



# Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar Policy

## **Aims of this Policy**

### **There are four main purposes to this policy:**

- To establish an entitlement for all pupils
- To establish expectations for teachers of this subject
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school
- To state the school's approaches to this subject in order to promote public, particularly parents' and carers', understanding of the curriculum.

### **The Importance of Grammar and Punctuation to the Curriculum**

Grammar is concerned with the way in which sentences are used in spoken language, in reading and in writing. Sentences are the construct which help give words their sense. The purpose of grammar teaching is to enable pupils to become conscious of patterns of language which they can apply in their own work to enhance meaning. The purpose of punctuation is to clarify the meaning of texts. Readers use punctuation to help make sense of written texts while writers use punctuation to help communicate intended meaning to the reader.

### **Strategy for Implementation**

The National Curriculum gives a clear developmental programme for the introduction and acquisition of knowledge about grammar and punctuation. Grammar and punctuation will be taught during the Literacy lesson and should be explicitly referred to during direct teaching, then alluded to during the remainder of the lesson. Therefore the children will receive direct teaching and also be aware of punctuation and grammar within the structures of reading and writing which are the main focus of the lesson.

### **Teaching and Learning**

To teach pupils about grammar and punctuation, the emphasis is on the close consideration of examples of language in use, including pupils' own writing and on the exploration of language as a system. The aim is to develop pupils' curiosity about language and their capacity to observe and reflect, which will in turn enable them to develop more control and choice in their use of language.

### **The Role of the Teacher**

- To provide direct teaching and accurate explicit modelling of grammar and punctuation choices during guided and modelled writing.
- To provide resources and an environment which promotes a developing understanding of grammar and punctuation including a SPAG focussed display referring their year group's specific requirements as exemplified by the New Curriculum in order to allow children to achieve and exceed.
- To monitor pupil's progress and determine targets for via marking and group working and intervene with specific targets as required.
- The teaching of correct grammatical terminology is vital to the children's understanding and use of the English language and as such all teachers must use the terminology set down in the National Curriculum grammar and punctuation appendices. This will enable pupils to discuss, use and recognise their grammatical knowledge into independent reading and writing.
- Within the planning of Literacy, the grammar or punctuation feature to be taught must be explicitly referred to.
- Teachers must demonstrate the use of grammatical features at word level (morphology), sentence level (syntax) and text level (conventions of style and organisation). Guided writing, during the literacy lesson, provides opportunities for the pupils to focus on specific aspects of grammar and

punctuation, while the group/independent sessions provide helpful contexts for investigations and application of grammatical knowledge in pupils' own writing.

- Specific grammar, punctuation and spelling will be taught and then teachers will assess application in writing tasks.
- During marking spelling, punctuation and grammar will be marked using the following codes:

Error	Code	Outcome
Spelling	SP Highlighted in orange in book	Use dictionary Use electronic spellcheckers Write correct spelling in books
Missing paragraphs	//	Children to place this sign where they consider the new paragraph to begin //
Missing capital letter	Letter circled in red	Children to correct
Missing full stops	A circle	Children to correct
Grammatical error	G	Children will correct their sentence(s) in their books

### **The Monitoring of Punctuation and Grammar**

- The Literacy exercise books will be monitored to demonstrate a regular focus upon one aspect of the punctuation and grammar expectations as set out in the New Curriculum appendices.
- The results of spelling assessment will be available in teacher's files for analysis and comparison with spelling ages.
- A standardised spelling age test will be taken by children twice each year and results discussed with parents.
- Regular assessments using work in books, spelling tests and spelling scores will enable teachers to make an informed assessment of their pupil's ability to:
  1. Recognise the use of punctuation and grammar.
  2. Recognise grammatical terminology and apply that knowledge.
  3. Apply taught spellings within written work.
  4. Apply explicit and implicit grammatical knowledge in an assessed situation.

### **Continuity and Progression**

In Years 3 and 4 pupils are introduced to the grammatical functions of different types of word and they begin to explore how sentences are constructed. The emphasis will be on the grammatical labelling (the naming of parts of speech) and on discovering and experimenting with their function, i.e. what words can be made to do.

