



Spellings

Background

Most people read words more accurately than they spell them. The younger pupils are, the truer this is.

By the end of Year 1, pupils should be able to read a large number of different words containing the GPCs that they have learnt, whether or not they have seen these words before. Spelling, however, is a very different matter. Once pupils have learnt more than one way of spelling particular sounds, choosing the right letter or letters depends on them either having made a conscious effort to learn the words or having absorbed them less consciously through their reading. Younger pupils have not had enough time to learn or absorb the accurate spelling of all the words that they may want to write.

Aims

Spelling is a cross-curricular skill and will be taken into consideration during all lessons. The teaching of spelling is to be carried out regularly and systematically to ensure Key Stage objectives are met.

Teaching and Learning

Some points to bear in mind:

- Good spellers are usually good speakers and good readers – children need to be listened to, read to and read with.
- Spelling is about spotting patterns and generalising - it would be impossible to learn to spell each word separately! Seeing patterns, making analogies and generalising are key skills, which is why sorting activities with words are particularly helpful.
- Being able to spell is not an indicator of intelligence or overall writing ability, but, being able to spell accurately will help with the development of other inter-related writing skills. Particular support for those children with specific learning needs in terms of spelling is best discussed at an individual level.
- Spelling needs to be thought of as a thinking process rather than a rote learning process. If you can explain **why** a word is spelt in a particular way, you will probably remember how to spell it.
- Children will enjoy spelling if it feels like fun and if they feel good about themselves as spellers. We need, therefore, to be playful and positive in our approach – noticing and praising what children **can** do as well as helping them to correct their mistakes.

Transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2

Phonic knowledge should continue to underpin spelling but, increasingly, pupils need to understand the role of morphology (units meaning) and etymology (word derivation).

All earlier knowledge and skills will be developed and embedded, and further spelling rules and patterns are introduced. These will include:

- the unusual letter matches for phonemes
- prefixes e.g. *dis- mis- in- il- im- ir- re- sub- inter- super- anti- auto-*
- suffixes e.g. *-ation -ly -ous*
- words ending in *-able -ible -ant -ance, -ent -ence*
- homophones e.g. *groan/grown, peace/piece, practice/practise*
- silent letters
- the use of the hyphen
- the use of the apostrophe for possession (singular and plural)

Pupils will continue to build the bank of common words they always spell correctly and employ a range of strategies to attempt unfamiliar words.

They will be expected to

- think about the meaning of the word in the context of the sentence
- apply spelling rules and to develop their proof-reading skills
- have the skills to use both a dictionary and a thesaurus

Key Stage 1

In KS1 children will be taught spellings through their daily phonics lesson. Phonics is taught using the Unlocking Letters and Sounds (ULS) SSP which was validated by the DfE in December 2021. We begin teaching phonics in the first week of Term 1 in Reception and children make rapid progress in their reading journey. Children begin to learn the main sounds heard in the English Language and how they can be represented, as well as learning 'Common Exception' words for Phases 2, 3 and 4. They use these sounds to read and write simple words, captions and sentences. Children leave Reception being able to apply the phonemes taught within Phase 2, 3 and 4. In Year 1 through Phase 5a, b and c, they learn any alternative spellings and pronunciations for the graphemes and additional Common Exception Words. By the end of Year 1 children will have mastered using phonics to decode and blend when reading and segment when spelling. In Year 1, all children are screened using the national Phonics Screening Check.

In Year 2, phonics continues to be revisited to ensure mastery of the phonetic code and any child who does not meet age related expectations will continue to receive support to close identified gaps. The majority of children will move on to study the statutory spelling patterns listed in the National Curriculum in January of Year 2.

From January 2026, Year 2 are trialling the Spelling Shed scheme. Pupils who are not secure in their Phase 5 words will continue to have support in this area (daily ULS Phonics Interventions).

Key Stage 2

In lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4) children will be taught spellings 3 times a week, these are approximately 15-minute sessions. Testing of the spellings will be set at an additional time. Teachers will then ensure that the spellings that have been taught that week are followed up as homework. Homework will be sent home on a Monday and the spelling words will be tested on a Friday. All classes will teach a more formal lesson of spellings on a Monday in order to expose the children to their new word list before they are sent home as homework.

