Spelling – years 5 and 6

Revise work done in previous years

New work for years 5 and 6

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidelines (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
Endings which sound like /ʃəs/ spelt –cious or –tious	Not many common words end like this. If the root word ends in **–ce**, the /ʃ/ sound is usually spelt as **c** – e.g. *vice – vicious*, *grace – gracious*, *space – spacious*, *malice – malicious.* **Exception**: *anxious*	vicious, precious, conscious, delicious, malicious, suspicious ambitious, cautious, fictitious, infectious, nutritious ferocious
Endings which sound like /ʃəl/	**–cial** is common after a vowel letter and **–tial** after a consonant letter, but there are some exceptions. **Exceptions**: initial, financial, commercial, provincial (the spelling of the last three is clearly related to *finance*, *commerce* and *province*).	official, special, artificial, partial, confidential, essential potential, initial, crucial, social
Words ending in –ant, –ance/–ancy, –ent, –ence/–ency	Use **–ant** and **–ance/–ancy** if there is a related word with a /æ/ or /eɪ/ sound in the right position; **–ation** endings are often a clue. Use **–ent** and **–ence/–ency** after soft **c** (/s/ sound), soft **g** (/dʒ/ sound) and **qu**, or if there is a related word with a clear /ɛ/ sound in the right position. There are many words, however, where the above guidelines don't help. These words just have to be learnt.	observant, observance, (observation), expectant (expectation), hesitant, hesitancy (hesitation), tolerant, tolerance (toleration), substance (substantial) innocent, innocence, decent, decency, frequent, frequency, confident, confidence (confidential) assistant, assistance, obedient, obedience, independent, independence
Words ending in –able and –ible	The **–able** ending is far more common than the **–ible** ending. As with **–ant** and **–ance/–ancy**, the **–able** ending is used if there is a related word ending in **–ation**. If the **–able** ending is added to a word ending in **–ce** or **–ge**, the **e** after the **c** or **g** must be kept as those letters would otherwise have their 'hard' sounds (as in *cap* and *gap*) before the **a** of the **–able** ending. The **–able** ending is usually but not always used if a complete root word can be heard before it, even if there is no	adorable (adoration), applicable (application), considerable (consideration), tolerable (toleration) changeable, noticeable, forcible, legible dependable, comfortable, understandable, reasonable, enjoyable, reliable

	related word ending in **–ation**. The first five examples opposite are obvious; in *reliable*, the complete word *rely* is heard, but the **y** changes to **i** in accordance with the rule. The **–ible** ending is common if a complete root word can't be heard before it but it also sometimes occurs when a complete word *can* be heard (e.g. *sensible*).	possible, horrible, terrible, visible, incredible, sensible suitable, miserable, probable, comfortable, horrible, possible, impossible, collectible, terrible, legible, credible, illegible, revisable, invincible
Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words ending in –fer	The **r** is doubled if the **–fer** is still stressed when the ending is added. The **r** is not doubled if the **–fer** is no longer stressed.	referring, referred, referral, preferring, preferred, transferring, transferred reference, referee, preference, transference
Use of the hyphen	Hyphens can be used to join a prefix to a root word, especially if the prefix ends in a vowel letter and the root word also begins with one.	co-ordinate, co-ordination re-enter, co-operate, co-operation, co-own
Words with the /i:/ sound spelt ei after c	The '**i** before **e** except after **c**' rule applies to words where the sound spelt by **ei** is /i:/. Exceptions: *protein*, *caffeine*, *seize* (and *either* and *neither* if pronounced with an initial /i:/ sound).	deceive, conceive, receive, perceive, ceiling receipt, deceit, conceit
Words containing the letter-string ough	**ough** is one of the trickiest spellings in English – it can be used to spell a number of different sounds.	ought, bought, thought, nought, brought, fought rough, tough, enough cough though, although, dough through thorough, borough plough
Words with 'silent' letters (i.e. letters whose presence cannot be predicted from the pronunciation of the word)	Some letters which are no longer sounded used to be sounded hundreds of years ago: e.g. in *knight*, there was a /k/ sound before the /n/, and the **gh** used to represent the sound that 'ch' now represents in the Scottish word *loch.*	doubt, island, lamb, solemn, thistle, knight silent B: bomb, climb, comb, crumb, debt, plumber, dumb, womb, tomb, thumb, numb, limb, lamb silent C: ascend, descend, muscle, scene, scent, scissors, isosceles, disciple, fascinate, conscious, conscience, science, crescent Silent G: gnaw, gnome, foreign, gnarl, gnash, sign, resign, design Silent K: knight, knuckle, know, knob, knock, knowledge, knit, knot, knife, knew, knee, kneel, knickers, knead

