

Lower Key Stage 2 Literacy – (Years 3- 4)

By the beginning of year 3, pupils should be able to read books written at an age-appropriate interest level. They should be able to read them accurately and at a speed that is sufficient for them to focus on understanding what they read rather than on decoding individual words. They should be able to decode most new words outside their spoken vocabulary, making a good approximation to the word's pronunciation. As their decoding skills become increasingly secure, teaching should be directed more towards developing the breadth and depth of their reading, making sure that they become independent, fluent and enthusiastic readers who read widely and frequently. They should be developing their understanding and enjoyment of stories, poetry, plays and non-fiction, and learning to read silently. They should also be developing their knowledge and skills in reading non-fiction about a wide range of subjects. They should be learning to justify their views about what they have read: with support at the start of year 3 and increasingly independently by the end of year 4.

Pupils should be able to write down their ideas with a reasonable degree of accuracy and with good sentence punctuation. Teachers should therefore be consolidating pupils' writing skills, their grasp of sentence structure and their knowledge of linguistic terminology. Teaching them to develop as writers involves increasing their competence as well as teaching them to enhance the effectiveness of what they write. Teachers should make sure that pupils build on what they have learnt, particularly in terms of the range of their writing and the more varied grammar from which they can draw to express their ideas. Pupils should be beginning to understand how writing can be different from speech. Joined handwriting should be the norm; pupils should be able to use it fast enough to keep pace with what they want to say.

Pupils' spelling of common words should be correct, including exception words and other words that they have learnt (see Appendix 1). Pupils should spell words as accurately as possible using their phonic knowledge and other knowledge of spelling, such as morphology and etymology.

Most pupils will not need further direct teaching of word reading skills: they are able to decode unfamiliar words accurately, and need very few repeated experiences of this before the word is stored in such a way that they can read it without overt sound-blending.

As in key stage 1, however, pupils who are still struggling to decode need to be taught to do this urgently through a rigorous and systematic phonics programme so that they catch up rapidly with their peers. If they cannot decode independently and fluently, they will find it increasingly difficult to understand what they read and to write down what they want to say. As far as possible, however, they should follow the year 3 and 4 programme of study in terms of listening to new books, hearing and learning new vocabulary and grammatical structures, and discussing these.

Specific requirements for pupils to discuss what they are learning and to develop their wider skills in spoken language form part of this programme of study. In years 3 and 4, pupils should become more familiar with and confident in using language in a greater variety of situations, for a variety of audiences and purposes, including through drama, formal presentations and debate.

Years 3-4 programme of study (statutory requirements)	Notes and guidance (non-statutory)
<p>READING Word reading</p> <p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes (etymology and morphology) as listed in Appendix 1, both to read aloud and to understand the meaning of new words they meet ▪ read further exception words, noting the unusual correspondences between spelling and sound, and where these occur in the word. 	<p>READING Word reading</p> <p>At this stage, teaching comprehension should be taking precedence over teaching word reading directly. Any focus on word reading should support the development of vocabulary. When pupils are taught to read longer words, they should be supported to test out different pronunciations. They will attempt to match what they decode to words they may have already heard but may not have seen in print: e.g. in reading <i>technical</i>, the pronunciation /tɛtʃnɪkəl/ ('tetchnical') might not sound familiar, but /tɛknɪkəl/ ('teknical') should.</p>
<p>READING Comprehension</p> <p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ develop positive attitudes to reading and understanding of what they read by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks ▪ reading books that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes ▪ using dictionaries to check the meaning of words that 	<p>READING Comprehension</p> <p>The focus should continue to be on pupils' comprehension as a primary element in reading. The knowledge and skills that pupils need in order to comprehend are very similar at different ages. This is why the programmes of study for comprehension in years 3 and 4 and years 5 and 6 are similar: the complexity of the writing increases the level of challenge.</p> <p>Pupils should be taught to recognise themes in what they read, such as the triumph of good over evil or the use of magical devices in fairy stories and folk tales.</p>

they have read

- increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including fairy stories, myths and legends, and retelling some of these orally
- identifying themes and conventions in a wide range of books
- preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action
- discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
- recognising some different forms of poetry (e.g. free verse, narrative poetry)
- understand what they read, in books they can read independently, by:
 - checking that the text makes sense to them, discussing their understanding and explaining the meaning of words in context
 - asking questions to improve their understanding of a text
 - drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
 - predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
 - identifying main ideas drawn from more than one

They should also learn the conventions of different types of writing, such as the greeting in letters, a diary written in the first person or the use of presentational devices such as numbering and headings in instructions.