In upper Key Stage 2 (Year 5 and 6) children will be taught spellings 2 times a week, these are approximately 15-minute sessions. Testing of the spellings will be set at an additional time. Teachers will then ensure that the spellings that have been taught that week are followed up as homework. Homework will be sent home on a Monday and the spelling words will be tested on a Friday. All classes will teach a more formal lesson of spellings on a Monday in order to expose the children to their new word list before they are sent home as homework.

Word lists have been created for each year group to follow on a week by week basis. These word lists include the words from the statutory word-lists for Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6. They also group words according to spelling patterns to aid teaching, learning and progression across the school.

Week 1

*Words with the long /ai/
sound spell ei*

*eight
eighth
eighty
weight
neighbour
vein
sleigh
freight*

Week 3

*Words with the long /ai/
sound spell with ai*

*straight
campaign
contain
brain
faint
waist
praise
complaint*

From October 2025, Year 5 have been trialling the Spelling Shed Scheme.

Spelling Shed Medium Term Plan – Stage 5					
Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Step 1: Words ending in '-ous' and '-ious'	Step 7: Words ending in '-ant'	Step 13: Words ending in '-able' where the 'v' from the first word remains	Step 19: Words with 'ie' after 'c'	Step 25: Words that are homophones or near homophones	Step 31: Words with 'yphens'
ambitious, amphibious, curious, device, fictitious, infectious, notorious, nutritious, repulsive, vicious	abundant, brilliant, constant, grant, grantant, migrant, migrant, grantant, migrant, migrant	agendas, charged, charged, charged, charged, charged, charged, charged, charged, charged	society, deficient, efficient, emergency, efficient, efficient, efficient, efficient, efficient	advise, advice, device, device, device, device, device, device, device	co-author, co-operate, co-operate, co-operate, co-operate, co-operate, co-operate, co-operate
Step 2: Words ending in '-ous'	Step 8: Words ending in '-ant' and '-ant'	Step 14: Words that are adverbs of time	Step 20: Words where 'ie' can make an 'ee' sound	Step 26: Words that are homophones	Step 32: Challenge Words
precious, conscious, delicious, famous, glorious, malicious, precious, precious, precious, precious, precious	abundance, abundance, abundance, abundance, abundance, abundance, abundance, abundance, abundance	afterwards, earlier, eventually, finally, immediately, promptly, recently, tomorrow, whilst, yesterday	coffee, conserve, devious, either, either, either, either, either, either, either	axis, axe, allowed, about, after, after, after, after, after, after, after	afterwards, amidst, ancient, changeable, devious, dead, knight, referring, secure, immediate
Step 3: Words ending in '-ous'	Step 9: Words ending in '-ant' and '-ant'	Step 15: Words with 'uff' where the 'v' from the first word remains	Step 21: Words where 'ie' can make an 'ee' sound	Step 27: Words that are homophones	Step 33: Revision Words
artificial, beneficial, crucial, especially, final, place, special, multisyllabic, official, special	compliance, confidence, decent, enormous, emergent, frequent, enormous, challenge, transparent, urgent	confering, difference, inference, preference, profound, reference, referring, transference, transferring	afterthought, brought, brought, brought, brought, brought, brought, brought	break, broke, guest, guest, guest, guest, guest, guest, guest	accompany, achieve, advice, affect, able, brought, cannot, definitely, guessed, though
Step 4: Words ending in '-ous'	Step 10: Words with 'ie' after 'c'	Step 16: Words with 'ie' after 'c'	Step 22: Words containing 'ough'	Step 28: Words that are homophones or near homophones	Step 34: Revision Words
circumstantial, confidential, expedite, expedite, expedite, expedite, expedite, expedite, expedite	comfortable, dependable, expedite, expedite, expedite, expedite, expedite, expedite, expedite	kite, knight, knowledge, knuckle, nervous, phonetic, wealth, wreckage, whether, writer	although, brought, brought, brought, brought, brought, brought, brought	canal, canal, complement, complement, principle, principle, stationary, stationary, weary, weary	conscious, constant, controversy, conformity, earlier, elegance, fictitious, frequent, manageable, understandable
Step 5: Words ending in '-ous' and '-ous'	Step 11: Words ending in '-ant' and '-ant'	Step 17: Words with 'ie' after 'c'	Step 23: Adverbs of possibility and frequency	Step 29: Words that are homophones or near homophones	Step 35: Revision Words
commercial, controversial, controversial, controversial, controversial, controversial, controversial, controversial, controversial	comfortable, dependability, friendly, friendly, friendly, friendly, friendly, friendly, friendly	ascend, autumn, built, disciple, doubt, heart, long, month, seem, those	certainly, definitely, frequently, frequently, frequently, frequently, frequently, frequently	affect, effect, desert, desert, desert, desert, desert, desert, desert	ascend, awkward, conscience, doubt, devious, device, device, thought, transferring, writer
Step 6: Challenge Words	Step 12: Challenge Words	Step 18: Challenge Words	Step 24: Challenge Words	Step 30: Challenge Words	Step 36: Revision Words
appreciate, cemetery, conscious, convenience, environment, immediately, language, sufficient, through, vegetable	accommodate, available, conference, dictionary, marvelous, opportunity, secondary, sincerely, suggest, wealth	ancient, ambitious, awkward, advice, equipment, student, foreign, pronunciation, symbol, yacht	accompany, communicate, communicate, communicate, communicate, communicate, communicate, communicate	achieve, apparent, bargain, brain, community, malicious, music, necessary, vehicle, system	about, community, complement, desert, device, final, music, provide, principle, stationary



