



Vicarage Road, Watford, WD18 0DD  
Tel: 01923 233146 e-mail: admin@lhaines.herts.sch.uk

## *ENJOY, CARE, AIM HIGH AND SUCCEED TOGETHER*

8<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Dear Parents/carers,

As a school, we would like to raise the profile of spelling, the skills needed to learn them and the enthusiasm for exploring new and exciting vocabulary. We are therefore launching a Spelling Bee competition to celebrate and promote spelling across Key Stage 2. We feel this will be a motivating and fun way to celebrate the achievements of all children.

### **Why?**

Due to the development of technology, predictive text and spell checkers, spelling runs the risk of taking a back seat. However, our belief is that children absolutely need a good understanding of spelling rules as well as patterns and an enriched vocabulary – this is supported by the shift of focus in government tests as well as curriculum requirements. Having a spell checker is not useful if you have little understanding of which one of the choices are correct! The ability to spell, and apply this to more adventurous word choices, is also important in improving the quality of children's writing as well as their progression in reading.

### **What is a Spelling Bee?**

A 'bee' is a term for a meeting or gathering. Therefore, a Spelling Bee is a meeting to promote a love of spelling.

Round one: Each year group will be given the Christmas holidays to learn a list of words. These words will be a mixture of words from the National Curriculum, high frequency common words and exciting vocabulary from age-appropriate books. Each class teacher will give their class a written test on a selection of these spellings and the children will achieve a point for their house for every word they spell correctly.

Heats: The two highest scorers from each house in each class will be invited to take part in the next stage. New spelling words will be given to practise. The heats will take place, where the children will spell out loud.

Ultimate spelling final: The top four highest scorers from each year group will take part in a final in front of an audience of peers and parents. This part of the competition will be made fair because children will only be challenged on spellings from their year group list.

We will also be repeating the first round in every class, so that all children can aim to make progress in their spelling regardless of the level reached within the Spelling Bee.

### **My child finds spelling tricky, is this going to knock their confidence?**

On each word list, there will be new and exciting vocabulary which will be unfamiliar to most children. Therefore, every child is starting from the same point. For every correct spelling, points for their house can be gained. In addition, every new word learnt is another word that they can add to their personal bank of words to help improve the quality of their writing.

As a school we also promote resilience and feel this is a very valuable life skill. Children need opportunities to shine in particular subjects, much the same as competitions such as Sports Day. By providing chances to persevere within learning and challenging themselves, we are enabling children to develop into more resilient, positive individuals. We will also be tracking and celebrating progress even if your child doesn't make it to the later stages of the competition. In summary, the Spelling Bee is designed to improve confidence and promote a love of spelling for all children.



## How can I help?

There are a range of different strategies to learn new words:

- Look, cover, write check
- Speed write: write the word accurately as many times as you can in a set time.
- Mnemonics: create an easily remembered acronym to remember a spelling (Because: **B**ig **E**lephants **C**an **A**lways **U**nderstand **S**mall **E**lephants)
- Spelling scribble
- Spelling word race
- Type it out on a computer/device
- Catch: spelling ball game
- Number codes: Number each letter of the alphabet, then create number codes using spelling words
- Hangman game
- Make up rhymes or songs
- Fill the blank: Provide your child with the spelling word with missing letters to fill in
- Scramble the words
- Treasure hunt around the house: find the letters and make the words
- Flash cards

Please ensure your child also knows the meaning of the word and can use it within the context of a variety of sentences.

## Spellings

### Year 3 and 4

|            |            |
|------------|------------|
| Again      | Despondent |
| Address    | Earth      |
| Answer     | Eight      |
| Any        | Everyone   |
| Attractive | Favourite  |
| Because    | February   |
| Believe    | First      |
| Build      | Friend     |
| Can't      | Gargantuan |
| Caught     | Grotesque  |
| Charming   | Horrible   |
| Continue   | Impressive |
| Describe   | Livid      |
| Didn't     | Optimistic |
| Different  | Valiant    |
| Delighted  |            |

### Year 5 and 6

|             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| Accommodate | Especially |
| Achieve     | Familiar   |
| Amiable     | Foreign    |
| Ancient     | Forty      |
| Available   | Hideous    |
| Bruise      | Lavish     |
| Category    | Majestic   |
| Communicate | Malevolent |
| Conscience  | Obnoxious  |
| Convenience | Regal      |
| Crestfallen | Repugnant  |
| Definite    | Sanguine   |
| Desperate   | Sinister   |
| Determined  | Swarming   |
| Dictionary  | Talisman   |
| Equipment   | Tranquil   |
| Euphoric    |            |
| Elixir      |            |

Thank you,

Miss Burrell

