



St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School

Spelling Rationale



Spelling

Intent

At St Cuthbert's, we recognise that accurate spelling is an essential component of effective writing and communication. We are committed to developing confident, independent spellers who understand the patterns, rules and structure of the English language and can apply this knowledge accurately across the curriculum.

We recognise that spelling is far more than the memorisation of words. Our carefully sequenced spelling curriculum enables children to develop a secure understanding of phonics, morphology (word structure), etymology (word origins) and orthography (spelling patterns). Building upon the foundations established through our Read Write Inc. phonics programme, children learn how words are constructed, make meaningful connections between words and develop strategies to spell unfamiliar vocabulary with increasing confidence.

Vocabulary development is central to our English curriculum. Through explicit teaching, rich discussion and high-quality texts, children develop an understanding of the meaning, structure and purpose of words, enabling them to become accurate spellers and increasingly ambitious writers. Our aim is that every child leaves our federation with the confidence and knowledge to spell accurately, communicate effectively and apply their spelling skills across all areas of learning and throughout later life.

Implementation

Spelling is taught explicitly through a progressive curriculum that builds upon children's phonics knowledge and develops a deeper understanding of the English spelling system. From Key Stage 1 onwards, children follow the Ready Steady Spell programme, which provides a carefully sequenced approach to teaching statutory spelling objectives, spelling conventions and spelling strategies.

Lessons follow a consistent structure that enables children to revisit prior learning, explicitly teach new spelling patterns and conventions, practise and apply their knowledge before revisiting learning through regular retrieval practice. Children are taught to recognise patterns, identify relationships between words and understand how morphology, etymology and orthography support accurate spelling.

Teachers explicitly model spelling strategies and encourage children to use their knowledge of phonics, root words, prefixes, suffixes and word families when spelling unfamiliar vocabulary. Vocabulary is taught in context through high-quality texts and across the wider curriculum, enabling children to understand both the meaning and spelling of ambitious subject-specific language.

Spelling is closely linked to writing. Children are given regular opportunities to apply newly taught spelling knowledge within meaningful writing tasks across the curriculum, reinforcing learning and promoting long-term retention. Dictionaries and other age-appropriate resources are introduced progressively to encourage independence and accuracy.

Assessment is ongoing and informs future teaching, enabling misconceptions to be identified quickly and addressed through responsive teaching and targeted support. Weekly spelling practice is further

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reinforced through Spelling Shed, providing engaging opportunities for children to revisit and practise spelling patterns at home while strengthening the partnership between home and school.

Staff receive regular professional development to ensure a consistent approach to the teaching of spelling, enabling all children to make strong progress from their individual starting points.

Impact

Through our spelling curriculum, children develop the knowledge, understanding and strategies needed to become accurate, confident and independent spellers.

Our children:

- demonstrate secure knowledge of spelling patterns, conventions and statutory spelling objectives;
- apply their understanding of phonics, morphology, etymology and orthography when spelling familiar and unfamiliar words;
- use a range of spelling strategies independently to edit and improve their writing;
- accurately apply spelling knowledge across the wider curriculum, enabling them to write with increasing fluency and confidence;
- develop an ambitious vocabulary and understand the relationship between word meaning, structure and spelling;
- leave our school as confident communicators who recognise the importance of accurate spelling in both their education and future lives.

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