

OUR APPROACH TO THE TEACHING OF SPELLING AND HANDWRITING

SPELLING AT MILEFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Every class focuses on the key skills involved in spelling and handwriting. We start in EYFS with the basic skills of phonetic awareness/grapheme correspondence. Children are taught how to read and spell words using sounds (phonemes) and then the letters (graphemes) which represent these sounds.

In KS1, these foundations are built upon with further practice and the use of alien words in phonics sessions test children's understanding of key phonemes and graphemes. These words are nonsense words which can be read but do not exist. Children use their reading skills hand-in-hand with spelling as these skills help to unlock the skills required to spell words. High frequency words are learnt first in KS1 and children are shown how to decode and break down words to assist them read unfamiliar words. Weekly spellings and spelling rules are taught weekly to support the understanding of key words and spelling rules/patterns. Children are also given access to this at home through Spelling Shed.

In LKS2, children's phonetic awareness is built upon through further development of reading for purpose and locating spelling patterns. Spelling patterns and rules are taught weekly in daily spelling lessons. Children are taught rules for spelling unfamiliar words and are expected to learn and know, by heart, the 200 High Frequency Words from KS1 and the Y3/4 spelling list; these lists are embedded within English lessons to support children when writing extended pieces of writing to be able to achieve EXS or GDS by the end of Year 4.

In UKS2, children are expected to use all High Frequency Words and the Y3/4 spelling list words within their writing, spelled correctly. They then move onto learning Y5/6 spelling rules and patterns and key words from the list within the National Curriculum. Spelling rules are taught daily in spelling lessons and children are shown how rules impact on the spelling for particular words. Ambitious vocabulary and spellings are taught daily in English lessons and children are encouraged to use this in their own work, using author examples as models. Key topic words from Maths, Reading and wider curriculum lessons are expected to be spelled correctly within all areas of the curriculum too.

Reading is taught alongside spelling as wider reading supports the understanding of the contexts in which spellings are used. Children are asked spelling questions during the teaching of reading and phonics throughout school.

Spelling lessons are taught daily through the use of phonics/spelling lessons throughout school. Some groups of pupils may receive small group interventions to help them bridge any gaps in knowledge from phonics to spelling patterns.

HANDWRITING AT MILEFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

The process of handwriting starts in EYFS where they mark-make daily. Children are expected to begin by writing their names using a script suited to them. They are taught about appropriate pencil grip and shown how to move from grasping the pencil towards a pincer grip and then tripod grip. Pencil grips are used to assist children to become comfortable with this process.

Mark making is set up daily in class so children may access writing implements. We also teach how to form letters using soft materials such as sand, paint, water and foam. This allows children to see the process of forming letters separately before they are expected to link them to make words.

From EYFS-Y6, we follow a handwriting scheme 'BetterHandWritten'. This is a tailored scheme to meet the needs of pupils at Milefield: handwriting and letter formation is assessed termly and key letters are then taught. Handwriting practise is daily, with children having the opportunity to practise letters, put them into words, then sentences.

In KS1, pupils are taught to begin to form printed letters with every one formed from the line. This then enables transition to fully cursive joined writing in Years 2-6. Once children have grasped printed letters, they begin to link letters to make words. By the end of Key Stage 1 children will be able to write legibly, using upper and lower case letters appropriately and correct spacing between words. Children must practice starting sentences and writing names using a capital letter: this is modelled by the teacher during Literacy lessons.

In Y2-Y6, children are taught to develop their script into a firm pencil grasp which allows for fluency when handwriting any work. Cursive script is used and works alongside spelling lessons. This allows children, especially in KS2, to develop the flow and pattern in words and rarely spell them incorrectly.

HANDWRITING SCHEME- BETTERHANDWRITTEN.

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