

School Plan for English Language: Canal Way Educate Together

The centrality of language

English has a unique position and function in the curriculum because it is the first language of the majority of children in Ireland. The particular needs of children with English as an Additional Language and those with Special Educational Needs will be met through differentiation within a class and support teaching.

The structure of the English curriculum and the style of language learning it advocates have been informed by five principles which will be fully endorsed at all class levels at Canal Way ETNS.

1. The integration of oral language, reading and writing

Listening, speaking, reading and writing are integrated in the process of learning language. The child's ability with oral language can be a determining factor in the speed and effectiveness with which he/she makes progress in reading, just as the experience of reading will extend vocabulary and enhance control of sentence structure. Similarly, there is a close relationship between competence in reading and the ability to express oneself in writing. Thus, each of the three functions draws from and feeds into the others to form an interrelated process of language learning.

2. Language learning and learning through language

The English curriculum is concerned not just with language learning but with learning through language. In the process of acquiring language skills and in developing the ability to use language, other dimensions of the child's personality and potential are cultivated and enriched. The learning of a new word, for instance, or an extended meaning of a word already known, can entail more than an expansion of the child's vocabulary. It can interact with concepts that are already familiar in a way that deepens and broadens perception. Likewise, in attempting to express emotional or imaginative experience, the act of putting feelings and intuitions into language can provide a focus that deepens the child's knowledge of him/herself and the world. Furthermore, it is through enhanced language skill and understanding that the child gains meaningful access to the full range of the curriculum. Language skills and the ability to communicate have huge significance in the forming of friendships and interpersonal relationships.-

3. The central place of oral language throughout the curriculum

The development of oral language is as important as that of reading and writing, at every level, in the curriculum, and it has an equal weighting with them in the integrated language process. It will have a crucial role to play not only in language learning but as an approach to teaching throughout the curriculum. Canal Way

Educate Together teaches children how to have philosophical discussions during thinking time / philosophy.

4. Learning to read through a range of approaches

The curriculum incorporates an approach to the teaching of reading that is based on the child's overall experience of language and the world, and involves the use of a range of word identification strategies. It also asserts that his/her reading experience should be as rich and varied as possible. This can only be realised through the consistent use of well-stocked school and class libraries as well as through the use of reading schemes.

5. The process of writing is as important as the product

The curriculum stresses the importance of the process of writing as well as the product. It incorporates the principle that the act of writing is a part of the language learning process. It asserts that the child can become an independent writer by attempting to write and by self-correcting his/her writing with the prompting and guidance of the teacher. This entails a consistent experience of writing, editing and redrafting that involves the child in writing on a wide range of topics, in a variety of genres and for different audiences.

Section 1: Approaches to oral language Contexts for oral language

Oral language activity can be approached through five principal contexts:

- talk and discussion. • play and games (story) • Story.
- Improvisational drama
- poetry and rhyme

Ideas:

Activity	Junior Senior	1st 2nd	3rd 4th	5th 6th
Aistear	Y	Y		
Games – Guess Who, Headbands, Charades, Pictionary, story cubes. etc	Y	Y	Y	Y
News / Knee to Knee	Y	Y	Y	Y
Philosophy, Story discussion.	Y	Y	Y	Y
Drama, mime, role play,	Y	Y	Y	Y
Idioms, Proverbs, rhymes and riddles.		Y	Y	Y
Circle Time.	Y	Y	Y	Y
Scenario Cards	Y	Y	Y	Y
Oral Reports	Y	Y	Y	Y
Circle Stories	Y	Y	Y	Y
Puppetry	Y	Y	Y	Y
Circle within a circle		Y	Y	Y

Hot Seating	Y	Y	Y	Y
Who Am I	Y	Y	Y	Y
Take a stand, Debates, Arguments		Y	Y	Y
Picture Word Inductive Model			Y	Y
Semantic Gradient		Y	Y	Y
Listening Triads		Y	Y	Y
Partner Conversations	Y	Y	Y	Y
Preparing Interviews		Y	Y	Y
Feely Bags	Y	Y	Y	Y
Give it a Go	Y	Y	Y	Y

<http://pdst.ie/sites/default/files/Oral%20Language%20Booklet%20PDF.pdf>

Oral Language Resources: A box of oral language games and the PDST resource booklet will be kept in the downstairs store beside the staff room.

