

ALL SAINTS

ACADEMY TRUST

*A Parents' Guide to
Supporting Children's
Spelling*

Dear Parents,

After discussions at the Parent Consultation Group (PCG) meeting we have produced this guide to support parents working on spelling with your child. Staff hope you find it useful.

Learning to spell is a highly complex business. Some children learn to spell effortlessly – most get there in the end, but too many find the process of learning to spell arduous, painstaking and, sadly, uninspiring. The weekly spelling test may be great for those who can already spell, but for others it can make for a panicked event. As you are well aware most children get most spellings right on the day, but forget them when coming to use them in future work, others just feel the disappointment of getting them wrong. For these reasons, it is necessary to have an approach which meets the needs of all children and allows them to develop their skills at an appropriate rate, in order that they can happily spell common words accurately and develop a range of strategies to tackle more complex words with confidence.

Studies have shown that sending home a list of words to learn in preparation for a weekly test is not the most effective way for most children to learn and many children (although they may have performed well), have forgotten these words just a few hours after the test. Although we have not decided to abandon the tests, we have decided that we want to build in opportunities for over learning and recalling over time and we hope you can support your child with this approach.

We approach spelling, like any other area of the curriculum, aiming to engage and motivate pupils making it enjoyable and interesting. Children only really become good at spelling by practising over and over again and this is best done in fun ways. The “Linkalot” training offered last year had much to gain, with tricks and ideas that you can adapt for your own child and some are touched on in this pack.

There are distinct stages through which children progress in spelling and these will be outlined further on. Before finding out about these, please take time to read about how children learn to spell, the range of strategies for spelling and multi-sensory teaching and learning. These sections will help you understand how your child learns best and how to choose the most appropriate activities to help them. It is important to say however, that all children are different and progress at different rates and some will not display the characteristics described in the Key Stage descriptions in this document. If you are unsure at which stage your child is at, please ask the class teacher who will be happy to advise on appropriate words and activities.

Bridgette Gough
Headteacher



How do children remember spelling?

There are four main ways in which children process the spelling of words.

Visual

„Does it look right?'

Writer responds to the shapes of words and the patterns of the letter-strings within words.

Auditory

„Sound it out!'

Writer recognises the relationship between sounds and letters or groups of letters, and analyses words in these terms..



Kinesthetic

„Let the spelling come out of the end of your pencil!'

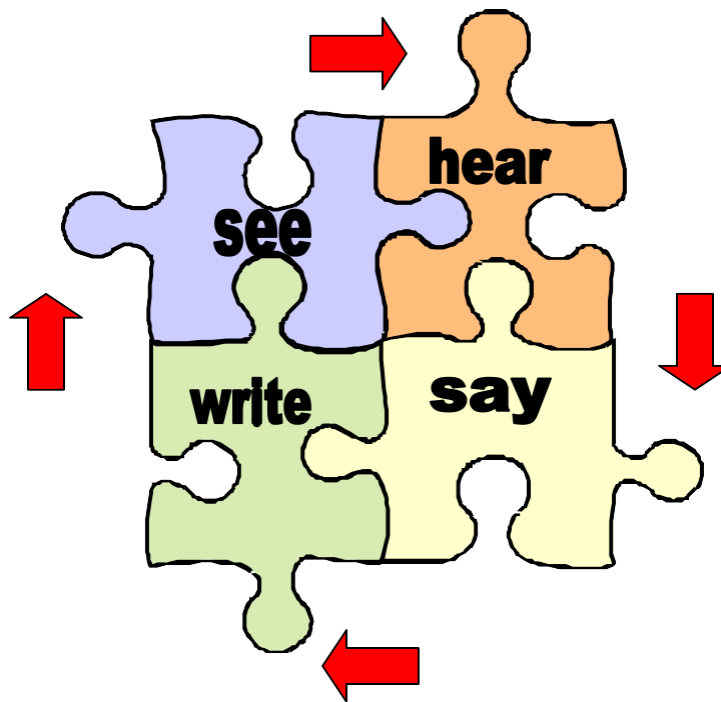
Spelling as a grapho-motor skill: writer is accustomed to making specific hand-movements to produce particular words or letter strings.

Linguistic

„Why is it spelt like that?'

Writer is aware of relationships between words or parts of words, based on meanings, syntax, derivations, etc.

Multi-Sensory Teaching and Learning



All children have a preferred learning style and by offering them activities which suit this, they can learn more quickly and effectively.

Visual –



By looking at the letter/word as it is said or written, a visual link is created to the manual, oral and auditory channels.

Auditory –



By listening to the phoneme/word as it is said and written, an aural link is created to the manual visual and oral channels.

