



Barnfields Primary School
Spelling Policy

Date Approved: September 2025	Print Name: Sue Francis
Date to be Reviewed: September 2026	Signed: Sue Francis

Intent

At Barnfields Primary School, we recognise that spelling is a cornerstone of literacy, underpinning reading, writing and effective communication across the curriculum. Our spelling curriculum is designed to ensure pupils become confident, accurate, and reflective spellers, capable of applying their knowledge independently and across a range of contexts.

To achieve this, we have adopted the Spelling Shed scheme, a research-informed, evidence-based programme that systematically develops spelling skills through phonology, morphology, orthography, and etymology. Spelling Shed is complemented by Common Exception Words, which are prominently displayed on the front cover of all English books to support ongoing reference and independent learning.

Spelling at Barnfields Primary School is developmental, inclusive and progressive, providing every pupil with the opportunity to achieve mastery while fostering a lifelong appreciation for language.

Aims of our Spelling Curriculum

Through our spelling curriculum, we aim to:

1. **Foster Engagement and Enjoyment:** Create a stimulating, interactive environment where spelling is a positive and motivating experience.
2. **Develop Phonological Awareness:** Ensure pupils understand the relationship between sounds and symbols and can apply this knowledge in reading and writing.
3. **Build Morphological Knowledge:** Teach pupils to recognise roots, prefixes and suffixes, enabling them to decode, spell, and understand complex words.
4. **Promote Orthographic Competence:** Develop pupils' understanding of spelling patterns, digraphs, trigraphs, and letter strings.
5. **Cultivate Etymological Understanding:** Explore the origins of words to help pupils make connections, identify patterns, and improve retention of irregular spellings.
6. **Enable Curriculum Integration:** Embed spelling skills across all subjects, ensuring pupils can apply their knowledge confidently in context.

Curriculum Planning and Progression

Early Years and Key Stage 1

- **Reception and Year 1:** Spelling is taught through daily phonics lessons, ensuring secure phoneme–grapheme correspondence. Some units of learning from Spelling Shed are delivered in Year 1 to ensure full National Curriculum Coverage.
- **Year 2:** Pupils follow the Little Wandle programme, accessing:
 - Phase 5 review and Bridge to Spelling (Autumn 1)
 - Progression onto Spelling Shed (Autumn 2 onwards)

This provides a structured transition from phonics-based spelling to the spelling approaches used in Spelling Shed.



4. Independent Practice and Consolidation

Pupils work independently to consolidate their learning. Activities can take place:

- Immediately after the teaching input in class.
- Later in an additional session.

Activities should be scaffolded to allow pupils to practise spelling patterns, tricky words or new strategies independently.

Teachers continue to adapt lessons to suit the needs of their year group, include 'deepen the moments' if appropriate. Teachers and Teaching Assistants to live mark to address any errors/misconceptions in the moment (see Barnfields Feedback and Marking Policy).

Spelling Shed activities used may include:

- *Syllable Maps/Orthographic Mapping*
- *Segmenting using sound buttons or Elkonin boxes*



- *Morphology Matrices*
- *Word Sorting Activities*
- *Identification of alternative spellings*
- *Alphabetise*
- *Cloze Sentences*

Lesson Sequence

The spelling lesson sequence at Barnfields is designed to systematically build on pupils' prior knowledge. Teachers are encouraged to begin with Lesson 1 in their year group stage and progress through the lessons in the order presented.

Stage 6 exception: The first 10 lessons focus on challenge words to ensure statutory words are learned. Teachers may choose to:

- Focus on these challenge words first, or
- Begin their sequence at Lesson 11, revisiting the challenge weeks as appropriate for their cohort.

This approach ensures learning is progressive, structured, and responsive to the needs of the pupils.

Teaching Approaches within Spelling Shed

Spelling Shed provides a consistent approach across KS2, ensuring pupils:

- Understand spelling rules and patterns rather than memorising lists
- Develop secure knowledge of phonology, morphology, orthography and etymology
- Apply spelling knowledge to unfamiliar words
- Make links between spelling, reading and vocabulary development

Repetitive copying activities such as *Look–Say–Cover–Write–Check* are not used as a core strategy. Instead, we prioritise explicit teaching, discussion and word investigation, which research shows has a greater impact on spelling outcomes.

Phonology, Orthography, Morphology and Etymology



Phonology
phon = Greek root meaning sound
The study of speech sounds of a language or languages, and the laws governing them

Orthography
ortho = Greek root meaning correct
graph = Greek root meaning to write
The conventional spelling system of a language and the patterns it can use.

Morphology
morph = meaning form: shape
The study of words and their parts.

Etymology
etymon = origin of a word
The study of the origin of words.

Spelling Shed

An effective speller draws upon the entire rich linguistic tapestry of a word to spell it correctly. The threads of this tapestry can be identified as phonological knowledge (including phonemic awareness), orthographic knowledge, morphological knowledge (which includes semantic knowledge, etymological knowledge and visual knowledge).