Section 2: Approaches to reading

The curriculum assumes a considerable change in the approach to reading. Firstly, it envisages that the early stages of reading will be grounded firmly on the child's general language experience. This presupposes that oral language activities will provide the basis for the child's preparation for reading. This will, progressively, involve the child in the creation and reading of oral-based texts and in the collaborative reading of large format books. Building on this foundation of language activity the child will learn to use a number of cueing strategies that will enable him/her to read and understand an increasingly complex range of text.

It is a fundamental principle of the curriculum that the child's language competence, attention span, concentration and perceptual abilities should be well developed before being introduced to a formal reading scheme. Consequently, much of the English programme in the child's first year at school will be devoted to oral language and enjoyable reading experiences.

A print-rich environment

It is important that, from the first day at school, the child is encouraged to see books and reading materials as exciting, pleasurable and interesting. The infant classroom should be organised in away that facilitates interaction between children and books and develops their curiosity about print.

Creating a print-rich environment involves more than a simple labelling of objects in the classroom. The regular use of job charts, weather charts and posters, for example, in which words, phrases and sentences change very regularly will help to focus the child's attention on the written word and he/she can be encouraged to respond appropriately. Word walls and high interest words to be displayed in classrooms.

Environmental print in the neighbourhood can also be explored and the addition of directories, newspapers and magazines to a play corner will encourage children to engage in play activities that resemble real-life reading activities.

An important element of the print environment is the regular display of the children's writing, whether on the classroom walls or as items in the classroom library. As such it can become part of the children's reading material and provide stimulation to the reader and encouragement for the writer.

Library

Canal Way Educate Together is a new school and every effort will be made to ensure that every classroom has a well-stocked library. Given the financial state of the school at the time of writing this plan, the school aims to have at least 12 books per child in each classroom library in the coming 5 years.

Paired Reading: Paired reading starts in January. Children start at the correct level of reader.

Sails: They get one book per week at this stage with the emphasis on shared reading of the text, comprehension and a developing understanding of phonics/sightwords.

Story Worlds: When the children start Story Worlds they will be reading in groups of 5/6.

Children's Literature: Children will read real books in groups of 5/6.

Organising class reading: When the children are reading in groups of 5/6 ensure that the focus is on comprehension of text (predict, ask questions, summarise, clarify) and pre-teach a few vocabulary words at the beginning of the lesson. While you take your groups of 4, the rest of the class should be engaged in literacy related activities.

Note for teaching children who read above their birth age.

Canal Way ETNS recognise that some pupils may start school as proficient readers. In this case, the child will be given appropriate reading material from the library. Canal Way place value in group reading and so recommends that the high achieving reader will read independently until such time that their peers will have formed suitable reading groups for them to join. This ensures that the children are enjoying discussions around books with their peers, and also ensures that they are reading at an appropriate age & comprehension level.

Reading in the junior classes -Using language experience materials and large format books

These can provide a springboard for a variety of language activities that help to develop language skills and to provide the language base the child needs before embarking on a life time of reading. They are used to teach pre-reading skills and concepts of print.

- large-format books, or 'big books' as they are more familiarly called, are, as their name suggests, books which are produced in format large enough to use for collaborative reading with groups
- language experience charts are created collaboratively by the teacher and the children. The teacher records what the children have to say on a large sheet of chart paper.

Big Books: These are the books available for each class level

One every two weeks (minimum)

Big Books

Junior Infants

Ten in the Bed

Handa's Hen

Monkey Puzzle

Wishy-Washy Day

This is Bear

The Monster Pet

Where's my Teddy

The Little Red Hen

Sharing a Shell

The Pig in the pond

Owl Babies Jolly

Phonics 1-7

Senior Infants:

Handa's Surprise

A Meanies' party

The Gruffalo

The Bear who wouldn't Share

Farmer Duck

Jolly Phonics 1-7

1st Class

The Hidden Forest

***The big books should not be used merely as storybooks but as a meaningful context for teaching sightwords, phonics, fluency, comprehension, concepts of print and phonological awareness.**

***Teachers are also encouraged to use the shared reading texts available on www.starfall.com.**

Phonological and phonemic awareness

In acquiring the ability to use soundletter relationships (grapho/phonic cues) the child needs to develop phonological and phonemic awareness, that is, an ability to manipulate the sound segments in words.

