



Beaumont Primary School
Phonics & Spelling Policy

Date agreed: November 2020

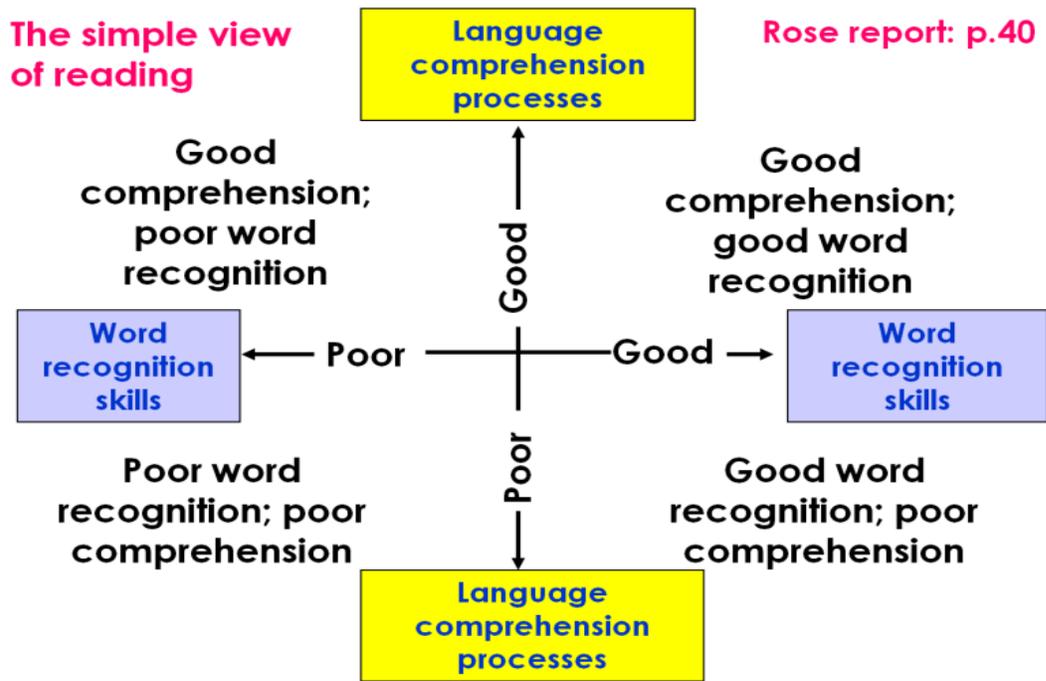
Review date: November 2023



RATIONAL

At Beaumont Primary School, we place high value on the teaching of reading as we understand the impact it can have on a child’s education and future. We understand the importance of teaching phonics daily in a systematic way to enable pupils to read and spell.

We believe that phonics is a means to an end. Alongside the high quality, systematic teaching of phonics, we also teach children to understand what they have read through discussion and guided reading. It is also essential that when children have a secure phonological knowledge, they also have access to high quality teaching of comprehension and spelling rules.





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PROCESS

- In EYFS and Year 1, children have access to daily 15-30 minute phonics lessons which follow the 'Letters and Sounds' phases
- Phase 1 starts in EYFS and the children progress through to Phase 5 by end of Year 1 (see appendix) Phase 5 is then recapped at the beginning of year 2.
- Those children who do not meet the phonics requirements by the end of year 1 will have regular interventions focusing on phase 3 – 5 phonics.
- We use the 5-phase structure flexibly, especially in the case of the boundary between Phases 1 and 2. It is not necessary to teach the whole of Phase 1 before children are introduced to phonemes in Phase 2.
- From phases 2-5, children are taught to blend and segment syllables in words to read/spell polysyllabic words e.g. catnap
- When children can identify and apply the phonemes taught in each phase, they move on to the next phase.
- 'Tricky words' which are not phonetic are taught and consolidated in specific phases. Many of these words are included in the First/Second/Third High Frequency Word lists (see appendix). Children should be able to read and spell these words by the end of Year 2.
- Where possible, home reading books consolidate the Letters and Sounds phase the child is working on.
- Regular phonics training is available for all staff and parents through staff meetings and homework meetings.
- Phase 6 overlaps with some of the objectives in the New National Curriculum Document and No Nonsense Spelling so there is a natural progression from the teaching of phonics to spelling.
- Although all children should have completed Phase 5 before entering Year 3, the school recognises that some children will not have made this much progress.
- Individual records must be kept and updated on a regular basis.
- In order to consolidate the phonological skills extra phonics work and sounds can be sent home e.g. spelling lists to learn (HFW/ common exception words)

ASSESSMENT

- Ongoing assessments are recorded in phonics planning and more formal phonics assessments take place each half-term for Reception and Year 1, culminating in the Phonics screening test at the end of Year 1. For Years 2-5, an NFER Spelling Test that tests on the New National Curriculum, will be administered at three checkpoints in the year. Year 6 are tested using previous SATs tests. This data is to be used within our tracking system.
- Pupils completing the Letters and Sounds program are assessed in 4 areas:
 - Phoneme-grapheme correspondence
 - Oral blending
 - Oral segmentation



