



# Helping your child with spelling



When we write we have to consider a number of aspects.

- We need to know what the purpose of our writing is and for whom we are writing.
- We need to think about the content and what form our writing will take, for example, is it a shopping list, a report, a letter to a friend, an email?
- We then need to think about the structure appropriate to the purpose and form of our writing – the use of sentences, paragraphs and punctuation.
- We then select the vocabulary that will best convey our meaning.
- And finally we think about how to spell the words we write.

Children can find writing a real challenge; they need encouragement, support and praise for their efforts. You can best support them by encouraging them to write on every possible occasion, praising their efforts and, importantly, by letting them see you writing whenever possible. You can play word games with them (e.g. **I spy**, **Find the word** puzzles), you can point to interesting or new words as you read to your child (without interrupting the flow of the story) and you can compose emails together.

Most of us, even if we consider ourselves to be good spellers, make spelling mistakes at some point. What is important is that we know what to do when we get stuck and we know how to correct our mistakes.

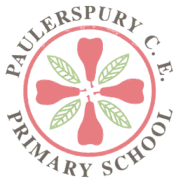
The English language is a rich but complex language but, despite its complexity, 85% of the English spelling system is predictable. Your child will learn the rules and conventions of the system and the spelling strategies needed to become a confident speller.

Here are some of the strategies that will help your child become a confident and accurate speller:

- sounding words out: breaking the word down into phonemes (e.g. *c-a-t*, *sh-e-ll*) – many words cannot be sounded out so other strategies are needed;
- dividing the word into syllables, say each syllable as they write the word (e.g. *re-mem-ber*);
- using the **Look, say, cover, write, check** strategy: look at the word and say it out aloud, then cover it, write it and check to see if it is correct. If not, highlight or underline the incorrect part and repeat the process;
- using mnemonics as an aid to memorising a tricky word (e.g. *people: people eat orange peel like elephants; could: O U lucky duck*);
- finding words within words (e.g. *a rat* in *separate*);
- making links between the meaning of words and their spelling (e.g. *sign, signal, signature*) – this strategy is used at a later stage than others;
- working out spelling rules for themselves – a later strategy;
- using a dictionary as soon as they know how to.

Encourage your child to have a go at spelling words they are unsure of. This will give them the opportunity to try out spelling strategies and to find those that they find useful. You can help them to use the strategies outlined above and praise their efforts.

Online spelling games: <http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/interactive/literacy.html>

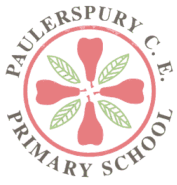


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## The first 100 high-frequency words in order