Activities such as the following can contribute to the development of this ability:

- saying and hearing nursery rhymes and rhymed stories
- reproducing rhymes
- clapping and dancing to syllabic rhythms
- playing 'I spy' games involving onsets and rimes
- segmenting of sentences into individual words
- segmenting of words into syllables
- matching the length of a word to its utterance

Knowledge of the conventions of print

The child needs to understand that there are certain directional and positional conventions in print:

- a line of text is read from left to right
- the letters in a word are read from left to right
- text is read from top to bottom
- words are separated by spaces
- punctuation marks play a role in text.

Please see Appendices for further information

Basic sight vocabulary

Basic sight vocabulary is an important element of the language base the child needs before beginning a structured reading programme. It will be acquired from a number of sources, such as

- language experience material
- large-format books
- environmental print
- labelling
- flash cards.

It is important to stress that even when children have begun to use a reading scheme they need a richer reading experience than a reading scheme alone will give. Canal Way endeavor to support the reading scheme with sets of 5/6 real books which will enable the children to enjoy children's literature in reading groups. Emphasis is places on comprehension and not pushing children through levels.

Sight Words for Junior Infants:

Dolche Words

Create an alphabetised word wall

I	Look
like	At
the	We
This	Was
Is	Want
A	And
See	He
Can	His
Went	Said
To	She
Am	

Senior Infants:

Dolche Words:

Create an alphabetised word wall:

Her	My	Go
On	If	But
In	Of	With
Look	Red	Up
do	Put	Not
Little	Here	Will
Big	Going	Yes
Play	Are	No
Eat	It	they
Me	Has	Him
		you

First Class:

Jolly Phonics - Tricky words – no 35 to 72

Steps in teaching a sight word to infants

- Try to link the sight word to the big book you're currently using.
- Examine the word, discuss how many letters are in the word, count the syllables(clap the word), ask 'Does it look like any other words we know?', look at the shape of the word
- Model oral sentences using the word, pointing to it each time it is used, encourage the children to create sentences
- The children write the word several times (in different colours, copying from a flashcard), encourage them to read what they have written
- Locate the word in the big book/rhyme/on environmental print in the classroom etc (Children can point, underline, highlight, match post-its etc)

- Write sentences containing the word (and other sight words already known/decodable words) for the children to read on the board, encourage the children to dictate sentences to you
- Play games using the word ('Go fish', 'Magic doors', 'Téigh a choladh', 'Popcorn words' or create games/activities linked to the theme of the big book/LEA etc, e.g. monster footprints)
- Encourage the children to use the word in their writing.

Word identification strategies:

Reading is a complex activity and in order to become a competent reader the child has to become proficient in recognising and identifying words. In order to acquire the ability to identify words speedily and fluently he/she needs to use information from different sources.

These sources of information, or cueing strategies, are based on the child's

- knowledge of letter-sound relationships (grapho/phonic cues)
- experiences and understanding of the world (meaning or semantic cues)
- knowledge of the forms of language (syntactic cues)
- knowledge of the directional and positional conventions of print
- awareness of the function of punctuation marks.

Phonics:

Junior Infants

- Use Jolly phonics handbook in junior infants

Begin blending cvc words according to jolly phonic Big Books – when the sounds s,a,t,i, p, n are complete, teacher models blending accordingly. Initially, blending games are without letters or text. Eg teacher says c-a-t, and children pick a picture of a cat out of three pictures. Only when the children are proficient at this task are the cvc words introduced.

Letter names introduced in Term Three.

