

LEARNING TO SPELL

A guide for parents

READ WRITE INC SPELLING PROGRAMME

At Henleaze Junior School, we have introduced a structured programme for the teaching of spelling. The direct impact of this is that classes do not give out a standard list of words each week to be learnt and then tested in class a week later.

This brief guide explains how the scheme works, and how parents can support children at home.

THE SCHEME

[Read Write Inc Spelling](#) is written by Ruth Miskin and published by Oxford University Press. It consists of a set of individual workbooks and online resources. Lessons are designed to be delivered in daily 15-minute chunks, using a familiar set of activities to learn and practise the week's spelling patterns.

The sequence of lessons is closely matched to the requirements of the [2014 National Curriculum](#).

The various activities are designed to help children understand the rules and exceptions that govern the English language. By revisiting the same spelling patterns in a number of ways during the week, children acquire strategies for remembering how to spell words, which means they are more likely to spell them correctly in their independent writing.

As well as learning the spelling of the words, children have to use the words in context, therefore making sure that they understand the meaning.

Each child adds words to their Log Book during the week which they need to learn. These lists are individual, not set for the whole class.

HOMEWORK AND TESTING

We do not have a whole class weekly spelling test. Each child is expected to learn the words that they have identified and written in their Log Book.

In addition to the words that are identified in each week's lessons, there are "[common exception words for Year 3 and 4](#)" and "[common exception words for Year 5 and 6](#)" which are listed in the National Curriculum, which all children are expected to be able to spell. You can find these on our website.

SOME GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

Parents should set aside some time at home to help their children learn their spellings.

Ask them whether the word follows a rule, or if it is one of those tricky words (in the scheme they are the “orange” words) which doesn’t fit the rules.

Ask them if the word has a prefix or a suffix. Can they find the root word? Can they explain the rules for adding the prefix or suffix?

If it is an “orange” word, ask them if they have thought of a good way of remembering it. Can they point to the letters that are the tricky ones? Can they use a rhyme or mnemonic to help them? Is there a funny way to say the word that helps them remember it?

Check that your child knows what the word means. Ask them to use it in a sentence – this might be spoken rather than written at first, to check that they understand.

Don’t try to practise too many words each week. There may be a few words in their spelling log which they have identified either in their spelling lesson or in their written work. If there are not many of these words to learn, parents may wish to choose a few from the “common exception words” lists.

From time to time, check back over some of the words learnt in previous weeks.

Don’t make every spelling session a test – time spent talking about strategies for remembering, or copying out the word, is just as valuable.