record:** Take a video of your child spelling their words. Have them put on a funny hat, dress-up, or use a silly prop to add to the fun.

* **Stamp It:** Use alphabet letter stamps to 'stamp' the words they need to learn.

* **Magnetic Letters:** Ask your child to look at a word from their list or from a flash card, cover it and then they make their word using magnetic letters.

* **Mnemonics:** Help your child create amusing mnemonics to help them remember spellings of tricky words e.g. because

Bears

Eating

Custard

Are

Usually

Sloppy

Eaters

* **Word Chop:** Split your child's words into lots of 'parts of words' on cards then they have to match them up to make the whole word. Your child can then say the word, cover it up and have a go at spelling it.

* **Split it Up:** Help your child to write their words with different coloured pens to break it down into syllables or phonemes. This helps to teach children to learn to spell in 'chunks' rather than 'letter by letter.'

* **Chant the Syllables:** Chant the syllables in tricky words e.g. Wed-nes-day, emphasising the tricky bit. Use actions for each syllable.

* **Word Pictures:** Make a word into a picture; for example, 'bed' could be drawn to look like a bed.

* **Spelling Tennis:** With your child, spell their words by saying alternative letters until the whole word is written.

* **Kim's Game:** Write your child's words on cards and lay them out on a table. Let them study the words then they look away whilst you remove one of the cards. Your child then turns back and has 1 minute to try and guess the missing word.

* **Lucky Dip:** Take it in turns to pick out 12 plastic letters from a bag without looking. Place the letters in front of you and the rest of the letters are left in the bag. The idea is to make one of the spellings on your child's list out of the letters. Take it in turns to pick one new letter out of the bag and discard one that you don't want any more until someone has the right letters to win.

* **Jingles:** Help your child make up a jingle, catchy song or rhyme to help them remember a difficult spelling or spelling rule.

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