Strategies:

- Songs
- Picture sorts for initial letters
- Feely bags
- Create a letter table
- Big books
- Sound copies (homework Mon-Thurs, see handbook)
- Magnetic boards
- Whiteboards
- Implement Writer's workshop (from Jan)

Senior Infants:

Sept-Nov: Revise all junior infant work

Introduce alternatives to phonemes

- word chains.

'igh'

'ea'

'y'

'ew'

'ir'

'ur'

'aw'

'oy'

'ow'

First Class:

Onset-rime work:

-ack -all -ap

-at -et -ell

-est -ice -ick

-ight -ill-in

-ing -ink -ip

-it -ock -oke

-op -ot -ug

-ump
-ake
-ate

Teaching Comprehension Strategies (Junior Infants)

Building Bridges: Classes have a copy of this in their room and follow.

Section 3: Approaches to poetry The role of poetry

Poetry should have a special place in children's language experience. The heightened and often compressed expression of thought and feeling and the music, rhythm and rhyme in the language can often provide unique and striking glimpses into aspects of human experience. The key to this lies in the variety of poetry they encounter and the ways they are encouraged to respond to it.

Choosing poems

The choice of poems can be influenced by many factors:

- time of year
- weather
- children's preoccupations and interests
- other areas of the curriculum
- a concern for broadening and deepening children's tastes
- events in the world at large.
- Areas of the curriculum: visual arts (as already mentioned), history, geography, mathematics, PE.

Developing children's responses Approaching a poem

Children can approach a poem in a number of ways:

- They can read it silently.
- They can listen to another pupil reading it.

- The teacher can read it aloud.
- They can listen to a professional reading of it on a recording.
- They can listen to the teacher reading it aloud while they look at the text.

Pupils' response

- look for the thrust of the poem
- distinguish the deeper meaning under the surface meaning (for example
in
Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening)
- appreciate how words are used to achieve particular effects
- appreciate the effects of rhythm and rhyme
- examine the function of repetition
- recognise the effects of simile and metaphor
- examine the effects of alliteration, onomatopoeia, assonance, imagery.

It is useful, sometimes, to compare two or more poems on a similar subject; for example 'Mid-term Break' by Seamus Heaney and 'The Night before Patricia's Funeral' by Michael Hartnett, where children can experience two poets' wholly different approaches to similar subjects.

Childrens Poetry:

Children are given opportunity to write poetry after teacher modelling and immersion in the genre. Children are given the opportunity to display and read poetry.

Section 4: Approaches to Writing

The Writing Workshop

- ❖ This is an approach suitable for all class levels.
- ❖ Time: The children should be given time to write at least 3 times a week (teachers can use discretionary time or teach writing in blocks e.g. month on/off, term on/off, as it is important that the children write regularly, i.e. it is more effective to write every day for two months than to write once a week for the school year)
- ❖ Ownership: The children choose their own topics and/or genres. ❖ Lesson Structure:
 - Mini-lesson (5-10 minutes, short, focused on one aspect, responding to the children's needs, lessons are invitations not mandates)

-Writing/conferencing (15-30 minutes, depending on age/attention span), while the children are writing the teacher (s) talk to the children about their writing - Sharing (5-10 minutes) children read their writing aloud (use a checklist to ensure all children are given the opportunity, always voluntary)
-It is essential that you follow this structure, simply providing time everyday for the children to write will not allow the children to progress and reach their potential

❖ Proof-reading/editing: When the children become older and more confident in their writing they can be taught how to read over their writing (*to see if it makes sense, did I forget any words?, is there any spellings that I need to fix?*). These skills can be taught in mini-lessons, in conferences and highlighted in share sessions. Eventually, children can be taught how to revise a piece, but pieces should only be revised if it is agreed that the writing can be developed (not just written out in the child's best handwriting!!!).

