



Spelling Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 At Etz Chaim Jewish Primary School, our job is not to correct mistakes the pupils have already made, but to help them not to make that mistake next time. Equally parents, pupils and teachers should be aware that spelling is a secretarial skill and is not related to how clever a person is.

1.2 We believe that the ability to spell enables our pupils to become more effective writers. When spelling becomes automatic, more thought and creativity can be put into the exact content of what is written. Pupils can channel their time and energy into the skills of composition, sentence structure and precise word choice. Learning to spell is a process of learning and then applying patterns to new words.

1.3 We aim to:

- give pupils the tools that are necessary for spelling accurately;
- enable all pupils to develop their own strategies for spelling confidently;
- encourage creativity and the use of ambitious vocabulary choices;
- give pupils a love of language.

1.4 It is important that all members of staff are fully aware of, and understand, the way in which spelling is taught, so that our approach is implemented consistently to ensure continuity and progression in children's learning. Although guidelines for the teaching of spelling are outlined in this policy, it is essential that these are adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils, taking into account the ways in which they learn best.

2. Teaching and Learning

2.1 The teaching of spelling aims to develop pupils as independent spellers who take an active part in their own learning. Pupils are taught the knowledge and skills they need to become independent spellers. Routines and structures are provided to enable pupils to apply what they learn about spelling independently. Teaching aims to show pupils how to become confident, natural and accurate spellers.

2.2 There is an emphasis on developing confidence and independence. It is expected that pupils assume increased responsibility by identifying their own spelling errors, making reasoned choices about likely alternatives and using a range of resources (including Personal Spelling Journals and a variety of dictionaries and word banks) for making corrections.

3. Entitlement and Curriculum Provision

3.1 The teaching of phonics and spelling aims to show pupils how to become natural and accurate spellers. The school approaches this in four ways;

- Firstly by using the programmes Read Write Inc (RWI), Letters and Sounds (L&S), Support for Spelling (SS) and then the objectives and spelling rules laid out in Appendix 1 of the English Curriculum 2013 to base planning and the series of teaching on.
- Secondly, by ensuring pupils learn and practise new phonemes and sounds patterns taught, including words, which they find most challenging. Such words are to be addressed when marking pieces of writing across the curriculum, through teachers.
- Thirdly, by increasing their spelling vocabulary by learning how to spell and by using the technical and subject-specific words which occur across the curriculum.
- Finally, the school's Handwriting Policy, also acts as an aid to develop accurate spellings from all pupils.

3.2 All phonics will be planned for based upon a four part lesson model. The four stages are:

a. Revisit and Review

- Practise previously learned letters/sound patterns
- Practise oral blending and segmentation

b. Teach

- Teach a new letter/sound pattern
- Teaching blending/and or segmentation with letters
- Teach tricky words that cannot be decoded

c. Practise

- Practise reading/and or spelling words with the new letters/sound pattern

d. Apply

- Read or write a caption using one or more high frequency words and the letters/sound pattern learnt during the session.

3.3 All spelling will be planned for based upon a four part lesson model. The four stages are:

a. Revisit, explain, use

- The first part of the sequence consists of lively oral and quick-write activities with two purposes: to revise and secure prior learning and to introduce and explain new learning. An important aspect of this part of the sequence is that children use the words orally, in context, so that they have a clear understanding of what they are learning. For example, in a unit related to learning the correct spelling of verb endings, the children need to have a clear understanding of the concept of tense.
- b. Teach, model, define
- Provide a range of direct teaching activities, including teacher modelling and involving the children in the new learning. For example, after an introductory activity based on the spelling of plurals, the teacher and children define the categories and generalise the rules for their formation.
- c. Practise, explore, investigate
- Provide children with the opportunity to work independently, in pairs or in small groups, using a range of strategies to practise and consolidate new learning.
- d. Apply, assess, reflect
- revise new learning
 - apply the words orally and in writing
 - reflect and assess progress.
 - ask children to apply their learning in writing, both through a short dictated piece and by composing their own sentence for their partner to transform by adding affixes to selected

4. Expectations

4.1 Progression of spelling will follow the structure identified in the Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) level statements – Assessment Focus 8 (AF8) – use correct spellings.

