



# Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling Policy

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**Hunslet Moor Primary School**  
**Policy for the Teaching and Learning of Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG)**

**Main purposes for this policy:**

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

**Aims:**

- To ensure all pupils have the knowledge to spell words efficiently and accurately whilst drawing on knowledge of phonics and spelling patterns.
- To ensure that all pupils are able to react to punctuation when reading, be aware of all parts of punctuation and where/ where not to apply them and to be able to write using these devices accurately.
- To ensure that all children are aware of correct English grammar for both oral and written work.
- To promote accurate oracy for all children in the form of being effective and confident public speakers and storytellers who practise precise grammar.

**Introduction**

**The importance of grammar and punctuation to the curriculum**

Grammar is concerned with the way in which sentences are used in spoken language, in reading and in writing. Sentences are the construct that help give words their sense. The purpose of grammar teaching is to enable pupils to become conscious of patterns of language that they can apply in their own work to enhance meaning.

The purpose of punctuation is to clarify the meaning of texts. Readers use punctuation to help make sense of written texts while writers use punctuation to help communicate intended meaning to the reader.

Grammar is not about learning terminology. The use of terms to discuss language is helpful but is not an end in itself. Many pupils become adept at repeating terms they have heard but remain unable to transfer grammatical knowledge into independent reading and writing.

Within the writing teaching sequence, children would benefit from aspects of grammar pertinent to the genre under scrutiny being referred to in order to enable children to improve their writing ability e.g. in terms of sentence construction, greater complexity of vocabulary or spelling, and to make that all-important link between spelling, punctuation, grammar and writing as a composite effort. Thus, shared reading and writing provides a helpful context for the discussion and demonstration of grammatical features at word level (morphology), sentence level (syntax) and text level (conventions of style and organisation); discrete grammar and punctuation lessons, e.g. from Year 3 upwards, then allow children time to home in on specific grammatical concepts which they later apply to their writing.

**Entitlement and curriculum provision**

The National Curriculum gives a clear, developmental programme for the introduction and acquisition of knowledge about grammar and punctuation.

## Classroom provision

- Spelling will be taught discretely from Years R-Y6.
- In Reception/Year 1, the emphasis will be on Phonics; in Year 2/Key Stage 2, guidance is drawn from the National Curriculum for Spelling and the No-Nonsense spelling programme.
- SPaG lessons from Years 3-6 will revolve around work corresponding to a discrete SPaG text as outlined on the whole-school curriculum LTP.
- The work done in the children's SPaG lessons is intended to impact on children's ability to write using correct punctuation and grammar and to develop the 'writing voice' of all children throughout school. It is expected that skills taught are fed back into any lessons that involves writing.
- Grammar will be taught at teachers' discretion in accordance with the Key Stage 1 and 2 SPaG long-term plan that is directly in accordance with the National Curriculum guidance appropriate to each year group.
- Children who are consistently struggling to retain knowledge of spelling patterns, grammatical concepts and punctuation devices in either a discrete or contextualised setting (putting concepts into practice in writing tasks) may be identified for additional support in the form of interventions in order to help those children attain the standards of achievement expected within their year group.
- Regarding the teaching of spelling, in Reception and KS1, 5 x sessions will take place across the week during phonics sessions; in KS2, 3 X spelling sessions will take place each week.
- Spelling challenges for Years 2-6 are to take the form of each group's differentiated spellings to be randomly presented, plus 5 unseen spellings adhering to the same spelling pattern/rule in order to encourage the learning of these patterns/rules as opposed to merely knowing the spelling of a specific, decontextualized set of words.
- The spelling guidance (see Appendix 1), refers to the spellings to be covered each year. Year 6 will need to consolidate all rules and patterns from Reception to Year 6.
- The SPaG guidance (see Appendix 2) refers to the coverage expected of each year group. Again, Year 6 will need to consolidate all aspects on top of their year group's expectations.
- For Years 3-6, the punctuation and grammar aspect of SPaG is to be taught discretely in the form of a (minimum) 30 minute session in addition to the spelling sessions.

