WOODMANSEY CE
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Building Strong Foundations · Unlocking Potential · Inspiring a Generation

Spelling Policy

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Approved by: Governing Body

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Next Review: September 2029

1. Relationship Between Charter, Policy and Planning

Spelling supports Woodmansey's vision by giving pupils reliable tools to record ideas, communicate clearly and participate confidently across the curriculum.

This policy sits beneath the Writing Charter and alongside Early Reading & Phonics, Handwriting, Vocabulary and Writing. Reception and Year 1 spelling follows Little Wandle in exact alignment with taught GPCs. Beyond the core phonics programme, the Spelling Shed whole-school medium-term plan provides the long-term sequence; weekly lesson materials provide the unit-level teaching; teachers plan retrieval and application in authentic writing.

2. Subject Overview

Spelling is the process of representing spoken language in written form using knowledge of phoneme-grapheme correspondences, orthographic patterns, syllables, morphology, etymology and word-specific memory.

At Woodmansey, spelling is taught, not merely tested. Pupils investigate why words are spelled as they are, practise through retrieval and dictation, and apply learning in composition. Early teaching remains faithful to Little Wandle; later teaching uses Spelling Shed in its published sequence and the National Curriculum spelling appendix.

3. Intent

Our intent is that pupils become increasingly accurate, independent spellers who can use several complementary sources of knowledge and make thoughtful attempts at unfamiliar words.

Pupils should:

- apply secure phonics as the foundation for spelling
- recognise common orthographic patterns and conventions
- segment words into phonemes and syllables
- understand bases, roots, prefixes, suffixes and grammatical endings
- use etymology when it illuminates an otherwise opaque spelling
- learn statutory and high-frequency exception words through analysis and retrieval
- proofread and correct spelling in meaningful writing
- use dictionaries, word banks and digital tools intelligently.

4. Implementation

i. Progression from Phonics to Spelling

In Reception and Year 1, spelling is integrated within Little Wandle: pupils segment orally, identify phonemes, select taught graphemes, form them correctly and write

dictated words and sentences. No separate scheme introduces GPCs out of sequence. In Year 2 and Key Stage 2, teaching builds on assessed phonic knowledge through the Spelling Shed stages and statutory expectations.

ii. Weekly Teaching Structure

Spelling Shed lessons are taught through modular components that may form one extended lesson or several shorter sessions: revise, introduce, main teaching, independent application and consolidation. Teachers preserve the sequence and provide sufficient practice between lessons.

iii. Orthographic Mapping and Word Study

Pupils say the word, examine meaning, segment sounds and syllables, map graphemes, identify the difficult part and connect it to known patterns or morphemes. Sound buttons or Elkonin boxes may support analysis where appropriate, but tools are withdrawn when no longer useful.

iv. Morphology and Etymology

Pupils learn how prefixes, roots, base words and suffixes carry meaning and influence spelling. Morphology matrices and word families help them generalise. Etymology is used selectively to explain durable patterns, not as disconnected trivia.

v. Practice, Dictation and Retrieval

Practice is distributed across the week and revisits prior learning. Dictation connects spelling, handwriting, punctuation and sentence memory. Retrieval includes choosing, generating, sorting and explaining spellings rather than repeatedly copying a list.

vi. Application in Writing

Teachers establish a manageable spelling focus during composition and teach pupils how to proofread after meaning has been secured. Personal errors inform short practice, but random individual lists do not replace the planned curriculum.

vii. Inclusion and Catch-up

When assessment shows insecure GPC knowledge, pupils receive the appropriate Little Wandle catch-up provision alongside age-appropriate language and composition. Other adaptations include reduced word sets, oral rehearsal, visual mapping, cumulative review, accessible dictionaries and additional practice.

viii. Challenge and Word Consciousness

Greater depth involves explaining alternatives, applying morphology to unfamiliar words, analysing exceptions, using etymology judiciously and maintaining accuracy in ambitious independent writing.

5. Impact

Pupils should spell increasingly complex words accurately, make plausible attempts when uncertain and use resources and proofreading strategies without losing fluency of composition.

- segment and map phonemes to known graphemes
- apply taught patterns, conventions and affixes
- use morphology and word families to spell related words
- recall statutory and frequently used exception words
- explain the difficult part of a word
- proofread and correct selected errors
- transfer taught spelling into writing across subjects.

6. Assessment

Assessment combines observation during spelling, low-stakes retrieval, dictation, analysis activities and application in independent writing. A weekly score alone cannot show whether knowledge transfers.

Teachers use errors diagnostically: a phonics gap, morphological misunderstanding, memory difficulty or careless transcription requires a different response. Spelling Shed challenge and review points support cumulative evaluation.

Assessment also includes:

- secure GPC knowledge and phonemic segmentation
- application of current and previously taught patterns
- knowledge of morphology, syllables and word families
- retention of statutory and exception words
- proofreading independence and transfer into composition.

7. Leadership, Monitoring and Review

The English subject leader supports staff in understanding the curriculum, maintaining consistency and securing strong outcomes for all pupils. Leadership is developmental: monitoring identifies strengths, tests whether the intended curriculum is being learned and leads to precise support, coaching or curriculum refinement.

The subject leader will:

- review fidelity to Little Wandle in early spelling and to Spelling Shed progression thereafter
- sample lessons, dictation and independent writing
- check whether pupils retain and transfer taught patterns
- analyse recurring errors and provision for pupils with phonics gaps
- support staff knowledge of phonology, morphology and etymology

- review access to home practice without disadvantaging pupils lacking devices.

This policy is reviewed every three years, or sooner when statutory expectations, the adopted programme, school priorities or evaluated pupil need require a change. Any revision must remain aligned with the relevant charter, long-term planning and unit-plan hierarchy.

8. Subject Specific Pedagogy and Non-Negotiables

The following expectations preserve the distinctive quality of spelling at Woodmansey. They should be read alongside the relevant charter, long-term plan, unit or medium-term planning and agreed teaching resources.

Teach before Test

Every list or assessment follows explicit teaching and purposeful practice. A score is used to diagnose and plan, not simply rank.

Protect SSP Fidelity

Reception and Year 1 spell only with Little Wandle content and language. Later pupils with code gaps receive the programme's catch-up provision.

Analyse Words

Pupils attend to pronunciation, meaning, phonemes, graphemes, syllables and morphemes. Copying a word repeatedly is not the main method.

Cumulative Review

Previously taught patterns and challenge words are revisited systematically across the year.

Transfer Is the Goal

Teachers expect taught spellings to appear in ordinary writing and create time to proofread selected priorities after composition.