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- Non-word reading (**pseudo word reading (made up words)**)
 - KS2 pupils are assessed on their application of taught spelling rules as well as their phonological awareness
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- Phonic phase and High Frequency Word assessments in EYFS and Year 1 are recorded on a half-termly basis through Phonics Tracker to ensure that progression is monitored throughout and ensure interventions are put in place for children who are not progressing.
 - Children in Year 1 are assessed using the 'Year 1 Phonics Screening Check' in June. This is an assessment of children's oral blending of words including non-words (pseudo words). Children must read around 32 out of 40 words to pass the check.
 - For those children who do not pass the check in Year 1, a re-check is administered in Year 2
 - If pupils have not understood parts of a phase / stage, they will complete intervention / re-do until the learning is secure.
 - Any pupils not making progress or who are working below age related expectations will be given intervention from a TA or teacher to allow for progress to be made.
 - In situations where pupils regularly make below average progress, the SEN co-ordinator will be informed and an Individual Learning Plan would be created at class level.
 - If pupils do not reach stage 5 at the end of Year 2, they will continue with focused targeted phonics teaching appropriate to their level until they have completed the program. Once completed and they can use, apply and understand the program, they will then be taught the objectives from the New National Curriculum Spelling Lists.

THE TEACHING OF SPELLINGS

In Year 1-6, pupils will be taught using the Spelling Shed scheme of work within the Literacy Session. Pupils who are working below that level will be given targeted intervention and support and will be assessed regularly. Designated spelling sessions take place during the week during sessions such as EMT and after lunch time; weekly spelling tests take place also. Spelling scores are recorded in the children's reading journals which they take home so their parents are updated about how they are scoring each week.

Lists of appropriate spellings must be provided on a weekly basis for the pupils to learn and apply.

Year 1- 5-10 spellings

Year 2/3- 5-10 spellings

Year 4 – 10-15 spellings

Year 5 & 6 – 15-20 spellings

Spellings must be tested in a variety of ways including testing and dictation. This will ensure that pupils can apply the learned spellings within a context as well as learning the rule and rehearsing it.



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Spelling must be taught. Wordlists and tests are not enough because children need focused interactive teaching that can only be provided by a teacher. Spelling should be taught frequently and, mostly for short bursts – little and often. Word work should be taught within the majority of literacy lessons. This is achieved by the sharing of a word of the week at the start of the week. Children are then encouraged to apply the word in their writing that week. Children will also complete vocabulary activities during EMT sessions at the start of the day.

Good teaching of spelling should regularly:

- draw attention to and focus on the patterns and rules of English spelling
- help them to remember these rules and recognise exceptions and anomalies
- provide a variety of strategies for remembering spellings
- interest pupils in the English language

INTERVENTIONS

Children not working at the expected level form intervention groups which are regularly monitored by the class teacher and SEN co-ordinator. Targeted children also complete the Toe-by-Toe intervention with an assigned adult. Children are encouraged to access Spelling Shed where they can complete targeted sessions suitable for their level.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

Look, say, cover, write and check.

This method should be explicitly and regularly taught, the most important part of the process is *Look*. Pupils are told to look closely at the word and to identify any difficult or awkward parts. They are required to focus on these parts and remember that they are in that word. They are then required to focus on strings of letters. Research has proven that most people recognise strings of letters rather than single letters e.g. *committee*; when examining the word the pupils may identify the double m and double t as potential difficulties. The word can be learned as comm.-itt-ee. While focusing on the words the children repeat the spelling of the word aloud. The pupils then close their eyes and try to picture the word. If they are unable to picture it then they have to focus intently on the word again and try to picture the word when they close their eyes while repeating the spelling to themselves. After this interactive session the pupils' learning is reinforced by them looking, saying, writing, and checking the words themselves with the emphasis on looking and picturing the words. These sessions should not last longer than 10 to 12 minutes.

Words within words

This method should also be taught. In the same way as *look, say, cover, write and check*, the pupils look closely at the word and identify any letter strings within the word that make up smaller words e.g. *business* is discussed as bus-i-ness. Pupils only have to remember the 2 strings



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with *i* in between them. *Appointed* can be discussed as *ap-point-ed* and so on. Whenever words that are being learned contain words within words then they should be taught as such because letter strings that make up words are easier to remember than other letter strings. Again pupils should close their eyes and picture the words before spelling them. Reinforcement will involve the pupils writing the words and checking them with emphasis on looking and picturing.

Segmenting

Splitting the word into its constituent phonemes in the correct order.

Drawing around the word

This makes a clear distinction in size, where the letters ascend or descend. When the pupil then writes the word, they can see whether it is the same shape.

Drawing an image- this is about making a word memorable. It links to meaning in order to make the spelling more noticeable. (This doesn't work for all words, but may work for those that are more difficult to remember e.g MONARCHY.)

Pyramid Words

This method forces you to consider each letter separately.

*For extra information on these spelling ideas, look at the No Nonsense Spelling programme P10-11.

Rules

There are spelling rules in the English language and these must be taught. The difficulty is that almost all of these rules can be broken so teaching must also involve anomalies and common exceptions.