- |                 |                   |                     |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. <i>the</i>   | 26. <i>are</i>    | 51. <i>do</i>       | 76. <i>about</i>  |
| 2. <i>and</i>   | 27. <i>up</i>     | 52. <i>me</i>       | 77. <i>got</i>    |
| 3. <i>a</i>     | 28. <i>had</i>    | 53. <i>down</i>     | 78. <i>their</i>  |
| 4. <i>to</i>    | 29. <i>my</i>     | 54. <i>dad</i>      | 79. <i>people</i> |
| 5. <i>said</i>  | 30. <i>her</i>    | 55. <i>big</i>      | 80. <i>your</i>   |
| 6. <i>in</i>    | 31. <i>what</i>   | 56. <i>when</i>     | 81. <i>put</i>    |
| 7. <i>he</i>    | 32. <i>there</i>  | 57. <i>it's</i>     | 82. <i>could</i>  |
| 8. <i>I</i>     | 33. <i>out</i>    | 58. <i>see</i>      | 83. <i>house</i>  |
| 9. <i>of</i>    | 34. <i>this</i>   | 59. <i>looked</i>   | 84. <i>old</i>    |
| 10. <i>it</i>   | 35. <i>have</i>   | 60. <i>very</i>     | 85. <i>too</i>    |
| 11. <i>was</i>  | 36. <i>went</i>   | 61. <i>look</i>     | 86. <i>by</i>     |
| 12. <i>you</i>  | 37. <i>be</i>     | 62. <i>don't</i>    | 87. <i>day</i>    |
| 13. <i>they</i> | 38. <i>like</i>   | 63. <i>come</i>     | 88. <i>made</i>   |
| 14. <i>on</i>   | 39. <i>some</i>   | 64. <i>will</i>     | 89. <i>time</i>   |
| 15. <i>she</i>  | 40. <i>so</i>     | 65. <i>into</i>     | 90. <i>I'm</i>    |
| 16. <i>is</i>   | 41. <i>not</i>    | 66. <i>back</i>     | 91. <i>if</i>     |
| 17. <i>for</i>  | 42. <i>then</i>   | 67. <i>from</i>     | 92. <i>help</i>   |
| 18. <i>at</i>   | 43. <i>were</i>   | 68. <i>children</i> | 93. <i>Mrs</i>    |
| 19. <i>his</i>  | 44. <i>go</i>     | 69. <i>him</i>      | 94. <i>called</i> |
| 20. <i>but</i>  | 45. <i>little</i> | 70. <i>Mr</i>       | 95. <i>here</i>   |
| 21. <i>that</i> | 46. <i>as</i>     | 71. <i>get</i>      | 96. <i>off</i>    |
| 22. <i>with</i> | 47. <i>no</i>     | 72. <i>just</i>     | 97. <i>asked</i>  |
| 23. <i>all</i>  | 48. <i>mum</i>    | 73. <i>now</i>      | 98. <i>saw</i>    |
| 24. <i>we</i>   | 49. <i>one</i>    | 74. <i>came</i>     | 99. <i>make</i>   |
| 25. <i>can</i>  | 50. <i>them</i>   | 75. <i>oh</i>       | 100. <i>an</i>    |



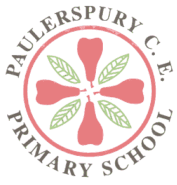
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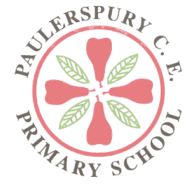
## The next 200 most common words in order of frequency

This list is read down the columns (i.e. in the list, *water* is most frequently used and *grow* is the least frequently used).

<i>water</i>	<i>way</i>	<i>another</i>	<i>looking</i>	<i>find</i>	<i>inside</i>
<i>away</i>	<i>been</i>	<i>great</i>	<i>end</i>	<i>more</i>	<i>run</i>
<i>good</i>	<i>stop</i>	<i>why</i>	<i>than</i>	<i>I'll</i>	<i>any</i>
<i>want</i>	<i>must</i>	<i>cried</i>	<i>best</i>	<i>round</i>	<i>under</i>
<i>over</i>	<i>red</i>	<i>keep</i>	<i>better</i>	<i>tree</i>	<i>hat</i>
<i>how</i>	<i>door</i>	<i>room</i>	<i>hot</i>	<i>magic</i>	<i>snow</i>
<i>did</i>	<i>right</i>	<i>last</i>	<i>sun</i>	<i>shouted</i>	<i>air</i>
<i>man</i>	<i>sea</i>	<i>jumped</i>	<i>across</i>	<i>us</i>	<i>trees</i>
<i>going</i>	<i>these</i>	<i>because</i>	<i>gone</i>	<i>other</i>	<i>bad</i>
<i>where</i>	<i>began</i>	<i>even</i>	<i>hard</i>	<i>food</i>	<i>tea</i>
<i>would</i>	<i>boy</i>	<i>am</i>	<i>floppy</i>	<i>soon</i>	<i>top</i>
<i>or</i>	<i>animals</i>	<i>before</i>	<i>really</i>	<i>night</i>	<i>eyes</i>
<i>took</i>	<i>never</i>	<i>gran</i>	<i>wind</i>	<i>narrator</i>	<i>duck</i>
<i>school</i>	<i>next</i>	<i>clothes</i>	<i>wish</i>	<i>small</i>	<i>horse</i>
<i>think</i>	<i>first</i>	<i>tell</i>	<i>eggs</i>	<i>car</i>	<i>rabbit</i>
<i>home</i>	<i>work</i>	<i>key</i>	<i>once</i>	<i>couldn't</i>	<i>white</i>
<i>who</i>	<i>lots</i>	<i>fun</i>	<i>please</i>	<i>three</i>	<i>coming</i>
<i>didn't</i>	<i>need</i>	<i>place</i>	<i>thing</i>	<i>head</i>	<i>he's</i>
<i>ran</i>	<i>that's</i>	<i>mother</i>	<i>stopped</i>	<i>king</i>	<i>river</i>
<i>know</i>	<i>baby</i>	<i>sat</i>	<i>ever</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>liked</i>
<i>bear</i>	<i>fish</i>	<i>boat</i>	<i>miss</i>	<i>I've</i>	<i>giant</i>
<i>can't</i>	<i>gave</i>	<i>window</i>	<i>most</i>	<i>around</i>	<i>looks</i>
<i>again</i>	<i>mouse</i>	<i>sleep</i>	<i>cold</i>	<i>every</i>	<i>use</i>
<i>cat</i>	<i>something</i>	<i>feet</i>	<i>park</i>	<i>garden</i>	<i>along</i>
<i>long</i>	<i>bed</i>	<i>morning</i>	<i>lived</i>	<i>fast</i>	<i>plants</i>
<i>things</i>	<i>may</i>	<i>queen</i>	<i>birds</i>	<i>only</i>	<i>dragon</i>
<i>new</i>	<i>still</i>	<i>each</i>	<i>two</i>	<i>many</i>	<i>pulled</i>
<i>after</i>	<i>found</i>	<i>book</i>	<i>has</i>	<i>laughed</i>	<i>we're</i>
<i>wanted</i>	<i>live</i>	<i>fell</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>its</i>	<i>fly</i>
<i>eat</i>	<i>say</i>	<i>friends</i>	<i>play</i>	<i>green</i>	<i>grow</i>
<i>everyone</i>	<i>let's</i>	<i>box</i>	<i>take</i>	<i>different</i>	
<i>our</i>	<i>much</i>	<i>dark</i>	<i>thought</i>	<i>let</i>	
<i>fox</i>	<i>suddenly</i>	<i>grandad</i>	<i>dog</i>	<i>girl</i>	
<i>through</i>	<i>told</i>	<i>there's</i>	<i>well</i>	<i>which</i>	