Pupils should be taught to use the skills they have learnt earlier and continue to apply these skills to read for different reasons, including for pleasure, or to find out information and the meaning of new words.

Pupils should continue to have opportunities to listen frequently to stories, poems, non-fiction and other writing, including whole books and not just extracts, so that they build on what was taught previously. In this way, they also meet books and authors that they might not choose themselves. Pupils should also have opportunities to exercise choice in selecting books and be taught how to do so, with teachers making use of any available library services and expertise to support this.

Reading, re-reading, and rehearsing poems and plays for presentation and performance give pupils opportunities to discuss language, including vocabulary, extending their interest in the meaning and origin of words. Pupils should be encouraged to use drama approaches to understand how to perform plays and poems to support their understanding of the meaning. These activities also provide them with an incentive to find out what expression is required, so feeding into comprehension.

In using non-fiction, pupils should know what information they need

<p>paragraph and summarising these</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ identifying how language, structure, and presentation contribute to meaning ▪ retrieve and record information from non-fiction ▪ participate in discussion about both books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say. 	<p>to look for before they begin and be clear about the task. They should be shown how to use contents pages and indexes to locate information.</p> <p>Pupils should have guidance about the kinds of explanations and questions that are expected from them. They should help to develop, agree on, and evaluate rules for effective discussion. The expectation should be that all pupils take part.</p>
<p>WRITING Transcription</p> <p>Spelling (see Appendix 1)</p> <p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ use further prefixes and suffixes and understand how to add them (Appendix 1) ▪ spell further homophones ▪ spell words that are often misspelt (Appendix 1) ▪ use the first two or three letters of a word to check its spelling in a dictionary ▪ write from memory simple sentences, dictated by the teacher, that include words and punctuation taught so far. 	<p>WRITING Transcription</p> <p>Spelling</p> <p>Pupils should learn to spell new words correctly and have plenty of practice in spelling them.</p> <p>They should understand how to place the apostrophe in words with regular plurals (e.g. girls', boys') and in words with irregular plurals (e.g. children's).</p> <p>As in years 1 and 2, pupils should continue to be supported in understanding and applying the concepts of word structure (see Appendix 2).</p> <p>Dictionaries are not useful for pupils who cannot yet spell, since these pupils do not have sufficient knowledge of spelling to use them efficiently.</p>

Handwriting

Pupils should be taught to:

- use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
- increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, e.g. by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

Handwriting

Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.

Composition

Pupils should be taught to:

- plan their writing by:
 - discussing writing similar to that which they are planning to write in order to understand and learn from its structure, vocabulary and grammar
 - discussing and recording ideas
- draft and write by:
 - composing and rehearsing sentences orally (including dialogue), progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures (See Appendix 2)
 - organising paragraphs around a theme
 - in narratives, creating settings, characters and plot

Composition

Pupils should continue to have opportunities to write for a range of real purposes and audiences as part of their work across the curriculum. These purposes and audiences should underpin the decisions about the form the writing should take, such as a narrative, an explanation or a description.

Pupils should understand, through being shown these, the skills and processes that are essential for writing: that is, thinking aloud to explore and collect ideas, drafting, and re-reading to check their meaning is clear, including doing so as the writing develops. Pupils should be taught to monitor whether their own writing makes sense in the same way that they monitor their reading, checking at different levels.

