

Dunmow St Mary's Primary School



*Policy for Spelling  
and Grammar*

2016

(revised February 2018)

*Following the introduction of the new National Curriculum requirements in 2014 and the introduction of new tests in Key Stages 1 and 2 this policy was developed as part of the school's whole school development target of improving writing standards and of general presentation in written work. A 'Spelling and Grammar Team' of parents, teachers and governors and led by the Assistant Headteacher was set up to be introduced to new ideas, to discuss them and to raise awareness of the opinions of the various groups of stakeholders in the school.*

*Further revisions, following changes to the Assessment and Feedback policy and general classroom requirements, were made in February 2018.*

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# Part 1: Spelling

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## Teaching Spelling

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It is vitally important that the children at Dunmow St Mary's spell as accurately and as fluently as possible. There are three main strands to spelling teaching:

- Learning and applying the spelling of High Frequency Words (HF Words)
- Learning the sounds and spelling patterns of collections of words (e.g. 'ck' 'qu', 'ch'/'tch', 'igh', 'cian'/'tion'/'sion', 'shion')
- Learning how to be as accurate as possible with 'unknown' words.

It was agreed that in all classes (from Year R to Year 6):

- Explicit session(s) of spelling need to happen each week
- Phonic spelling, spelling patterns (KS1) and rules (KS2) will be taught
- Children will group and learn words according to spelling strings and rules

Each phase of the school then defined an approach which would best suit the teachers and children of each phase:

### Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

<b>How often?</b>	<i>Letters and Sounds session daily. 10 minute revision of spelling in the afternoon/morning as a 'daily starter' (e.g. a register activity)</i>
<b>Differentiation</b>	<i>All children to learn year group spelling strategies and year group spelling lists (from National Curriculum) A very few children who struggle with spelling to learn specific spellings from previous year group targets</i>
<b>Typical content of a spelling session</b>	<i>Blending and segmenting Building sight vocabulary and High Frequency spellings Using words in context Teach phonics (e.g. er, ir, ur) Begin to teach strategies (e.g. by writing out the mis-spelling and correct spelling of bird/burd/berd etc)</i>
<b>Use a book to record spelling work?</b>	<i>No. Spelling tests in homework books or designated Spelling/Grammar books</i>

### Keystage 2

<b>How often?</b>	<i>Explicit session of spelling teaching each week, such as a daily short activity (e.g. morning starter)</i>
<b>Differentiation</b>	<i>All children to learn year group spelling strategies and year group spelling lists (from National Curriculum) A very few children who struggle with spelling to learn specific spellings from previous year group targets</i>

<b>Typical content of spelling sessions</b>	<i>Introduce the rule/pattern Practise the rule / pattern with words that fit/or don't Apply the rule / pattern</i>
<b>Use a book to record spelling work?</b>	<i>Yes. Spelling tests in homework books or in designated spelling/grammar books</i>

During INSET work, staff discussed and evaluated the range of strategies which competent spellers may use to help them approach the spelling of an unknown word. These included:

- *Overlearning strategies (repetition)*
- *Knowing the word itself*
- *Knowing what the word means*
- *Clear pronunciation*
- *Rehearse the spelling of the word (e.g. "I know it starts..., I sounds like..., the end must be...")*
- *Link the word to others known*
- *Knowing homonyms*
- *Be systematic*
- *Does it look right?*
- *Use dictionaries*
- *How many syllables/ letters might this have?*

Effective teaching of spelling will incorporate a range of strategies and not expect the children to rely on one. The staff also identified that emphasising some of the following strategies would support the quality teaching of spelling:

- Put the word into a sentence
- Know the root word
- Know the place of origin
- Link the word to the sounds it contains
- Repeat the word and spelling regularly
- Saying the word out loud and in your head

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## **Progression in spelling**

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Following Staff training, and in accordance with the requirements of the new National Curriculum 2014, we have agreed that in all Key Stage 1 and 2 classes, teachers will:

- make a very strong emphasis on the correct spelling of HF words in their spelling sessions AND in everyday writing.
- use the Letters and Sounds Phases to guide the correct spelling of words ALONGSIDE the teaching of reading these sounds and words. It should be emphasized that the spelling requirements of the new National Curriculum should be adhered to alongside the Letters and Sounds Phases, so best to ensure continuity and consistency. The requirements for Years 1 and 2 are attached.
- Use the 2014 National Curriculum requirements to guide the spelling rules and patterns teaching. In addition to this, all year groups will need to learn the Spelling lists (Y1/2, Y3/4, Y5/6) at their age level.

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## ***Spelling homework***

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Spellings are set weekly for the children to learn. Here is an example of how this might appear in a weekly homework sheet. This example is from Year 6:

Spelling pattern of the week:  -able -ably -ible -ibly	visible / visibly
	invisible / invisibly
	comfortable / comfortably
	inflatable
	probable / probably
	terrible / terribly
	horrible / horribly
	laughable
	adjustable
incredible	
Spelling list words to learn	amateur
	ancient
	apparent
	appreciate
	attached

Spelling homework covers both spelling patterns (here 'able/ible suffixes) and words from the Spelling List for that Year group.