Morphology

In many lessons, we use a Morphology Matrix to demonstrate how morphemes fit together. In this example, pupils can create new words by adding affixes to the base word 'round'. The prefix 'sur' can be added to 'round' to create 'surround'. The suffix '-ed' can be added to the base word to make 'rounded'. Both prefixes and suffixes can be added to the base to further change the meaning, e.g., 'surrounded'. Note: In some examples, the section title 'Base Word' is changed to 'Root Word'. Base and root words are similar, they are both root words but a base word can stand alone and have meaning as in 'round' above. Whereas, root words do not always have a meaning of its own in English, these are often of Greek or Latin origin.

Morphology Matrix

How many new words can you create by adding a prefix and/or suffix(es)?

Prefix	Base Word	Suffix
a (on, in, into)	round (circular in shape)	s est ed ing
sur (above, over)		er s

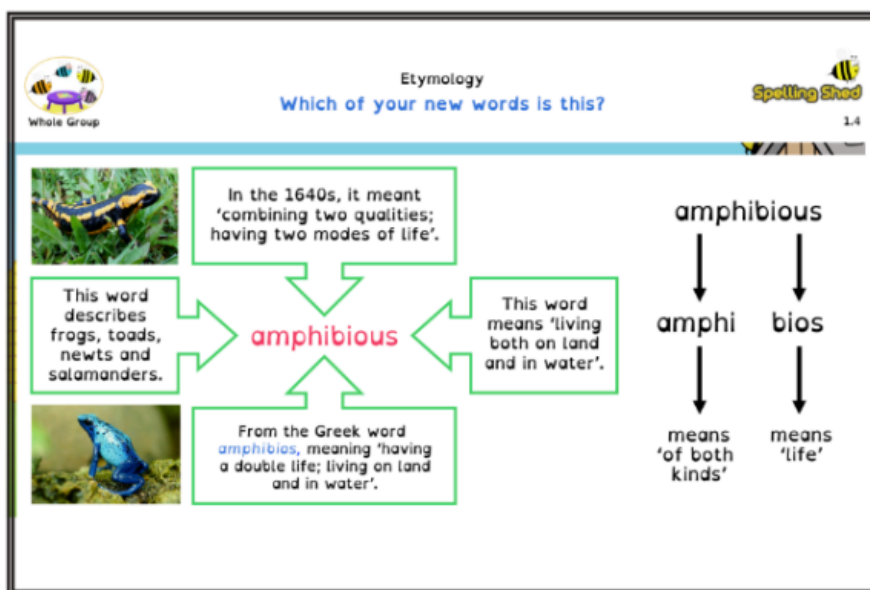
Which new words can you make by adding just a prefix?
Which new words can be made using just a suffix?
Can you make any words which use a prefix and a suffix?

Etymology

In our revised scheme, we have included etymology activities in order to further study words. Looking at the etymology of words and word parts can help children to spot patterns which are helpful when spelling. For example the word giant comes, through French, from the Latin gigas (a giant) and Greek Gigas (race of monsters) which helps explain why the word begins with a 'g' rather than a 'j' and also shows where the word 'gigantic' comes from. It is interesting to note that 'giant' came through Old French and the middle 'g' was elided, whereas 'gigantic' came to English straight from Latin which is why it kept its middle 'g'. When looking at morphology it is



worth noting that we can explore the word origins of both roots and affixes. To know that the root 'sect' means 'to cut' helps when looking at words 'bisect', 'dissect' and 'intersection'. All three involve some cutting or splitting



Challenge Week

Challenge Weeks at Barnfields use lists of words drawn from the statutory word lists in the National Curriculum English Programme of Study, Spelling Appendix 2. These lists appear throughout the scheme every 6 weeks. The purpose of these Challenge Weeks is to give children the opportunity to apply their learning to words with unfamiliar or unusual spelling patterns, consolidating and extending their knowledge.

Common Exception Words

All English Writing books in KS2 display year-appropriate Common Exception Words, enabling pupils to self-check and reinforce learning. Pupils are taught, assessed and encouraged to **apply these words in independent writing**, ensuring accuracy and fluency. In their planning, teachers highlight these in **yellow** and do the same when modelling to the children, drawing attention to these words and using them as a teaching point.

Key Stage 1

Common Exception words in KS1 are taught through the Little Wandle Phonics Scheme. They are known and taught as 'tricky words'. When children progress onto Spelling Shed after they have completed Bridge to Spelling in Year 2, they are referred to as Common Exception Words.

Key Stage 2

During independent writing:

- Teachers give copies of the bespoke Barnfields CEW list to children during the planning process to keep with their plan in the planning envelope.
- Children will then select words that they think will fit well into their independent writing and underline/circle/highlight them, or they may use them in their planned sentence if appropriate.
- Children will then be encouraged them to use them in their independent writing. Emphasise that the words must 'fit' within their writing.
- When the children have used a CEW in their independent writing, they must highlight the word in yellow, checking that it is definitely spelt correctly.