Junior/senior Infants:

- Begin in Jan. (see Gentry spelling stages)
- Try to do it at least 3 times a week
- Begin using unlined paper and then after a few weeks progress to lined paper, increasing the number of lines as the children improve ● Each lesson should follow this sequence:
- After the mini-lesson, add the extra oral language element: 'Tell your partner what you will write about'
- Writing (as teacher confers with individual children about their writing)
- Share session (children on the rug, a few children read their story aloud, then all children share their writing with their buddy)

1st -6th class

Use the writing workshop approach

Children choose their own topics

Children write at least 3 times a week

Lesson: Mini-lesson (5-10mins), writing/conferences (20-30mins), sharing (5-7mins)

Children use a hard ring binder with dividers (section for ideas, title tally, spellings, drafts, final drafts)

See list of mini-lessons on the next page

Handwriting

Junior Infants:

- Term 1 – Prewriting skills.
- January: Jolly Phonics Script. Sassoon Infant.

- Copy work – highlighter to write out the letters for the children to trace.
- Books

Recommended sequence:

o, c, a, d, g, q, i, j, l, r, n, h, m, b, p, u, v, y,
w, x, z, e, f, s, z.

o: say - around and stop

a: say - around, up and down

d: say – around, up to the top and down

g: say – around, up, down to the bottom
and around

q: say – around, up, down to the bottom and curve

o: say – around and up around

r: say – down, up, around and stop

n: say – down and up, around, down and stop

m: say – down and up, around, down and up, around, down and stop

h: say – down from the top, up, around and down

b: say – down from the top, up and around

p: say – down to the bottom and up, around and stop

i: say – down, lift and dot

t: say – down from the top, curve, lift and cross **j:**

say – down to the bottom, around, lift and dot

f: say – around at the top, down, lift and cross

k: say – down from the top and lift, back across and down across

x: say – down across, lift back across

u: say – up and around , up and down.

y: say – down, around and up, down to the bottom and around

l: say – down to the top and curve.

v: say – down across and up across

w: say – down across and up across, down across and up across

z: say – over, back and across and over again

e: say – up across, around and stop

s: say – around and forward around.

Senior Infants:

- Revise letters throughout the year.
- Introduce capital letters as per **writing workbooks**. ●
Copying words/sentences with correct formation

First Class to sixth class –

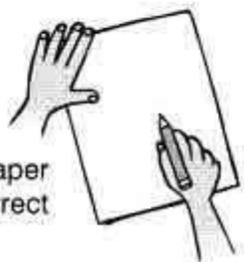
Writing workbooks.

Correct Grip

As soon as possible children should be encouraged to adopt a satisfactory pencil hold which will enable them to write effectively in a relaxed manner and which will not result in problems at a later stage. There are basic principles which are generally accepted.

Right-handers

In the natural tripod grip the pencil is held lightly between thumb and forefinger, about 3 cm from the point, with the middle finger providing extra support. The pencil (or pen) should rest on the end joint of the middle finger. The other two fingers rest lightly on the paper along with the side of the hand. It is important that the pencil hold is so light and relaxed that the pencil can be pulled out of the grip easily. The pencil should point along the line of the forearm to the right of the shoulder at an angle of 45 degrees (approximately) to the writing line. Similarly the angle of the writing instrument to the plane of the paper should be 45 degrees (approximately).

<p>Getting ready to write </p> <p>  Are you sitting comfortably with both feet on the floor?</p> <p>  Are you holding your pencil correctly?</p> <p>  Is your paper at the correct angle?</p>	<p>Handwriting CHECKLIST </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Are you forming your letters correctly?  Are any letters too tall or too short?  Are the descenders of any letters too long or too curly?  Is there a space between your letters?  Is there a space between your words?  Are you making the four joins correctly? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagonal join to letters without ascenders <i>ai, ar, un</i> • Horizontal join to letters without ascenders <i>ou, vi, wi</i> • Diagonal join to letters with ascenders <i>ab, ul, it</i> • Horizontal join to letters with ascenders <i>ol, wh, ot</i>
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Left-handers

The method of holding the pencil is much the same as for the right-hander except that the grip should be about 4 cm from the point instead of 3 cm. This change makes it easier for the writer to see what is written. Special care is needed to ensure that lefthanders do not grip the pen too tightly. Left-handers find the correct angle of pencil

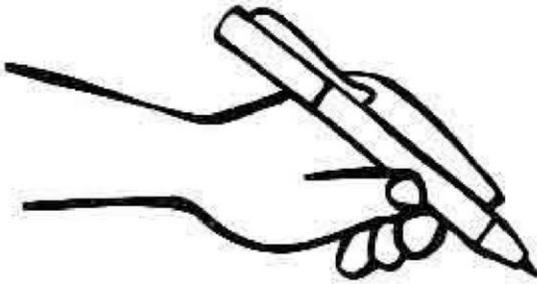
to paper more difficult to achieve but can be helped through ensuring that the pencil is neither too hard or too sharply pointed.