Oral kinaesthetic –



By saying the letter/word as it is viewed or written, an oral link is created to the manual, visual and auditory channels.

Manual
kinaesthetic –
kinaesthetic –



By writing/creating/modelling/tracing the letter/word as it is viewed or spoken, a manual link is created to the oral, visual and auditory channels.

Learning Strategies for Spelling Sounding

out or 'Fred talking'

Eg. C-a-t, Sh-i-p.

This is the most popular method for teaching spelling. Ask the child to spell out or „segment' the word they want to spell, then write the constituent sounds. Children use pure sounds.

Syllabification

Clap out and say each of the syllables. Eg. Re–
mem-ber

Analogy

Making families of words

Eg. Night, fright, sight, slight

Root (the core word or origin)

E.g. bi (two) cycle (circle) = bicycle

Prefixes and suffixes

E.g. Dis-satisfied

Rules

E.g. „i' before „e' except after „c"

Word ending in Y such as fairy/fairies (consonant +y = ies)

Donkey/donkeys (vowel +y = ys)

Referring to the family words that articulate the ambiguous letters

E.g. Definite – finite, final, infinity

Muscle– muscular

Sounding out words as they are spelt

Eg. Wed-nes-day

Words within words

Eg. There is a rat in separate, When has got a hen in it and What has got a hat in it.

Mnemonics

Big Elephants Can Always Upset Small Elephants

Stages of Development

1. Exploring sounds, words and spelling

In **Reception** we introduce the children to the letter sounds and shapes and show them how these are linked together to create words. Children are encouraged to „have a go‘ at writing the words they want to say and they are praised highly for their efforts. Initially their writing is often unreadable to the adult eye (and may resemble “scribble,” although the child will know what he/she means. At this stage it is vital to value and praise their efforts and to resist correcting spelling or writing words for them to copy or write over the top of. The danger here is that children learn that only correctly spelt words are acceptable, become reliant on adult support and limit their writing to include only words that they know they can spell accurately. As children’s awareness of letter sounds increases, more recognisable words will appear in their writing. The following extracts from the Reception document, „Helping your child learn to write“, gives an overview of writing development including spelling.

Becoming a writer

In order to write, children need to develop various skills, including oral language skills, gross and fine motor skills and phonic skills. They also need to understand that writing is a form of communication and that what they write is for someone to read. They should therefore write for a purpose that is clear to them and stems from their own interests.

Oral Language skills

“If a child can’t say it, a child can’t write it”.

- Take everyday opportunities to develop your child’s imagination and vocabulary though talking about what you see, feel and experience together e.g. whilst walking through leaves in the park or splashing in the puddles.
- Read and re-tell stories together, talking about the pictures and the story, and explaining any new or unfamiliar words.
- Use puppets to retell stories, or become characters and act out the story.
- Sing songs and rhymes together.
- Engage with children in play and role play.
- Allow family time for talk e.g. dinner time.

Gross and fine motor skills

Children need to develop the muscles in their arms and fingers before they can hold a pencil to write. There are many fun activities that will help your child develop strength, dexterity and control:

- Painting (with big brushes and water for gross motor skills)
- Threading beads, laces
- Peg boards
- Finger rhymes
- Play dough
- Cutting
- Writing and doing big movements in the air e.g .with ribbons
- Squeezing sponge balls, stress balls or a small ball of paper
- Bat and ball games
- Pegging things onto a line.
- Using tweezers or sugar tongs to pick up beads, raisins or dried beans.
- Undoing and doing up buttons, poppers etc.
- Transferring small objects from one pot to an other.

Writing for a purpose

Help your child become aware of the writing that surrounds them e.g. signs in the environment, and ensure that children see you writing. Daily activities can all be a stimulus for writing:

- Shopping lists
- Invitations
- Cards
- Letters
- Notes
- Signs and messages
- Dates on a calendar

Emergent Writing

- Always praise attempts at writing, and respond positively to your child's mark making (even if it looks like what adults call "scribble").
- Show interest and ask them what they have written. Encourage them to point at the marks as they talk.
- As they begin to learn their letter sounds, encourage them to use their sounds in their writing.
- Do not correct their spellings, but celebrate their efforts.

Above all ensure that your children feel confident that, as writers, they always have your interest, admiration and support.

2. Growing confidence with writing and spelling

In **Key Stage 1** we encourage parents to help the children learn to spell a range of high frequency (most common) words and to use their knowledge of the sounds that letters make to help them with more tricky words. The expectation is that children will have learnt most of these 300 spellings by the end of Year 2. You can help by having fun helping your child choose two or three words at a time to learn. The following activities are suggestions for enjoyable and effective ways for children at this stage to practice spelling. Remember that writing words time and time again is often only successful in the short term and fun, meaningful activities are more likely to lead to correct spelling being stored in the long term memory.

