



1. INTRODUCTION

This policy document is written after consultation with the teaching staff and the Governor with responsibility for Literacy and is presented to the Local Education Authority and the Governing Body in the Autumn term 2003 and updated Spring term 2008.

It is a working document, which reflects the ethos and practice within the school in relation to the teaching of Spelling. It has been written with due regard to the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy schemes of work and the National Curriculum and it will be monitored and evaluated according to changes within these documents as and when they arise.

The Literacy coordinator: Julie Hakner KS1 Carolyn Baker KS2

The role of the co-ordinator: *See Appendix 1 :Literacy Coordinator Job Description*

2. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

The whole ethos of Molescroft Primary School is to provide every child with a happy, caring, learning environment in which he or she can develop their full potential - whatever their needs and irrespective of ability race or gender.

Molescroft Primary school believes that spelling is an important aspect of writing but it must not be allowed to dominate our responses to children's writing. Very good efforts at writing can often be dismissed because of basic spelling errors and this can damage a child's perception of him or herself as a writer. We believe that a positive and interactive approach to spelling will encourage children to recognise their achievements in spelling rather than allowing spelling to be associated simply with mistakes and corrections. Through careful teaching and using specific strategies to develop spelling through its stages, we can encourage children to investigate and overcome spelling problems, thus becoming more confident writers.

AIMS.

The aims of Molescroft Primary School are:

- To teach spelling systematically throughout the school, using the PNS and Letters and Sounds as a framework.
- To teach the Word element of the PNS effectively focusing on Phonological Awareness, Word Recognition, Graphic knowledge and Spelling knowledge.



- To encourage children to develop and learn a personal bank of frequently used words.
- To equip children with the strategies to tackle unknown words independently and sensibly, thus avoiding dependence upon the teacher.
- To make children aware of the Writing Process so that they can write fluently, confidently and independently, concentrating on Spelling when and where it is appropriate.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing body should, in cooperation with the head teacher, determine the school's general policy and approach to spelling at Molescroft Primary School.

The Literacy coordinator should advise the Headteacher, staff and Governors of the current and changing practice in spelling at Molescroft Primary School and keep them up to date with new initiatives put forward by the Government and LEA.

The Teaching Staff should in cooperation with the Headteacher and Literacy coordinator, plan and deliver effective and investigative-style spelling lessons which reflect the school policy.

The SENCO should, in cooperation with the Headteacher, Literacy Coordinator and teaching staff provide support and additional spelling resources for children with Special Educational Needs.

4. PRACTICE

DEVELOPING SPELLING.

In order to be an efficient speller, a child needs to:

- Be able to segment words into component phonemes;
- Know which graphemes represent the phonemes in words;
- Be able to distinguish visually between words which are 'legitimately' spelled, eg wait, wate;
- Know the meanings of the homophones, eg been and bean, so that the correct spelling is used;
- Recall, eg by mental image, by memorising order of tricky letters, 'tricky' words;
- Know spelling conventions, eg, relating to double letters;
- Look for similarities in the spellings of words which are etymologically related, eg, sign, signal.



THE TEACHING OF SPELLING.

In order to guide children to becoming more confident spellers, the teaching of spelling is as investigative as possible. The lessons provide visual, auditory and kinaesthetic elements in which the children play a vital role in their own learning. The spelling lessons try to incorporate the successful elements of an Accelerated Learning lesson.

The Progression of approaches which are used throughout the school are laid out in the 'Spelling Progression' chart in Appendix 7

In KS1, daily activities follow the 'Letters and Sounds' framework and are taught initially using the Jolly Phonics scheme. Section 4 of Developing Early Writing is also followed closely.

In KS2, investigations are taken from and based upon the KS2 Spelling Bank book, the Grammar for Writing book, both from DFES and Spelling for Literacy an A&C Black publication. These books are used in order to fulfill the objectives in the Primary National Strategy.

The key words used in the teaching of spelling are used from year to year to ensure continuity and aid children's understanding: *blend, segment, phonemes* and *graphemes* are the more common key words.

THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT.

As part of the Accelerated Learning process, each child has access to the key words that may use in their writing. This is kept in their spelling logs or may be on laminated mats on their tables.(Appendix 2a KS1 : Appendix 2b KS2)

The key words for Key Stage 1 are taken from the Letter and Sounds phases and first 100 key words.

The key words for Key Stage 2 are taken from the NLS Year 4/5 words.

Each classroom also has a visual reminder of the Proof-reading system and the Spelling Strategies for use in the lesson when appropriate. In KS1, these visual reminders are colourful and eye-catching to encourage children to become more independent in their writing and spelling work. In KS2, the visual reminders are A3 enlarged versions of the ones in their Spelling Logs.