Marking Spellings

When writing, children usually spend the majority of their time concentrating on the content of their writing rather than the spelling of words which can sometimes lead to incorrect spellings occurring. It is important that



as professionals we understand the difference between spelling mistakes and spelling errors. Mistakes are considered to be spellings that the children know but have spelt incorrectly (usually out of habit). Errors occur when children have an underlying misconception about a particular word or pattern and further teaching is required. To improve children’s spellings, we should respond to mistakes by encouraging children to correct without support; we should respond to errors with further clarification, teaching, guidance and support (see further guidance in Marking Policy).

SP	Spelling error #Yr1- 4 only to identify specific error.	The spelling error (linked to age and expectation) will have a line marked underneath it. The symbol will be identified in the margin alongside a number (such as SP1, SP2)	The teacher will write SP1 etc. at the bottom of the page. The child will then re-write the correct spelling next to it three times.
-----------	--	---	--

*Some individual children, specifically those with SEND, may continue to have the spelling identified in UKS2.

Assessment and Monitoring

Assessment includes:

- Weekly dictation (recorded and monitored) of spellings (3 words from those taught)
- Teacher observation during lessons
- Application of spelling strategies in independent writing across the curriculum
- Use of online Spelling Shed data to track engagement and progress

Assessment outcomes are used to:

- Identify gaps or misconceptions
- Inform targeted interventions
- Adapt planning and pacing

Homework and Home Learning (Spelling Shed)

- Spelling homework is set once per week using Spelling Shed, linked to current or recent learning.
- Teachers can assign word lists to individual pupils or groups.
- Where pupils have limited access to devices at home, time is provided in school to ensure equity of access.

Spelling Across the Curriculum

Spelling remains a high priority in all subjects.

- Subject-specific vocabulary (Tier 3 words) is identified on knowledge organisers.
- Pupils are expected to apply taught strategies in all written work.
- Teachers consistently model correct spelling and reinforce spelling patterns across the curriculum

Inclusion, SEND and Intervention

Spelling Shed is adapted to meet the needs of all learners. Additional support includes:

- Nesy Learning
- Morning intervention clubs
- Spelling lists displayed on tables
- EPATT spelling intervention

Interventions are informed by Spelling Shed assessment outcomes and are reviewed regularly to ensure impact.



Year 3

Common Exception Words

accident
 accidentally
 actual
 address
 answer
 appear
 arrive
 bicycle
 breathe
 build
 centre
 century
 circle
 consider
 decide
 describe
 disappear
 early
 earth
 eight
 enough
 experience
 fruit
 guard
 heard
 heart
 history
 imagine
 island
 learn
 library
 minute
 natural
 notice
 occasion
 occasionally
 often
 ordinary
 peculiar
 popular
 possible
 probably
 promise
 purpose
 quarter
 question
 recent
 regular
 reign
 sentence
 special
 suppose
 therefore
 weight



Year 4

Common Exception Words

actually
 although
 believe
 breath
 busy
 business
 calendar
 caught
 certain
 complete
 continue
 different
 difficult
 eighth
 exercise
 experiment
 extreme
 famous
 favourite
 February
 forward
 forwards
 grammar
 group
 guide
 height
 important
 increase
 knowledge
 length
 material
 medicine
 mention
 naughty
 opposite
 particular
 perhaps
 position
 possess
 possession
 potatoes
 pressure
 remember
 separate
 straight
 strange
 strength
 surprise
 though
 thought
 through
 various
 woman
 women



Year 5

Common Exception Words

accommodate
 accompany
 achieve
 amateur
 ancient
 apparent
 appreciate
 available
 awkward
 bargain
 bruise
 cemetery
 communicate
 community
 conscience
 conscious
 controversy
 convenience
 criticise
 desperate
 determined
 dictionary
 disastrous
 environment
 equip
 equipped
 equipment
 excellent
 familiar
 foreign
 immediate
 immediately
 interfere
 language
 marvellous
 mischievous
 muscle
 necessary
 nuisance
 opportunity
 pronunciation
 queue
 recognise
 restaurant
 secretary
 sincere
 sincerely
 sufficient
 suggest
 symbol
 system
 thorough
 twelfth
 vegetable
 vehicle
 yacht



Year 6

Common Exception Words

according
 aggressive
 attached
 average
 category
 committee
 competition
 correspond
 curiosity
 definite
 develop
 embarrass
 especially
 exaggerate
 existence
 explanation
 forty
 frequently
 government
 guarantee
 harass
 hindrance
 identity
 individual
 interrupt
 leisure
 lightning
 neighbour
 occupy
 occur
 parliament
 persuade
 physical
 prejudice
 privilege
 profession
 programme
 recommend
 relevant
 rhyme
 rhythm
 sacrifice
 shoulder
 signature
 soldier
 stomach
 temperature
 variety