There are no statutory lists for Key Stage 1 in the same way as Key Stage 2, however the high frequency words have been added to book diaries to come into line with the Key Stage 2 diaries. In addition the National Curriculum spelling requirements link is posted below for your information.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239784/English_Appendix_1_-_Spelling.pdf

Some ideas for activities to support this stage of development

Cloudy Words

Materials Word
List
Paper Glue
Cotton wool
Pencil



Choose a word from the list which your child is learning to read and write. Give an example of how the word is used in a sentence and support them to think of another example.

Write the word for your child and ask them to trace over the letters with a glue stick or a finger dipped in glue. Lay cotton wool over the glue until the entire word is covered. Ask your child to write a sentence on the paper and to draw a picture to go with their sentence.

You could do this with other words and make a „cloudy book‘. Sand may be sprinkled over the glue in place of cotton wool.

Pipe-cleaner Words

Materials Word
List Pipe cleaners
Paper/card Pencil

In advance write a few words on individual pieces of card or paper. Ask your child to listen carefully while you say a word. Challenge your child to use the pipe cleaners to form all of the letters they hear. Show your child the word card and support them to use their pipe cleaners to add or change the letters they need to spell the word correctly.

Water Words

Materials
Words on card or paper
Paintbrushes
Water

Write several words on separate pieces of card or paper. Ask your child to write a word two or three times on the patio or path. Repeat with a different word.
Challenge: - can they write a sentence that includes the word?

Goopy Words

Materials

Re-sealable plastic bags
Hairstyling gel or finger paint
Masking tape

Fill the re-sealable bag with gel or finger paint. Use masking tape to secure each bag to a table or other flat surface. Invite your child to choose a word from the Word List and use one finger to press the letters of their word into the gel or paint. Your child can erase their word by gently rubbing the bag with the palm of their hand until it is evenly distributed inside the bag.



Secret Words

Materials

Word List
Large sheet of paper
Pencil
Scissors

Write three words on a large piece of paper from the word list. Write out the same three words and cut them up. Lay them out in front of your child. Tell your child that one of the words is a „secret word“. Choose a word from the paper and say each one of the letters in random order. Support your child to find the letter. Can they rearrange them to find the „secret word“?

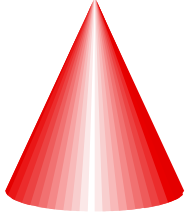
Snowman

Materials Paper
and pencil

Write a selection of words from the Word List on a large piece of paper. Choose one of the words. Write one or two letters of the word on another piece of paper, with blank lines for the remaining letters. Ask your child for a missing letter. Write it in if they are correct and if not, draw the head of the snowman.

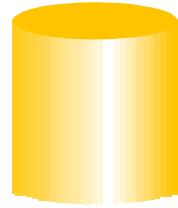
The object of the game is for the child to guess the word before you have completed the drawing of the snowman.





Shape Word

Materials
Paper Pencil
Scissors Word
List



In advance, write several words on paper and cut the words following the shape of each letter. Trace around the shapes and cut out a second set without the words. Practise saying the words with your child. Ask your child to match a word with its shape by writing the correct word in its shape.

Extra Extra

Materials
Word List
Paper Scissors
Glue

Magazines/newspapers

Write a selection of words from the Word List in random order on a piece of paper. Read the words to your child. Ask your child to find the word in the magazine, cut it out and glue it to the appropriate word. (Give your child one page from a magazine and check that the words they are searching for are on the page.)

Guess Who

Materials
Paper Pencil
Masking tape
Word List

Write some words on paper. Read the words with your child. Ask them to tape a word to your back. You have to ask a question e.g. does it begin with „th“? Can I sound it out? (green word)
Now your child takes a turn to answers your questions. Tape a word to their back.

Concentration

Material

Paper/card

Pencil Word

List

Make a set of matching word cards from the word list. Put them on the table face down. Turn two cards over at a time. If they match you or your child can keep them. The winner is the person with the greatest number of words.

Make sure your child can read the words they turn over.



