

TIMAT Phonics & Spelling Policy



The Inspire Multi Academy Trust (South West)

March 2026



The Inspire Multi Academy Trust
Phonics & Spelling Policy








Rationale

“Is spelling caught or taught? For the majority of children, reading extensively is not sufficient to secure accurate spelling; spelling must be taught explicitly and systematically.”

Aims





The teaching of phonics and then spelling aims to develop pupils as independent spellers who take an active part in their own learning. It will also enable children to decode words independently when reading and communicate more easily and effectively when writing. Pupils are taught the knowledge and skills they need to become independent spellers. In addition to this, at TIMAT we will enable all of our pupils, to develop, to their full potential, the ability to communicate effectively and confidently for a wide variety of purposes and audiences.

Objectives

-  To develop each child as a confident and independent speller.
-  To observe and monitor the progress of children and identify further targets for development.
-  To give every child access to direct teaching and accurate modelling of spelling.
-  In Reception, Key Stage 1 and where necessary in Key Stage 2, the ‘Read Write Inc’ (RWI) phonics programme is primarily used to give children a firm grasp of basic phonetic skills.
-  There is a daily discrete teaching of phonics in Reception and Key Stage 1 for approximately 45 minutes; each of these sessions address the needs of all children.
-  In Key Stage 2, for those children who have achieved completion of RWI, the Spelling Appendix from the English National Curriculum will build on the children’s phonic skills and develop their awareness of spelling rules, patterns and structures. This will happen daily throughout the school.
-  Spellings are marked according to the Responding to Children’s Learning Policy.

Phonics and Spelling Curriculum Planning

The teaching of phonics and spelling aims to show pupils how to become natural and accurate spellers. The school approaches this in four ways;

-  Firstly by using the programme ‘Read Write Inc’ and then the objectives and spelling rules laid out in Appendix 1 of the English National Curriculum to base planning and the series of teaching on.
-  Secondly, by ensuring pupils learn and practise new phonemes and sounds patterns taught, including words, which they find most challenging. Such words are to be addressed when marking pieces of writing across the curriculum, through teachers drawing a wiggly line underneath the incorrectly spelt word. The teacher can then write the correct spelling above the word or in the margin. If the child is misspelling a High Frequency Word or one the teacher feels they should know, they can then write the words to be copied in the child’s book. (See Responding to Children’s Learning Policy).
-  Thirdly, by increasing their spelling vocabulary by learning how to spell and by using the technical and subject-specific words which occur across the curriculum.
-  Finally, the school’s Handwriting Policy, also acts as an aid to develop accurate spellings from all pupils.

Once children have completed the Read Write Inc. programme spelling will be planned for based upon a four-part lesson model. The four stages are:

1. **Revisit, explain, use**

- The first part of the sequence consists of lively oral and quick-write activities with two purposes: to revise and secure prior learning and to introduce and explain new learning. An important aspect of this part of the sequence is that children use the words orally, in context, so that they have a clear understanding of what they are learning. For example, in a unit related to learning the correct spelling of verb endings, the children need to have a clear understanding of the concept of tense.

2. **Teach, model, define**

- Provide a range of direct teaching activities, including teacher modelling and involving the children in the new learning. For example, after an introductory activity based on the spelling of plurals, the teacher and children define the categories and generalise the rules for their formation.

3. **Practise, explore, investigate**

- Provide children with the opportunity to work independently, in pairs or in small groups, using a range of strategies to practise and consolidate new learning.

4. **Apply, assess, reflect**

- revise new learning
- apply the words orally and in writing
- reflect and assess progress.
- ask children to apply their learning in writing, both through a short, dictated piece and by composing their own sentence for their partner to transform by adding affixes to selected

Reception and Key Stage 1

Children start on the Read Write Inc programme as soon as they start in Reception where they learn to discriminate and make connections between letter sounds used in reading (phonemes) and letter names used for spelling (graphemes). Phonics is taught on a daily basis and children are taught in differentiated groups. The RWI programme allows children to

For reading:

Revise grapheme/phoneme correspondences (GPCs) taught in earlier sessions, are **taught** new GPCs, **practise** reading words containing those GPC. They are **taught** how to read common exception words and **practise** reading 'decodable' phrases, sentences and books that match the GPCs and exception words they already know.