Children who struggle with spellings will have individual spelling lists referring to One-Plan targets.

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## ***Spelling tests***

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The weekly spelling checks are administered as a class after the homework set in the previous week is completed. There may be some other words which use the pattern but were not on the list to be learned. Spellings from previous weeks are also tested and revised.

There are also formal spelling test in Year 2 and in Year 6, where words and spelling patterns taught up to and including that Year groups own spelling coverage will be tested.

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## ***Spelling in everyday writing***

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To raise the profile of the importance of good spelling, it has been agreed that in pieces of written work completed by a child, the teacher should, where appropriate, mark or correct spellings accordingly.

Word banks for tricky contextual words and Word Mats for the National Curriculum Spelling Lists will be available and displayed to encourage correct spellings.

Children are encouraged always to use their known spellings, age-appropriate spelling patterns and phonic skills to attempt words they wish to write. Teachers should use their professional judgement in identifying spellings that individual children should have spelled correctly.

Children are not expected to copy out incorrect spellings several times. However, they are encouraged to copy correctly from the board/books, use the resources and spelling lists to help them, be taught to identify sight vocabulary and spot when a word looks wrong and to use dictionaries to self-correct. Once a spelling has been taught, or a spelling rule, children are expected to spell these words correctly across all writing. More ambitious vocabulary in the year group does not need to be corrected unless it is a specific topic word or mathematical vocabulary.

Throughout the junior classes the children are encouraged to develop their independence in proof-reading their work; this includes spelling and punctuation. Where appropriate, teachers should identify **particular spellings (and mark sp. in the margin)**.

Examples of when this correction might be appropriate include:

- A common word, usually spelled correctly, has been incorrectly spelled.
- 'sloppy' spelling, where a word given on the board or on a word bank has not been looked at properly to ensure correct spelling

As part of the child's editing and proofreading work, following the teacher's marking, the child should look at these spelling improvements. It was agreed by parents and teachers that it would be unnecessary and demoralizing for children to have many spellings corrected in each piece of writing. Therefore a sensitive amount of spellings should be identified in each piece.

# Part 2: Grammar

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## Progression in grammar and punctuation

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We have adapted a suggested structure of grammar teaching for our own use so that each year-group builds and extends the work they have covered in previous years.

It should be noted that the following progression of skills is a suggested structure which should be used as guidelines for each year group's coverage.

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## Progression in skills

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(E) = Extra objective not in National Curriculum

Year R children will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Write simple sentences</li><li>• Sometimes use full stops and capitals</li></ul>
In addition, Year 1 children will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Leave spaces between words</li><li>• Use full stops and capitals</li><li>• Join sentences and clauses with 'and'</li><li>• Use question marks</li><li>• Use exclamation marks</li><li>• Use capital letters for people, places, days of the week and 'I'</li><li>• Identify and know the purpose of nouns (E)</li></ul>
In addition, Year 2 children will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Know and identify verbs</li><li>• Use interesting verbs when writing (E)</li><li>• Know and identify nouns</li><li>• Know and identify adjectives</li><li>• Write extended noun phrases</li><li>• Use commas for lists</li><li>• Know what an apostrophe is</li><li>• Use apostrophes for simple contracted forms</li><li>• Use apostrophes to show singular possession e.g. Sid's book</li><li>• Recognise and write statements</li><li>• Recognise and write questions</li><li>• Recognise and write exclamations</li><li>• Recognise and write commands</li><li>• Join sentences with 'or' and 'but'</li><li>• Use 'when', 'if', 'that' and 'because' to extend sentences</li><li>• Write consistently in 'past' or 'present' tense</li><li>• Use the continuous form of verbs (-ing) to write about actions</li></ul>

	<p>in progress e.g. He was thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use some features of basic written Standard English</li> </ul>
In addition, Year 3 children will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know what a pronoun is</li> <li>• Know what a personal pronoun is e.g. I, me, we, us, you, he, she, it, him, her, they, them (E)</li> <li>• Know what a conjunction is</li> <li>• Use causal and time conjunctions e.g. when, so, before, after, while, because</li> <li>• Know what adverbs are</li> <li>• Use adverbs as connectives to express time and cause e.g. then, next, soon, therefore</li> <li>• Know what prepositions are</li> <li>• Use prepositions to express time and cause e.g. before, after, during</li> <li>• Use 'have' or 'has' before a verb to create the 'perfect form' e.g. Fred has walked to school</li> <li>• To know and recognise direct speech and inverted commas</li> <li>• Start to use inverted commas</li> <li>• Know what simple and compound sentences are (E)</li> </ul>
In addition, Year 4 children will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know what a possessive pronoun is e.g. my, mine, our, ours, its, his, her, hers, their, theirs, your, yours, whose, and one's</li> <li>• Use pronouns and nouns appropriately (for clarity and cohesion)</li> <li>• Use connectives for cohesion across a text</li> <li>• Use adverbs to express frequency e.g. often and manner e.g. loudly</li> <li>• Know and recognise adverbial phrases and clauses</li> <li>• Use fronted adverbials</li> <li>• Know some differences between standard and non-standard English</li> <li>• Use commas to mark off fronted adverbials</li> <li>• Know what a clause is</li> <li>• Know what a subordinate clause is</li> <li>• Know what a complex sentence is (E)</li> <li>• Write complex sentences (E)</li> <li>• Use commas for marking off subordinate clauses</li> <li>• Use inverted commas appropriately</li> <li>• Use apostrophes to show plural possession e.g. The boys' house</li> </ul>
In addition, Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know what determiners are</li> </ul>

