

# O-G Reading Clinic

Clinic Information Sheet

## How Spelling Skills Are Developed

Spelling develops through explicit teaching, repeated practice and growing knowledge of how English words are structured.

**Spelling is more than memorising words.** Students need to learn the sounds in words, the letters that represent those sounds, the spelling patterns and rules that guide choices, and the meaning parts inside words.

### The building blocks of spelling

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| <b>1. Sounds in words</b><br>Students develop phonological awareness: hearing, identifying and manipulating sounds in words.                      | <b>2. Letter-sound links</b><br>Students learn which letters or letter teams represent sounds, and where these spellings usually occur. | <b>3. Word structure</b><br>Students learn syllable types, syllable division and how the structure of a word affects vowel sounds. |
| <b>4. Spelling rules</b><br>Students learn reliable generalisations, such as when to use ck, when to double, and how suffixes change a base word. | <b>5. Morphology</b><br>Students learn how prefixes, roots, bases and suffixes build words and meaning.                                 | <b>6. Fluency and application</b><br>Students need cumulative practice so accurate spelling becomes easier to use in writing.      |

### A typical spelling development pathway

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| <b>Early spelling skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Hears and separates sounds in spoken words.</li><li>· Writes simple CVC words using taught letter-sound links.</li><li>· Begins to spell longer words by saying each sound and writing a matching spelling.</li><li>· Learns common digraphs and simple vowel spellings.</li></ul> | <b>Developing accuracy and independence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Applies spelling rules rather than relying only on memory.</li><li>· Recognises syllables and uses syllable division to spell longer words.</li><li>· Learns suffixing conventions and how words change when endings are added.</li><li>· Uses morphology to spell meaning parts, not just sounds.</li></ul> |
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- Builds accuracy through reading, spelling and writing practice.

- Begins to proofread and correct spelling in written work.

## When spelling is difficult

### Some students do not naturally absorb spelling patterns through reading and writing alone.

- They may spell words exactly as they sound and miss the spelling rules or structure.
- They may know a word one day but forget it the next.
- They may read adequately but continue to have persistent difficulty with spelling.
- They may avoid writing because spelling takes so much effort.
- They usually need explicit, systematic and cumulative teaching, with many opportunities to practise.

How O-G Reading Clinic supports spelling development

#### Targeted assessment

We identify what the student already knows and where the gaps are.

#### Explicit teaching

We teach spelling patterns, rules and word structure directly and clearly.

#### Structured sequence

Students move through a carefully sequenced progression from simple to complex words.

#### Cumulative review

Previously taught skills are revised so learning is retained and becomes automatic.

#### Morphology and meaning

Students learn how prefixes, bases, roots and suffixes help explain spelling.

#### Application to writing

We support students to transfer spelling knowledge into sentences and written work.

Key message for parents

**Spelling can be taught.** When students understand how words work, spelling becomes more logical, confidence improves and writing becomes less effortful.