This states:

Level 1 - In some writing, usually with support:

- usually correct spelling of
 - high-frequency single morpheme words
 - non-inflected grammatical words
- likely errors
 - word division
 - phonetically plausible attempts at single and multiple morpheme words
 - use of letter names to approximate syllables and words

Level 2 – In some forms of writing:

- usually correct spelling of
 - high frequency grammatical function words
 - common single morpheme content/lexical words

- likely errors
- inflected endings, e.g. past tense, plurals, adverbs
- phonetic attempts at vowel digraphs

Level 3 – In most writing:

- correct spelling of
 - some common grammatical function words
 - common content/lexical words with more than one morpheme, including compound words
- likely errors
- some inflected endings, e.g. past tense, comparatives, adverbs
- some phonetically plausible attempts at content/lexical words

Level 4 – Across a range of writing:

- correct spelling of
 - most common grammatical function words, including adverbs with –ly formation
 - regularly formed content/lexical words, including those with multiple morphemes
 - most past and present tense inflections, plurals
- likely errors
- homophones of some common grammatical function words
- occasional phonetically plausible spelling in content/lexical words

Level 5 – Across a range of writing:

- correct spelling of
 - grammatical function words
 - almost all inflected words
 - most derivational suffixes and prefixes
 - most content/lexical words
- likely errors
- occasional phonetically plausible spelling of unstressed syllables in content words
- double consonants in prefixes

5. Role of the Teacher

- To follow the school's spelling policy and help every child to develop as a confident and independent speller.
- To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling of spelling, following RWI, L&S and the SS programme.
- To create a learning ethos and environment that promotes confidence and accurate spelling.
- To ensure that all pupils are suitably challenged and engaged in interactive, fast paced, 'fun' learning.
- To observe pupils, monitor and assess their progress and development.

6. Principles of teaching spelling

6.1 It is important to note that while as a general rule progression through the sequence of phonics and spelling will get more difficult, this is not always the case. For example, for many children Phase 3a & 3b will be more challenging

than Phase 4 (see appendix 1). In addition from Phase 6 onwards there is much overlap as children learn more complex spelling rules and patterns, whilst revising phonics.

6.2 Similarly, it may be necessary to take a step back with some children as 'missing' phonemes are identified, gaps emerge or spellings have been mis-learnt (e.g. waz instead of was). A child may also have difficulty transferring what they have learnt for a single-word spelling test to extended writing, when they are writing in context.

6.3 In the teaching of spelling, we take a four-pronged, multi-sensory approach;

- Visual activities could include:

- drawing a box around the tricky part of the word and remembering the shape;
- noticing patterns and unusual arrangements of letters in words;
- using flash cards;
- learning words in groups that look the same (could, would, should);
- displaying key words around the room;
- asking pupils to visualize a picture of a word in their head and break it down into parts;
- writing each phoneme/morpheme in a different colour;
- writing words (or parts of words) in different sizes;
- noticing common letter strings by ringing them/colouring them in.

- Oral (saying the sound/word) and aural (hearing the sound/word) activities could include:

- saying the word in funny voices; high, low, slow, fast, like Donald Duck;
- pronouncing each part, syllable or phoneme, in an exaggerated manner
- e.g. Wed-nes-day, Feb-ru-ary;
- saying the phoneme as you write it;
- making up mnemonics or a silly sentence to remember the spelling of a particular word or group of words sharing a common spelling pattern e.g. Children Occasionally Like Old Ugly Rabbits (colour), I'll be your friend to the end, O U Lucy Duck (ould as in could, would, should);
- call and response activities;
- clapping out the phonemes/morphemes/syllables;
- learning spellings through songs - pick a tune, for instance a well known nursery rhyme or football chant and 'sing' the spelling to the tune.

6.4 It is very important that when sounds are modelled careful attention is paid to pronouncing the sounds correctly. For example, do not add a short 'u' to hard consonants; the adult should model 'b' not 'buuh'.