<p>children will</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know what a relative pronoun is e.g. which, that, who (whom, whose), when, where</li> <li>• Use relative pronouns appropriately</li> <li>• Combine simple, compound and complex sentences successfully in a text (E)</li> <li>• Know what a relative clause is e.g. beginning with who, which, where, why, whose</li> <li>• Use relative clauses to expand sentences</li> <li>• Know what a modal verb is e.g. might, should, could, would, can, may, must, shall, will</li> <li>• Know what a modal adverb is e.g. perhaps, surely, obviously</li> <li>• Use modal verbs and adverbs to indicate degrees of possibility e.g. must, perhaps</li> <li>• Ensure correct subject verb agreement</li> <li>• Use connectives for cohesion within a paragraph</li> <li>• Use adverbs and adverbials as connectives to show time (e.g. after five minutes), place (e.g. nearby) and number (e.g. secondly) across a text</li> <li>• Know what parenthesis is</li> <li>• Recognise and identify brackets and dashes</li> <li>• Use brackets, dashes or commas for parenthesis</li> <li>• Use commas to avoid ambiguity or clarify meaning</li> </ul>
<p>In addition, Year 6 children will</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the basic grammatical structure of subject, object and verb</li> <li>• Know and recognise active and passive voice</li> <li>• Use passive voice in writing</li> <li>• Use more extended noun phrases to convey information concisely e.g. the colourful comic strip on the back page</li> <li>• Recognise and understand 'the subjunctive' e.g. If Fred <b>were</b> here, things would be different</li> <li>• Use grammar to show formality or informality</li> <li>• Use grammar to manipulate the reader (E)</li> <li>• Know how colons are used</li> <li>• Use colons appropriately</li> <li>• Know how semi-colons are used</li> <li>• Use semi-colons appropriately</li> <li>• Know how hyphens are used</li> <li>• Use hyphens appropriately</li> <li>• Know how ellipsis is used (omission of predictable words and phrase as well as ...)</li> <li>• Use ellipsis appropriately</li> <li>• Use a range of devices for cohesion across a text e.g. repetition,</li> </ul>

	adverbials, connectives, ellipsis etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know how to use punctuation with bullet points</li> <li>• Use punctuation consistently with bullet points</li> </ul>
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### ***Testing of grammar***

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Grammar is tested formally throughout Years 2 to 6. It is important that all teachers become familiar with the way the questions are phrased so that when teaching and practising grammar exercises, the children are sure about how to answer questions such as this:

*Put a tick in the correct box to show the function of the apostrophe in these words.*

	Possession	Contraction
Those are Ben's pens		
Aren't you coming?		
Why don't you hurry?		
The cat's sitting on the mat		

Many of the skills of answering test questions fluently and accurately are covered as part of the revision element of the curriculum in Years 2 and 6, though other children can still be exposed to these formats of questions. The tests are timed and - with a substantial number of questions to answer - it is important that children become very confident at knowing and understanding the terminology associated with Grammar exercises.

In addition, it is vital that children are taught grammar and punctuation in an as varied and stimulating 'real' context as possible.

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### ***Teaching of grammar***

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Good grammar is central to good quality writing. Children should be taught to express their ideas in as clear and direct a way as possible and so the explicit teaching of grammar should work alongside a rich and stimulating English writing curriculum.

The above progression of skills is a key set of skills which the children can learn about separately in explicit Grammar Teaching sessions, though they should also work on these skills embedding them in their general writing and exploring the ways in which they enhance the quality of their expression. It is recommended that explicit grammar teaching happens in every classroom in the school. This may be done in one of two ways or, more likely, a combination of the two.

**Short sessions (10-15 minutes)**

*Children will learn and practise a given skill in a short 20 minute 'burst' of grammar work. If this is chosen, then two or three of these sessions may be apparent in the timetable for a class each week.*

**Grammar lesson as one of the five English sessions (50 - 60 minutes)**

*Children will learn and practise a given skill in an English lesson. It is important that pace and coverage of learning is effective if a longer session is to be preferred so that the children's learning is equally comprehensive.*

It has been seen that daily 15 minute slots of Letters and Sounds and Speedy Maths in our school produce good results. It would therefore may be more effective to have shorter periods on Grammar and to use the longer session to apply the skills in writing or reading work in English. However, each individual teacher may decide on the best approach for their own class.