

Focus on Phonics: Why Australia should adopt the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check

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Executive Summary

- In order to read proficiently, students need accurate and fluent word identification skills and adequate language comprehension. Put simply, they must be able to work out what the words on the page or screen are, and know what they mean.
- The most effective way to develop accurate and fluent word identification is to learn the code of written English through being taught phonics — the relationships between sounds in speech and the letter patterns in written words — especially through an explicit teaching method called ‘systematic synthetic phonics’.
- Literacy policies and programs in use in Australian schools do not consistently support effective teaching of phonics, and many teachers do not have the necessary knowledge and skills to teach in this way.
- The UK government introduced a Year 1 Phonics Screening Check in all primary schools in England in 2012. It takes 5–7 minutes per student to administer by a teacher. Results are reported nationally. Individual school results are not published but are taken into consideration in school inspection reports.
- The proportion of students reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check in England has increased each year since its introduction, and the number of students failing to achieve the expected standard in Year 2 reading tests has fallen by one third over the same period. The attainment gap associated with socioeconomic disadvantage has also narrowed.
- The Australian government proposed a phonics check in its May 2016 budget and federal Education Minister Simon Birmingham has since reiterated the government’s intention to introduce the Check in Australian schools.
- The UK Year 1 Phonics Screening Check could easily be adopted for use in Australian schools with some simple adaptations and improvements that would increase its positive impact without increasing its cost.
- A Year 1 Phonics Screening Check would be an effective and cost-effective measure, which would demonstrate how well phonics is being taught across the country and in individual schools, and supply the impetus to drive improvements in teaching.
- At the student level, it would provide early identification of students who are struggling with this essential foundational reading skill and need intervention or further specialist assessment.

Summary of Recommendations

- Recommendation 1:** Australia should seek permission to use the UK government’s Phonics Screening Check structure and item generation database.
- Recommendation 2:** Have clear specifications about which students are exempt from the Phonics Screening Check and when the Check can be discontinued.
- Recommendation 3:** Conduct a pilot study before implementing the Phonics Screening Check nationally. Consider a controlled trial to assess the impact of the Phonics Screening Check prior to national implementation.
- Recommendation 4:** Explore ways to avoid the ‘spike’ in the score distribution at the threshold (expected standard) score.
- Recommendation 5:** Resist proposals to expand the Phonics Screening Check to become a comprehensive literacy assessment.



Introduction

Early success in reading is a powerful predictor of later literacy achievement, which is in turn strongly correlated with performance across the school curriculum.

Evidence from educational and cognitive science research has shown the most effective way to develop accurate and fluent word identification is to learn the code of written English through being taught phonics – the relationships between sounds in speech and the letter patterns in written words. With effective phonics instruction, students can 'decode' almost any word they encounter when reading.

Unfortunately, there are numerous reasons to believe the most effective phonics instruction methods are not routinely used in classroom teaching in the early years of school, with the result that many children fail to acquire this foundation skill and struggle to read throughout their education.

Australian students have relatively low literacy skills compared with other English-speaking countries, according to international assessments of students in Year 4 and at age 15. But there is no assessment

showing how well their reading is progressing in the crucial early years when intervention can have the most impact.

The Australian government proposed a Phonics Screening Check for Year 1 students in its May 2016 budget, based on the success of a Year 1 Phonics Screening Check introduced in England in 2012.¹ Federal education minister Simon Birmingham has since reiterated the government's intention to introduce the Check in all Australian schools.² While there has been a muted response from most states for the proposal, there has also been criticism, including from Queensland education minister Kate Jones.³

Objections to the Phonics Screening Check are largely based on a lack of understanding of its intent and implementation. This paper outlines the rationale for introducing a Phonics Screening Check in Australian schools, provides a detailed explanation of its development, implementation, and results in English schools, and proposes recommendations for a Phonics Screening Check policy for Australia.