SPELLING ROUTINES IN KEY STAGE 1 AND 2.

Spelling Logs.

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Each child is given a green Esselte folder in Year 1. This is a personal Spelling Log in which all spelling-related work is stored. This includes any spelling investigations completed in class; spelling homework; spelling tests; spelling walls; spelling mats of the relevant keywords; visual reminders of the Spelling Strategy Checklist; Proof-reading checklist; Look/Say/Cover/Write/Check sheets and other relevant material. The Spelling Logs are given to the next class teacher at the beginning of each new academic year as an annual record of the child's spelling work. Any further work in the new academic year will be added to it.

Spelling Walls.

Each child is encouraged to keep a spelling wall of personal spellings that need to be learnt. The words that the child transfers on to his/her spelling wall have already been identified by the teacher as a word that the child is spelling incorrectly but should already know according to his/her ability. In this sense, the spelling walls are differentiated according to spelling ability. How to make the most efficient use of the walls is taught and modelled in the Literacy lesson and a Guidance for Parents is put in to their Spelling Logs (See Appendix 3a : Spelling Wall for KS1: Appendix 3b Spelling Wall for KS2: Appendix 4: Instructions on how to use a Spelling Wall.)

The Spelling Checklist.

One of our aims is to make the children in KS1 and KS2 as independent as possible in their approach to spelling. As a staff we have unanimously agreed that a queue of children waiting for 'spellings' is both frustrating for child and teacher and a waste of valuable 'independent work' time.

In KS2, the Spelling Checklist shows a child how to find a correct spelling by suggesting various stages that s/he may follow. The purpose of the Spelling Checklist and how to use it is modelled in the Literacy lesson until the children are familiar with the stages. The Spelling Checklist is put in to the Spelling Logs as a reminder and each teacher has an A3 laminated version as a teaching tool or aide memoir. The Checklist can also be found on the reverse of the laminated table Spelling Mats (Appendix 5: Spelling Checklist.)

In KS1, the teachers have the keywords displayed and the children are encouraged to 'have a try' at an unknown word first. The teacher then discusses the attempt referring to any relevant phonics teaching in order to remind the child. The Spelling Strategy Checklist has been adapted in to a 'Spelling Spider' in an Accelerated Learning format.

The Proof-Reading System.

Within the Literacy lesson, proof-reading techniques are taught using 'Teacher Demonstration' and 'Shared Writing' teaching methods. The children are made aware that checking their work for spelling mistakes is a vital and important part of the Writing Process. We agree as a staff that children should have the ability to proof-read work independently and not waste time queuing up to have their writing checked. We also want



to avoid the scenario where children become accustomed to teachers proof-reading their work and finding all the mistakes for them. The Proof-reading system is taught and referred to in lessons to ensure that the children can proof-read work independently.

In KS2, the Proof-reading system is the model shown in Appendix 6.

In KS1, the Proof-Reading system has been adapted to suit the needs of the children. Year 1 classes use the Sentence Snake. Year 2 use the Checklist Cards as advised by the LEA Literacy team but they also have the KS2 Proof-reading System to refer to in their Spelling Logs.

Dictionary Use.

There are a range of dictionaries and thesauri in each class which are differentiated in ability levels to suit the range of needs within the Literacy groups. As well as doing investigations using dictionaries and undertaking specific dictionary work, the children are also encouraged to have dictionaries on the table during Guided Reading in order to research the meaning of an unknown word. The use of dictionaries also plays a part in the Spelling Strategy Checklist for KS2.

Marking Writing.

From Year 2 upwards, children are becoming more familiar with the Writing Process, which is displayed in most classrooms as a reminder. The children understand that the purpose of the Thinking, Planning and Drafting stages of writing is to bring cohesion and clarity to their thought processes and ideas. The first drafts of the writing should not be interrupted and troubled with lengthy searches for correct spellings. When the children move on to the Proof-Reading stage however, the time is given to checking any unfamiliar or unsure words. These words will have already been high-lighted within the writing because children are encouraged to put a line under any words they feel may need investigating later. The children go through the Proof-reading stages and then use the Spelling Strategy Checklist to investigate unknown words.

As teachers, our initial responses to a child's piece of work particularly at the Drafting stage should be related to the content (Composition and Effect) and should concentrate on the positive aspects of the writing. Later on, during the Proof-reading stage, any words that the child should know can be high-lighted using the symbol **Sp** and written correctly for them to transfer on to their Spelling Walls. Children should also be encouraged to transfer words that they find particularly useful on to their spelling walls. These words may be found in Reading books or during Guided Reading sessions.