In order to develop creative and imaginative writing, pupils can be

- in non-narrative material, using simple organisational devices such as headings and sub-headings
- evaluate and edit by:
 - assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing and suggesting improvements
 - proposing changes to grammar and vocabulary to improve consistency, e.g. the accurate use of pronouns in sentences
- proof-read for spelling and punctuation errors
- read aloud their own writing, to a group or the whole class, using appropriate intonation and controlling the tone and volume so that the meaning is clear.

encouraged to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role (both verbally and non-verbally). They should have opportunities to create their own improvised, devised and scripted drama for each other and a range of audiences as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation

Pupils should be taught to:

- develop their understanding of the concepts set out in Appendix 2 by:
 - extending the range of sentences with more than one clause by using a wider range of conjunctions, e.g. *when, if, because, although*
 - using the perfect form of verbs to mark relationships of time and cause
 - choosing nouns or pronouns appropriately for clarity and cohesion and to avoid repetition
 - using conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions to express time and cause
 - using fronted adverbials
 - learning the grammar in column 1 of year 3 and 4 in Appendix 2
- indicate grammatical and other features by:
 - using commas after fronted adverbials
 - indicating possession by using the possessive apostrophe with singular and plural nouns
 - using and punctuating direct speech
- use and understand the grammatical terminology in Appendix 2 accurately and appropriately when discussing their writing and reading.

Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation

Grammar should be taught explicitly: pupils should be taught the terminology and concepts set out in Appendix 2, and be able to apply them correctly to examples of real language, such as their own writing or books that they have read.

At this stage, pupils should start to learn about some of the differences between Standard English and non-Standard English and begin to apply what they have learnt, for example, in writing dialogue for characters.

English Appendix 1: Spelling

Most people read words more accurately than they spell them. The younger pupils are, the truer this is.

By the end of year 1, pupils should be able to read a large number of different words containing the grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) that they have learnt, whether or not they have seen these words before. Spelling, however, is a very different matter. Once pupils have learnt more than one way of spelling particular sounds, choosing the right letter or letters depends on their either having made a conscious effort to learn the words or having absorbed them less consciously through their reading. Younger pupils have not had enough time to learn or absorb the accurate spelling of all the words that they may want to write.

This appendix provides examples of words embodying each pattern which is taught. Many of the words listed as 'example words' for years 1 and 2, including almost all those listed as 'exception words', are used frequently in pupils' writing, and therefore it is worth pupils learning the correct spelling. The 'exception words' contain GPCs which have not yet been taught as widely applicable, but this may be because they are applicable in very few age-appropriate words rather than because they are rare in English words in general.

The word-lists for years 3 and 4 and years 5 and 6 are statutory. The lists are a mixture both of words pupils frequently use in their writing and those which they often misspell. Some of the listed words may be thought of as quite challenging, but the 100 words in each list can be covered in fewer than two school years if teachers simply add words each week.

The rules and guidance are intended to support the teaching of spelling. Phonic knowledge should continue to underpin spelling after key stage 1; teachers should still draw pupils' attention to GPCs that do and do not fit in with what has been taught so far. Increasingly, however, pupils also need to understand the role of morphology and etymology. Although particular GPCs in root words simply have to be learnt, teachers can help pupils to understand relationships between meaning and spelling where these are relevant. For example, understanding the relationship between *medical* and *medicine* may help pupils to spell the /s/ sound in *medicine* with the letter 'c'. Pupils can also be helped to spell words with prefixes and suffixes correctly if they understand some general principles for adding them. Teachers should be familiar with what pupils have been taught about spelling in earlier years, such as which rules pupils have been taught for adding prefixes and suffixes.

The spelling appendix is structured in the same way as the programmes of study: the left-hand column is statutory; the middle and right-hand columns are non-statutory guidance.

The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is used to represent sounds (phonemes). A table showing the IPA is provided in this document.