3. Developing accuracy and a range of strategies for spelling

In **Key Stage 2** most children will be taught through the Oxford Owl Spelling Programme. The teachers use this programme to help them tailor spelling development to each child's individual needs. Children will have a set of ten words per unit of the programme covered, that they find tricky, to learn to spell in which ever way best suits them. You will find a record of these words in your child's spelling Log Book. Please encourage your child to practice spelling their words and then initial to show that you have seen this happening. Teachers check that the children are then using these correct spellings in their own writing. At this stage it is appropriate for teachers to point out when certain words are spelt incorrectly, but more importantly, that children recognise for themselves when they have made an error and know a range of strategies for correcting inaccuracies. By this stage children will have a range of spelling strategies that they will have been taught, to draw on. Children will use the strategy which best suits their learning style and works best for them.

Supporting children who find spelling particularly difficult





In a few cases, children have particular difficulties with reading and spelling. Your child's teacher will have told you if your child has these difficulties and it is most likely that there will be an Individual Education Plan in place which identifies specific, tailored activities that will best help your child learn to spell. You can help by supporting your child with these specific activities rather than the general ones (listed below.)

The statutory spelling word lists are in the front of your child's reading diary, we have selected these diaries this year for that very reason and hope you will make use of these example words to go back to frequently and use as a guide for learning individual words and spelling rules. In addition we have asked pupils to stick in created lists with spelling patterns.

Activities to support this stage of development.

<p><u>Spelling Rainbows</u></p> <p>Choose your 3 favourite crayons to rainbow write your spelling words. Write each word first in pencil in your literacy log. Then trace over each word three times. Each time you trace, you must use a different colour crayon.</p>	<p><u>Silly Sentences</u></p> <p>Write ten silly sentences using a spelling word in each sentence. Please underline your spelling words! Write your sentences neatly!</p> <p><u>Example</u> My dog <u>wears</u> a blue and purple dress when he takes a bath.</p>
<p><u>Backwards Words</u></p> <p>Write your spelling words forwards and then backwards.</p> <p><u>Example</u> where erehw Colour ruoloc</p>	<p><u>Pyramid Writing</u></p> <p>Pyramid write 10 of your spelling words. When you are finished, draw a pyramid around your word.</p> <p>Home h h o h o m h o m e</p>
<p><u>ABC Order</u></p> <p>Write your spelling words in alphabetical order. Be sure to look at the first letter of each word. If the first letter is the same, look at the second letter.</p>	<p><u>Spelling Paragraph</u></p> <p>Write a paragraph using ALL of your spelling words. Be sure to underline your spelling words in your paragraph.</p> <p>Don't forget a topic sentence and a concluding sentence.</p>
<p><u>Draw and Label</u></p> <p>Draw and label ten of your spelling words neatly. You MUST colour your drawings and labels.</p> <p>Don't forget to add a lot of great detail. Do your very best work!</p>	<p><u>Squiggly Spelling Words</u></p> <p>Choose ten spelling words.</p> <p>You are going to write them two times. Write them first in squiggly letters. Then write them once more in regular letters.</p>

<p><u>Blue Vowels</u></p> <p>Write EACH of your spelling words out neatly.</p> <p>You will need a BLUE coloured pencil. Trace over ALL the vowels in each word with your blue coloured pencil. Vowels= A E I O U</p>	<p><u>Bubble Letters</u></p> <p>Write six of your spelling words in bubble letters neatly. After you write your words in bubble letters, colour your words with a crayon or coloured pencil.</p> <p>Bubble Letters Rock!</p>
<p><u>Acrostic Poem</u></p> <p>Choose ONE of your spelling words. Write an acrostic poem for that word. You must also ILLUSTRATE your poem.</p> <p>Example Fun in the sun Fly Laps around clouds Yes! I'm free!</p>	<p><u>Adding My Words</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose ten spelling words. 2. Add up each spelling word. 3. Write them neatly. <p>*Consonants are worth 10. *Vowels are worth 5.</p> <p>Example Said = 10+5+5+5+10=30 There = 10+10+5+5+10+5=40</p>
<p><u>Spelling Shapes</u></p> <p>Write each of your spelling words neatly. Then go back and draw a circle around consonants and draw a square around the vowels.</p>	<p><u>Spelling Riddles</u></p> <p>Choose 5 spelling words and write riddles for these words. Don't forget to add the answer to your riddle.</p> <p>Example I cry when I am hungry. I am cute and cuddly. I wear nappies. What am I? *Answer- Baby</p>
<p><u>Rhyming Words</u></p> <p>Choose eight of your spelling words.</p> <p>First write each spelling neatly. Think of a rhyming word for each spelling word. Write the new rhyming word next to your spelling word.</p> <p>*Example: Cries Tries</p>	<p><u>Spelling Sort</u></p> <p>Think of a way to sort your spelling words. Write your word sort neatly. You may want to sort your words by: syllables, beginning sounds, part of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives, other), vowel sounds</p> <p>The possibilities are endless! Have fun!</p>