Explicit teaching of a wider range of punctuation marks occurs later on in these years and this is reflected by their use in pupils' writing. However, care is taken that punctuation is taught within the context of what is being read and what the pupils need to use in their own writing. Therefore children will be introduced to an explicit use of punctuation and then guided to see its use in action in text.

In Years 5 and 6 this basic knowledge is extended through the close reading and discussion of carefully chosen examples from a range of text-types. In their writing pupils are encouraged to draw on this understanding to develop a sense of

individual, ambitious style, to experiment with the construction of complex sentences and to restructure their own and others' sentences for clarity and effect.

### **Spelling: Our Aims at Moorpark**

To enable pupils how to become natural and accurate spellers, we approach this in three ways:

1. Firstly, by using a structured approach as outlined in the National Curriculum.
2. Secondly, by ensuring that pupils learn and practise those words which they most frequently misspell as individuals.
3. Thirdly, by increasing their spelling vocabulary by learning how to spell and by using the technical and subject-specific words which are specified for year groups within the National Curriculum.

### **The Role of the Teacher is to:**

- Follow the school policy to help each child develop as a confident and independent speller
- Provide direct teaching and accurate modelling
- Provide resources and an environment which promotes good spelling
- Observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development

### **Continuity and Progression**

At Key Stage 2 there is an emphasis on the recognition of letter strings, visual patterns and analogies, the application of spelling conventions, the use of a range of word resources and the morphology of words. Nevertheless, it is recognised that some pupils will need to consolidate the phonic knowledge and skills from Key Stage 1.

An investigative approach is taken to the teaching of spelling. Building on the approaches introduced in Key Stage 1, there is an emphasis on developing confidence and independence. It is expected that pupils assume increased responsibility by identifying their own spelling errors, making reasoned choices about likely alternatives and using a range of resources (dictionaries and word banks) for making corrections.

### **Active Spelling at Moorpark:**

- All children will take part in 15 minute spelling lessons, which occur three times per week, following the New National Curriculum.
- These lessons will follow a model of 'teach, practise, apply', utilising approaches and games.
- In the teach session the rule or word will be taught explicitly with examples.
- In the practise session the children will have the opportunity to access deep learning using a range of strategies as listed below.
- In the apply session, the children will receive a series of dictated sentences containing their spellings for the week which will include words from the National Curriculum Statutory Spelling Banks, the Letters and Sounds High Frequency Word List and those identified as common errors within the classroom.
- Statutory spellings will be taught in line with the curriculum.

- Students' grammar and punctuation work should be in English books and follow the school presentation and marking policies.
- All children in KS2 will have their own diaries in which to write their own common errors and to encourage a wide and ambitious selection of vocabulary when writing. These will be used within all lessons.
- Standardised spelling age tests will be used twice per year from Year 3 – 6, using No-Nonsense Spelling Scheme and assessments. These results will be used to monitor progress and inform interventions.
- Precision teaching will be delivered as needed within each classroom decided upon by the classroom teacher using the data available from the spelling age exam taken in September and February. Precision teaching files will be monitored by SLT half termly to assess the impact of the intervention and said files will be available in the appropriate classroom at all times.

### Spelling Activities

It has been found that children learn to spell better, quicker and more easily if they are given short but fun activities on a daily basis. Tasks that are **interactive** and can be undertaken **collaboratively** are more effective than worksheets and will lead to pupils becoming more independent and focused learners.

Below are some suggestions for spelling activities that may be used at Moorpark. Some are more suited to one particular age but others can be used in every class from Year 3 to Year 6.

### Spelling Strategies

Pupils should be given **strategies** to help them learn to spell. Examples are below.