## Continuity and Progression

### Early Years Foundation Stage

Pupils expect written text to make sense and they recognise sentences in their shared reading of texts and in their own play and experimental writing. They write simple sentences based on speech and begin to use significant punctuation e.g. capital letters for their own name and at the beginning of a sentence.

### Key Stage 1

At Key Stage 1, the emphasis is on developing pupils' general awareness of language, both written and spoken. Pupils are encouraged to attempt more complex spoken language and to observe the use of punctuation in written texts as a pointer for pausing, for intonation and as an aid to meaning. They are to be taught to recognise sentences, expect them to make sense and use basic sentence structures in their own writing. Some punctuation marks are used in context. More complex sentences are developed through the use of an increasing range of connectives. **In order to drive progression in both SPaG and writing (as SPaG knowledge and application is considered crucial if writing is to improve in accuracy, complexity and overall efficacy), children's writing bands should simultaneously reflect their SPaG ability i.e. a Year 1 cannot be considered to be age-related in writing if their writing i) does not make sense and**

ii) less than 60% of their work lacks correct use of capital letters and full stops (Year 1 non-negotiables – see Appendix 2).

### Key Stage 2

In Years 3 and 4, pupils are introduced to the grammatical functions of different types of word and they begin to explore how sentences are constructed. The emphasis here is not about grammatical labelling (i.e. the naming of parts of speech, though this could be the case for greater depth pupils) but on discovering their function i.e. what words can be made to do. Explicit teaching of a wider range of punctuation marks occurs and this is reflected by their use in pupils' writing. However, care should be taken that punctuation is taught within the context of what is being read and what the pupils need to use in their own writing and a number of non-negotiables e.g. capital letters and full stops (90% accurate – see Appendix 2). **As stated above, in order to drive progression in both SPaG and writing (as SPaG knowledge and application is considered crucial if writing is to improve in accuracy, complexity and overall efficacy), children's writing bands should simultaneously reflect their SPaG ability i.e. a Year 3 cannot be considered to be age-related in writing if i) 90% of their writing lacks capital letters and full stops, ii) less than 60% of their work lacks question marks and exclamation marks, and iii) less than 60% of their work lacks commas to separate items in a list (Year 3 non-negotiables – see Appendix 2).**

In Years 5 and 6, this basic knowledge is extended through the close reading and discussion of carefully-chosen examples from a range of text types – and explicit practice of these concepts, both in terms of recognition of an e.g. embedded clause, and the formulation of one. In their writing, pupils are encouraged to draw on this understanding to develop a sense of style, to experiment with the construction of complex sentences and to restructure sentences for clarity, effect audience and purpose. This will, in turn, necessitate the use of a wider range of punctuation marks, including punctuation within a sentence. **As stated above, in order to drive progression in both SPaG and writing (as SPaG knowledge and application is considered crucial if writing is to improve in accuracy, complexity and overall efficacy), children's writing bands should simultaneously reflect their SPaG ability i.e. a Year 5 cannot be considered to be age-related in writing if i) 90% of their writing lacks capital letters and full stops, ii) less than 90% of their work lacks question marks and exclamation marks, iii) less than 90% of their work lacks inverted commas for speech, and iv) less than 60% of spellings are spelled correctly (Year 5 non-negotiables – see Appendix 2).**

### Teaching and Learning

To teach pupils about grammar and punctuation, the emphasis is on the close consideration of examples of language in use, including pupils' own writing, and on the exploration of language in general. The aim is 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, both written and spoken.

#### The role of the teacher:

- To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling;
- To provide resources and an environment which promotes a developing understanding of grammar and punctuation;
- To observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development.

#### The learning environment

- Pupils have good access to a range of appropriate dictionaries and thesauruses in class. References to SPaG content will also be visual in the classroom.

