

**Spelling and Phonics Policy**

At Mersey Park Primary School, we aim for all children to achieve the highest possible standards of spelling. We want children to spell well and to achieve satisfaction from spelling well. Spelling is essential for communication and when children write for a purpose they become more aware of this need. The systematic teaching of phonics and spelling is fundamental. Phonics and spelling are taught as part of a planned programme, following the requirements of the new National Curriculum. In addition, handwriting sessions, guided reading and writing sessions afford many opportunities for talking about spelling and revisiting and practising strategies.

# **Aims**

* To provide all children with a solid phonics grounding on which to build
* To guide each child towards becoming an effective speller
* To encourage children to see learning to spell as an integral part of the developmental process of learning to write
* To encourage children to explore words and vocabulary
* To be able to apply spelling strategies

# **Teaching and Learning**

Here at Mersey Park Primary School, we follow the Letters and Sounds phonic programme which aims to build children's speaking and listening skills in their own right as well as to prepare children for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. We also use the Jolly Phonics scheme with its multi – sensory approach, to aid retention of new letters and sounds through actions and songs. High quality phonics work is taught systematically and daily throughout Foundation Stage and Year1. Guided reading books and home reading books are carefully chosen to match the phonic sounds being taught that week.

Children will be taught:

* The grapheme-phoneme correspondence in a clearly defined sequence.
* The skill of segmenting words into their phonemes to spell
* That blending and segmenting are reversible processes.

**Overview of Phonics Phases**

**Phase 1** - supports the development of speaking and listening. Phase 1 develops children’s abilities to listen to, make, explore and talk about sounds in the environment. This is generally taught through games, music and rhymes.

**Phase 2** - introduces children to 5 sets of sounds.

Set 1 – s a t p

Set 2 – i n m d

Set 3 – g o c k

Set 4 – ck e u r

Set 5 – h b f ff l ll s ss

Children are taught the process of segmenting and blending simple VC and CVC words and selecting letters to represent those phonemes taught. Children are taught to pronounce phonemes clearly and correctly to support correct reading and spelling of words. Teachers encourage children to form or identify letters in many different ways. Phonemes are introduced using games, pictures, sounds and actions, making it a multi-sensory learning approach.

**Phase 3** - continues in the same way as phase 2 and includes the teaching of the rest of the alphabet. It also teaches digraph sequences. Just one spelling is given at this stage for each phoneme.

Set 6 – j v w x

Set 7 – y z zz qu

Consonant digraphs – ch sh th ng

Vowel digraphs/ trigraphs – ai, ee, igh, oa, oo, ar, or, ur, ow, oi, ear, ure, er

**Phase 4** - supports children to blend and segment words with adjacent consonants e.g. truck, help. Children practice spelling words using a range of resources. No new phonemes are taught as it is important for children to start sounding out as they practice spelling.

**Phase 5** - looks at alternative spellings for some phonemes, including split diagraphs. Spelling is taught by the process of ‘best fit’, where the children are encouraged to ‘have a go’ with different spellings of particular phonemes. When applying these spellings, children are reminded to read their work back to decode and check that the word looks right and sounds right. Children are also taught that some graphemes can be pronounced in more than one way.

**Phase 6** - reinforces the learning from Phase 5 and enables children to explore spelling rules and conventions e.g. adding –ing and –ed. This phase covers the requirements from the new National Curriculum for spelling including words with prefixes and suffixes, singular and plural, doubling consonants and dropping letters where necessary. It also teaches the accurate spelling of words containing unusual GPC’s such as laughs, two.

The daily phonics sessions are very focused and they all follow the same structure, as outlined below:

* Revision of previous sounds (learned with actions).
* Introduction of new sound and action/ model letter formation
* Using sound button actions to read the sound in words.
* Dictated sentence-the children write a sentence dictated by the adult.
* Memory activity-this helps to improve the children’s memory especially when they are learning spellings.
* Alphabet chant from Phase 3 upwards

**High Frequency Words/ Tricky Words**

Children are taught to spell ‘tricky words’/ high frequency words from Foundation stage as part of their daily phonic lesson. These spellings are repeatedly taught and reinforced throughout the school for children who are still not secure in spelling them. They also form part of our Non -Negotiable spellings which are present in each year group to aid writing, develop basic skills and ensure that children are checking their own spelling.

**Practice**

Teachers recognise worthy attempts made by children to spell words, particularly with alternative spellings for particular sounds, but also correct them selectively and sensitively. Resources such as word banks, sound/ word mats, phoneme fans and phoneme frames to practice segmentation and blending are provided for children. Working walls and word walls are also used for spelling prompts and reminders.

**Phonics Test**

All children take the national phonics test in Year 1. For any children who do not reach the expected standard, they receive additional phonics teaching alongside their spelling work in Year 2. They are then retested in Year 2. If any child still fails to meet the expected standard by the end of Year 2, then they will continue to receive additional phonics teaching and reading interventions in Year 3 and beyond.

**Spelling**

From Year 2 and throughout Key Stage 2, teachers then follow the National Curriculum framework for spelling. These daily sessions are carefully structured and follow the same format.

* Revision of previous spelling pattern and handwriting practice
* Introduction of new spelling pattern with modelled handwriting
* Discussion of new spellings including their meanings
* Dictated sentence-the children write a sentence dictated by the adult.
* Alphabet chant/Memory activity/ fine motor skills as appropriate

We use the Spelling Shed resources to support our teaching and for home learning purposes. The children receive spelling homework every week and spelling prizes are awarded for effort and improvement. Common exception words are taught alongside spelling patterns.

As well as daily spelling lessons, the teaching of spelling is continuous. Opportunities are planned within guided reading, VIPERS lessons, shared reading, handwriting practice, Grammar Hammer and SPAG sessions to study, practice and improve spellings. Children are encouraged to use dictionaries, working walls, word walls and word banks to self-assess and check their own spelling within their written work.