



Spelling Handbook

At Lulworth and Winfrith Primary School, we believe that spelling is a vital component of literacy that empowers children to communicate effectively and confidently. Our approach is designed to foster deep understanding of spelling patterns, being taught systematically and revisited regularly, so that pupils develop a secure understanding of rules, and strategies, rather than relying on rote memorisation.

We believe that spelling should be our approach equips pupils to make informed spelling choices and apply their knowledge in context across the curriculum.

Curriculum Intent

1. Pattern-Based Learning

- We teach spelling through **recognisable patterns**, helping children make connections between words.
- Focus on **phonics, morphology, and etymology** ensures children understand *why* words are spelled a certain way.
- Regular exposure to **word families** and **common rules** builds automaticity and confidence.

2. Cognitive Load Reduction

- Spelling instruction is **sequenced carefully** to avoid overwhelming learners.
- We use **spaced repetition, visual aids, and multisensory techniques** to support memory retention.
- New content is introduced in **manageable chunks**, with frequent opportunities for consolidation.

3. Consistency and Progression

- A whole-school approach ensures **continuity from EYFS to Year 6**.
- Supersonic Phonic Friends provides a **structured framework** that aligns phonics and spelling development.
- Children revisit and build upon prior knowledge, reinforcing learning and reducing the need to relearn.

4. Application and Purpose

- Spelling is taught in context, linked to **reading and writing tasks** across the curriculum.
- Children are encouraged to **apply spelling strategies** in independent writing.
- Editing and proofreading are embedded to promote **metacognitive awareness**.

Spelling Progression

EYFS and Key Stage 1 Overview

In EYFS and Key Stage 1 we use the Supersonic Phonic Friends scheme, which is a fully systematic synthetic phonics programme that spans from Firm Foundations in Phonics through to spelling rules in Key Stage 1, ensuring consistency, engagement, and progression in phonics and spelling instruction in the early stages for primary school.

EYFS (Nursery & Reception)

Firm Foundations in Phonics 1 (Nursery)

- Focus: **Sound awareness and auditory processing**
- Activities: Environmental sounds, body percussion, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, oral blending and segmenting
- No flashcards—learning is **play-based and multisensory**

The Basics 2 (Reception)

- Teaches at least **18 of the 44 sounds** of English
- Children learn:
 - One spelling per sound
 - To read and write simple **CVC words**
 - To decode texts using these spellings

The Basics 3 (Reception)

- Introduces the remaining **26 sounds**
- Includes:
 - Digraphs and trigraphs
 - Early exposure to **alternative spellings**
 - Introduction to **alternative pronunciations**

The Basics 4 (Reception/Year 1)

- Focuses on **adjacent consonants** and longer words (e.g., stamp, plug)
 - Children learn to hear and spell words with **4–6 sounds**
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Key Stage 1 (Year 1 & Year 2)

The Higher Levels – Choose to Use Spellings (Year 1)

- Teaches that **multiple spellings** can represent the same sound
- Covers up to **85 spellings** for the 44 phonemes
- Children learn to make informed spelling choices

The Higher Levels – Switch it Spell Sounds (Year 1)

- Focuses on **alternative pronunciations** of graphemes
- Helps children understand that one spelling can make **different sounds**

Suze's Super Spelling Rules (Year 2)

- Introduces **formal spelling rules** and grammar
- Children consolidate phonemic spelling and begin to spell **irregular and exception words**
- Emphasis on fluency and accuracy in writing

Key Stage 2 Overview

Our Key Stage 2 spelling curriculum aims to develop confident, independent spellers through a structured, pattern-based approach. Using the **Spelling Shed scheme**, we ensure progression, consistency, and cognitive accessibility across Years 3 to 6.

1. Pattern Recognition and Rule-Based Learning

- Spelling Shed introduces spelling through **weekly rule-based lists**, focusing on:
 - Common suffixes and prefixes
 - Homophones and contractions
 - Morphological patterns (e.g. -tion, -sion, -ous)
 - Etymological roots (Latin, Greek, Anglo-Saxon)
- This approach helps children **internalise patterns**, reducing the need for rote memorisation.

2. Cognitive Load Reduction

- Lessons are **sequenced progressively**, revisiting and building on prior knowledge.
- Weekly focus on a **single spelling rule or pattern** avoids overload.
- Interactive games and visual scaffolds support **orthographic mapping** and memory retention.
- Differentiated lists and activities allow learners to work at their **cognitive readiness level**.

3. Multisensory and Retrieval-Based Learning

- Spelling Shed incorporates:
 - **Visual cues** (colour-coded graphemes)
 - **Auditory reinforcement** (spoken word practice)
 - **Kinesthetic activities** (writing, sorting, building words)
- Regular **low-stakes quizzes** and **retrieval practice** strengthen long-term retention.

4. Application Across the Curriculum

- Spelling is embedded in writing tasks across subjects.
 - Children are encouraged to **apply spelling rules** in context, not just in isolation.
 - Editing and proofreading strategies are taught to promote **metacognitive awareness**.
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Year-by-Year Progression Highlights (Spelling Shed)

- **Year 3:** Focus on suffixes (-ly, -ful, -less), homophones, and basic prefixes (un-, dis-, re-)
- **Year 4:** Introduction to more complex patterns (-tion, -sion, -ous), silent letters, and word families
- **Year 5:** Emphasis on etymology, advanced prefixes/suffixes, and statutory word lists
- **Year 6:** Consolidation of all rules, mastery of exceptions, and preparation for KS2 SATs spelling paper

Agreed Script

Whole-School Approach

Four dedicated spelling sessions are taught per week, with direct instruction based on the year group's rule. Pupils also practise their personalised level list from Spelling Shed throughout the week through home learning tasks and intervention sessions.

