



Primary School Spelling Strategy

Our aims

- Teach spelling explicitly, cumulatively and in small steps, with frequent opportunities to retrieve and use prior learning.
- Help pupils understand sounds, spelling patterns, word structure and meaning, then apply this knowledge in independent writing.
- Use errors as information for teaching and develop confidence, independence and appropriate support for every learner.

At Milborne Port Primary School, we recognise spelling as a fundamental skill that supports clear and effective communication across every area of the curriculum. Accurate spelling not only enables pupils to express their ideas confidently but also strengthens their overall literacy development. To become proficient writers, children need to cultivate a genuine love of language, deepen their understanding of word structures and meanings, and master a wide range of spelling strategies. Our approach encourages pupils to explore patterns, apply rules, and develop resilience when tackling unfamiliar words, ensuring they grow into independent, confident communicators prepared for lifelong learning.

Curriculum and progression

EYFS/ Key Stage 1	Daily RWI phonics provides the sequence for sound to spelling correspondence, oral segmenting, writing and common exception words. Teachers model using phonics during independent writing. Continue this pathway in later years for pupils who still need it.
Key Stage 1	We follow Read Write Inc as our Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) programme to teach early reading and spelling. This structured approach ensures that children learn to read and spell through a clear progression of sounds and spelling patterns, where they practice phoneme grapheme correspondence in reading and spelling. Children are encouraged to use their understanding of phonics when spelling, using segmenting strategies at the point of independent writing • Daily Practice: Children have the opportunity to practice their spellings every day. They apply the spelling rules and words they have learned in their written work, helping to embed these skills in real contexts. • Tricky Words: As children learn to read, they encounter “tricky words” – words that cannot be decoded phonetically (e.g., said, the, was). These are practiced daily within phonics lessons to build fluency and confidence. • Assessment: Each half term, children will be assessed on their knowledge of common exception words, often referred to as ‘red words’. • Beyond Phonics: Once children have graduated from the phonics programme, teaching moves to spelling rules and patterns.
Years 3 and 4	Use ACE objectives to review KS1 patterns and teach vowel spellings, affixes, word families, homophones, statutory words and relevant word origins. Select examples that make the principle visible.
Years 5 and 6	Use ACE objectives to deepen morphology, suffix choices, unstressed vowels, less common letter patterns, homophones, etymology and statutory words. Build pupils’ ability to choose and explain strategies.

The ACE progression is the planning spine, not a fixed weekly list. Teachers map its objectives over the year, revisit prerequisite knowledge, and check the national curriculum and statutory word lists. Reading progress is not held back by a pupil’s spelling accuracy.

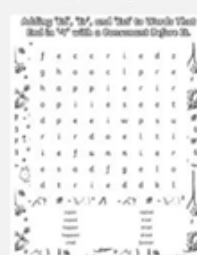
EYFS and KS1 Spelling

Phonics - Reception and Year 1

Children have daily RWI phonics sessions where they practise phoneme-grapheme correspondence in reading and in spelling. Children build on their understanding over the two years and are taught and assessed in line with RWI expectations. Children are encouraged to use their understanding of phonics when spelling, using segmenting strategies at the point of independent writing. Year 1 common exception words are taught during this hour daily. Assessment for learning is rigorous and misconceptions are identified and addressed at the earliest point by teachers.

Year 2

Once graduated from the RWI programme, our children follow the Year 2 programme of study. Within the teaching sequence, new and previously taught spelling rules are built upon. Within a weekly teaching sequence, all children are expected to recall prior knowledge and previously taught spellings, acquire new knowledge and spelling patterns, apply their understanding of this new knowledge and transfer it during the show stage. This structured and systematic approach ensures consistency and that any misconceptions are addressed at the earliest possible opportunity. Children also have regular practise and teaching of the KS1 common exception words and spelling pattern words. Common exception words are tracked at the front of their journals.

KNOW – Recall Test previous spellings taught 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.	KNOW – Acquire – Practise UPPER and Lower Write each of your words out five times. Write in UPPERCASE the first time and in lowercase the second time. LITERACY literacy Rainbow Words Write your words out in pencil. Next, draw around each letter (five more times using a different coloured pencil). literacy Pyramid Writing Write each of your words like a pyramid. literacy Tracing Colours Write each of your words using tracing writing. Your letters could be curly or bumpy, or whatever you decide. literacy Join the Dots Write each of your words using dots. Then join the dots with a coloured pencil to make your word. literacy Air Writing Write your words in the air with your finger. Ask someone to read your words as you write. It will be easier to see with the letters you tell them to spell your words. literacy Spelling Flowers Draw a big flower. Write each of your spelling words on one of the petals. literacy Silly Sentences Use the words you are learning to write a silly sentence. Write it on a piece of paper. literacy Spelling Shapes Use the words you are learning to write a sentence. Write it on a piece of paper. literacy
KNOW - Acquire New spelling rule and spelling words/ Practise copy copied happier happiest cried replied tried dried driest funnier Adding 'th', 'sh', and 'ch' to Words That Start with 't' 	SHOW – Transfer - Dictation Possible GROW – analysing the tricky parts or creating a mnemonic to help remember a spelling or creating own sentence. Or creating their own sentences.

