

St Peter in Thanet CE Junior School

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) Policy

St Peter-in-Thanet CE Junior School

This document provides a clear outline of our shared intentions and the approaches to teaching Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar at St Peter's. Based on the expectations outlined by the National Curriculum, children's grammar and punctuation should be broadly accurate, in particular in writing. Pupils' spelling of most words taught should be accurate and they should be able to spell words that they have not yet been taught by using what they have learnt about how spelling works in English. Teachers should encourage pupils' enjoyment and understanding of language, especially vocabulary, to support their reading and writing.

To be able to convey meanings grammatically correctly - based on the official standard form of English - and to be able to follow the conventions of British English orthography is an essential life skill. When these skills become automatic, pupils are able to utilise language to fulfil the purpose of their writing at a higher level, enabling them to express nuances and inferences thus potentially having a profound effect on the writer's self-image and success in later life.

All children will be fully included in all aspects of SPAG teaching and will be appropriately supported and challenged by teachers and support staff.

There are four main purposes to this policy:

- to establish an entitlement for all pupils;
- to establish expectations for teachers regarding this subject;
- to promote continuity and coherence across the school;
- to state the school's approaches to this subject in order to promote staff's as well as parents' and carers' understanding of the curriculum.

Learning outcomes

- The aim of SPAG provision with regard to final outcomes is for every child to be able to speak and write grammatically and semantically coherently as well as to be able to access age-appropriate and challenging texts. In addition, linked to the overall programme of study in English, we also want to develop pupils' curiosity about language and their capacity to observe and reflect, which will in turn enable them to develop more control and choice in their use of language.
- It is intended that a love of language will be shared – that children will have an understanding of the morphology and etymology of the English language and use these to both assist them in accurate spelling and grammar as well as gaining an understanding of how our language has developed and continues to develop.
- All children will be able to use spelling patterns taught to them to make accurate attempts at spelling any word given to them having used and applied their knowledge of spelling patterns as opposed to merely learning lists of words.

- Pupils will all be able to write clearly, using correct spelling, punctuation and grammar consistently in any piece of written work they produce, irrespective of the subject they are covering at the time. The expectation is that pupils will be expected to apply the correct skills in all subjects, not just English lessons.
- All pupils will leave our school being able to speak, read and write with confidence and credibility and these skills will stay with the children for life and positively impact on life achievements and opportunities.

Spelling

Classroom provision

- The spelling programme for Years 3/4 and Years 5/6 as outlined by the National Curriculum has been broken down into Medium Term Plans for each year group. These plans outline which spellings need to be taught in each term but giving year groups and teachers enough flexibility to address other spelling issues that may arise based on their gap analysis.
- The current medium-term plans reflect the need to revise spelling strategies and spelling patterns from Key Stage 1 and they will be revised based on improving ability of future intakes.
- Spelling in Years 3-6 will be taught discretely in the form of a spelling investigation during English lessons on average once a fortnight. Children will be given numerous opportunities to practise these spellings during the week. Techniques to do that can range from SPAG starters at the beginning of English lessons to short bursts of practice during the day.
- Spellings introduced through spelling investigations will then be given as homework (20 words a week). These spellings are also available through the school's VLE thus giving children quick access both at home and at school.
- Once a spelling pattern or spelling rule has been taught, teachers will use the marking key outlined in the Marking Policy to ensure that previously taught skills and knowledge are applied in writing across all subjects.
- To offer both reinforcement and differentiation, additional spellings identified in a child's independent writing can be given by applying the marking key. Any misspelt word the teacher feels a child would benefit from knowing how to spell will be underlined once and its correction put into the margin. The child then transfers this word into his/her green spelling book which holds the spellings relevant for the child.
- Dictionaries are available in all classrooms for the children to use as well as high-frequency word lists for children with greater need.
- Key vocabulary is available either on working walls, on interactive whiteboard charts or handouts. Children are always reminded to write these words correctly.

Assessment

- Weekly spelling tests comprise of 20 words that have been introduced in class and which have been practised in school beforehand. Teachers record the weekly spelling score and an atmosphere of praise and encouragement ensures that all children feel that their efforts are valued. The weekly scores influence the teacher's knowledge about a child's spelling ability, whether a class has a gap with regard to skills and informs future interventions.

- Using the Rising Star's termly assessments, a formal assessment is carried out and spelling and PGV (Punctuation, Grammar and Vocabulary) scores are recorded separately.
- The SPAG coordinator will monitor a sample of class books throughout the year to ensure that the typicality of a child's written work matches the assessment band that the teacher awards.
- Through daily marking of all writing, a picture of the overall spelling ability of a child is established.
- Depending on the need for accurate assessments, additional assessments may be given to year groups to carry out in Term 6.
- Year 6 will complete the end-of-keystage Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar SATS.

Grammar and Punctuation

Classroom provision

- Grammar and punctuation will be taught discretely in English lessons with an explicit grammar or punctuation focus. In addition to these lessons, all other teaching and learning linked to English will provide an opportunity to embed punctuation and grammar skills.
- SPAG starters should happen daily or a SPAG-related activity is provided during a different part of the day.
- Lessons whose integral part is either grammar or punctuation should be embedded within the context of the English unit whenever possible. The content with which grammatical structures or punctuation are practised is based on the topic of the unit. (For example, the layout of direct speech is practised by reproducing a dialogue based on characterisation inferred from the text. Alternatively, practising the layout of direct speech prepares dialogue between the main characters for the final writing task.)
- With the increased focus on cross-curricular learning, particular
- Lessons with a focus on grammar and punctuation lend themselves naturally to be taught during the first two phases of an English unit, i.e. text input and word and sentence level work to prepare writing. We aim for at least three grammar-/punctuation-based lessons per unit. In addition, almost all English lessons will have elements that are linked to grammar and punctuation.
- In Guided Reading, children will be asked to identify techniques that an author has used to convey meanings. Those techniques can be directly linked to punctuation, clauses and other grammatical structures. Furthermore, children will also be expected to read text passages aloud with correct pace and intonation based on both context and punctuation.
- Speaking and listening activities in all subjects enable pupils to practise correct grammar in the form of recounting stories and information and constructing sentences based on useful phrases and vocabulary taken from the stimulus materials. This in turn will impact on children's ability to write using correct punctuation and grammar and is intended to develop the 'writing voice' of all children throughout school.
- Grammar will be a key focus in conversational English, with teachers picking up on errors and politely correcting pupils when needed. There will be opportunities for public speaking in each class whilst grammar will also be a focus in every writing tasks.
- The marking policy will be applied to ensure that correct punctuation and grammar are applied in all writing tasks across all subjects.
- Grammar is the body of rules that describes the structure of words and their derivations, phrases, clauses and sentences and thus underpins all activities based on language. Therefore, upholding correct grammatical use and punctuation applies to all subjects and

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with regard to grammar both to speaking and writing. There is an absolute expectation that all staff will model correct grammar to children in their speech and writing.

Additional provision for SPAG

- If early screening in Year 3 indicates that children are substantially working below the expected level and need phonics-based spelling practice first, then this will be put in place during the first term of Year 3 with daily phonics-based interventions. From Term 2 onwards, these children will be expected to follow a differentiated programme based on the spellings programme for the cohort.
- Children who are consistently struggling to retain knowledge of spelling patterns, grammatical concepts and/or how to punctuate their writing in either a discreet or contextualised setting will be identified for additional support in the form of a short, targeted intervention in order for them to attain the standards of achievement expected within their year group.

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