### **Learning outcomes**

- The aim of SPaG provision in regards to final outcomes is for every child to be able to speak and, most importantly, write clearly in terms of correct grammar.
- 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 rules/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.

### **Assessment**

- Assessment of grammar and punctuation will take the form of the marking of the children's weekly work in both writing (SPaG in context) and in the discrete SPaG lessons.
- Year 2 and 6 will undertake the Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar test as part of their end-of-year assessments.
- Optional testing in Key Stage 2 will include a spelling test.
- Year 2 and 6 will do a past SPaG SATs paper once every half term.
- Work in SPaG sessions will focus on key learning objectives about grammar and punctuation as outlined in the SPaG document (Appendix 2).

## APPENDIX 1

### Hunslet Moor Spelling Guidance for staff

This guidance is in addition to that given in the 'National Curriculum 2014 English – Appendix 1: Spelling' and adapted from the previous HMPS spelling guidance document of Spring 2015.

#### AIMS:

- To develop competence in spelling
- To nurture an inquisitive approach to the spelling of words
- To engender a fascination with words and their origins
- To enhance pupils' vocabulary

Depending on the age/ability of the child, **explicitly-taught spelling strategies** might follow some/all of the following:

- **PHONOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE** (letters and sounds) – breaking the word into chunks/syllables eg in/ven/tion; thinking of words that rhyme with that word eg house/mouse
- **VISUAL KNOWLEDGE** (the way a word looks) – thinking of a word that might look the same/have the same spelling pattern eg could, would, should; writing the word out and seeing if it 'looks right' eg spiy/spy/spi
- **MORPHEMIC KNOWLEDGE** (the parts of words) – compound words eg handbag; base words/word roots/word stems eg laugh/ter; prefixes and suffixes eg un/predict/able; spelling rules eg 'e' or 'i' before a c softens the sound to a 'ss' – and considering if a word is perhaps an exception to a rule; also mnemonic devices for uncommon or irregular spelling patterns eg m/ight (**I've got hairy toes**)
- **ETYMOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE** (word origins) – linguistic roots eg deca = ten for decade, decimal, decagon

#### Pointers for improving children's understanding of spelling rules and patterns

\***Investigative spelling work** can be beneficial as can **explicitly describing and modelling concepts and externalising internal processes**.

\*Take advantage of **writing/reading sessions** whilst collecting powerful vocabulary in order to bring children's attention to spelling rules/patterns.

\*Children need **regular, scaffolded, specific learning experiences** in order to **practise and consolidate** learning; giving children a selection to choose from promotes independence and interest regarding how words are spelled. These sessions should be **identified on class timetables** and work from these sessions **evident in children's spelling books** week on week.

\* Spellings should be differentiated, not merely in terms of the number of spellings given, but also in terms of complexity.

\*The same week's spelling list, with an **explicit spelling rule(s)** stated and words grouped accordingly, should then be sent home (see home learning guidance)

\*All spellings should be **written in the lower case** (unless eg topic-related, proper nouns are being given eg Pudding Lane, or other proper nouns eg Wednesday). It is important to note that, in the Year 6 spelling

part of the Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar SAT, if a child unnecessarily gives a word a capital letter, it will be marked as incorrect, even if the spelling itself is correct.

\*It may be beneficial for children to be encouraged to **print their spellings as opposed to join up** so as to ensure that, in test conditions, errors are not incurred on account of incorrect letter joins eg a cursive version of 'hood' written as 'haad'.

\*The spellings being practised in these daily sessions, from year 2 onwards, should then culminate in a **weekly 'spelling challenge'**.

\*This spelling challenge should take the form of asking the children to spell words given **in random order**. Again, children need to be trained to question whether the word needs a capital letter or not. Children should also be given 5 unseen spellings that adhere to the same spelling pattern/rule being studied that week in order to encourage the learning of these patterns/rules as opposed to merely knowing the spelling of a specific, decontextualized set of words.

