



Foundational Knowledge

Spelling • Handwriting • Dictation | EYFS to Year 6

At Castleton, foundational knowledge in writing is taught explicitly, cumulatively and every day. Our aim is for spelling, handwriting and transcription to become increasingly automatic, so pupils can devote more attention to composition, meaning and the wider curriculum.

SPELLING



- RWI Phonics from EYFS, with Spelling Shed Stage 1 introduced in Year 1 alongside phonics.
- Spelling Shed Stage 1 in Year 1 follows National Curriculum Year 1 spelling patterns matched to phonics sounds; progression continues through Year 6.
- Daily teaching, retrieval, dictation and ongoing checking.

HANDWRITING



- Motor readiness and RWI formation in EYFS.
- RWI Handwriting / Letter Village once initial sounds are secure.
- Morrells from Year 3, with an explicit bridge between schemes.

DICTATION

- Embedded in phonics, English, spelling and handwriting.
- Moves from modelled transcription to increasing independence.
- Daily use; KS2 includes I do → We do → You do and spelling retrieval.

THE JOURNEY

EYFS	BRIDGE	Y1-2	BRIDGE	Y3-4	Y5-6
Build the foundations	Continue what works	Secure transcription	Reduce transition load	Build fluency	Automaticity & application
Daily explicit practice	Cumulative progression	Consistent routines and language	Assessment informs next steps	Application beyond isolated practice	Transitions preserve prior learning

Why this matters The DfE Writing Framework emphasises systematic teaching of transcription from Reception so handwriting and spelling become automatic and free working memory for composition. Our progression makes those foundations and the transitions between phases explicit.



Spelling Progression

EYFS to Year 6

Our spelling journey begins with the alphabetic code through Read Write Inc. Phonics. From Year 1, pupils also access Spelling Shed Stage 1 alongside RWI phonics. These National Curriculum Year 1 spelling patterns match the phonics sounds being taught. As pupils secure the code, Spelling Shed becomes increasingly central to spelling instruction, they move deliberately into Spelling Shed. This early handover establishes Key Stage 2 routines before Year 3 and avoids an unnecessary cliff-edge between schemes.

Our approach and schemes



- RWI Phonics: EYFS → secure code
- Spelling Shed: Stage 1 from Y1 alongside RWI → Y6
- RWI consultant/training support for fidelity

Key features



- Daily spelling teaching
- Teach → practise → retrieve → dictate → assess
- Previously taught rules are deliberately revisited
- Ongoing independent app assessment/checking

Why we use this approach

- Secure phonics before extending spelling knowledge
- Stage 1 spelling patterns reinforce phonics in Y1; Spelling Shed continues progressively through KS2
- Spelling Shed supports progressive and mixed-age organisation
- Retrieval helps knowledge remain available over time

Year group / transition point	What we teach <i>Key knowledge and skills</i>	How we teach it <i>Approach and resources</i>	When / how often <i>Frequency and structure</i>	Why <i>Rationale</i>
EYFS	• RWI alphabetic code • Segment sounds for spelling • Apply known GPCs in words/sentences	• RWI routines taught with fidelity • Fred Fingers / oral segmenting • Matched reading and writing practice	Daily	• Builds spelling directly from taught phonics • Consistent code, routines and terminology
BRIDGE: EYFS → Y1	• Retain the code already secured • Continue from assessed RWI point	• Same RWI routines and language • Additional practice for identified gaps	Daily continuity	• No artificial scheme change • Progression follows attainment rather than a restart
YEAR 1	• Extend and secure the alphabetic code • Accurate application of known GPCs	• RWI phonics alongside Spelling Shed Stage 1, matching National Curriculum Year 1 spelling patterns to taught phonics sounds; ongoing assessment • Cumulative review and targeted keep-up	Daily	• Spelling Shed Stage 1 reinforces the phonics sounds taught in Year 1 • Builds automaticity before transition
YEAR 2	• Complete RWI until code is secure • Then spelling patterns, conventions and rules through Spelling Shed	• Continue and extend established Spelling Shed routines alongside any necessary phonics • Introduce rule explicitly • App practice + dictation + independent check	Daily; assessment/checking	• Preserves phonics foundations • Allows Spelling Shed routines to be established before KS2
BRIDGE: Y2 → Y3	• Spelling Shed routine already established • Retain/revisit prior phonics and spelling rules	• Teach → practise → retrieve → dictation → assess • Targeted phonics remains where needed	Daily continuity	• Spelling Shed is already familiar from Year 1 • Reduces transition load and prevents gaps
YEAR 3	• Y3 spelling patterns and statutory words • Word structure and morphology begin to deepen	• Explicit focus + app consolidation • Dictation retrieves current and prior rules • Independent assessment/checking	Daily	• Systematic cumulative progression • Prior learning is revisited, not treated as finished
YEAR 4	• Increasingly complex patterns • Prefixes, suffixes, statutory words	• Explicit teaching + deliberate practice • Retrieval of previous rules through app and dictation	Daily	• Builds durable spelling knowledge • Supports application in wider writing
YEAR 5	• Complex orthographic patterns • Morphology, etymology and Y5/6 words	• Teach pattern and meaning • App practice + cumulative dictation + independent check	Daily	• Moves beyond memorising lists • Supports generalisation to unfamiliar words
YEAR 6	• Consolidate and fluently apply Y5/6 knowledge • Identify remaining gaps before secondary	• Responsive review informed by assessment • Retrieval, dictation and application in wider writing	Daily	• Secures a coherent endpoint • Promotes automatic application across the curriculum



