



Individual Spelling Programme & Spelling Bees

At Kemsley, children are taught spelling through 2 distinctive programmes:

1. The Letters and Sounds Phonics Programme

Phonics is taught to all children through Early Years and KS1. There are 6 distinct phases to the Letters and Sounds programme. While there is whole class teaching in each year group of the appropriate phases, there is also teaching in smaller groups to ensure appropriate differentiation – supporting those children who need additional help and extending those children who are working at greater than expected levels for their age. If children are not able to attain the expected level required to pass the phonics screen at the end of year 2 then further individual provision will be put in place for additional phonics support in KS2.

2. KS2 Spelling programme

As per the recommendation of the National Curriculum, we believe that the approach to teaching spellings in KS2 should be grounded in an ongoing understanding of phonics. As a result, our KS2 spellings programme (taught as a part of the SPaG – spellings, punctuation and grammar lessons) revisits aspects of the Letters and Sounds programme and uses the children's knowledge of phonemes as a basis for understanding more complex spellings. However, KS2 spelling teaching also focuses on the role of morphology and etymology for spellings as pupils need to understand the relationships between meaning and spelling where relevant. Pupils also learn to spell words with prefixes and suffixes correctly as they increasingly understand some general principles for adding them.

While there is a general expectation regarding the spellings that children should know at all stages of the primary curriculum, we also recognise that children learn phonics, spelling rules and general principles of spelling at different rates. As a result, rather than providing all children in each year group with the same spellings to learn, we have an individualised spelling programme. This programme runs throughout the school and covers all aspects of the expectations of the National Curriculum.

Individualised spelling programme

The school's programme has 218 separate spelling lists in it. Each list has 10 words (with the exception of some of the earliest lists that are composed of 8 words). The spellings are generally progressive and follow, approximately, the development of phonic awareness (in line with Letters and Sounds) and then the more complex understanding required for some of the KS2 National Curriculum spelling expectation. All spelling lists are on the school website for reference.

Each spelling list has a coloured band at the top. This roughly equates to the year group that the list 'belongs to'. The coding for this is as follows:

Year 1 – orange, Year 2 – yellow, Year 3 – green, Year 4 – blue, Year 5 – pink, Year 6 – purple.

Children may well be working on spelling lists that are not the colour of their year group. This is due to the progressive nature of the programme; children are able to work at their own pace. It is essential that children are able to consolidate their knowledge and understanding of key high frequency words before moving on to more complex or abstract spelling patterns.

As the lists are progressive and the spelling system runs through the school children are able to move through the programme year after year with no interruption or 'starting again'. As children start the programme, they will be given a list that is felt to be appropriate by their class teacher and work from there. If you feel that your child's initial listing is too simple or too complex, please do let us know and we will look to adjust accordingly. This should only be an issue when children begin the programme as from that point onwards, they will be able to progress at their own pace.

There is no specific day for spellings to be set or tested. Children should aim to learn a list of spellings each week. When they are ready to be tested on their spellings, they will be checked by the class teacher or TA. Class teachers and TAs will endeavour to do some testing each day (first thing in the morning or after lunch). If children score 8 or more out of 10 they will be given the next list to learn. If they score less than 8, children will be encouraged to spend more time learning their spellings and try again in a few days. As a result, some children may get through 2 or 3 lists per week or may take 2 weeks to learn one listing. Class teachers and TAs will ensure that all children are tested at least once per week to encourage learning of spellings.

All children will have spellings books that will be taken home and should be returned to school each day. The list of spellings that the child is working on will be stuck in the book. When children have been tested, the class teacher or TA will mark in the spellings book which spellings were right (and/or wrong). That way, parents will be able to see which words the children need to work on if necessary. New lists will then be stuck in the books so an ongoing record is kept. Children will be asked to put their spelling book in a designated box when they feel they are ready to be tested.

Spellings in class work: The school's feedback policy (September 2017) recognises the need to highlight incorrect spellings to children in their class work, however, it is also recognised that highlighting a large amount of spellings on every piece of work can detract from the main learning objective. As a result, class teachers will highlight, where appropriate, a few incorrect spellings in each piece of written work. The focus will always be upon high frequency words or appropriate 'expected' spellings for each year group. Where children have highlighted spelling errors, they will be expected to find the correct spelling (with support or through the use of dictionaries) and to write out the sentence that the spelling error occurred in so that the correct spelling is written in the context

it was used. Class teachers will take account of the spelling ability of the children when deciding which spelling errors to highlight.

Spelling Bees

In addition to the individual spelling programme, we will be running Spelling Bee competitions for any children that wish to enter. The Spelling Bee lists contain complex words for each year group that are additional to those in the spelling programme lists. Spelling Bee lists are available on the school website and will be sent out twice a year.

Children do not need to take part in the Spelling Bee. There will be 2 Spelling Bee competitions each year; one at Christmas and one in the Summer term. Heats will be held in each year group to decide which children will represent the school in the Spelling Bee. We will then be holding competitive Spelling Bees against year group representatives from Greenfields Primary. A Spelling Bee trophy will be available for each year group and an overall Spelling Bee trophy for the overall winning school.

In the Spelling Bee, children can be asked any spelling from the year group Spelling Bee list. Unlike the normal spelling programme, the Spelling Bee competition will require children to verbally spell out the given word letter by letter.

Further information on the Spelling Bees will be sent out at the relevant times of the year.