APPENDIX 2 – Expected progression in SPaG (compiled from writing grids, NC and HMPS non-negotiables)

YEAR GROUP	<p style="text-align: center;">SPaG concepts</p> <p>FROM WRITING GRIDS</p> <p>black – requirements for ARE; pink – requirements for GD</p> <p>FROM National Curriculum – purple</p> <p><u>underlined</u> – non-negotiables</p> <p>handwriting</p>
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ sequencing simple sentences</li> <li>✓ <u>sentences make sense</u></li> <li>✓ <u>capital letters and full stops to demarcate sentences; for names and 'I'</u> (60%; 90% for GD)</li> <li>✓ nouns and adjectives</li> <li>✓ spell common exception words for Y1 (60%; 90% for GD)</li> <li>✓ exclamation marks and question marks (30%)</li> <li>✓ prefixes and suffixes – s, es, ing, ed, er, est</li> </ul> <p>Word level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ regular plural noun suffixes –s or –es eg dog, dogs; wish, wishes</li> <li>✓ suffixes added to verbs where no change is needed in the spelling of root words eg helping, helped, helper</li> <li>✓ prefix un– negates the meaning of verbs and adjectives eg unkind, unhappy; undo, untie</li> </ul> <p>Sentence level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ words can combine to make sentences</li> <li>✓ use 'and' to join words and clauses</li> </ul> <p>Text level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ sequencing sentences</li> </ul> <p>Punctuation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <u>finger spaces</u></li> </ul> <p>Terminology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ letter, capital letter, word, singular, plural, sentence, punctuation, full stop, question mark, exclamation mark</li> </ul> <p>*lower-case &amp; capital letters of the correct size, and orientation</p> <p>*clear spacing between words</p>

- ✓ capital letters and full stops (90%)
- ✓ question marks (30%)
- ✓ past and present tense
- ✓ spell common exception words for Y2 (60%; 90% for GD)
- ✓ *commas to separate items in a short list*
- ✓ *contracted forms*
- ✓ *apostrophes to mark singular possession in nouns*
- ✓ *exclamation marks* (90%)
- ✓ *add suffixes to spell most (90%) words correctly in their writing -  
-ment, -ness, -ful, -less, -ly*

#### Word level

- ✓ formation nouns using suffixes such as -ness, -er and by compounding eg whiteboard, superman
- ✓ formation of adjectives using suffixes such as -ful, -ness (A fuller list of suffixes can be found in the Year 2 spelling section in English Appendix 1)
- ✓ use of suffixes -er, -est in adjectives; use of -ly to turn adjectives into adverbs

#### Sentence level

- ✓ subordination (using when, if, that, because) and co-ordination (using or, and, but)
- ✓ expanded noun phrases – adding adjectives eg the blue butterfly, plain flour; adding prepositional phrases eg the man in the moon
- ✓ sentence types – statements, questions, exclamations, commands

#### Text level

- ✓ correct choice and consistent use of present tense eg I sit; and past tense eg you came throughout writing
- ✓ present progressive eg I am driving, she is drumming, we are running;  
past progressive eg he was shouting, they are swimming

#### Punctuation

- ✓ exclamation marks
- ✓ commas to separate items in a list
- ✓ apostrophes for omission – eg can't, I'll; apostrophes for singular possession eg the girl's name

#### Terminology

- ✓ noun, noun phrase, statement, question, exclamation, command, compound, suffix, adjective, adverb, verb, tense (past, present, present progressive, past progressive), apostrophe, comma

(All non-negotiables to date)

- \*lower-case & capital letters of the correct size, and orientation
- \*use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters
- \*use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join some letters (30%)

