

# A New Spelling Guide for Parents September 2016



*In September we will be changing the way in which we revise, teach, practise and apply spellings. We will not be sending weekly lists of spellings for your child to learn.*

*Occasionally they may bring home a look, say, cover, write and check sheet to learn spellings but this will not be every week. May I take this opportunity in thanking you for your time, patience and commitment in supporting your child with this spelling method.*

*Although we are changing the way in which children learn their spellings, please can I ask for your continued support in working with your child, on a weekly basis, on different spelling tasks, games and strategies, which will be sent home. These tasks will come home weekly, every Wednesday, in addition to homework. Thank you for your continued support.*

## **Helping your child with spelling**

When we write we have to consider a number of aspects.

- We need to know what the purpose of our writing is and for whom we are writing.
- We need to think about the content and what form our writing will take, for example, is it a shopping list, a report, a letter to a friend, an e-mail?
- We then need to think about the structure appropriate to the purpose and form of our writing – the use of sentences, paragraphs and punctuation.
- We then select the vocabulary that will best convey our meaning.
- And finally we think about how to spell the words we write.

Children can find writing a real challenge; they need encouragement, support and praise for their efforts. You can best support them by encouraging them to write on every possible occasion, praising their efforts and, importantly, by letting them see you writing whenever possible. You can play word games with them (e.g. I spy, find the word puzzles), you can point to interesting or new words as you read to your child (without interrupting the flow of the story) and you can compose emails together.

Most of us, even if we consider ourselves to be good spellers, make spelling mistakes at some point. What is important is that we know what to do when we get struck and we know how to correct mistakes.

The English language is a rich but complex language but, despite its complexity, 85% of the English spelling system is predictable. Your child will learn the rules and conventions of the system and the spelling strategies needed to become a confident speller.

**Take a look at some of the games, activities and strategies over the page that we will be exploring in our quest to become great spellers!**

Sounding words out: breaking the word down into phonemes (eg. c-a-t, sh-e-ll) Many words cannot be sounded out other strategies are needed
Dividing the word into syllables, say each syllable as they write the word (e.g. re-mem-ber)
Using the look, say, cover, write, check strategy: look at the word and say it out aloud, then cover it, write it and check to see if it correct. If not, highlight or underline the incorrect part and repeat the process
Using mnemonics as an aid to memorising a tricky word (e.g. people: people eat orange peel like elephants) (could: O U lucky duck)
Finding words within words (e.g. a rat in separate)
Working out spelling rules for themselves
Using a dictionary to support spellings
Making links between the meaning of words and their spelling (e.g. sign, signal, signature)
Segmentation strategy
Quick-write
Drawing an image around the word
Words without vowels
Pyramid words
Silly sentences

*Please encourage your child to have a go at spelling words they are unsure of. This will give them the opportunity to try out spelling strategies and to find those that they find useful. You can help them to use the strategies outlined above and praise their efforts*

<b>Useful terminology</b>
<b>Phoneme</b> – unit of sound
<b>Initial sound</b> – the first sound in a word e.g. the initial sound in cat is ‘c’, the initial sound in shop is ‘sh’
<b>Vowel</b> – letters a, e, i, o and u
<b>Short vowel sound</b> – short a (as in <u>cat</u> ), short e (as in <u>egg</u> ), short i (as in <u>igloo</u> ), short o (as in <u>on</u> ), short u (as in <u>up</u> )
<b>Long vowel sound</b> – the name of the letters; long a (as in <u>pa<u>in</u></u> ), long e (as in <u>she<u>ep</u></u> ), long i (as in <u>nigh<u>t</u></u> ), long o (as in <u>go<u>at</u></u> ), long u (as in <u>new</u> ) – Long vowel sounds have many different spelling patterns
<b>Consonant</b> – all the letters of the alphabet except – a – e – i – o – u
<b>CVC word</b> – consonant – vowel – consonant e.g. dog
<b>CVCC word</b> – consonant – vowel – consonant – consonant e.g. tent
<b>CCVC word</b> – consonant – consonant – vowel – consonant e.g. flag
<b>Blending</b> – saying each sound, then merging the sound (phonemes) within a word to break it down for writing e.g. ship – sh-i-p
<b>Diagraph</b> – two letters representing one sound (phoneme) e.g. <u>ba<u>th</u></u> , <u>go<u>at</u></u>
<b>Trigraph</b> – three letters representing one sound (phoneme) e.g. <u>nigh<u>t</u></u>
<b>Tricky words</b> – words which do not follow phonic rules e.g. was
<b>Syllable</b> – a unit of pronunciation with one vowel sound e.g. cheese (1 syllable), Lindley (2 syllables – Lind – Ley), holiday (3 syllables hol-i-day) etc.