Wilkinson Primary School

Spelling and Grammar

Date: October 2026

Review Date: September 2027

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Introduction

This policy sets out the principles, expectations and practical arrangements for the teaching of spelling and grammar in Wilkinson Primary School from the Early Years to Year 6. It is designed to ensure that pupils develop accurate, confident and purposeful use of language in reading, writing and speaking, in line with the 2014 National Curriculum framework and the expectations of the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and School Inspection Handbook for England.
Spelling and grammar are taught as integral parts of English and as essential foundations for learning across the curriculum. The school expects pupils to learn spelling patterns systematically and cumulatively, understand and apply grammar in context, and transfer taught knowledge into their independent writing. The policy supports consistent practice, high expectations, effective assessment and inclusive teaching for all pupils.

Aims

The school aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop secure spelling knowledge through a systematic, cumulative and well-sequenced curriculum
- learn to spell common words, exception words, patterns, rules and word families accurately
- understand how phonics, morphology and etymology support spelling development
- apply grammar accurately and purposefully in speaking, writing and editing
- use correct sentence structures, punctuation and vocabulary choices to improve clarity and effect
- transfer spelling and grammar knowledge into extended writing across all subjects
- become increasingly independent in proofreading, editing and checking spelling using appropriate strategies and reference tools
- are taught through explicit instruction, guided practice, retrieval and meaningful application
- experience ambitious, inclusive teaching that enables all pupils, including those with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, to achieve well
- develop confidence in talking about language using accurate terminology
- meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and are prepared for statutory assessment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6

Statutory Requirements

The school will teach spelling and grammar in accordance with the 2014 National Curriculum for English. The curriculum must enable pupils to read, write and speak fluently and to understand how language works.

Spelling

Pupils must be taught to spell through:

- phonics and secure phoneme grapheme correspondence
- common exception words
- spelling patterns and rules
- prefixes and suffixes
- homophones and near homophones
- accurate use of apostrophes
- dictionary and thesaurus skills
- morphology and etymology in later primary years
- dictated sentences and application in context

Grammar, punctuation and vocabulary

Pupils must be taught the statutory grammar and punctuation content for each year group, including:

- sentence construction and variety
- word classes and word structure
- clauses, conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions
- tense and agreement
- paragraphs and cohesion
- direct speech
- possessive forms and apostrophes
- punctuation for lists, parenthesis, clarity and effect
- formal and informal language choices
- terminology appropriate to each year group

Statutory assessment

The school will ensure that pupils are prepared for the statutory English grammar, punctuation and spelling assessments in Year 6.

Curriculum Coverage

The spelling and grammar curriculum provides pupils with a broad and progressive body of knowledge and skills from Reception to Year 6. Coverage includes:

- early phonological awareness and phonics based spelling
- high-frequency and common exception words
- spelling strategies for unknown words
- prefixes, suffixes, root words and word families
- morphology and etymology
- grammar and punctuation for sentence construction and text cohesion
- oral rehearsal and sentence composition
- editing, proofreading and independent application
- accurate use of standard English in speaking and writing
- vocabulary choices that support precision, formality and clarity
- layout features, including headings, sub-headings, bullets and tables

The curriculum is sequenced so that pupils revisit and deepen prior learning, with increasing independence and sophistication through the primary years.

Curriculum Implementation

Spelling and grammar will be taught explicitly, systematically and regularly across the school. Teaching will ensure that pupils learn, practise and apply knowledge in short, focused steps and in authentic writing.

Planning principles

Teachers will:

- follow the school's progressive curriculum for spelling and grammar
- ensure knowledge builds cumulatively from Reception to Year 6
- teach spelling patterns, rules and exceptions in a clear sequence
- revisit prior learning regularly to support retention
- make explicit links between reading, spelling, grammar and writing
- plan opportunities for pupils to apply new learning in independent writing across the curriculum
- identify and teach common misconceptions directly

Teaching approaches

Effective teaching will include:

- clear explanation and modelling
- oral rehearsal before writing
- guided practice and sentence construction
- sentence combining and editing
- dictation
- retrieval practice and spaced review
- immediate feedback and correction
- frequent reference to examples and non-examples
- explicit teaching of terminology where appropriate

Spelling teaching

Spelling teaching will reflect pupils' stage of development.