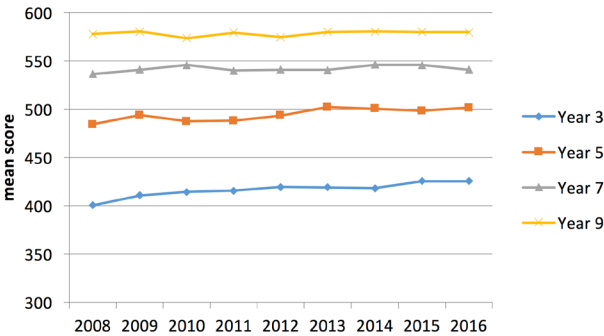
Literacy levels of Australian children are persistently low by international standards

National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

All students in Australian schools take the National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests in Years 3, 5, 7, and 9. NAPLAN tests reading, spelling and grammar, writing, and numeracy. The reading tests are 'pen and paper' measures of vocabulary and passage reading comprehension. There is a mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions.

Over the eight years since the NAPLAN tests were introduced, there has been statistically significant but relatively small improvement in national average performance (Figure 1) in the reading tests in Year 3, but this is yet to be seen in the upper years.⁴

Figure 1: NAPLAN Reading 2008-2016: Mean scale scores for Year 3 to Year 9



Source: ACARA 2009, 2015, 2016⁵

Not all states have improved to the same extent (Figure 2). In NSW, Victoria, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), there was an improvement in average score for Year 3 reading in the first few years of NAPLAN testing but there has been little change since 2010. Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory have made the largest gains, albeit from a lower starting point. In 2008, Queensland and Western Australia had mean reading scores much lower than the other states but in 2015, they were not significantly different. While it has improved, the Northern Territory is still well below other states and territories.

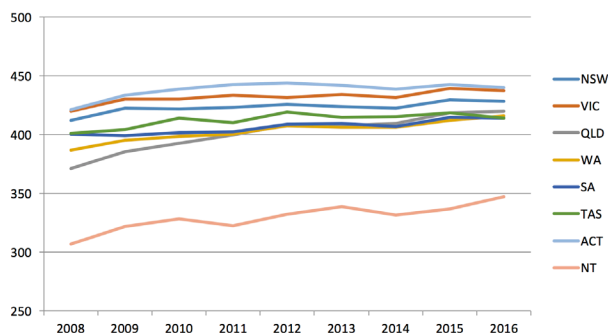
The NAPLAN national reports also provide the percentage of students who have met the national minimum standard (NMS), which is defined as “the agreed minimum acceptable standard of knowledge and skills without which a student will have difficulty making sufficient progress at school”.⁷

The NAPLAN NMS is a relatively low standard for achievement. An analysis published by the Mitchell Institute compared the NAPLAN NMS to literacy measures in the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Children and suggested that “the NAPLAN NMS does not adequately differentiate between learners who are on track and learners who are achieving below expected standards”.⁸ It also notes that the NAPLAN NMS is much lower than the standard identified by the international assessment programme Progress in Reading Literacy (PIRLS) as being adequate.

PIRLS

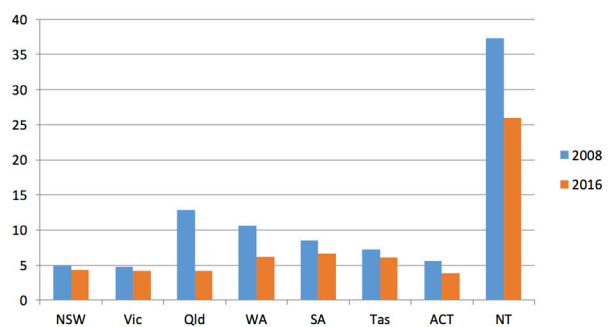
The performance of Australian primary school students in the Progress in Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) in 2011 supports the argument that NAPLAN reporting measures have underestimated the extent of low literacy among Australian children. The most recent published PIRLS results indicate that one in four Year 4 children did not meet the benchmark for an acceptable minimum standard of reading proficiency.¹⁰ Figure 4 shows that Australia and New Zealand had the highest proportions of struggling readers among English-speaking countries. Four times as many students fail to meet the PIRLS minimum standard as fall under the NAPLAN NMS.¹¹

Figure 2 : NAPLAN Year 3 Reading 2008-2016: Mean scale score by state and territory