Years 3 and 4

Revision of work from years 1 and 2		Pay special attention to the rules for adding suffixes.
New work for years 3 and 4		
Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words of more than one syllable	If the last syllable of a word is stressed and ends with one consonant letter which has just one vowel letter before it, the final consonant letter is doubled before any ending beginning with a vowel letter is added. The consonant letter is not doubled if the syllable is unstressed.	forgetting, forgotten, beginning, beginner, prefer, preferred gardening, gardener, limiting, limited, limitation
The /ɪ/ sound spelt y elsewhere than at the end of words	These words should be learnt as needed.	myth, gym, Egypt, pyramid, mystery
The /ʌ/ sound spelt ou	These words should be learnt as needed.	young, touch, double, trouble, country
More prefixes	Most prefixes are added to the beginning of root words without any changes in spelling, but see in- below. Like un- , the prefixes dis- and mis- have negative meanings. The prefix in- can mean both 'not' and 'in'/'into'. In the words given here it means 'not'. Before a root word starting with l , in- becomes il Before a root word starting with m or p , in- becomes im- . Before a root word starting with r , in- becomes ir- . re- means 'again' or 'back'. sub- means 'under'. inter- means 'between' or 'among'. super- means 'above'. anti- means 'against'. auto- means 'self' or 'own'.	dis- , mis- : disappoint, disagree, disobey misbehave, mislead, misspell (mis + spell) in- : inactive, incorrect illegal, illegible immature, immortal, impossible, impatient, imperfect irregular, irrelevant, irresponsible re- : redo, refresh, return, reappear, redecorate sub- : subdivide, subheading, submarine, submerge inter- : interact, intercity, international, interrelated (inter + related) super- : supermarket, superman, superstar anti- : antiseptic, anti-clockwise, antisocial auto- : autobiography, autograph
The suffix -ation	The suffix -ation is added to verbs to form nouns. The rules already learnt still apply.	information, adoration, sensation, preparation, admiration

<p>The suffix –ly</p>	<p>The suffix –ly is added to an adjective to form an adverb. The rules already learnt still apply.</p> <p>The suffix –ly starts with a consonant letter, so it is added straight on to most root words.</p> <p>Exceptions:</p> <p>(1) If the root word ends in –y with a consonant letter before it, the y is changed to i, but only if the root word has more than one syllable.</p> <p>(2) If the root word ends with –le, the –le is changed to –ly.</p> <p>(3) If the root word ends with –ic, –ally is added rather than just –ly, except in the word <i>publicly</i>.</p> <p>(4) The words <i>truly, duly, wholly</i>.</p>	<p>sadly, completely, usually (usual + ly), finally (final + ly), comically (comical + ly)</p> <p>happily, angrily</p> <p>gently, simply, humbly, nobly</p> <p>basically, frantically, dramatically</p>
<p>Words with endings sounding like /ʒə/ or /tʃə/</p>	<p>The ending sounding like /ʒə/ is always spelt –sure.</p> <p>The ending sounding like /tʃə/ is often spelt –ture, but check that the word is not a root word ending in (t)ch with an er ending – e.g. <i>teacher, catcher, richer, stretcher</i>.</p>	<p>measure, treasure, pleasure, enclosure</p> <p>creature, furniture, picture, nature, adventure</p>
<p>Endings which sound like /ʒən/</p>	<p>If the ending sounds like /ʒən/, it is spelt as –sion</p>	<p>division, invasion, confusion, decision, collision, television</p>
<p>The suffix –ous</p>	<p>Sometimes the root word is obvious and the usual rules apply for adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters.</p> <p>Sometimes there is no obvious root word.</p> <p>–our is changed to –or before –ous is added.</p> <p>A final ‘e’ must be kept if the /dʒ/ sound of ‘g’ is to be kept.</p> <p>If there is an /i:/ sound before the –ous ending, it is usually spelt as i, but a few words have e.</p>	<p>poisonous, dangerous, mountainous, famous, various</p> <p>tremendous, enormous, jealous</p> <p>humorous, glamorous, vigorous</p> <p>courageous, outrageous</p> <p>serious, obvious, curious</p> <p>hideous, spontaneous, courteous</p>
<p>Endings which sound like /ʃən/, spelt –tion, –sion, –ssion, –cian</p>	<p>Strictly speaking, the suffixes are –ion and –ian. Clues about whether to put t, s, ss or c before these suffixes often come from the last letter or letters of the root word.</p> <p>–tion is the most common spelling. It is used if the root word ends in t or te.</p> <p>–ssion is used if the root word ends in ss or –mit.</p> <p>–sion is used if the root word ends in d or se.</p> <p>Exceptions: <i>attend – attention, intend – intention</i>.</p> <p>–cian is used if the root word ends in c or cs.</p>	<p>invention, injection, action, hesitation, completion</p> <p>expression, discussion, confession, permission, admission</p> <p>expansion, extension, comprehension, tension</p> <p>musician, electrician, magician, politician, mathematician</p>
<p>Words with the /k/ sound spelt ch (Greek in origin)</p>		<p>scheme, chorus, chemist, echo, character</p>