For writing (spelling and handwriting):

Practise segmenting spoken words into their individual sounds, choose which letter or letters to represent each sound, respond to dictation from the teacher, **practising** writing words in sentences that include only the GPCs and exception words they have learnt

In addition to this, pupils learn how to read and spell Common Exception Words, as listed in the 'Year 1 & 2 Keyword Lists' from 'Appendix 2: Spelling' document; this will enable them to write fluently.

The aim by the end of Key Stage 1 is for pupils to be able to learn and investigate how to use common spelling patterns and frequently used prefixes and suffixes in their writing. Pupils will, as a consequence, become increasingly more independent and be able to begin to identify reasons for misspellings in their own writing.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2, those children who have completed the 'Read Write Inc' phonics programme are taught 'Appendix 2: Spelling' on a daily basis for 15 minutes, which focuses upon discrete spellings and then has a word/sentence-level focus. The teaching of phonics continues in intervention groups in Key Stage 2 for those individuals and groups of pupils who require further support. Those children still requiring phonics teaching and the opportunity to consolidate their phonic knowledge and skills from Key Stage 1, receive this during a separate session in a differentiated group to suit their needs. This approach means the children are still being taught and cover the statutory requirements of spellings for their appropriate age group.

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 for making corrections.

Pupils are exposed to words from the high frequency word lists and the suggested word lists from 'Appendix 2: Spelling' during spelling sessions, and their knowledge of these words are assessed through weekly spelling tests and marking.

Throughout the 'Appendix 2: Spelling' programme, there is an emphasis on the recognition of letter strings, visual patterns and analogies and the application of spelling conventions.

In Key Stage 2, we follow a balanced spelling programme, which includes five main components:

- understanding the principles underpinning word construction (phonemic, morphemic and etymological)
- recognising how (and how far) these principles apply to each word, in order to learn to spell words
- practising and assessing spelling
- applying spelling strategies and proofreading
- building pupils' self-images as spellers.

We gradually build pupils' spelling vocabulary by introducing patterns or conventions and recalling weekly, those already introduced. We aim to teach lively, focused sessions, which are enjoyable and effective, rather than just a simple skills session. We teach spelling strategies explicitly and apply these to high frequency words, cross-curricular words and individual pupils' words. Proofreading is also taught during shared and guided writing sessions.

Across the school, teachers will use their professional judgement in order to pitch the pace of their spelling sessions. Those that find spelling more difficult will be taught the words and rules at a slower pace to ensure their understanding is solid before moving on. Those who find spelling easier will investigate extensions and exceptions to the rules they are being taught. Teaching and Learning Assistants across the school have been trained to take a phonics or spelling session. This allows an English class to be split into smaller differentiated groups which leads to very focused teaching and individualised learning to take place.

Learning at Home

Reception and Key Stage 1 teachers distribute weekly spellings for Parents/Carers to support their children further at home, these are also available when necessary for those children in Key Stage 2 who are still to learn to read and write these words. Reception & Key Stage 1 children take home words that they have successfully learned in their

'Read Write Inc' sessions each week. These are informally tested in school every Friday and scores are shared with Parents/Carers.

In Key Stage 2, weekly spellings are sent home, which are also informally tested in school every week. Class teachers send home ten spellings each week. Exceptions can be made and if a class teacher feels this is inappropriate, they can seek advice from the Early Reading Leader, Inclusion Leader or the More and Most Able Leader. A typical weekly spelling test could consist of some high/medium frequency words, words using the new sounds/spelling patterns learnt that week, plus some relevant topic words which will help with children's writing in school. Teachers will also assess the children's ability to spell these words when marking. Please refer to the Learning at Home Policy if it appears a child has not learnt their spellings at home.

Monitoring and Review

In Reception and Key Stage 1, teachers monitor and assess the children's phonic progress on a regular basis. Data is gathered from a variety of sources including one to one assessments and from children's written work. More informal assessments also occur as part of daily teaching.

In addition to this, in Key Stage 2, testing is used as a diagnostic tool to inform future planning and grouping of children, depending on their individual spelling needs. Whenever possible, spelling errors are tackled with pupils present. Teachers are expected to use their professional judgement as to the number of errors corrected in any single piece of writing.

At the end of each term children in Reception and KS1 are tested on whether they can read and write the sounds they have learnt during their RWI sessions. Children in KS2 are tested on whether they can read and spell 30 words which follow the rules they have been taught that term. If a child reads or writes/spells under half the sounds/words, then an intervention should be set up for the following term to address any gaps in their learning. Class teachers can also identify any common misconceptions and cover these in the 'revise' section of next term's planning.