- Kinaesthetic (doing/movement) activities could include:

- writing the word in the air with one hand, two hands, backwards,
- forwards, both directions;
- writing the word with a different body part – nose, elbow;

- writing the word in the palm of a hand, then with their eyes shut, then
 - with eyes shut and saying it at the same time;
 - writing in cursive handwriting so the muscles learn the 'flow' of the word (see handwriting policy);
 - using textured letters;
 - writing the word in sand, on sand paper, on a gel bag;
 - slicing up the word and sliding it back together;
 - sounding out the phonemes on your fingers;
 - jumping along the word;
 - drawing beeps and buttons underneath the word.
- Cognitive spelling refers to the rules of spelling, and could include:
 - in the English language q is followed by u;
 - when two vowels go a walking the first one does the talking;
 - i before e except after c (when it makes the ee sound);
 - when adding a vowel suffix onto a verb with a short vowel the consonant is doubled (hop – hopping, skip – skipped);
 - when singular nouns ending in y are changed to a plural – 'change the y to an i and es';
 - the etymological origin of words.

6.4 Remember rules are made to be broken! There are no perfect spelling rules, but there are conventions which help children make choices. Many spellings are dictated by grammar (e.g. -ed for the past tense). Many spellings are dictated by morphology or word-changing (i.e. adding prefixes and suffixes). Even some of the advanced spelling conventions are dictated by phonics (e.g. doubling consonants after a short vowel sound).

6.5 In addition some high frequency words (HFW) and medium frequency words (MFW) (the most common words in the English written language) are not phonetic and do not follow a rule. We call these tricky words. These words will be taught by repetition and possibly mnemonics e.g. said – Silly Ann Is Dancing, because – big elephants can't always use small exits.

7. Continuity and Progression

7.1 Children are taught in differentiated groups across each year group. Teachers and Teaching Assistants (TAs) lead the different groups, which are closely monitored. Regular assessments allow for movement between the differentiated groups and these are closely monitored. Pupil progress within L&S and SS is carefully tracked and then analysed at year group and whole-school levels.

7.2 Resource boxes will be created to support the direct teaching of the different 'Phase' groups. These contain phase specific graphemes and tricky words, as well as a range of tactile resources and interactive games, to ensure a VAK approach to the teaching of spellings. SS resources are also used.

8. Inclusion

Where pupils make limited progress in their confidence and ability to spell, intervention programmes are set up. A mix of teachers and TAs lead these intervention groups, depending on the needs of the whole year group.

9. The Learning Environment

9.1 Teachers should provide a rich and lively learning environment supported by well-chosen word resources and interactive displays to enhance pupils' confidence as independent spellers. Phonics resources should always be available to children when they are writing. For example – table top grapheme cards or phoneme frames.

9.2 In all classes from Reception, a Tricky Word Wall (for Phase 2 – 5 words) is displayed within each classroom. In addition to this, the graphemes from phases 2-5 are also displayed, along with any suffixes/prefixes or spelling rules that the children have been learning within SS. An emphasis is placed on exposing children to spelling rules and patterns, irrespective of their phonic or SS developmental stage. In all year groups throughout the school, topic words are also displayed and changed termly. Children are encouraged to take an 'active' part in helping to plan and create classroom displays.

10. Whole-School Consistent Approach/Building Confidence

Teachers and TAs are all responsible for creating a positive, independent ethos where children feel confident in their approach to spelling. An emphasis is placed on children applying their phonic or SS knowledge when carrying out any writing within the classroom.

Peer and self-marking is encouraged for spelling improvement.

11. The Role of Parents

At Etz Chaim Jewish Primary School we do not have weekly spelling tests. We believe that weekly spelling tests are not effective. For the children who find spelling difficult tests do not support them to use the spellings that they had learned in their writing. For the children who find spelling easy, there is often little or no indication of improvement in their spelling. Undue stress on parents to drill their children on spelling lists and unnecessary pressure on the children; as well as the expectation that every child is to read regularly and at times complete homework during the school week is another reason.

12. Teaching Spelling in School Together with Your Support from Home

In Key Stage 1, we will continue with our systematic approach to the teaching of spelling in school, but not in order to test the children on a weekly basis. We ask parents to support their children by working on any relevant spelling patterns or high frequency word lists when they are sent home at certain times throughout the school year. Parents are asked to continue to read regularly with their children, as the children who are encouraged to read and enjoy books on a regular basis will be increasing their spelling success each time that they open a book.