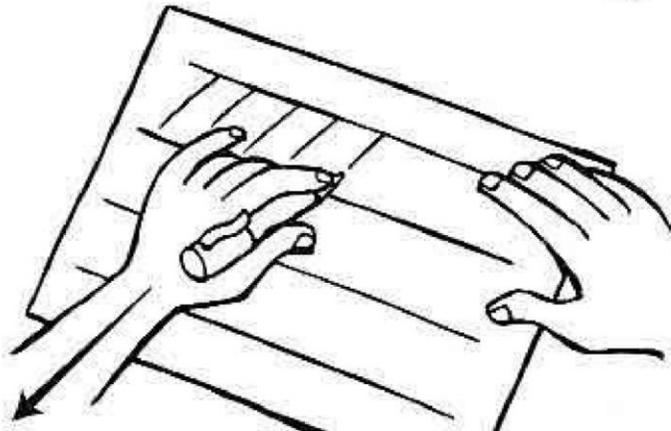
Are you sitting comfortably with both feet on the floor?



Are you holding your pen correctly?



Is your



Directions for the teaching of correct grip

- Hold your pencil very lightly between your thumb and fore finger.
- Your middle finger should also rest very lightly on the pencil. • Your other fingers and your hand can rest lightly on the desk
- Do not press heavily on the paper
- The pencil should point along your arm. It must not point up in the air or towards your body
- Use your left-hand to hold your exercise book steady.

Handwriting is a skill and like all skills, it may be improved and refined through practice.

Spelling

Brendan Culligan.

The Primary School Curriculum (1999, p. 85) advocates a multi-dimensional approach to enabling pupils to acquire the conventions of spelling, and it recommends that the following strategies be used consistently in each class.

- Accepting approximate spelling as children move through the developmental process and arrive at correct spelling through trial and error. The use of approximate spelling allows children to self-correct their attempts as they move through the different stages
- Linking spelling with the development of phonological and phonemic awareness.
- Compiling personal dictionaries
- Using dictionaries and thesauruses
- Using strategies to learn spellings
- Becoming familiar with common spelling rules

Stages in Spelling Development

*These stages are provided as guidelines because there will always be exceptions to generalisations with regard to development

Stage 1

Pre-Communicative :

The child uses a pen /pencil / marker to scribble on page

- Stage 2** Pre-Phonetic :
Letter formation is very underdeveloped. One letter may be used to represent a word. During this stage, the child begins to name and form letters correctly
- Stage 3** Phonetic:
The child's awareness of letter – sound correspondence is developed. The favoured children have the ability to proceed from stage to stage without specific teacher intervention, but the child who is struggling, encounters major problems at this stage. This third stage is where children use their phonic knowledge to invent words they need, but cannot spell. By continuing to do this, the poor speller will not pass on automatically unaided to the next stage. With developing phonological awareness comes the need for intervention in the form of teaching of spelling. This strategy will need to be consistent, systematic and visually based because spelling is a visual motor skill. The speller who continues to rely on sound will not become a competent speller. Children should be trained to look at words within words and compare letter strings.
- Stage 4** Transitional (7 – 10 years)
The favoured children move away from a heavy reliance on phonics, and the child who is struggling needs to be taught to transcend phonics. Concentrate on words needed in children's writing (core words).
- Stage 5** Correct / Competent (10 – 18 years)
Children are aware of phoneme /grapheme relationships, and recognise if a word looks right or wrong. Results of research show that many children do not reach this final stage of spelling development, but it is possible with appropriate intervention to help children become more confident with regard to spelling.

Methods of Teaching Spelling

Look at the word. Look at all the letters in the word.