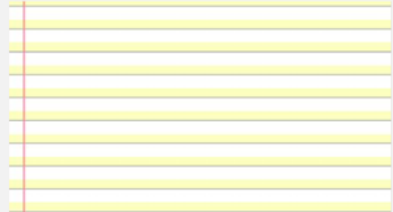
Common Exception Words

Year 1				Year 2			
a	his	push	was	after	class	floor	most
are	house	put	we	again	climb	gold	move
ask	I	said	were	any	clothes	grass	Mr
be	is	says	where	both	cold	great	Mrs
by	love	school	you	beautiful	could	half	old
come	me	she	your	because	door	hold	only
do	my	so		behind	even	hour	parents
friend	no	some		both	every	improve	pass
full	of	the		break	everybody	kind	past
go	once	there		busy	eye	last	path
has	one	they		child	fast	many	people
he	our	to		children	father	mind	plant
here	pull	today		Christmas	find	money	poor

KS2 Spelling

Year 3 and 4

Our Lower Key Stage Two children follow a two year rolling programme of study. Objectives in pink are those spellings in the Year 3/4 statutory spelling list. The words in black are previously taught words or new words focusing on a specific spelling pattern or rule.

KNOW – Recall Test previous spellings taught	KNOW - Acquire New spelling rule and spelling words e.g. Y5 Autumn 1 Week 1	KNOW – Acquire – Practise	Week 1 Creating adverbs using the suffix -ly (no change to root word)	Week 2 Creating adverbs using the suffix -ly (root word ends in 'y' with more than one syllable)
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.			kindly quickly safely rudely sweetly strongly bravely secretly finally usually	happily angrily lazily easily busily greedily messily wearily cheekily clumsily
SHOW - Apply handwriting practice – new spellings	SHOW – Transfer – Dictation	Possible GROW – analysing the tricky parts or creating a mnemonic to help remember a spelling or creating own sentence. Or creating their own sentences.		
				

Year 5 and 6

Our Upper Key Stage Two children follow a two year programme of study building upon prior knowledge. Strategies for the teaching of new spellings and previously taught spellings are fully embedded by Year 5. All learners are able to develop their independence and self select strategies that they find most powerful and impactful by this stage of their spelling journey

This method of learning words forces you to think of each letter separately.

You can then reverse the process so that you end up with a diamond.

P
py
pyr
pyra
pyram
pyrami
pyramid

Draw around the words making a clear distinction in size where there are ascenders and descenders. Look carefully at the shape of the word and the letters in each box. Now try to write the word making sure that you get the same shape.

t o t a l l y

Quickwrite	Writing the words linked to the teaching focus with speed and fluency. The aim is to write as many words as possible within a time constraint. Pupils can write words provided by the teacher or generate their own examples. For example, in two minutes write as many words as possible with the /i/ phoneme. This can be turned into a variety of competitive games including working in teams and developing relay race approaches.
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Teaching sequence

For pupils beyond early phonics, use The Spelling Book resources to support an active cycle of noticing, investigating, explaining, practising and applying.

1. **Retrieve:** Begin with short recall of previously taught words and patterns and identify misconceptions.
2. **Investigate:** Introduce a small group of examples in meaningful sentences. Pupils sort, compare, discuss the relevant sound, grapheme, morpheme or meaning, and identify exceptions.
3. **Explain and practise:** Model the generalisation and its limits. Pupils say, write, check and correct words, then revisit them through spaced practice.



4. **Apply and review:** Use target words in dictation and authentic writing. Invite pupils to check, edit and explain spelling choices; revisit these words later.

Spelling in everyday writing

Teachers model spelling decisions aloud in every subject: segment a word, choose a plausible grapheme, consider its root and suffix, check meaning, then verify where appropriate. Working walls display current patterns and useful examples. Subject vocabulary is taught with its meaning and pronunciation. Feedback selects a manageable number of high value errors; pupils correct these and use the words again in a sentence or later piece of writing. Personal words from pupils' work are recorded in learning journals and revisited regularly.

From Year 1, children have personal spelling lists which are tagged into their learning journals. These are words that the children have misspelt in their daily writing.

Assessment and response

- At the start of a unit, sample words or writing to establish what pupils know. During teaching, use oral responses, whiteboards, short dictation and writing samples to adjust the next lesson.
- At the end of a sequence, check whether pupils can explain and apply the pattern in new words and in independent writing. A correct isolated spelling alone does not show secure transfer.
- Build a review opportunity into each half term. Track recurring errors, common exception and statutory words where relevant, and the effect of reteaching. Use school assessment information and pupil progress discussions to plan next steps.
- In Key stage 1, in accordance with the Read Write Inc programme, rigorous assessments take place on a half-termly basis. Ongoing, informal assessment, as part of daily teaching, will also inform groupings and interventions if necessary.
- In addition to this, in Key Stage 1 and 2, children may have to check spellings in their learning experience work as part of our marking and feedback policy. Children will correct in purple pen. Teachers monitor spellings in children's work and collect common mistakes for children to practice as a further method of formative assessment. Intervention, including precision and pre-teaching, supports this process in all year groups. At the end of every term, all Key Stage 2 children will complete a formal spelling test to assess their knowledge of statutory words. This is recorded on our foundational skills trackers to ensure we monitor progress each term.
- Our Year 6 children, during assessment week, are allocated practice SATS papers to ensure alignment with national curriculum expectations and for teachers to rapidly identify gaps in spelling patterns and misconceptions amongst different groups of learners. Teaching is then adapted as a result.

Inclusion and additional support

Assess the underlying gap before choosing support. Pupils still securing sound to spelling correspondence receive continued systematic phonics teaching and timely practice. Others may need pre teaching, fewer carefully chosen examples, oral rehearsal, visual prompts, extra retrieval and short focused intervention. Check progress in classroom writing; adjust support if learning does not transfer. Teach the same core concept with appropriate scaffolds and challenge, including word origins and exceptions for secure spellers.

Home learning and school responsibilities

Share the current pattern, a few useful example words and a simple activity for saying, noticing and using them. Personal words may be practised at home, but school teaching does not depend on family support. Teachers maintain plans and samples in the learning journal, select words from writing and respond to errors. The English lead checks coverage against ACE, models effective practice, supports staff training in any resources and reviews work and outcomes each term.