

**St Mary's Primary (Cleland)
Parent Guide to support Spelling**



What is a Phoneme?

A phoneme is a unit of sound. It can be one letter, two letters or a group of letters that make a single sound.

Single Sound a as in **apple**

d as in **dog**

Joined Phoneme sh as in **shop**

ch as in **church**

ight as in **light sight**

Split Phoneme a-e as in **lane**

i-e as in **line**

Sometimes in school we refer to the phoneme programme as **Phonics**.

What are common words? What are phoneme words?

Common words are words that are used most commonly in reading books or by the children to write in school.

Phoneme words are words that can be sounded out, or can be placed in an elkonin box or can be diacritically marked.

What are whiteboards?

White boards are laminated boards that are used in class for the children to make words, write sentences or revise letter formation. Children use a dry wipe marker on these boards.

What are magnetic boards?

Magnetic boards are boards with a thin layer of metal. The boards are used with magnetic letters and the children are encouraged to make, break and blend words on these boards. They are mainly used in primary one, two and three.



What is the FIVE Finger Strategy?



From primary one the children are taught the FIVE Finger Strategy. It is basically an easy way for the children to remember what they need to be able to do with each of their spelling words. The strategy words alongside the magnetic boards with magnetic letters.

SAY The children say the word

MAKE/ BREAK The children make the word and they break it into its different sounds

BLEND The children push the word back together and run their finger

under the word as they say it.

READ The children read the word

WRITE The children write the word

What is Reciprocal Teaching?

In its very simplest form, reciprocal teaching just means that the children become the teacher and teach their partner a word, a sound a process etc. Research shows that when children are involved in teaching a new process, sound or word, they retain more than 80% of what they have learned.

What are Elkonin Boxes?

These boxes are named after their inventor and they are a great way for children to demonstrate that they can pick out all of the different sounds within a word. Every sound is placed in its own box.

If you think about the word faster and say it out loud, you can hear every letter making a sound.

f	a	s	t	e	r
---	---	---	---	---	---

In the word speed, you don't hear the 'e' sound, you hear 'ee.' Speed would look like this:

s	p	ee	d
---	---	----	---

e	l	e	ph	a	n	t
---	---	---	----	---	---	---

What is Diacritical Marking?

Not all words will fit inside an elkonin box, especially when we introduce split phonemes to the children. Instead, they use a strategy called diacritical marking. The principle behind this strategy is to encourage the children to think about all of the different sounds that make up a word.

Single Phoneme Sounds are marked with a dot ●

Joined Phoneme Sounds are marked with a line —

Split Phoneme Sounds are marked with an arch ⤴

faster
●●●●●●

speed
●●—●

nine
●●
⤴

Not all words will work in an elkonin box or with diacritical marking. For these words, we use **strategy spelling**.

What is strategy spelling?

From primary 4 onwards the children are introduced to strategy spelling. At this stage the children investigate different strategies and choose the one that works best for them to learn how to spell the new word. There are many different strategies and we have named a few below.

Knowledge and use of phonics

Place words into elkonin boxes or use diacritical marking.

Syllabification

Breaking words into syllables. Each syllable will have a vowel.

going - go ing

remember – re mem ber

yesterday – yes ter day

Words within words

country = count try

example = exam ample

Compound Words

breakfast break fast

strawberry straw berry

homework home work

Using analogy

If you know how to spell a word, you'll know how to spell others

E.g. If you can spell **light**, then you can spell **sight**, **might**, **fright** etc.

Mnemonic

Children are encouraged to create their own memory aid.

E.g. BECAUSE

Big Elephants Can Always Understand

Small Elephants

E.g. ENGAGEMENT

Contains the word ENGAGE.

You sometimes get a ring with a GEM in the middle

E.g. NECESSARY

One Collar, two Sleeves

'i;' before 'e' except after 'c'

Spelling Rules (if appropriate)

One Syllable Words

Double the final consonant before adding an ending that starts with a vowel.

E.g. drop – double the p and add ed – dropped.

Home Learning Tasks for Spelling Practice. The home Learning tasks are designed to make the children think about their words, the letters that make them, the sounds etc.

The children will have a home Learning Wall with tasks they can complete. Tasks can include:

30 Second Words

Write a TV commercial using all your spelling words. Read it to a parent or sibling!

ABC Order

Write your spelling words in a list. Then write them again in alphabetical order. Now write them in reverse alphabetical order.

Acrostic Poem

Choose one of your spelling words. Write an acrostic poem for that word. You must also illustrate your poem.

Adding My Words

Each letter has a value. Consonants are worth 10 and vowels are worth 5. Write your spelling words then add up the value of each word.

Bubble Letters

Write each of your spelling words in bubble letters. Colour with crayon or coloured pencils.

Buzzing Bees

Draw and colour an outdoor picture. Draw 8 bees then choose 8 of your spelling words and write them inside each of the bees.

Connect the Dots

Write your spelling words in dots. Then connect the dots by tracing over them with a coloured pencil.

Consonant Circle

Write each of your spelling words in a list then go back and circle all of the consonants in your words.

Fancy Letters

Write your spelling words using fancy letters.

Hidden Words

Draw a picture and write your spelling words in the picture. Try to hide the words!

Letter Writing

Write a letter to your friend using each of your spelling words. Underline the spelling words that you use in your letter.

Magazine Words

Use an old magazine or newspaper and find your spelling words (or use letters that make up your word) Cut then out and stick in your jotter.

Make Some Music

Write a song or rap that includes your words! Share with a family member.

Other Handed

If you are right handed, write your spelling words using your left hand. If you are left handed, write them using your right hand.

Rhyming Words

Write each of your spelling words. Next to each word, write a rhyming word with the same spelling pattern. If necessary, your rhyming words can be nonsense words.

Riddle Me

Write a riddle for 6 of your spelling words. Don't forget to write answers to your riddles. Then ask a parent or friend to try to figure out your riddles.

Silly Sentences

Write silly sentences that include your spelling words. Underline your words.

Spelling Flower

Draw a picture of a great big flower. Write each of your spelling words on one of the flower petals or on a leaf. Draw extra flowers if you run out of room.

Spelling Poem

Write a poem using several of your spelling words. Underline the words that you use. Illustrate your poem.

Spelling Shapes

Draw one shape for each of your spelling words then write your words inside the shapes.

Squiggly Spelling Words

Write your words in squiggly letters.

Three Times

Write your spelling words three times. First in pencil, then write each word in crayon and then write each word in pen.

UPPER and Lower

Write your spelling words in UPPERCASE letters then in lowercase letters.

Vowel Circle

Write each of your words in a list. Then go back and circle all of the vowels in your word list.

Wordsearch

Make a wordsearch using your spelling words.

Words without Consonants

Write your spelling words in a list but replace all the consonants with a line. Then go back and fill in the missing consonants.

Words without Vowels

Write your spelling words but replace all the vowels with a line. Go back and fill in the correct missing vowels.