- **Rhyme** – if they can spell mouse, they should be able to spell house
- Write the word with **different coloured pens** to break it into sections. This will help to teach the pupils to learn to spell in 'chunks' rather than 'letter by letter'
- Use **different coloured post-its**, one for each word. This will help pupils visualise the word when they are trying to recall it.
- Write the word in **sand, finger paint** etc –helps form memory hooks.
- Use **big paper and big felt pens** – not always a jotter.
- **Chant the syllables** eg Wed-**nes**-day, emphasising the tricky bit. Use actions for each syllable.
- **Draw a picture** to help with a word eg big elephants can always understand small elephants = because
- **Make the word into a picture** eg bed could be drawn to look like a bed

### 1. Look, Cover, Write, Check - TRIOS

This is often the basic method used in classes but the expectation is that the pupil will be motivated and be able to self-teach. Mistakes are often written out three times and become embedded.

Children may be put in same ability trios where they check each others' lists and then swap around again so the checkers are checked!

Alternatively, the teacher shows the pupils the word, covers it and then the pupils write the word. The teacher would then show the word again for the pupils to check. Again this method has a higher success rate than when the pupils work as individuals.

## **2. Look, Cover, Write, Check – ‘SHOW ME’**

Pupils work in pairs. Both pupils look at the same word. It is then covered and both pupils write the word on an individual whiteboard. They then reveal their word - ‘one two three, show me’ - and check that they both have the same spelling. This is repeated with every word on their list. A quick activity that is very effective which can also be done in trios or quartets.

## **3. Flashcards**

This is similar to the ‘show me’ activity above. Pupils quickly write out words on flashcards, making sure that they have the correct spellings. One reads aloud from a card and the other pupil writes the word on a whiteboard. This time when they say ‘show me’, one shows the correct spelling on the card and the other shows their attempt on the whiteboard. Pupils take turns reading or spelling.

## **4. Definitions**

This exercise is a more worthwhile learning experience by asking pupils to work in pairs. Pupils are given one dictionary to share and work together to find and write the definition of each word. By using a selection of dictionaries, pairs can then share and compare their definitions with another pair.

## **5. Spelling Aloud**

Using flashcards, as above, one pupil reads a word aloud. Their partner spells the word out loud. If they spell correctly, they ‘win’ the card. If they are incorrect, the card is put to the bottom of the pile. Pupils take turns and the ‘winner’ is the one who has most cards at the end of the game.

## **6. Spelling Tennis**

Pupils work in trios. One takes on the role of both ‘reader’ and ‘checker’. The other two pupils spell the word by saying alternative letters until the whole word is spelt. If a mistake is made, the checker stops the game and shows them the correct spelling. The word is then spelt again and then put to the bottom of the pile. Correct words are discarded. Pupils take turns to be the checker.

## **7. Alphabetical Order**

Pupils write out their spelling list in alphabetical order.

## **8. Muddled Letters**

Pupils rewrite each of their spelling words in a muddled up fashion eg ‘beautiful’ could be written ‘befulitau’. It is better if they always put the initial letter in the correct place. These muddled lists are then swapped with someone with same spelling words. Without looking at the correct list, pupils have to rewrite each word correctly.

## **9. Dictionary Race**

Pupils work in threes using a dictionary each. They take turns to call out one of their spelling words which is then hidden. The idea is to be the first to locate the word in the dictionary. This not only helps them to remember how to spell, it is also excellent for practising dictionary skills.

## **10. Syllables**

Working in twos, pupils split their spelling words into syllables eg beau-ti-ful.

Again close attention to details is needed so it helps them to retain more difficult spellings.

### **11. Words within Words**

Pupils try to find smaller words inside each of their spelling words without rearranging the letters. Eg using the word 'practising', you could find – 'act' 'sing' 'in' 'is'. Set a time limit, say 10 minutes, for them to work individually to find as many as possible using all their spelling words. Finish off with an oral feedback session to pull all their suggestions together.

### **12. Silly Story**

Working in pairs, pupils write a short story (about a paragraph) using as many of their spelling words as possible. Again, set a time limit of about 10 minutes. Stories can be shared with another pair or with the whole class – the stories are usually very silly so children enjoy this activity.

### **13. Kim's Game**

This game can be played in groups of 4 to 6. Spelling words are written on cards and laid out on the table. The pupils study the words. They then look away and a nominated person removes *one* of the cards. Pupils turn back, look at the remaining cards and have 2 minutes (use an egg timer) to write the missing word on a whiteboard which they keep hidden. All the guesses are then revealed at the same time. If they are correct, they win a point, but only if it is spelt correctly!