Say the word slowly.

Cover the word.

Write the word without looking at it.

Check the word by looking at it and mark it right or wrong. When the child has written the word correctly, ask him to write it again before moving on to the next word. Do not consider the word in question to be mastered unless it can be written from memory several days later. If the child gets the word wrong, he should go through the entire process again.

Use the word in a sentence.

Correcting Spellings

Marking can be one of the most significant strategies by which spelling can be improved. However a consistent whole school approach is required which remains flexible with regard to the needs of the individual child. There is no necessity to mark every spelling mistake in a piece of work, and it should be emphasised that mistakes are pointed out to enable children to improve their spelling.

- Ideally, the correction of spellings should be done in the presence of the child
- Children's attitudes to spelling change when the positive aspects of their attempts to spell a word are pointed out, e.g., point out the letters which are right in a word
- Spelling mistakes should be underlined and 'sp' put in the margin
- At the end of a piece of writing, teachers might write the first three letters of the mis-spelt word, and the pupils then complete the correction
- If appropriate, the teacher writes down the word for correction
- If the same mistake is repeated, it is only marked once
- If a common error is discovered, class discussion might take place on families of words or words associated with a particular topic
- An able child will have most, if not all, mistakes pointed out
- In the case of a child with spelling difficulties, only key words will be corrected
- In the early stages of writing, the pupils need time to read their own pieces of work to the teacher, to notice and to question how words are spelled and to extend the range of words they can spell themselves, e.g., commonly used words and words that are important to them.

Assessment of Spelling

With the possible exception of tables, no other area of learning is tested as much as spelling. Spelling should be seen as part of writing development, as an integral aspect of the curriculum which frees the child to be able to write confidently and freely. Our aim should not be that children do well in weekly spelling tests, but to improve the children's ability in free writing. The "five a night and test for Friday" procedure does not improve the performance of the child who is weak at spelling because there is a tendency to assume that once the errors have been corrected, the child knows those words. Test through dictation and in sentences.

Proof reading

Pupils are encouraged to identify a small number of mistakes in their own work and correct them. The word processing exercises are particularly helpful in this regard.

Effective Practices

- -Provide a list of common everyday words
- -Pupils should make up their own dictionaries
- -Key words for each topic can be displayed in the class
- -Use any opportunities which may arise to teach spelling, e.g., point out letter patterns in their names or in the names of family members
- -Look for words hidden within another word
- -Spelling games such as word sleuths, word chains, word families
- -Use of PC software such as Wordshark, Speaking Starspell •

Spellings by class level:

Senior infants:

-Teach children the 'look-say-cover-write-check' method and communicate this to parents

-begin teaching the spelling of the junior infant sight words

Concepts About Print are the things a student needs to know about books, letters, words, directionality, punctuation and other pre-reading skills in order to be a successful reader.

1. **How to hold a book:** This is the understanding that books have a front and a back and are read front to back. It also includes a child's ability to notice if the book is upside down.
2. **Left to right, top to bottom orientation:** This is the understanding that English language text is read from left to right and from top to bottom. Demonstrate this as you read a big book by pointing to each word as you read it. Assess the children's understanding by asking 'Where should I start reading?' 'What will I read next?' etc.
3. **Title, author, illustrator, blurb:** Children should use and understand these terms from the earliest juncture. At first, simply explain and discuss each term, then elicit definitions/terminology from the children.
4. **Table of contents, index, glossary:** These terms should be discussed when exploring a non-fiction big book.

5. **Understanding the notion of a letter and a word:** Some children come to school without the understanding that spoken words are strung together to form sentences (the most basic level of phonological awareness). The teacher should emphasise that each spoken word corresponds to a group of letters (a 'word') in the text by pointing to each word as s/he reads. There should also be some discussion on what a 'letter' is and how it differs from a 'word' using concrete examples from a familiar big book.

6. **Punctuation** (full stops, commas, colons, semi-colons, speech marks, exclamation marks, question marks, ellipses, parentheses)

7. **Capital letters & lower-case letters, print features (bold print, capitalized print, italics)**