

Westlands Primary School



The Power of Spelling:

How We Build Confident Writers at Westlands Primary School.

At Westlands Primary School, our goal is simple: to make spelling so accurate and natural that your child doesn't even have to think about it—it just flows onto the page!

Why Spelling Matters So Much

Spelling isn't just about tests; it's about freeing up your child's brain:

- **Boosts Confidence:** Children who spell well are more likely to use exciting, advanced vocabulary. Poor spellers often stick to simple words they know they can spell correctly.
- **Improves Writing Quality:** When a child struggles to spell, it takes too much effort, which can lead to shorter, lower-quality writing. Fluent spelling allows them to focus on their amazing ideas and stories instead.

Our Approach: Systematic, Fun, and Effective

We understand that English spelling is tricky—our 26 letters have to represent about 44 different sounds! That's why we use a clear, consistent, and engaging approach:

- **We Use the Emile Scheme of Work:** To support and reinforce our spelling teaching. This program ensures that children receive **systematic, explicit teaching** with plenty of opportunities to practice and reinforce their knowledge in a fun, engaging way.

- **Phonics First:** In Reception and Year 1, spelling follows the progression of our phonics program, Little Wandle. We teach children to break words down into sounds (segmenting) and then write the letters that represent those sounds.
- **Beyond Phonics:** As children get older, we teach them about:
 - **Orthography (Letter Patterns):** Learning which spelling patterns are allowed in English (e.g., when to use 'ck' or 'k').
 - **Morphology (Word Parts):** Understanding how prefixes (like *un-*), suffixes (like *-ing*), and root words help us spell longer words (e.g., knowing *happy* helps you spell *unhappy*).

How We Practice Spelling at School

Spelling practice is **regular and consistent** throughout primary school to build speed and automaticity:

- **Weekly Focus:** We teach new spelling rules and words in small steps.
- **Reinforcement:** Practice includes writing dictation sentences and revisiting previously taught words until they are secure.
- **Connecting Skills:** We encourage children to say the words and understand their meaning before trying to spell them, which helps them use the words correctly in their own writing.

By working together, we can ensure your child develops the powerful spelling skills they need to become confident and brilliant writers.