Stage 5

Lesson 1: Words ending in '-tious' and '-lous'

Objectives

- To be able to segment words into the correct syllables and phonemes
- To spell words ending in '-tious' and '-lous'

This Week's Words				
ambitious	fictitious	repetitious	curious	notorious
infectious	nutritious	amphibious	devious	obvious

How should Key Stage 2 teach spellings?

A range of activities should be used to teach your children spellings. Some activities will be much more suitable for certain spelling patterns than others. E.g. when teaching homophones, it is essential that children look at the difference between how the word looks as well as its meaning. Notebook templates have been created with a range of suitable activities on for each phase.

MATCHING PAIRS

GUESS MY WORD

Activities

A summary of how to support the learning of spellings:

- talk about the meanings and possible derivations of words
- identify the 'root' word in a longer word e.g. *musician* (*music*), *vicious* (*vice*)
- provide 'real' purposes for using knowledge of alphabetic order e.g. *looking up a telephone number, finding a book in the library*
- discussing some possible ways of remembering the spelling such as singing the letter names as a melody, mispronouncing the word to emphasize its spelling e.g. *Wed-nes-day*
- breaking words into syllables
- try out alternative spellings to see which 'looks right'
- highlight the tricky parts in a word e.g. *separate, beautiful, weird*
- provide a dictionary and illustrated thesaurus – give support with using these

- play word games together e.g. *hangman, bingo*
- encourage the '**look, say, cover, write, check**' strategy for learn spellings

Please see Phonics guidance for EYFS and Key Stage 1 activities.

Websites

A list of useful websites with free games and activities that you can use with your class:

[BBC Spellits](#) - (Spelling games) (KS2)

[BBC Bitesize](#) (Spelling and grammar) (KS2)

[Arcademic Skill Builders](#) (Literacy and maths games) (KS1 & KS2)

[Crickweb](#) (Literacy and maths educational games) (KS2)

[Kids Spell](#) (Create your own spelling lists & games) (KS1 & KS2)

[Fun Brain](#) (Maths, reading and spelling games) (KS1 & KS2)

[Learning Games for Kids](#) (Spelling and word games) (KS1 & KS2)

[Eduplace.com](#) (Levelled spelling and vocabulary games) (KS1 & KS2)

[PrimaryGames.com](#) (Spelling rules, incl. vowels, blends, plurals etc) (KS1 & KS2)

[ICT Games.com](#) (Look, cover, check game) (KS1 & KS2)

[Manythings.org](#) (Aimed at ESL students but includes useful spelling & vocabulary games) (KS2)

[Spelling city](#) (Vocabulary and spelling interactive activities, printable worksheets, games) (KS2)

