

Dear Parents and Families,

We would like to outline our Home Spelling Program for you. In class we have demonstrated and modelled the format, so students can complete each section independently, as part of their home learning. However, they may require your support initially.

Research has shown that spelling is a complex cognitive process, not a simple case of memorisation. Students learn to spell '**pattern by pattern not word by word.**' Along with teaching them to be strategic, we build up visual, sound and meaning spelling patterns, which helps students learn new words. They can then connect these new words to familiar words and words they can already spell. For example, '**I know how to spell rain**, so it helps me spell **train** and **pain.**' – They have the same sound and visual pattern. Our focus will be on **sound** and **visual strategies**.

As well as the learning of words there are many other aspects of spelling that children learn. Competent spellers use many strategies in tackling unfamiliar words, and at Plenty Parklands Primary School we have a consistent approach to teaching our students to be **strategic spellers**. The key spelling strategies are:

Phonetic Strategy: focuses on sound to help us spell

- Say the word slowly
- Clap the syllables
- Say the word in parts
- Do you know other words that sound the same?

Visual Strategy: focuses on the way the words look e.g. said and maid

- Think about how the word looks
- Does the word have another word inside it?
- Which two letters often go together?
- Which part looks alike?

Meaning Strategy: focuses on the meaning of the word

- Think about the meaning of a word
- Do you know another word that has a similar meaning? e.g. happy; happily; happiness
- Think about the base word
- Does the word have a prefix or suffix?

Our Home Spelling Program supports current research on how children best learn to spell. It reflects the Victorian Curriculum which focuses on students consolidating their learning of these spelling strategies and patterns. The purpose of our home spelling program is to support the students to investigate word patterns and practise the strategies. We are teaching students to be strategic spellers and that means being 'metacognitive' – they understand and are aware of strategies they can employ when they come to a word they don't know. It is through strategic thinking that effective spellers accurately spell words when writing and therefore gain greater proficiency and fluency when recording their thinking and experiences.

Please do not hesitate to speak with us should you need any clarification.

Yours sincerely,
Year 1 Team