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## ***Writing Level Descriptors***

### **Level 1**

Pupils' writing communicates meaning through simple words and phrases. In their reading or their writing, pupils begin to show awareness of how full stops are used. Letters are usually clearly shaped and correctly orientated.

### **Level 2**

Pupils' writing communicates meaning in both narrative and non-narrative forms, using appropriate and interesting vocabulary, and showing some awareness of the reader. Ideas are developed in a sequence of sentences, sometimes demarcated by capital letters and full stops. Simple, monosyllabic words are usually spelt correctly, and where there are inaccuracies the alternative is phonetically plausible. In handwriting, letters are accurately formed and consistent in size.

### **Level 3**

Pupils' writing is often organised, imaginative and clear. The main features of different forms of writing are used appropriately, beginning to be adapted to different readers. Sequences of sentences extend ideas logically and words are chosen for variety and interest. The basic grammatical structure of sentences is usually correct. Spelling is usually accurate, including that of common, polysyllabic words. Punctuation to mark sentences - full stops, capital letters and question marks - is used accurately. Handwriting is joined and legible.

### **Level 4**

Pupils' writing in a range of forms is lively and thoughtful. Ideas are often sustained and developed in interesting ways and organised appropriately for the purpose of the reader. Vocabulary choices are often adventurous and words are used for effect. Pupils are beginning to use grammatically complex sentences, extending meaning. Spelling, including that of polysyllabic words that conform to regular patterns, is generally accurate. Full stops, capital letters and question marks are used correctly, and pupils are beginning to use punctuation within the sentence. Handwriting style is fluent, joined and legible.

### **Level 5**

Pupils' writing is varied and interesting, conveying meaning clearly in a range of forms for different readers, using a more formal style where appropriate. Vocabulary choices are imaginative and words are used precisely. Simple and complex sentences are organised into paragraphs. Words with complex regular patterns are usually spelt correctly. A range of punctuation, including commas, apostrophes and inverted commas, is usually used accurately. Handwriting is joined, clear and fluent and, where appropriate, is adapted to a range of tasks.