Words with the /ʃ/ sound spelt ch (mostly French in origin)		chef, chalet, machine, brochure
Words ending with the /g/ sound spelt -gue and the /k/ sound spelt -que (French in origin)		league, tongue, antique, unique
Words with the /s/ sound spelt sc (Latin in origin)	In the Latin words from which these words come, the Romans probably pronounced the c and the k as two sounds rather than one – /s/ /k/	science, scene, discipline, fascinate, crescent
Words with the /eɪ/ sound spelt ei, eigh, or ey		vein, weigh, eight, neighbour, they, obey
Possessive apostrophe with plural words	The apostrophe is placed after the plural form of the word; -s is not added if the plural already ends in -s , but <i>is</i> added if the plural does not end in -s (i.e. is an irregular plural – e.g. <i>children's</i>).	girls', boys', babies', children's, men's, mice's (Note: singular proper nouns ending in an <i>s</i> use the 's suffix e.g. Cyprus's population)
Homophones or near-homophones		accept/except, affect/effect, ball/bawl, berry/bury, brake/break, fair/fare, grate/great, groan/grown, here/hear, heel/heal/he'll, knot/not, mail/male, main/mane, meat/meet, medal/meddle, missed/mist, peace/piece, plain/plane, rain/rein/reign, scene/seen, weather/whether, whose/who's

Word list for years 3 and 4

accident(ally)	circle	famous	island	peculiar	sentence
actual(ly)	complete	favourite	knowledge	perhaps	separate
address	consider	February	learn	popular	special
answer	continue	forward(s)	length	position	straight
appear	decide	fruit	library	possess(ion)	strange
arrive	describe	grammar	material	possible	strength
believe	different	group	medicine	potatoes	suppose
bicycle	difficult	guard	mention	pressure	surprise
breath	disappear	guide	minute	probably	therefore
breathe	early	heard	natural	promise	though/although
build	earth	heart	naughty	purpose	thought
busy/business	eight/eighth	height	notice	quarter	through
calendar	enough	history	occasion(ally)	question	various
caught	exercise	imagine	often	recent	weight
centre	experience	increase	opposite	regular	woman/women
century	experiment	important	ordinary	reign	
certain	extreme	interest	particular	remember	

Teachers should continue to emphasise to pupils the relationships between sounds and letters, even when the relationships are unusual. Once root words are learnt in this way, longer words can be spelt correctly, if the rules and guidelines for adding prefixes and suffixes are also known.

Examples:

business : once *busy* is learnt, with due attention to the unusual spelling of the /i/ sound as 'u', *business* can then be spelt as **busy + ness**, with the **y** of **busy** changed to **i** according to the rule.

disappear: the root word *appear* contains sounds which can be spelt in more than one way so it needs to be learnt, but the prefix **dis-** is then simply added to **appear**.

Understanding the relationships between words can also help with spelling. Examples:

bicycle is *cycle* (from the Greek for *wheel*) with **bi-** (meaning *two*) before

it. *medicine* is related to *medical* so the /s/ sound is spelt as **c**.

opposite is related to *oppose*, so the schwa sound in *opposite* is spelt as **o**.