		Silent N: Autumn, column, solemn, hymn, damn, condemn, Silent P: receipt Silent T: apostle, thistle, fasten, soften, castle, bristle, whistle, wrestle, listen, bustle, bustling, rustle, rustling Silent W: wriggle, sword, wreck, wrap, wrinkle, wrist, write, written, writing, wrote
Homophones and other words that are often confused	In these pairs of words, nouns end **–ce** and verbs end **–se**. *Advice* and *advise* provide a useful clue as the word *advise* (verb) is pronounced with a /z/ sound – which could not be spelt **c**. aisle: a gangway between seats (in a church, train, plane) isle: an island aloud: out loud allowed: permitted affect: usually a verb (e.g. *The weather may affect our plans*.) effect: usually a noun (e.g. *It may have an effect on our plans*.). If a verb, it means 'bring about' (e.g. *He will effect changes in the running of the business*.). altar: a table-like piece of furniture in a church alter: to change ascent: the act of ascending (going up) assent: to agree/agreement (verb and noun) bridal: to do with a bride at a wedding bridle: reins etc. for controlling a horse cereal: made from grain (e.g. breakfast cereal) serial: adjective from the noun *series* – a succession of things one after the other compliment: to make nice remarks about someone (verb) or the remark that is made (noun) complement: related to the word *complete* – to make something complete or more complete (e.g. *her scarf complemented her outfit*)	advice/advise device/devise licence/license practice/practise prophecy/prophesy eligible: suitable to be chosen or elected illegible: not legible (i.e. unreadable) eliminate: get rid of/exclude illuminate: light up farther: further father: a male parent guessed: past tense of the verb *guess* guest: visitor heard: past tense of the verb *hear* herd: a group of animals led: past tense of the verb *lead* lead: present tense of that verb, or else the metal which is very heavy (*as heavy as lead*) morning: before noon mourning: grieving for someone who has died past: noun or adjective referring to a previous time (e.g. *In the past*) or preposition or adverb showing place (e.g. *he walked past me*) passed: past tense of the verb 'pass' (e.g. *I passed him in the road*) precede: go in front of or before proceed: go on principal: adjective – most important (e.g. *principal ballerina*) noun – important person (e.g. *principal of a college*)

	descent: the act of descending (going down) dissent: to disagree/disagreement (verb and noun) desert: as a noun – a barren place (stress on first syllable); as a verb – to abandon (stress on second syllable) dessert: (stress on second syllable) a sweet course after the main course of a meal disinterested: not having a personal stake in the matter (a World Cup referee must be disinterested – i.e. must not be from one of the countries playing in the match) uninterested: not interested, bored (a referee should be interested, not uninterested, in football) draft: noun – a first attempt at writing something; verb – to make the first attempt; also, to draw in someone (e.g. *to draft in extra help*) draught: a current of air	principle: basic truth or belief profit: money that is made in selling things prophet: someone who foretells the future stationary: not moving stationery: paper, envelopes etc. steal: take something that does not belong to you steel: metal wary: cautious weary: tired who's: contraction of *who is* or *who has* whose: belonging to someone (e.g. *Whose jacket is that?*)