

Spelling at Birkwood

At our core, we are steadfast in our belief that repeated practice, short-term retrieval and small-step goal achievement is key to spelling improvement. We teach spelling discretely through the RWI phonics programme in KS1 and through discrete teaching and practice opportunities reinforced by Spelling Shed.

Daily lesson sequence:

1. revisit
2. teach
3. practice
4. apply

*Dictation comes in at steps 3 & 4

Our teaching sequence involves some or all of the following pedagogies:

- opportunities to practise and apply prior learning
- discrete teaching of new spelling rule or set of words on Mondays
- followed up with additional daily activities to practise and recall new spellings
- learning consolidated through daily practice
- look, say, cover, practice, check, correct, repeat
- fun ways to practice writing the rule / part of word e.g.: colours, patterns
- spelling staircase
- praise for almost correct e.g.: “first and last letters correct, an error to change in the centre.” Encourage positive mindset.
- teachers modelling successful sentences
- dictated sentences as a strategy to practise and recall
- quiz on Fridays to check and assess learning
- short interventions to revisit if needed for those pupils falling behind
- initial teaching input on Fridays for 10 new rules / words
- spelling rule / words spellings sent home on Fridays

For further pedagogical choices, see

[The National College – Teaching Spelling Effectively](#)

Orthography

Orthography is how patterns of letters are used to make certain spoken sounds in a language. During spelling teaching, students will continue to build on the firm foundations built whilst studying phonics in their early years of education. They will continue to break down spellings into the smallest units of sound and cluster them into syllables in order to read and write words efficiently. Through adult-led discussion and investigation children will

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become more secure in their knowledge of English orthography based on the frequency and position of the sounds within words.

Morphology

Morphology describes how words are structured into subcomponents to give meaning. Children study words; word parts; their meanings and how this affects spelling. Lessons throughout our spelling programme consolidate children's knowledge of common morphemes such as root formations, prefixes and suffixes.

Etymology

Etymology describes the origins of words, which can lead to certain patterns of spelling. Most lessons in our spelling programme include an etymology element that allows staff to teach children about the origin of the words that they are learning about. Children see how the English language has, over time, borrowed and integrated words and spellings from a range of source languages. For example, the Latinate verbs which follow Latin prepositions in English words such as: -act (do), -pute (think) or -opt (choose).

The EEF Improving Literacy In Key Stage 2 Guidance Report says:

"Fast and accurate spelling of an extensive vocabulary is a key component of writing fluency. Many of the skills that support word reading will also support spelling, but spelling demands great specificity and has different motor demands. There is limited high quality evidence about how to teach spelling, but it is clear that spelling should be actively taught rather than simply tested.

Phonics provides a foundation for effective spelling, which can be applied alongside other strategies such as focusing on morphemes. By analysing the types of spelling errors pupils make it is possible to provide support specific to their needs."

The report goes on to identify the most common spelling errors as being phonological, orthographical or morphological. The spelling programme at Birkwood provides the tools to explicitly teach in a way that addresses these kinds of needs - giving 100% National Curriculum coverage.