Explicit Teaching

All spelling instruction includes:

- Direct modelling of the rule or pattern
- Segmenting and syllabification
- Morphological analysis (prefixes, suffixes, roots)
- Etymology when appropriate
- Identification of tricky parts and strategies
- Pupils are encouraged to actively manipulate and explore words, spot patterns, and apply taught strategies independently.

Consistent Language and Strategies

Shared terminology is used across the school to ensure clarity and reinforce conceptual understanding: phoneme, grapheme, GPC, segmenting, syllable, tricky part, morphology, etc.

Pupils are consistently taught to:

- Say the word aloud
- Break it into syllables or phonemes
- Map it using GPCs and morphology
- Identify and memorise tricky or unusual parts
- Revisit, self-assess, and reflect

Posters are displayed in each classroom as a visual aid for spelling independently.

Weekly Structure

A **dedicated 4 lessons** is given to the teaching and learning of spellings. Spelling lessons are short (10-20 minutes) and follow a consistent weekly structure:

Lesson 1: Recap the previous week's rule and introduce the pattern or rule for the new week, ensure all pupils understand the meaning of new words, hear the words' pronunciation and support with images where necessary.

Lesson 2: To identify the syllables (clapping) and the phonemes, and investigate the rule

Lesson 3: use the word in context (oral or written) and making links.

Lesson 4: A low-stakes assessment or quiz, (hear the word in context, write the word in isolation).

While much of the in-class practice is done on whiteboards or in the children's spelling books, the focus is on rapid, responsive teaching and immediate feedback. Each pupil has a spelling book for in class work and also a home book used for home learning and consolidating the weekly rule alongside ability-level words where necessary. Home learning tasks serve as a bridge between school and home to help support parents and children in their learning of spelling patterns and rules.

Assessment

EFYS and Key Stage 1

- **Observation-based assessment** during play and phonics sessions.
- Weekly **spelling and reading checks** linked to taught patterns.
- Formal spelling assessments aligned with **statutory requirements**

Key Stage 2

- Weekly spelling tests and formative assessments guide planning and intervention.
- Children demonstrate improved spelling fluency, writing accuracy, and confidence across wider curriculum.
- Formal spelling assessments aligned with **statutory requirements**

Provision and Inclusion

To support these learners effectively, we ensure that teaching is adapted and scaffolded to meet individual needs. Pupils may receive pre-teaching of new spelling patterns to help them access whole-class lessons with greater confidence. Visual aids, manipulatives, and multisensory resources such as phoneme mats, word cards, and magnetic letters are used to reinforce key concepts. Where appropriate, learners are also supported by adults during independent application tasks, receiving prompts or reminders to help them apply spelling strategies and self-correct their work.

Additional tools such as iPads, spelling checkers, word mats or personalised vocabulary lists are made available to ensure that pupils can participate fully and independently. Teachers monitor the progress of these pupils closely, adapting support in response to ongoing formative assessment. For some pupils, provision may be formally recorded on their provision maps with spelling-specific strategies and outcomes identified.

Pedagogy

Key Pedagogical Strategies

Say It, Hear It, See It, Write It

Begin with oral rehearsal (Supersonic Phonic Friends), then link sounds to graphemes visually and kinaesthetically.

Chunking and Segmenting

Teach children to break words into syllables and phonemes, supporting decoding and encoding.

Mapping Sounds to Letters

Use Supersonic Phonic Friends characters and stories to reinforce GPCs, then apply these in Spelling Shed activities.

Focus on Tricky Parts

Highlight irregular spellings and common exceptions explicitly.

Spaced Retrieval and Interleaving

Spelling Shed's games and weekly lists provide opportunities for revisiting and consolidating learning.

Progression

- **Early Years & KS1:**

Emphasis on phonics through Supersonic Phonic Friends—oral blending, segmenting, and secure GPC knowledge.

- **KS2:**

Transition to Spelling Shed for rule-based spelling, morphology, and etymology, while continuing to reinforce phonics for less common patterns.

Home Learning

Weekly Spelling Lists

Each week, your child will receive a spelling list with an explicit focus based on the current phonics phase or spelling rule taught in class.

Homework sheets incorporate a variety of interactive games and stimulating challenges designed to actively engage children in practising spelling through multiple approaches, rather than relying solely on rote memorisation of word lists.

Online Practice

Spelling Shed provides interactive games and activities that reinforce spelling patterns and rules. Children log in using their school-provided username and password.

Levels of Challenge

Each game offers multiple difficulty levels, allowing children to start with simple tasks and progress to more complex challenges.

Key Definitions

- Spelling – The process of encoding spoken sounds into written letters, patterns, or combinations that represent words accurately.
- Grapheme–Phoneme Correspondence (GPC) – The relationship between spoken sounds (phonemes) and the written letters or groups of letters (graphemes) used to represent them.
- Phoneme – The smallest unit of sound in a word.
- Grapheme – A letter or group of letters that represents a sound.
- Segmenting – The process of breaking spoken words into individual phonemes to support spelling.
- Encoding – The process of converting spoken language into written form (i.e. spelling).
- Morphology – The study of the structure of words, including root words, prefixes, and suffixes, and how these elements combine to create meaning.
- Etymology – The study of the origins and historical development of words.
- Transcription – The process of writing words accurately, including correct spelling and handwriting.
- Automaticity – The ability to apply spelling knowledge quickly and accurately without conscious thought, freeing cognitive load for composition.