

COLLATON ST. MARY C. OF E. (V.A.) PRIMARY SCHOOL, PAIGNTON

SPELLING POLICY

SEPTEMBER 1997

**Rationale**

At Collaton our aim is to encourage every child to write with confidence from the very beginning of school. We must always therefore be aware of the need to value each child's writing while, at the same time, developing the skills of the child towards correct spelling ultimately.

**Purposes**

1. In our school children will be encouraged to write without any restrictions caused by concerns over correct spellings! They will be supported by strong phonic teaching within the rigorous structure of Longman Language 1, so that their own writing will reflect their growing phonic knowledge.
2. Our children will be taught that reading, writing, speaking and listening and spelling are closely linked together, and the teaching will be organised to ensure that each strand of English supports the development of the others.
3. Children's spelling develops at different rates. Our teaching must be aimed at supporting children who have difficulties with spelling, while stretching and challenging those who do not.
4. Our teaching will emphasise the spelling of words that are important to the children and those that they use frequently in their writing. We must also aim to enlarge their vocabulary and teach them to spell words they have not met before. Group reading sessions are particularly useful for discovering new words.
5. We will teach children how to learn spellings and set aside time each week when this is done. Throughout the school we use the multi-sensory "Look, cover, write, check" approach.

We will offer other strategies for learning spellings when necessary.

6. Once children are writing confidently and using phonics when spelling, we will teach them to consider whether words "look right" and introduce the checking of spellings into the drafting process.

There will be wide selection of dictionaries in each classroom, and dictionary skills will be taught throughout the school.

7. By the time our children leave us, they will understand the importance of correct spelling and presenting their work as accurately as possible.

**Guidelines**

1. To acknowledge the value and importance of the children's work, we must display it. In our school we do not insist that any writing for display must be correctly spelt. The children's earliest "pretend" writing must be displayed carefully as well as later attempts. Equally, further up the school it is valuable to display first drafts, as well as final publications, to demonstrate the writing process.

2. As we do not put an emphasis on the use of wordbanks in our classrooms, it is vital that classroom displays contain as many teacher-written words, labels, phrases and sentences as possible. While computer printed text has an obvious place here, there must be at all times, good examples of adult-written handwriting in the Christopher Jarman style. This is particularly vital in their formative years of linking spelling and handwriting (see below).
3. In KS1 it is important that the children see the teacher modelling writing as much as possible - during group/class reading sessions, discussions, making floor books together etc.
4. Throughout the school the children will form their own spelling collections drawn, in the main, from three sources...

(i) Their own writing

These words, particularly during KS1 and the early years of KS2, will be important personal words that the children will find most useful when writing about their own lives and experiences e.g. brother, sister, cousin, rabbit, ballet, friend. High frequency words are also important to include, from the beginning of school e.g. my, the, was, went, is it.

(ii) Class topics

If children only learn to spell words they have already used in their own writing, we will not be enlarging their vocabulary. It is therefore important to introduce vocabulary appropriate to any classwork and learn to spell these accurately if appropriate e.g. magnet, temperature, water, costume, galleon etc. Foundation subject co-ordinators will support this development of technical language.

(iii) Groups of words with the same spelling patterns or rules

This is a vital part of our spelling strategy as children with difficulties in spelling will benefit most from this approach.

In KS1 we use the sequence of blends outlined in Longman Language 1. In classes 3 and 4 we use Longman Language 2 and in Class 5, Longman Language 3, and Longman 4, if necessary.

In addition, we have the "Easy spelling scheme" and word families that appear in group reading sessions should also be worked on.

The information from the DCA English team on a suggested order for the teaching of phonics at Key Stage One and Key Stage Two, is also very useful.

This work should be linked closely to the teaching of handwriting, and the word family should be practised carefully with reference to the type of joins and letter formation.

5. It is helpful for children to see their collection of known spellings growing. Children who have difficulty with spelling would be helped by having a pictogram of their own collection or keywords, with spellings they know highlighted.