

Our Approach to Phonics and Spelling at Townhill Junior School



At Townhill Junior School, we are aware how integral phonemic awareness is to every reader; as a result, we assess all pupils on entry (and throughout their journey with us) to ensure that phonological gaps are addressed rapidly. During the Autumn term, where appropriate, children will revisit the teaching of phonics in order to consolidate learning from KS1 ensuring that every child can access age-appropriate texts.

Any children who are struggling to decode after additional consolidation lessons, will be taught to do so urgently through a rigorous and systematic phonics programme (Rapid Phonics). This will ensure they catch up with their peers (they will, as far as possible, follow the programme of study for spelling appropriate to their age group so as not to create further gaps). Teachers will draw on a range of resources to decide on the most suitable intervention to enable gaps to be closed.

Phonic knowledge continues to underpin the teaching of spelling at key stage two. At Townhill, we make effective use of the Spelling Shed spelling scheme. This focuses on the teaching of spelling so that children understand how to apply patterns, strategies and knowledge to all words. It also provides links to prior knowledge and tracks back to related objectives so that teachers can give targeted support to children who are not yet able to spell words from their year group programme of study. In short, Spelling Shed enables children to become spellers for life, rather than remember spellings for a week.

Unlike other resources, Spelling Shed places an emphasis on the *Review* stage of the teaching sequence. This is not 'what did we learn last week?' but instead: "What do we already know that might help us to spell words in this sequence?" The sequence of teaching then moves through Teach, Practise and Apply where children will be able to use knowledge in context.

Throughout each sequence of Spelling Shed, pupils are encouraged to articulate their learning. Explaining what they have learned about the patterns and processes of spelling enables children to secure their understanding. Similarly, words, patterns and processes are revisited regularly. This spaced recall enables knowledge to move from short-term memory to long-term memory and stick.

Within spelling lessons, teachers will draw children's attention to grapheme and phoneme correspondences and will use sound buttons and phoneme frames to support encoding of words. Increasingly, however, teaching will aim to develop an understanding of morphology and etymology which will enable teachers to help children understand the relationship between meaning and spelling where relevant.