

Supporting your child with their spelling at home

Introduction: Being able to spell is an essential part of your child's learning that will help them throughout their school life and beyond into adulthood. Only 50% of English words are spelt phonetically. The remaining words conform either to spelling rules/patterns or they don't follow a pattern at all and just need to be learned individually. We call these tricky words and there are lists for Years 3/4 and Years 5/6. At the end of Year 6 every child is tested in SATs with words that are taken from the spelling lists for Year 1 all the way up to Year 6. For this reason, spellings in Year 5 will not only be taken from the Year 5/6 list, but also all the previous lists that your child needs to know.

When practising spellings, **please ensure that your child works with the correct spelling in-front of them**. Practising only makes perfect when they perfectly write/recall the word each time. Every time they write or recall the word incorrectly it is reinforcing that mistake in their memory. We say that practising doesn't necessarily make perfect, but it does make permanent. Here are some very useful and fun ways to help:

1. This might seem a bit odd, but it really works. On post-it notes with your child, write down the spellings for the week and put them up where your child will regularly see them throughout the day – the best places are
 - a. In the bathroom - next to the toilet
 - b. In the bathroom – next to the sink (for when washing hands/brushing teeth)
 - c. On the wall - next to their bed
 - d. On doors around the house
 - e. On the kitchen cupboard if your child helps in the kitchen
 - f. One parent even put them around the television
2. **With the correct word in-front of them** ask your child to carefully copy it out ten times. This helps with muscle memory and visual recall. They must be careful to ensure they copy it out correctly.
3. **With the correct word in-front of them** here are different ways to practise:
 - a. Write it in the air (saying each letter as they write)
 - b. Write it outside in chalk on the drive (it will wash away with the rain)
 - c. Write it in big letters... write it in tiny letters
 - d. Count the number of letters
 - e. Check how many ascenders and descenders there are
 - f. Write a silly story that includes all of the words spelt correctly
 - g. Write the words in bubble writing and colour them in
 - h. Spell the words using sign language (see attached sheet)

In Year 5 the children will receive a white enamel star when they can spell 100+ of the Year 3/4 spellings correctly. Tests will be carried out at the beginning of each half term from Autumn 2. Children will receive a blue star when they can correctly spell 62 of the Year 5/6 spellings and a black star when they can correctly spell 100+ of the Year 5/6 spellings. Tests will be carried out at the end of each half term, starting in Autumn 1.

Makaton alphabet