SPELLING AND ASSESSMENT.

Standardised Testing of Spelling.

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In KS1 and KS2, children are tested every July using the NFER Single Word Spelling Test. A spelling quotient and a spelling age is found for each child. The results are then used to identify the more-able and less-able spellers in each Literacy group. The information is particularly useful when planning Spelling work to inform the teacher which group may need input in the Guided Writing session and which group may need extension work.

For children on the SEN register, information gathered from the SPAR spelling results is used to inform the SENCO and class teacher of the children who may need specific spelling targets on their IEPs. The information is also useful when planning Literacy groupings.

In Year 2 and Year 6, children sit a spelling test as part of their National SATs tests. In addition to this, Year 3, 4 and 5, children sit a spelling test as part of the Optional SATs tests. The spelling test results forms part of the overall English level awarded.

These results are used in the same way as the NFER spelling test results and help the school to build a more focused picture of each child's ability in spelling.

Classroom Testing of Spelling.

As teaching of Spelling is based on the Letters and Sounds scheme in KS1 and Spelling Bank and Grammar for Writing books in KS2, the testing of any spelling work may differ in each year group.

As a staff we agree that the testing of random words in isolation which are not linked to any investigation has very little value and it is doubtful that all children will apply the new spellings in their work. We decided that we would test in the following way:

After a spelling investigation, we will test the children's new learning and retention of knowledge. This may be achieved in many ways such as giving a list of words to learn and spell (linked to the investigation); a dictated passage including target words or an extension of the investigation which can be completed at home. The results of these tests will be put in to the children's spelling logs. We will use the information gained from the test as a class assessment of progress and to inform future planning.

HOMEWORK AND SPELLING.

Children in KS2 will have spelling homework set. This homework will be appropriate to their needs and will be linked to the spelling investigations covered in the Literacy lessons. If there is no relevant spelling homework for a particular week, children are encouraged to learn the words on their Spelling walls and a parent/carer becomes their spelling partner. Information on how to use the Spelling Wall is included in the Spelling Log.

5. DOCUMENTATION



Year Group objectives for the teaching of spelling can be found in the Primary National Framework

Specific Phonic Teaching can be found in Letters and Sounds hand book.

In the booklet 'Developing Early Writing' from DFES, Section 4 deals with developing Spelling.

Objectives and Ideas for Spelling Investigations can be found in The Spelling Bank for KS2 book and Grammar for Writing book.

6. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

For certain children, it may be relevant to follow a more structured phonics and spelling scheme in order to meet their specific learning needs. These children are sometimes withdrawn from lessons in order to follow the PAT scheme- Phonological Awareness Training. The children are taught by Teaching Assistants who have the relevant experience in teaching PAT. PAT links the teaching of phonics, spelling and reading successfully and was recommended by SENSS (Special Educational Needs Support Services) PAT follows the following stages:

- A child learns a new spelling pattern (this varies according to the stage but may be an initial consonant blend etc) The child then investigates words that contain the new spelling pattern.
- The child then reads 20 words containing the new spelling pattern and is tested on the spelling of 10 out of 20 words.
- The teacher then dictates 5 sentences which contain the key words investigated and these are checked.
- If the child is successful, they move on to the next spelling pattern.

Star Spell is also used in school which is a structured, interactive computer programme. The use of coloured transparencies aids spelling in some cases as does the teaching of Rainbow writing.

7. INSET

The Literacy coordinators will attend spelling courses organised by the Literacy advisers and inspector in the Borough. The Literacy coordinator will deliver INSET on changes to National and East Riding policy on spelling.

8 LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Job Description for Literacy Coordinator.
- 2a. Key words table mat KS1
- 2b. Key words table mat KS2
- 3a. Spelling Wall used in KS1



- 3b. Spelling Wall used in KS2
4. Instructions on how to use the spelling wall (for children and parents)
5. The Spelling Strategy Checklist for Year 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.
6. The Proof-Reading system for KS2.
7. Progression in spelling chart

I. USEFUL PUBLICATIONS

DfES/QCA, *The National Curriculum: Handbook for primary teachers in England*, HMSO, London, 1999

DfES: *The National Literacy Strategy-Framework for Teaching*, DfES, London 1998

DfES: *The National Literacy Strategy- Developing Early Writing*, DfES, London 2001

DfES: *The National Literacy Strategy- Grammar For Writing*, DfES, London, 2000.

DfES: *The National Literacy Strategy- Spelling Bank*, DfES, London, 1999.

DfES: *The Primary National Strategy for Literacy*, 2007

Andrew and Brodie: *Spelling for Literacy*, A &C Black London 2005