

Spelling at St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Being able to spell is still incredibly important in primary school, even in these days of autocorrect and predictive text. All children at school in England will sit a spelling test at the end of Year 6. Children a list of words to learn at home each week once they have developed an understanding of basic phonics.

Children who can spell well are often more confident writers. They are more likely to write their ideas quickly and fluently as they don't need to worry about whether or not their spelling is correct. They are also likely to be more adventurous with the words they use to express themselves.

Memorising lists of words comes more easily to some children than to others. Here, we run through how children learn to spell and share our tips for making spelling homework fun.

Age 5–6 (Year 1)

Spelling goes hand in hand with reading, and reading every day will also help develop spelling skills. The more often a child decodes and reads a word, or starts to understand how words are structured, the more likely they are to be able to spell words correctly.

At school, your child will be using their phonics skills to spell unfamiliar words and to spell common and tricky words too. They'll also start using prefixes and suffixes.

Don't worry if they often get spellings wrong at this stage – 'inventive' spelling is an important part of the learning process. So long as the guess has a logic to it, you will see that your child is learning to use the rules of spelling. For example, spelling hear instead of here shows that your child knows about the ear sound.

Age 6–7 (Year 2)

Your child will continue to use their phonic skills, as well as what they know about word structures more generally, when reading and spelling unfamiliar, common and tricky words. Your child will also now be able to recognize by sight, read and spell many of the common and tricky words such as *because*.

In Year 2, your child will start to learn about contractions (such as it's) and possessive apostrophes. They'll start making words longer by adding suffixes.

Age 7–9 (Years 3 & 4)

Children will still need to use their phonic skills to tackle new or unknown words but they will also be learning about spelling patterns and rules, too, so that they have a wider range of tools to use when they get stuck.

Your child will explore homophones, such as except/accept, and learn to use the first two or three letters of a word to check its spelling in a dictionary.

Age 9–11 (Years 5 & 6)

Your child should be able to read and spell unfamiliar and common words using what they know about phonics and how words are structured. They will be expected to spell some words with 'silent' letters (such as *knight*) and will use their knowledge of morphology and etymology when spelling words.

By the end of Year 6, children are expected to understand and be able to meet the challenging spelling demands outlined in the National Curriculum. Children's knowledge is assessed through a grammar, punctuation and spelling test that children sit in May as part of a week of national tests.