

Parents Helping with School work

Teaching Spelling

Many parents are interested in the teaching of spelling and would like to know more about how they can help their children.

Here are some ideas that may help you to help your child:

- 1) Encourage an interest in words by playing word games e.g. 'Hang Man', word puzzles, word searches, scrabble, finding out which words mean the same as others, or opposites, which are nouns, verbs etc.
- 2) Look for new words around and about, as children walk to school, or when out on a family trip.
- 3) Look up the meanings of words
- 4) Use 'writing in the air' - get your child to close their eyes, visualise the word, write the word in the air saying the letters out loud. They can imagine letters in colour.
- 5) Use spelling pronunciations to emphasise letters (pronouncing the *b* in thumb)
- 6) Remembering the movement the hand makes when writing a word by, for instance, using a finger to trace a number of times over a written word in large letters, then repeating the movement in pencil.
- 7) Memory tricks usually using memorable sentences or phrases (*big elephants can all understand small elephants = because*)
- 8) For younger pupils, letting them make letters out of play- dough.
- 9) Make a list of words that your child regularly spells incorrectly, and build a word bank of words with similar letters
- 10) Look at words that your child regularly gets wrong - in longer words this is often the middle parts of words - getting the initial and final parts correct. Show them the correct spelling for as long as they need to see it, saying the word slowly out loud and breaking it down into smaller parts. Focus on the part that is difficult for them. After a count of about 3- 4 seconds, get them to write it down, check their word against the correct spelling.
- 11) Play memory games such as, "I went to the shops and bought." and 'Kim's Game' for memorising items. ('Kim's Game' - put several items on a tray or table top, ask the person to memorise the items, tell them to close their eyes, remove one item, ask the person to open

their eyes and then identify which item has been taken away. The more items on the tray the harder it becomes.)

12) Use the school handwriting style when writing words. Ideally teaching handwriting and spelling should be done together so that the child becomes confident in forming letters correctly. Some letter groups are common and children will get used to the 'flow' of these letter groups when writing - e.g. ion, ious, ly, ee, ea, ch, sh

Some children are good spellers and can 'catch' spellings quickly, others take longer to develop their spelling knowledge. Research suggests that it is beneficial to help children to select their own strategy for learning spellings and all will benefit from being given a range of strategies to use and choose from.

Spelling Homework.

Teachers can give home work as part of their Literacy work. It is not enough to give a list of 10 or 20 words and to tell a child to 'learn' them. For some children this is a task that they find difficult, which can lead to them becoming anxious and lose confidence. Those that are good at spelling will learn the words easily, but still need to know what the words means and be able to use them in context. The words chosen need to be selected and differentiated for children.

Parents can access the [Standards website at the NLS Spelling Bank](#) and download all of the information about spelling. Parents can also have a copy of the School's handwriting style to help forming letters correctly with their children.

SATs.

Reminder: This year the KS2 SATs will take place the week beginning May 12th 2008. It is important that all Y6 children attend during this week.

What are SATs? These are tests that are set by the Government and are compulsory for all pupils that are eligible to sit them. The children are tested in English, Maths and Science. The expectation is that the Y6 children are working at Level 4.

Some pupils will be working higher than Level 4 and may achieve a Level 5. Others will be working at Level 3.

When school receives the SATs scores a percentage is worked out for the whole group for each level. The percentage includes all pupils, including those who did not actually sit the tests for what ever reason. This is not always a reliable way to judge school performance. A more useful indication of performance is *CVA - Contextual Value Added*. Children are expected to progress 2 levels over time from Y2 to Y6. If a child achieves L2 at Y2 then the expectation is that they will achieve a L4 in Y6. If this happens with all children then the CVA for the group = 100.

Last year the CVA for the school = 98.9%. This figure included 1 pupil who did not sit the SATs because of unauthorised absence.

The SATs results will vary from year to year, as the children in the Y6 group changes. It is the progress of each individual pupil that is important. If you take your child's Level at KS1 and add 2 levels, this will be their predicted KS2 level in Y6.

It is also important to remember that the SATs are just a 'snap shot' of where the pupils are at on that particular day. While most children try their best, unfortunately, some children can have an 'off day' and just don't perform well in the test on the day.

SATs test only three out of as many as twelve different subjects taught in school. A great deal more goes on in school apart from English, Maths and Science to help children develop as a whole person.