### **14. Magnetic Letters**

Working with a partner, younger pupils would first look at a word from their list or from a flash card, cover it and then make their word using magnetic letters. This would continue until all the words are displayed. Another pair would then be asked to check their spellings.

### **15. Wordsearch**

Using squared paper, pupils make a wordsearch with their spelling words. Words are NOT written out underneath. They need to look really closely to make sure that they haven't made a mistake and that they have included all their words.

For the next spelling session, wordsearches are swapped with another member of the same spelling group. Words are ringed and then written out underneath. How many can they find?

They are then swapped back and marked by the original owner of the wordsearch.

### **16. Mnemonics**

Show the children an example of a mnemonic and explain why they are used eg **big elephants can always understand small elephants because**

Working with a partner, pupils try to make up a mnemonic for one or two of their trickiest spelling words. A time limit should be set – again about 10 minutes. Their mnemonics can then be shared with another pair, the whole group or displayed on the wall for everyone to use.

### **17. Lucky Dip**

This is a game best played in twos or threes. Pupils take turns to pick out 12 plastic letters from a bag. They mustn't look into the bag, as it is 'lucky dip'. The picked letters are placed in front of them and the rest of the letters are left in the bag. The idea is to make one of their spelling words out of the letters. The pupils take turns to pick one new letter out of the bag and discard one that they don't want any more.

This carries on until someone has the right letters to make one of their spelling words. The others check that it is indeed spelt correctly. The game then starts over again.

### **18. Guess the Word**

Pupils work in pairs. One pupil chooses one of their spelling words, and then writes one letter on a whiteboard at a time. They can begin *anywhere* in the word – it does not have to be at the beginning. The other pupil tries to guess the word after each letter is added. If they guess correctly, they must spell the whole word to win the points. The fewer letters that have been given – the more points to be won.

### **19. Crossword**

Using squared paper, pupils make a crossword using their spelling words. Definitions are written below to form the clues. The children may have already written the definitions during a previous spelling session.

During a further session, crosswords are swapped and completed by another member of the group. These would then be checked by the pupil who created the crossword.

### **20. Noughts and Crosses**

This is a very simple activity where pupils can work within mixed or same ability pairings. Pupils swap lists and ask their partner to spell one of the words. If the word is spelt correctly, the appropriate mark is placed on a noughts and crosses grid. If wrong, no mark is written but their mistake explained and the correct spelling shown. A 10-15 minute time limit is probably long enough to play several games.

### **21. Dragon's Dinner**

Pupils have counters, one for each of their target words. They take turns in spelling. If they make a misspelling, they lose a counter to the dragon. The dragon can be a pupil with a list of the words or all other pupils can have a list to check the words and the dragon can be a picture/model.

### **22. Find the Word**

This is a good activity for younger pupils who are learning how to spell High Frequency words. Each pair is given a highlighter pen and piece of text, for example a newspaper or advert. The teacher writes a few common words on the blackboard and the children highlight as many as they can find. Younger children may need to be given a highlighter each or you may ask that each common word is highlighted using a different colour.

This activity can also be used to highlight a spelling pattern in older classes eg 'ight' , 'ei/ie'.

Once highlighted, the words could be written in a list to share with another group.

### **23. The Weakest Link**

Just like the TV programme. Pupils work in groups of 4-8. Each person has a whiteboard. The 'presenter' has a list of words and displays a timer. Each person is asked a spelling in turn. They either write the spelling on the whiteboard or say it aloud. At the end of each 'round' each person uses their whiteboard to 'vote' off who they think is the 'weakest link' and a new round begins with a shorter time limit.

### **24. Spell, Spell, Trade**

Each member of the group has one word on a piece of paper. They walk about until they meet another member of their group. They then ask each other to spell their



word. If they get it wrong, they are shown the word and then try again. Once they have both spelled the word, they trade and go off to meet another person. All groups can play this at the same time just by colour coding the paper ie the pupils with the yellow cards only meet up with yellow cards.

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