



Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School and Nursery
Headteacher Mr C Beazeley
Windermere Road, Southend on Sea, Essex, SS1 2RF
Phone: 01702 414200
Email: office@sacredheart.southend.sch.uk



Friday 4th September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to let you know about an important change to the way we will be teaching spelling this year. Through our work with Grammarsaurus, children will be learning how words are built, rather than simply memorising spellings.

We will be focusing on etymology and morphology in spelling. This means that pupils will learn where words come from and how they are formed from smaller parts called morphemes. By exploring word origins, prefixes, suffixes and root words, children will develop a deeper understanding of spelling patterns and become more confident readers, writers and spellers.

As part of this approach, we will no longer be sending home weekly spelling lists for tests. Instead, spelling will be taught and practised through regular classroom activities, with an emphasis on applying rules and patterns in meaningful contexts. This change is designed to help children make stronger connections between words and to support long-term learning.

We are confident that this more systematic and exploratory approach will benefit the children greatly. If you would like to support your child at home, talking about word families, root words and word origins can be a valuable way to reinforce what they are learning in school. On the following pages is some information that will help you to support your child at home.

Thank you for your continued support.

Kind regards,

Miss S Baldwin
English Lead

Headteacher: Mr C Beazeley
Part of the Assisi Catholic Trust Ltd,
Registered address: Kenilworth Gdns, Leigh on Sea, Essex SS0 0BW
Registered in England. Company No 07696989



Southend-on-Sea



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This year, through our work with **Grammarsaurus**, children will be learning how words are built — not just memorised!

We'll be focusing on **etymology** and **morphology** in spelling, which means understanding where words come from and how words are made up of smaller parts called **morphemes**, such as:

- **Base** — the core part of a word that carries meaning (e.g. help, move, play)
- **Affix** — a morpheme that is either a prefix or a suffix
- **Prefix** — a part added **before** the base to change its meaning (e.g. un-, re-, mis-)
- **Suffix** — a part added **after** the base to change its form or meaning (e.g. -ed, -ing, -ful, -ness)
- **Stem** — a word part that includes a base and may also contain other morphemes (e.g. lovely, dangerous, laziness)

What will students be doing?

- Building words using bases, stems and affixes
- Learning the **etymology** of words — understanding their origins, historical roots, and language journey
- Exploring how morphemes change the meaning of words
- Using **word matrices** to see how one base can create many new words. A word matrix is a chart that shows how one base can grow into many new words using different prefixes and suffixes. It helps children see spelling patterns and deepens their understanding of word meanings
- Writing **word sums**
(e.g. runⁿ ing = running, help ful = helpful drive er = driver) / (+)
- Directly applying new spelling knowledge in their writing units
- Learning **four key spelling rules** for adding suffixes:
 1. Double the final consonant letter when a word ends in a CVC pattern, then add the vowel suffix.
 2. Drop the final silent e vowel letter, then add the vowel suffix.
 3. Change the final letter y after a consonant letter to i, then add the suffix (except -ing).

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4. Just add the suffix.

How you can help at home

We encourage a **creative and playful approach** to spelling rather than learning word lists. Here are some fun ways to support your child:

- Practise **phonics** to help spell common bases correctly, especially high-frequency ones like 'look', 'call', 'read', 'watch', etc.
- Take a simple base like 'play', 'jump', or 'walk', for example. Using word sums, see how many new words you can make with different prefixes and suffixes:

play⊕ed = played

play⊕er = player

re⊕play = replay

un⊕play⊕able = unplayable

- Practise breaking words into **word sums** to see how words are made:

walked = walk⊕ed

biker = bike⊕er

watching = watch⊕ing

- Choose a new base that you have learnt, maybe of Latin or Greek origin, and explore how many **prefixes and suffixes** you can add

Why morphology matters

Learning about morphemes helps children:

- **Improve their spelling** by recognising patterns not just sounds – for example, learning that the suffix -ed is the correct way to spell past tense verbs helps avoid mistakes like 'checkt' or 'needid'



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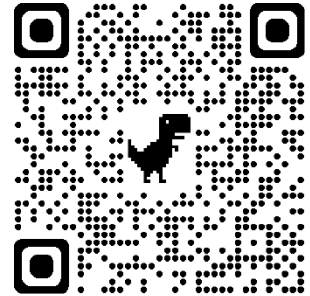


- **Understand word meanings**

Knowing the meaning of a base (like 'move') helps children make sense of related words like 'remove', 'mover', or 'movement'

- **Expand their vocabulary and improve reading comprehension more easily**

As they begin to recognise familiar word parts, they can make sense of new words on their own, supporting reading and learning



scan me!