- ✓ capital letters and full stops (90%)
- ✓ question marks and exclamation marks (60%; 90% for GD)
- ✓ commas to separate items in a short list (60%; 90% for GD)
- ✓ contracted forms (60%; 90% for GD)
- ✓ apostrophes to marks singular possession in nouns (60%; 90% for GD)
- ✓ inverted commas to denote speech (60%; 90% for GD)
- ✓ present perfect form eg I have drunk, she has eaten, we have run
- ✓ conjunctions (clause has a verb in it!) - when, before, after, while, because (subordinating); so (co-ordinating)
- ✓ adverbs - then, next, soon, therefore
- ✓ prepositions (no verb as these appear in a phrase!) - before, after, during, in, because of
- ✓ words from Y3/4 spelling list (60%; 90% for GD)
- ✓ fronted adverbials - time, place, manner (30%)

#### Word level

- ✓ formation of nouns using a range of prefixes eg super-, anti-, auto-
- ✓ 'a' (before a consonant) or 'an' (before a vowel) eg a rock, an open box
- ✓ word families based on common words, showing how words are related in form and meaning eg solve, solution, solver, dissolve, insoluble

#### Sentence level

- ✓ expressing time, place and cause using (see above) conjunctions, adverbs, prepositions

#### Text level

- ✓ paragraphs as a way to group related material
- ✓ headings and sub-headings to aid presentation
- ✓ use of the present perfect form of verbs instead of the simple past eg 'he has gone out to play' as opposed to 'he went out to play'

#### Punctuation

- ✓ inverted commas

#### Terminology

- ✓ preposition, conjunction, word family, prefix, clause, subordinate clause, direct speech, consonant, consonant letter vowel, vowel letter, inverted commas (or 'speech marks')

(All non-negotiables to date)

- \*diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters (30%; 60% for GD)
- \*capital letters of correct orientation and size compared to lower case letters (90%)

- ✓ organise writing into paragraphs around a theme (30%)
- ✓ capital letters and full stops (90%)
- ✓ question marks and exclamation marks (90%)
- ✓ fronted adverbials – time, place, manner (90%)
- ✓ comma after a fronted adverbial (90%)
- ✓ accurate use of verbs – ‘we were’, not ‘we was’ (90%)
- ✓ inverted commas for speech (60%; 90% for GD)
- ✓ apostrophe for singular possession (60%)
- ✓ words from Year 3/4 spelled correctly (60%)
- ✓ *apostrophes for plural possession (90%)*
- ✓ *standard and non-standard forms of English*
- ✓ *correct use of paragraphs to organise and structure*

#### Word level

- ✓ knowing the difference between the plural and possessive –s
- ✓ Standard English forms for verb inflections eg ‘we were’ instead of ‘we was’, ‘those things’ instead of ‘them things’, ‘I did’ instead of ‘I done’

#### Sentence level

- ✓ expanded noun phrases expanded by adding adjectives eg ‘the pot’ becomes ‘the cracked pot’, and prepositional phrases eg the teacher becomes ‘the teacher with the high-pitched voice’
- ✓ fronted adverbials

#### Text level

- ✓ paragraphs
- ✓ appropriate choice of pronoun or noun within and across sentences to aid cohesion and avoid repetition eg Santa had a team of reindeer; Rudolph was *his* favourite

#### Punctuation

- ✓ inverted commas and other punctuation to indicate direct speech eg a comma after the reporting clause, and end punctuation within inverted commas eg The conductor shouted, “Sit down!”
- ✓ Apostrophes to mark plural possession eg the girl’s name, the girls’ names
- ✓ commas after fronted adverbials

#### Terminology

- ✓ determiner, pronoun, possessive pronoun, adverbial

(All non-negotiables to date)

- \* diagonal and horizontal strokes (30%)
- \* diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join in some (30%) sections of their writing
- \* *legible, joined handwriting (90%)*

