



Staplehurst School

Spelling Policy

Learning & Development Committee notified of Headteacher's ratification of policy

March 2026

Policy to be next reviewed

March 2029

Context

“The overarching aim for English in the National Curriculum is to promote high standards of literacy equipping pupils with a strong command of the written and spoken word.”

The National Curriculum in England, July 2013

Within The National Curriculum, English is broken down into four key areas:

- Spoken Language
- Reading
- Writing (which includes Transcription – spelling and handwriting)
- Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation

“Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters(phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography(spelling structure) of words.”

The National Curriculum in England, July 2013

Overview

“Children’s learning to spell is closely related to their understandings of how spoken language is written down”

Understanding Spelling, O’Sullivan & Thomas (2007)

In order to support the development of children’s spelling in school, children are taught clear and consistent strategies to spell new words by identifying the syllables and the letters which represent sounds.

When teaching spelling, we refer to the Read Write Inc (RWInc) programme in Early Years and Key Stage 1. As children move into Key Stage 2, pupils are taught spelling lessons during 3 sessions a week following a systematic scheme that covers the national curriculum spelling objectives for each year group. Following on from phonics teaching in EYFS and KS1, children continue in KS2 to learn how to spell new words by the route of decoding; phonemes (sounds) in words and the graphemes (letters) which represent them.

We also teach children to use their knowledge of the origins of words or parts of words to help make links in their learning. Through this approach, children build their knowledge of words using phonics, etymology and morphology. Our aim is to ensure that all children are well equipped to tackle spelling new words they encounter within writing at school and beyond. Children are also taught the structural and semantics aspects of spelling, eg. Verb endings such as –ed, common suffixes such as –ly or prefixes such as inter-.

It is essential that spelling skills are taught consistently with a fidelity to our Staplehurst spelling strategy as children progress throughout the school.

Whilst this document outlines the expectations for spelling at Staplehurst, it is the quality teaching of spelling patterns and investigational work that goes on continually within the classroom that is key to spelling success. Learning spellings by rote is rarely effective and often results in great spelling test results but poor application in writing. The best spelling sessions are investigative. If children have explored the patterns, ‘tricky bits’ and history of words, they are far more likely to make informed decisions about how to spell a word when writing it independently.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children follow the RWInc programme experiencing discrete phonics teaching sessions every day. In Early Years, RWInc takes place every day for 15-20 minutes. During the year, adults working within the team will teach groups in rotation so that children will have opportunities to work with a different

member of staff. At the start of the year children are taught set 1 sounds and the ability to blend. Once this has happened the children are assessed and put into ability groups.

Within the RWInc sessions, children are provided with regular opportunities to read and write, enabling them to practise letter and word formation. Key words are displayed in their learning environments. These may be shared with parents and carers to support their children's spelling at home.

Assessment records are kept of children's progress in phonics and is tracked.

Key Stage 1

As children move into Key Stage 1, they continue to follow the RWInc programme, again experiencing discrete daily phonics sessions. Children will experience fluid groupings (across the Key Stage): they will work in ability groups according to their phonics ability with other children from Year 1 or Year 2. This enables teachers to tailor their teaching to specific needs as well as to ensure children's learning is not limited. RWInc phonics and reading sessions in KS1 take place each day for 30mins. Children also apply these skills into writing a sentence based on the book they have read that week.

Children who have been assessed as above Grey level in RWInc and show that they can apply their phonic knowledge in both their reading and writing will move into a fluency reading group. They will then read texts in sessions which focus on; fluency, extended and close reading techniques.

Assessment is used to plan for children's future learning and to ascertain children's phonic grouping.

In Year 1 children are subject to the statutory Phonics Screening Test and parents are informed of the outcome. Those children who do not secure a 'pass' in Year 1 will be retested in Year 2 and, again, parents will be informed of the result.

In addition to learning spelling through RWInc programme, Children in year 2 are also taught the common exception words and high frequency words expected to be learned by the end of KS1. They are taught these words through the Staplehurst spelling sequence.

Key Stage 2

Year 3 & 4:

In Year 3 some children may continue to work on phonics through the RWInc programme); however, the expectation is that most children will move on to work planned from The National Curriculum and Staplehurst spelling sequence.

Years 5- 6:

The expectation in Years 5– 6 is that children will be working to the objectives in The National Curriculum. Teachers follow the sequence of words as set out in the Staplehurst spelling overview for their year group.

Spelling is modelled consistently within the wider teaching of English – shared and guided reading, shared writing, word and sentence level work, opportunities for independent and group work. These all offer valuable opportunities for teaching spelling. All adults consistently model the strategies of clapping syllables, segmenting the sounds in order to spell a word.

The weekly overview for teaching spellings looks as follows:

Overview of weekly Spelling sessions:

Session 1:	Session 2:	Session 3:
5 words (minimum)	5 words (minimum)	2 words + partner quizzing.

Format of spelling session 1 and 2:

Resources needed: Post it note of words for day and any guidance notes to support teaching e.g morphology/root. Whiteboards.

Phoneme sort on the first session e.g options for alternatives ay/a_e/ai/ aigh/ eigh

Each session will follow the same format. It is important there is a fidelity to the sequence as set out below.

Introduce word	Say and display the word. Give context to the word if needed.
Teach morphemes	Identify and teach any morphemes within the word. (Including any Latin/Greek root)
Teach syllables	Model how many syllables are in the word. Identify using / to denoted syllables.
Teach the 'tricky' part	Explicitly teach the unusual/irregular phoneme/graphemes in the word. Denote with buttons and bars.
Children write on their whiteboard 3 times- using fingers to segment the phonemes. Use 'show me' board routine to assess.	

Session 3:

Follow format for teaching 2 new words as above+ model expectations for partner quizzing then partner quizzing.	
Teacher model word	Say the word. Segment the sounds. Model with fingers. Children write on whiteboard.
Paired quizzing for all words taught this week (12 in total)	Child A: says the word. Child B: says the word, segments the sounds, writes it down. Check answers at the end 3 points for correct spelling of phoneme. 1 extra point for spelling words correctly. Swap roles.

Assessment

Children working at Phonic level are assessed termly by the RWInc co-ordinator. This data is used by staff to identify children who may need additional support or specific intervention programmes. Any interventions will be recorded on the Provision Maps for each year group.

Children also are assessed during a low stakes quiz at the end of each week of taught spellings. Children are encouraged to apply the strategies of clapping syllables and identifying sounds and then writing the words on a whiteboard. Teachers use this as an opportunity to assess the children's application of the taught sounds in new words that week. They will also assess when children are writing in all lessons to see an application of new spellings.

Expectations:

- Early Years to be on Green/Purple books (Steady Progress) Pink/Orange books (Speedy Progress)
- Year 1 to be on Blue Books (Steady Progress) Grey Books (Speedy Progress)
- Year 2 to complete Grey Books and taught common exception words/high frequency words through the Staplehurst spelling strategy.

Classroom resources

Complex Speed Sound chart
Word Mats
Sound Cards
Red words
Dictionaries/Thesauruses
Whiteboards/pens

All the above resources must be made available to the children according to their age and stage and used for accurate spelling in all areas of the curriculum.