- In the early years and Key Stage 1, spelling will be closely linked to phonics, blending and segmenting, sight vocabulary and high-frequency words.
- In Key Stage 2, spelling will increasingly draw on morphology, etymology, word families and dictionary use.
- Pupils will be taught to use a range of strategies for unknown words, including:
    - look, cover, write, check
    - syllable division
    - pattern spotting
    - linking words by sound, meaning or root
    - mnemonics and visual memory
    - checking in a dictionary
    - saying the word aloud and rehearsing it orally
    - writing the word in a sentence

- Spelling will be taught through explicit Literacy sessions each week and reinforced through daily writing activities.

Grammar teaching

Grammar will be taught explicitly in Literacy lessons and also embedded in writing lessons so that pupils understand how grammar supports meaning, clarity and style.
Teaching will ensure that pupils:

- combine words and clauses into sentences
- write in appropriate tenses
- use punctuation accurately
- understand and apply grammatical terminology
- use grammar to improve the quality of their writing
- practise grammar in context, not only as isolated exercises

Writing application

Pupils will be expected to apply taught spelling and grammar in:

- Literacy lessons
- handwriting and transcription practice
- curriculum writing in other subjects
- independent writing tasks
- editing and redrafting

Resources

Teachers will use a range of resources to support secure teaching and retention, including:

- phonics materials
- word banks
- spelling lists and pattern sets
- dictionaries and thesauruses
- model sentences and texts
- visual prompts and displays
- cumulative review activities
- appropriate digital tools where they support learning

School practice

In Wilkinson Primary School, the following approaches are used to support implementation:

- daily phonics and literacy sessions in the early years and Key Stage 1
- daily literacy activities and a specific weekly spelling session in Key Stage 2
- differentiated groups within classes
- a spelling folder to record work practised in spelling sessions
- spellings recorded in spelling books
- regular practice in literacy books as necessary
- weekly spelling homework set for children to learn
- weekly spelling tests, including dictated words and sentences
- termly formal spelling assessments

Assessment

Assessment in spelling and grammar will be used to secure progress, identify gaps and inform teaching.

Formative assessment

Teachers will use ongoing assessment through:

- observation during oral rehearsal and guided practice
- marking of written work
- dictation activities
- questioning
- retrieval checks
- sentence completion and editing tasks
- short quizzes and class responses
- review of misconceptions in daily teaching

Formative assessment will help teachers to:

- identify gaps in phonics, spelling patterns or grammar knowledge
- adapt teaching in response to errors
- target support and challenge
- ensure pupils use correct spelling and grammar in extended writing
- build confidence through immediate correction and reinforcement

Summative assessment

Summative assessment will include:

- weekly spelling tests
- termly spelling assessments
- grammar assessments as part of the school's assessment cycle
- statutory assessment at the end of Year 6

Assessment outcomes will be used to:

- track attainment and progress over time
- identify pupils needing additional support
- inform parent and carer communication
- support intervention planning
- review the effectiveness of curriculum delivery

Feedback and improvement

Teachers will provide feedback that helps pupils improve. Pupils will be expected to:

- correct errors
- revisit misconceptions
- improve spellings in subsequent writing
- apply corrections in later work

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors and trustees, where applicable

Governors and trustees will:

- hold leaders to account for the quality and impact of spelling and grammar provision
- ensure the curriculum is broad, balanced and compliant with statutory requirements
- review the effectiveness of assessment, inclusion and professional development

Headteacher

The headteacher will:

- ensure spelling and grammar are prioritised within the wider English curriculum
- support a consistent whole school approach
- monitor the impact of the curriculum on pupils' writing and attainment
- ensure resources, training and assessment systems are effective

Subject leader

The subject leader will:

- maintain and review the spelling and grammar curriculum
- ensure progression from Reception to Year 6
- support staff subject knowledge and teaching practice
- monitor assessment information and pupils' work
- identify strengths and areas for improvement
- support consistency in terminology, expectations and feedback
- report to senior leaders and governors on the quality of provision

Class teachers

Class teachers will:

- teach spelling and grammar explicitly and systematically
- plan for daily reinforcement and weekly discrete teaching
- model accurate spoken and written English
- maintain high expectations for application in all writing
- provide timely feedback and opportunities for correction
- adapt teaching for the needs of all pupils
- ensure pupils know and use the terminology relevant to their year group

Teaching assistants and support staff

Support staff will:

- reinforce agreed teaching approaches
- support retrieval, modelling and guided practice
- help pupils access work through appropriate scaffolding
- encourage correct spoken and written language
- work under teacher direction to support identified pupils

Pupils

Pupils will be expected to:

- listen carefully and respond to feedback
- learn and practise spellings regularly
- use taught grammar in speaking and writing
- edit and improve their work
- take pride in accurate and well-constructed writing

Inclusion

The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils can access and succeed in spelling and grammar.

Principles of inclusive practice

Teaching will be adapted so that pupils with different needs can participate successfully, while maintaining high expectations for all.

Strategies for inclusion

Teachers will:

- break learning into small, manageable steps
- use multisensory teaching methods
- pre-teach key vocabulary where needed
- use visual prompts, models and oral rehearsal
- provide scaffolded recording methods
- reduce unnecessary cognitive load
- revisit content frequently through retrieval and overlearning
- ensure tasks are appropriately adapted
- provide challenge for the most able pupils
- allow assistive technology where appropriate
- support handwriting, transcription and working memory demands
- adapt outcomes and support for pupils with SEND in line with their needs and any plans in place
- ensure pupils can demonstrate learning in a range of ways

Equality and accessibility

The school will ensure that spelling and grammar teaching:

- does not discriminate
- provides reasonable adjustments where required
- reflects a range of examples and texts
- supports equitable access for disadvantaged pupils
- is monitored for the progress of different pupil groups

Wellbeing and safeguarding

Classroom practice will ensure:

- pupils are not embarrassed or humiliated by correction
- feedback is supportive and respectful
- texts and examples are age appropriate
- participation routines make pupils feel safe to contribute

Professional Development

Staff training will ensure secure subject knowledge and effective teaching practice.

Areas for professional development

Training will cover:

- the progression of spelling and grammar across the primary years
- phonics and early spelling
- morphology and etymology
- grammatical terminology and sentence structure
- punctuation and its accurate application
- teaching spelling in context
- dictation and retrieval practice
- feedback, editing and correction routines
- supporting pupils with SEND and other additional needs
- preparing pupils for statutory assessment

Delivery of training

Professional development may include:

- staff meetings
- phase meetings
- coaching and modelling
- collaborative planning
- scrutiny of pupil work
- review of assessment information
- individual support where needed

Subject knowledge development

The subject leader and senior leaders will ensure staff receive support to strengthen confidence in:

- apostrophes
- tense and agreement
- clauses
- passive voice
- formal and informal language
- punctuation for effect
- spelling rules and exceptions
- use of reference tools such as dictionaries and thesauruses

Quality of Teaching and Learning

This policy reflects the expectations of the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and School Inspection Handbook for England by ensuring that spelling and grammar provision is:

- ambitious
- coherently sequenced
- well taught
- appropriately assessed
- inclusive

The curriculum ensures that pupils:

- learn spelling patterns systematically and cumulatively
- revisit high-frequency and common exception words
- understand and apply grammar in writing and speaking
- transfer learning into extended writing
- develop fluency, accuracy and confidence over time

Leadership and management support:

- a clear subject vision
- consistent implementation
- effective staff training
- monitoring of impact on pupils' writing and oracy

Assessment is used to:

- identify misconceptions
- adapt teaching
- support intervention
- monitor the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND

Teaching reflects the expectation that spelling and grammar are not isolated exercises or test preparation alone, but essential parts of effective language use across the curriculum.

Monitoring and Review

The implementation and impact of this policy will be monitored through:

- learning walks
- book scrutiny
- lesson observation and feedback
- analysis of assessment data
- pupil interviews and work sampling
- review of planning and curriculum coverage
- monitoring of spelling and grammar outcomes in writing across subjects

The subject leader will review:

- progression and sequencing
- consistency of teaching
- effectiveness of assessment
- staff confidence and training needs
- provision for all groups of pupils
- impact on writing quality and statutory outcomes

The policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if required by changes in statutory guidance, school practice or curriculum review.