- ✓ cohesion within and across paragraphs eg then, after that, this, firstly
- ✓ precise vocab and grammatical structures that reflect level of formality required (30%)
- ✓ differing clause structures – embedded, subordinate, adverbial, -ed clauses, used in different positions within a sentence (60%)
- ✓ indicate degrees of possibility through modal verbs (might; will, should, must PLUS OTHERS) or adverbs (perhaps, surely PLUS OTHERS)
- ✓ capital letters and full stops (90%)
- ✓ question marks and exclamation marks (90%)
- ✓ inverted commas for speech (90%)
- ✓ commas for clarity (60%)
- ✓ punctuation for parenthesis – commas, brackets, dashes
- ✓ dashes (towards the end of a sentence)
- ✓ words spelled correctly (60%)
- ✓ shifts in formality through selecting precise vocab and grammatical structures for effect
- ✓ wide range of clause structures (see above), sometimes varying their position within a sentence
- ✓ colons and semi-colons (90%)
- ✓ hyphens (90%)

#### Word level

- ✓ converting nouns or adjectives into verbs using suffixes eg -ate, -ise, -ify (PLUS OTHERS)
- ✓ Verb prefixes eg dis-, de-, mis-, over- and re- (PLUS OTHERS)

#### Sentence level

- ✓ relative clauses beginning with who, whose, which, where, that eg 'The cat that is on the sofa is mine.'; or an omitted relative pronoun eg 'The cat on the sofa is mine.'
- ✓ degrees of possibility using adverbs or modal verbs

#### Text level

- ✓ building cohesion within a paragraph
- ✓ linking ideas across paragraphs using adverbials of time eg later (PLUS OTHERS); place eg nearby (PLUS OTHERS); and number eg secondly (PLUS OTHERS); or tense choices eg he had seen her before (the past perfect)

#### Punctuation

- ✓ brackets, dashes or commas to indicate parenthesis
- ✓ use of commas to clarify meaning or avoid ambiguity eg 'The pupil, said the teacher, was funny' as opposed to 'The pupil said the teacher was funny'

#### Terminology

- ✓ modal verb, relative pronoun, relative clause, parenthesis, bracket, dash, cohesion, ambiguity

(All non-negotiables to date)

\*legibility and fluency of handwriting over a sustained period. Ensuring letter formation is correct

\*legibility, fluency and speed of handwriting over a sustained period

- ✓ vocab and grammatical structures to reflect purpose – contracted forms in dialogues in narrative, passive verbs, modal verbs to denote degrees of possibility (90%)
- ✓ cohesion within and across paragraphs (conjunctions of time, adverbials of time and place, pronouns, synonyms PLUS OTHERS)
- ✓ verb tenses – full range including past perfect, past progressive, present perfect, present progressive and subjunctive
- ✓ inverted commas and other punctuation for direct speech (90%)
- ✓ spellings from Year 5/6 spelling list plus less common and more ambitious vocab (90%)
- ✓ assured and conscious control of formality – grammatical and vocab-related manipulation
- ✓ full range of punctuation

#### Word level

- ✓ difference between vocab typical of informal speech and vocab appropriate for formal speech and writing eg find out/discover; ask for/request; go in/enter
- ✓ how words are related by meaning as synonyms and antonyms eg big, large, little

#### Sentence level

- ✓ use of the passive form
- ✓ difference between structures typical of informal speech and structures appropriate for formal speech and writing eg with the use of question tags eg He's your friend, isn't he?; or the use of subjunctive forms eg 'If I were to come/Were I to come' in some very formal writing and speech

#### Text level

- ✓ linking ideas across paragraphs using a wider range of cohesive devices – repetition of a word or phrase, grammatical connections eg the use of adverbials such as on the other hand, in contrast, as a consequence; and ellipsis
- ✓ layout devices eg headings, sub-headings, columns, bullets, or tables to structure text

#### Punctuation

- ✓ semi-colon, colon and dash to mark the boundary between independent clauses eg It's raining; I'm fed up.
- ✓ colon to introduce a list and use of semi-colons within lists
- ✓ bullet points to list information
- ✓ how hyphens can be used to avoid ambiguity eg 'man eating shark' versus 'man-eating shark' or recover versus re-cover

(All non-negotiables to date)

## **APPENDIX 3**

**See attached NC spelling guidance.**