

Annex 1

Supporting your children with spelling – guidance for parents

The following information comes from 'Support for Spelling' a document published by the Department for Education

Guide for parents: How to help your child with spelling

There are a number of aspects to consider with spelling, and many methods, strategies and games you can use to help encourage and support your children in becoming confident and accurate spellers. You will find a variety of suggestions below.

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 stuck and we know how to correct our mistakes. The English language is a rich and 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.

Spelling strategies

There are many strategies that you can use to will help your child become a confident and accurate speller. These include:

- sounding words out: breaking the word down into phonemes, for example, c-a-t and sh-e-ll. Many words cannot be sounded out, so you will need to use other strategies;
- dividing the word into syllables, and saying each syllable while writing the word. For example, re-mem-ber;
- using the Look, say, cover, write, check strategy:
Look at the word and say it out aloud, then cover the word, then write it and finally check to see if it is correct. If not, highlight or underline the incorrect part and repeat the process;
- using mnemonics to help memorise tricky words. For example, people: people eat orange peel like elephants, and could: O U Lucky Duck.
- finding words within words. For example, a rat in separate;
- making links between the meaning of words and their spelling. For example, sign, signal, and signature. This strategy is used at a later stage than other strategies;
- working out spelling rules for themselves. This strategy is used at a later stage than other strategies;
- using a dictionary as soon as they know how to.

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 identify those that they find useful. You can help them to use the strategies outlined above and praise their efforts

General spelling advice – top tips

- Have spellings on post-its or word cards stuck up somewhere where the children will see them at home e.g. on the fridge, in the bedroom etc.
- Get the children to copy out the words in different colours or write them using 'funky' writing (see Twinkl ideas attached)
- Play 'hangman' with the words
- Engage with the words in short, sharp bursts throughout the week
- Spend some time revising words from a previous week – keep them ticking over!
- Discuss new or tricky words as they come up in reading.