Handwriting Progression

EYFS to Year 6

Fluent, legible and increasingly automatic handwriting is built from physical readiness in EYFS through Read Write Inc. and Letter Village, before a planned move to Morrells in Year 3. The bridge is explicit: established cursive habits are retained and the small differences between schemes are directly taught.

Our approach and schemes



- Fine and gross motor foundations in EYFS
- RWI letter formation and Letter Village through Y2
- Morrells progressive handwriting from Y3

Key features

- Daily teaching and practice
- Posture, pencil grip and seating checked and reinforced
- Online/video modelling plus practice in books
- Single letters → CVC words → joins → fluency

Why we use this approach

- RWI/Letter Village aligns directly with early phonics
- Morrells provides a progressive KS2 cursive pathway
- The planned bridge preserves established formation habits
- Supports fluent, automatic transcription

Year group / transition point	What we teach <i>Key knowledge and skills</i>	How we teach it <i>Approach and resources</i>	When / how often <i>Frequency and structure</i>	Why <i>Rationale</i>
EYFS	• Fine and gross motor control • Pre-writing patterns and mark making • Comfortable pencil grip, posture and seating • Begin RWI letter formation	• Play dough, tweezers, threading, peg boards • Large-scale painting/chalking, sand/water mark making • Daily RWI phonics and formation modelling	Daily focused practice + continuous provision	• Develops strength, coordination and control • Links letter formation directly to phonics
BRIDGE: EYFS → Y1	• Secure core formation habits • Recognise/form taught single letters	• Continue RWI language and formation • Move into Letter Village when initial set is secure • Maintain posture, grip and seating expectations	Daily continuity	• No change of handwriting system • Transition is based on readiness
YEAR 1	• Accurate single-letter formation • CVC words; consistent size/spacing • Secure letter formation, size and spacing before introducing joins (normally Year 2)	• Letter Village online/video modelling • Guided practice in books • Posture, grip and seating reinforced • Link practice to RWI sounds/words	Daily	• Builds automaticity from familiar RWI routines • Moves from isolated letters into words
YEAR 2	• Consolidate formation • Fluent words/simple sentences • Develop and practise joins	• Letter Village modelling • Guided and increasingly independent practice • Posture, grip and seating reinforced • Reinforcement in curriculum writing	Daily	• Builds fluency and prepares for longer writing • Creates a secure cursive foundation for Morrells
BRIDGE: Y2 → Y3	• Secure formation, size, spacing and core joins • Understand that Morrells retains a clear cursive style • Explicitly learn both looped k and familiar “kicking k” formation	• Teacher compares Letter Village and Morrells models • Teach the looped k explicitly as the notable formation difference • Retain established posture, grip, seating and fluency habits • Target gaps rather than restart handwriting learning	Daily continuity	• Morrells builds on rather than replaces established habits • Explicitly resolving the k difference prevents ambiguity between schemes
YEAR 3	• Secure Morrells cursive formations and joins • Legibility, size and spacing • Longer periods of fluent writing	• Teacher models through Morrells • Children practise and apply in handwriting books • Posture, grip and seating routinely checked	Daily	• Progressive scheme builds directly from KS1 foundations • Develops stamina and fluency for longer writing
YEAR 4	• Refine Morrells cursive handwriting • Consistency, spacing and fluent joins	• Teacher modelling through Morrells • Practice in handwriting books and application across curriculum • Physical handwriting habits reinforced as needed	Daily	• Increases automaticity while maintaining legibility • Supports composition across subjects
YEAR 5	• Write fluently at increasing speed • Maintain legibility and consistency • Develop an efficient mature style	• Progressive Morrells modelling and practice • Independent application in handwriting books and across subjects • Responsive correction of formation or physical habits	Daily	• Supports stamina and reduces transcription load • Keeps handwriting efficient as writing demand increases
YEAR 6	• Confident, fluent and legible cursive handwriting • Speed/endurance with consistent presentation • Secure an efficient personal style	• Morrells refinement and consolidation • Independent application in handwriting books and all written work • Posture, grip and seating remain monitored where needed	Daily	• Provides a progressive endpoint before secondary school • Allows attention to remain on content and composition