<p>Spelling Code Think of a code for each letter of the alphabet. Write the code neatly. Example: A=  B=  C= </p> <p>Then write as many of your spelling words as you can in your code. You must write the actual spelling word next to the “code word.”</p>	<p>Upper and Lower First write your spelling words neatly. Then rewrite each word, but this time write the vowels in lowercase and the consonants in uppercase.</p> <p>Example lower LoWeR</p>
<p>Across and Down</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose ten spelling words. 2. Write each word neatly across and down, sharing the beginning letter. <p>Example when h e n</p>	<p>Fancy Letters Write each of your spelling words neatly using fancy letters. Your letters can have curly-q"s or dots, for example. Have fun and be creative!</p> 
<p>Spelling Shapes</p> <p>Count your spelling words. If you have 15 words, draw 15 different shapes. Then write your spelling words neatly inside each of the different shapes.</p>	<p>Silly Spelling Story</p> <p>Write a silly spelling story using each of your spelling words. Be sure to underline your words as you use them.</p> <p>If you have time, you can illustrate and colour your silly picture to go along with your silly story!</p>
<p>Spelling Scramble</p> <p>Write your spelling words with the letters scrambled up. Then, unscramble the letters and write the word correctly next to the scrambled word.</p> <p>Example iabsbe= babies</p>	<p>Three times</p> <p>Write each of your spelling words out really neatly three times.</p>

<p>Create an Activity</p> <p>Can you think of a fun activity to do with your spelling words? Be sure to give your activity a special name!</p>	<p>Syllables Spelling</p> <p>Classify your spelling words accordingly to syllables. Clap each spelling word quietly to yourself to see how many syllables you hear. Write a chart like the one below.</p> <p><u>1 syllable</u> <u>2 syllables</u> <u>3 syllables</u> cat</p> <p>brother elastic</p> <p>ball friendly correctly</p>
<p>Parts of Speech</p> <p>Sort your spelling words according to their part of speech:</p> <p>Noun, adjective, verb, other</p> <p>Make a chart like the one below.</p> <p>Noun adjective verb other</p> <p>Apple red eat</p>	<p>Connect the Dots</p> <p>Write ten of your spelling words in dots. Then connect the dots by tracing over them with a coloured pencil.</p>
<p>Playdough Spelling</p> <p>Roll a small amount of play dough into a ball. Turn your ball of play dough into a play dough pancake. Take a toothpick and carefully write a spelling word in the play dough. With your finger, smooth out the word and start over with another spelling word. Write all of your spelling words in this way.</p>	<p>Spelling Scrabble</p> <p>Spell each of your words with scrabble tiles. Then add up the point value using the numbers on each tile. Write the words in order according to their point value from greatest to least.</p>
<p>Spelling Picture</p> <p>Choose ten of your spellings. Draw a picture incorporating all of your spellings somehow into the picture. Ask someone else to guess your spelling words by looking at your picture. As they are looking, try and spell their guesses!</p>	<p>Dot, Dash and Count</p> <p>Sound out each one of your spellings, how many sounds are in each word?</p>

Glossary

Consonant – any letter of the alphabet which is not a vowel.

Digraph – Two letters which together make one unit of sound, e.g. sh. th, ee, oa.

Grapheme – The written representation of letters which represent the sounds.

Homophone – a word which sounds the same as another word but is spelt differently and has a different meaning, e.g. hear and here

Phonetics – system of spelling words by representing sounds with syllables

Phoneme – the smallest unit of sound in a word, e.g. c/a/t, sh/o/p, t/ea/ch/er.

Prefix – small addition to a word made by joining on one or more letters at the beginning, e.g. pre, anti

Plural – a plural word refers to more than one thing, e.g. books

Segmenting – means hearing the individual phonemes within a word
– for instance the word „crash' consists of four phonemes: „c-r-a-sh'. In order to spell this word, a child must segment it into its component phonemes and choose a grapheme to represent each phoneme.

Singular – the name referring to one thing or a group of things, e.g. man, book, flock

Split digraph – two letters, which work as a pair, split, to represent one sound, e.g. a-e as in cake, or i-e as in kite

Suffix – a letter or group of letters added to the end of a word to change the way you use it, e.g. coward – cowardly

Syllable – a combination of one or more vowels and consonants which can make one short word or part of a longer word, e.g. won-der-ful

Trigraph – three letters which together make one sound but cannot be separated into smaller phonemes, e.g. igh as in light, ear as in fear and tch as in watch

Vowel – there are 5 vowels in the alphabet - aeiou