Multi-sensory teaching

Spelling involves a number of sense skills. Pupils must learn to look at words and to use visual techniques to help memorise tricky spelling. Many children need help to listen to the sounds of words; clear articulation will help here. Pupils must also learn to think about words so that they can use their prior knowledge about words to help them to learn new ones e.g. linking words by appearance. Kinaesthetic approaches, often simply writing out the words as described above, are important as writing and spelling are intertwined. Some pupils are stronger on one strategy than on others but all pupils need to develop the full range of strategies to become good spellers.

Dictation



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Dictation passages that contain the words that have been learned are very good ways for the pupils to write the words in context. Dictation also develops listening skills and auditory memory as well as providing very good models for sentence structure and the use of punctuation. It is important to read the whole passage through first so that the pupils may become familiarised with the context. Then dictate the passage in short sections slowly and clearly. Include punctuation marks and, especially in the initial stages of pupils formally learning spelling, say what the punctuation mark is and change your tone appropriately for each punctuation mark. As the pupils progress later start to cut down on declaring the punctuation marks and let the pupils use your tone as the only indicator for punctuation.

Personal Spelling Books/ Logs

Pupils should keep a personal spelling book that contains words that have caused the pupil difficulty. Pupils are then able to revise continuously these words to improve spelling. A maximum of 3 spellings should be corrected within a child's work to ensure they are not discouraged. These corrected words must be relevant and where possible, the rule must have been previously taught.

Spelling Journals

For children who find spelling particularly tricky, spelling journals can be very useful. Rather than a personal dictionary (personal spelling log/book) the idea is that the pupils can use the ideas above to practice learning their spellings e.g. drawing around the word etc. These are more personalised for the pupil and can help them as a reference to how they learn best.

Web-based activities

A number of web-based programs are used within school to enhance/engage the learning of spellings such as Purple Mash, Spelling Frame and IDL.



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Appendices:

Appendix 1- Technical Vocabulary:

Phonics

Phonics consists of knowledge of the skills of segmenting and blending, knowledge of the alphabetic code and an understanding of the principles underpinning the way the code is used in reading and spelling.

Phonemes

A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a word that can change its meaning (e.g. in /bed/ and /led/ the difference between the phonemes /b/ and /l/ signals the difference in meaning between the words *bed*, *led*). It is generally accepted that most varieties of spoken English use about 44 phonemes. In alphabetic writing systems (such as English) phonemes are represented by graphemes.

Graphemes

A grapheme is a symbol of a phoneme, that is, a letter or group of letters representing a sound. There is always the same number of graphemes in a word as phonemes. The alphabet contains only 26 letters but we use it to make all the graphemes that represent the phonemes of English.

Grapheme–phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and phoneme–grapheme correspondences

We convert graphemes to phonemes when we are reading aloud (decoding written words). We convert phonemes to graphemes when we are spelling (encoding words for writing). To do this, children need to learn which graphemes correspond to which phonemes and vice versa. In order to read an unfamiliar word, a child must recognise ('sound out') each grapheme, not each letter (e.g. sounding out ship as /sh/-/i/-/p/ not /s/- /h/ - /i/ - /p/), and then merge (blend) the phonemes together to make a word.

Segmenting and blending

Segmenting and blending are reversible key phonic skills. Segmenting consists of breaking words down into their constituent phonemes to spell. Blending consists of building words from their constituent phonemes to read. Both skills are important. The skill of blending (synthesising) phonemes, in order, all through the word to read it, tends to receive too little attention in the teaching of phonics; it is very important to make sure that children secure blending skills.



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Digraphs and trigraphs (and four-letter graphemes)

A digraph is a two-letter grapheme where two letters represent one sound such as 'ea' in *seat* and 'sh' in *ship*. A trigraph is a three-letter grapheme where three letters represent one phoneme (e.g. 'eau' in *bureau*, and 'igh' in *night*). And by definition a four-letter grapheme uses four letters to represent one phoneme (e.g. 'eigh' representing the /ai/ phoneme in *eight* and in *weight*).

A split digraph has a letter that splits, i.e. comes between, the two letters in the digraph, as in *make* and *take*, where 'k' separates the digraph 'ae' which in both words represents the phoneme /ai/. There are six split digraphs in English spelling: 'a-e', 'e-e', 'i-e', 'o-e', 'u-e', 'y-e', as in *make*, *scene*, *like*, *bone*, *cube*, *type*.

A very few words have more than one letter in the middle of a split digraph (e.g. *ache*, *blithe*, *cologne*, *scythe*).

Abbreviations

VC, CVC, and CCVC are the respective abbreviations for vowel-consonant, consonant-vowel-consonant, consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant, and are used to describe the order of graphemes in words (e.g. *am* (VC), *Sam* (CVC), *slam* (CCVC), or *each* (VC), *beach* (CVC), *bleach* (CCVC).

Appendix 2

Phonemes to graphemes table- P23- 24 Letters and Sounds document

Graphemes to phonemes table- P25-27 Letters and Sounds document

Overview of phonic knowledge to be covered

First, Second and Third 100 HFW

New National Curriculum Spelling Lists / Objectives – September 2014