Dictation Progression

EYFS to Year 6

Dictation is not a separate scheme at Castleton. It is a daily teaching technique embedded within phonics, English units, spelling and handwriting. It begins as a scaffold for learning the phonics code and sentence transcription, then becomes increasingly independent and is used in Key Stage 2 to retrieve and apply spelling knowledge.

Our approach

- Embedded from EYFS onwards
- Used within phonics, English, spelling and handwriting
- A teaching method, not an isolated programme

Key features

- Model → rehearse → transcribe → check
- EYFS/Y1: strong scaffold for writing
- Y2: pupils adapt/add and write more independently
- KS2: I do → We do → You do + spelling retrieval

Why we use this approach

- Connects oral language to transcription
- Reduces cognitive load while skills become automatic
- Provides repeated application of spelling/handwriting
- Aligned with principles in the DfE Writing Framework

Year group / transition point	What we teach <i>Key knowledge and skills</i>	How we teach it <i>Approach and resources</i>	When / how often <i>Frequency and structure</i>	Why <i>Rationale</i>
EYFS	• Hear, hold and segment words/short phrases • Apply taught phonics code • Begin sentence transcription	• Teacher models orally and in writing • Say/rehearse together • Children transcribe matched sounds/words/sentences	Daily; embedded	• Scaffolds early writing while code is developing • Connects speech, phonics and written transcription
BRIDGE: EYFS → Y1	• Retain familiar oral rehearsal and RWI routines • Increase length only as transcription becomes secure	• Same modelling language and sequence • Responsive support for phonics/formation gaps	Daily continuity	• Avoids removing scaffolds too early • Builds from what pupils can already transcribe
YEAR 1	• Accurate transcription of taught words/sentences • Capital letters, spacing and punctuation alongside phonics	• Model → oral rehearsal → supported dictation → check • Dictated content matched to taught code	Daily; embedded	• Teaches pupils how to turn a rehearsed sentence into writing • Keeps cognitive demand manageable
YEAR 2	• Increasingly automatic transcription • Begin adding to/adapting dictated sentences • Move more often into independent writing	• Reduced modelling as appropriate • Dictation within spelling/English/handwriting • Pupils extend or independently compose from model	Daily; embedded	• Scaffold fades as transcription becomes more automatic • Creates a bridge from modelled to independent composition
BRIDGE: Y2 → Y3	• Secure sentence transcription routines • Greater independence and self-checking	• Retain model/rehearse/check sequence • Introduce/strengthen I do → We do → You do • Use dictation to retrieve spelling rules	Daily continuity	• Pedagogy evolves rather than resets • Supports the increased demands of KS2 writing
YEAR 3	• Apply spelling, punctuation and handwriting in dictated sentences • Retrieve current and previous spelling patterns	• I do → We do → You do • Dictation embedded in spelling and English units • Review/correct using taught knowledge	Daily; embedded	• Provides supported practice before independent application • Strengthens retrieval of spelling knowledge
YEAR 4	• Increasingly complex sentence transcription • Apply cumulative spelling knowledge accurately	• Progressively reduced support • Dictation used for retrieval and responsive teaching	Daily; embedded	• Builds automaticity and reveals misconceptions efficiently
YEAR 5	• Accurate transcription of more complex language • Retrieve morphology/etymology and taught conventions	• I/We/You sequence where new content requires modelling • Cumulative dictation and independent checking	Daily; embedded	• Keeps transcription fluent while linguistic demand increases
YEAR 6	• Fluent transcription with accurate spelling/punctuation • Independent checking and correction • Transfer to wider curriculum	• Brief modelling when needed • Cumulative dictation as retrieval • Rapid move into independent application	Daily; embedded	• Maintains foundational accuracy under greater writing demands • Supports readiness for secondary curriculum