

Whole School Spelling Policy 2019-20

Woolton High is a school for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties. It is located in Woolton, a residential area of South Liverpool. The age of the pupils ranges from 11 to 16 years who attend school on a daily basis. The educational abilities of the pupils vary dramatically from P Levels to GCSE pupils. Therefore, teaching approaches also vary in accordance with the pupils' individual needs.

As a school recognise that the diversity of pupils and their learning styles require teaching approaches to reflect their needs through specialised, modified and structured teaching methods.

1. Aims and Objectives

1.1 The challenge facing a speller is very different from the challenge facing a reader, spelling is a letter-by-letter process that requires a set of conscious choices not required in reading. There are no perfect spelling rules but there are conventions that can help pupils to make informed choices and English spelling is regular enough to repay systematic teaching.

1.2 At Woolton High we realise that we need to do more than just give pupils words to spell; we need to give them strategies which improve their individual spelling and help them to understand why English spellings are as they are.

1.3 The aims of developing spelling are:

- * To know the regular patterns of English spelling;
- * To have effective ways of learning and remembering difficult and irregular spellings;
- * To have good writing strategies so that they can apply spelling knowledge when they are writing.
- * To promote a good visual memory
- * To encourage pupils to take risks and enjoy a challenge
- * To extend vocabulary to include exciting words
- * To proof read own work and use reference materials

2. Teaching and Learning Styles

2.1 At Woolton High we operate a whole school approach to spelling that involves all curriculum areas. In addition there is a Literacy Support Centre that focuses on basic literacy skills, including spelling. We understand the importance of pupils being aware of subject specific vocabulary and all staff are trained to display key vocabulary and teach methods of learning how to spell difficult words accurately through a variety of approaches.

2.2 All teachers will:

- * provide an environment that fosters and supports pupil learning;
- * model and teach a variety of spelling strategies;
- * encourage pupils to take risks and ‘have-a-go’;
- * provide spelling activities, investigations and problem solving;
- * give opportunities for pupils to apply and reflect what they have learnt.

2.3 Pupils will be taught a repertoire of skills with which to approach new or difficult spellings these are:

- * Break the word down into sounds
- * Break the word into syllables
- * Separate the prefix from the main word
- * Use a mnemonic to remind them
- * Think about words in the same family
- * Remember to say a word as it sounds
- * Think about some words that are within the words they to spell
- * Think about where the word comes from
- * Think of words in groups
- * Think about some rules for spelling
- * Think about where they may have seen the word written.

Pupils may adopt all or some of the above strategies depending on their style of learning. At Woolton High we believe in the phrase:

“If I can’t learn the way you teach – can you teach the way I learn?”

(Chasty 1985)

2.4 We believe that all pupils, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, social background, cultural heritage or disability, have the right to access education. The education we provide is aimed at the strengths, personalities and abilities of all pupils.

2.5 At Woolton High we use a range of strategies for teaching keywords:

- * Subject specific dictionaries
- * Creating word banks
- * Word and definition cards
- * Using icons
- * Key word crosswords and word searches
- * Creating word clusters
- * Creating mnemonics
- * Creating calligram poster
- * Spelling Journals
- * Playing words games
- * Look, cover, spell, check
- * Online spelling games.

3. Assessment and Record Keeping

3.1 Throughout the school pupils are regularly assessed on their spelling ability. Testing takes place 3 times per year in Spring, Summer and Winter terms. Results are used diagnostically to provide teaching appropriate to the individual needs.

3.2 This may trigger the need for additional basic literacy intervention at the Literacy Support Centre, where specific teaching and learning takes place. The main aim of this intervention is to ensure that all pupils leave Woolton High with an acceptable level of literacy to enable them to function within society.

3.3 Detailed records are kept for those pupils who attend the centre, along with what has been taught and how the pupils have improved. This tracking allows teachers to ascertain the impact of the teaching through pupil progress.

4. Rationale

Every pupil at Woolton High School will be able to improve their spelling ability to an individually appropriate level and have confidence in their skills to improve their self-esteem.

5. Monitoring and Review

The policy and its implementation will be monitored by the appointed Co-ordinator who will support and inform the staff on the teaching of spelling.

The policy will reviewed annually with reference to the following performance indicators:

- * Teacher and pupils are satisfied that the aims of the policy are being met;
- * The pupils are making progress;
- * Teachers are satisfied with the level of support offered via staff development.