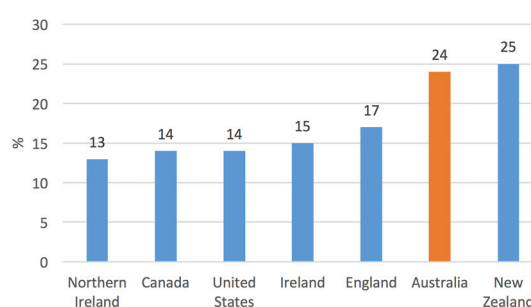
Source: ACARA 2009, 2015, 2016⁶

Figure 3: NAPLAN Reading 2008 & 2016: Percentage of students below national minimum standard (NMS)



Source: ACARA 2009, 2015, 2016⁹

Figure 4. Australia and New Zealand have the highest proportion of Year 4 students with low literacy among English-speaking countries



Source: Thomson et al. 2012¹²



Effective early reading instruction: The five 'keys' to reading

The ultimate goal of reading is comprehension — to be able to gain meaning from, and bring meaning to, written texts of various types. Achieving a high level of reading comprehension depends on the acquisition and mastery of foundational skills and knowledge.¹³

Unlike spoken language, reading is not an innate, developmental function of the brain.¹⁴ There is no single area of the brain devoted to reading — making sense of written text requires establishing connections between areas of the brain that evolved for other cognitive processes.¹⁵ For many children, the development of these neural pathways requires explicitly teaching the relationships between the sounds in spoken language, the letters and letter combinations that make up written words, and their meanings. For some children, this requires multiple exposures to this information and deliberate repetition and practice.¹⁶ The need for exposure to such explicit instruction is greater for children who come from disadvantaged homes and communities, where oral language exposure in the pre-school years is often significantly diminished when compared to children from more advantaged backgrounds. Explicit instruction is essential for children with learning disabilities such as dyslexia.¹⁷

Scientific research over the past few decades has identified five essential components of proficient reading — the five 'keys' to reading.¹⁸

1. Phonemic awareness: The ability to identify and manipulate the distinct individual sounds in spoken words.
2. Phonics: The ability to decode words using knowledge of the relationships between letters and sounds.
3. Fluency: Reading with speed, accuracy and expression.
4. Vocabulary: Knowing the meaning of a wide variety of words and the structure of written language.
5. Comprehension: Understanding the meaning and intent of the written text.

A high quality literacy program comprises all these elements. None is sufficient alone. However, despite clear evidence, the importance of phonics and the most effective way to teach it remains contested.



Why phonics is important

At the simplest level, skilled reading requires word recognition and comprehension. A deficit in either aspect will result in poor reading ability. If a child can read words aloud correctly but does not know what they mean, the child will not understand and therefore is not really reading. Conversely, a child can have a large vocabulary and good listening comprehension but these will not be of use if they cannot decipher the words on the page.

Explicit instruction in phonics is the most effective way to teach children to read words accurately; by teaching them to decode words. When children know how to decode, they will be able to read almost any word they encounter.¹⁹

Phonics instruction is one of the most researched aspects of education, in terms of both the volume of research over the past few decades and the consistency of the evidence. Numerous reviews of scientific studies of reading (excerpted below) have recommended that early reading instruction should have a well-developed systematic and explicit phonics component.

The research noted below has also shown that children who struggle to learn to read — either because they have had an impoverished home learning environment or because of a learning difficulty — are most likely to benefit from highly systematic and explicit phonics instruction. However, all children benefit from phonics instruction to some extent, whether it is for learning to read or learning to spell.

Systematic phonics instruction makes a bigger contribution to children's growth in reading than alternative programs providing unsystematic or no phonics instruction.

Systematic phonics instruction is significantly more effective than non-phonics instruction in helping to prevent reading difficulties among at-risk students and in helping to remediate reading difficulties in disabled readers.

*National Reading Panel 2000 (USA)*²⁰

The Committee recommends that teachers provide systematic, direct and explicit

phonics instruction so that children master the essential alphabetic code-breaking skills required for foundational reading proficiency.

*National Inquiry into Teaching Literacy 2005 (Australia)*²¹

The evidence is clear that the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics is the most effective way of teaching young children to read, particularly those at risk of having problems with reading.

*Independent Review into the Teaching of Early Reading 2006 (United Kingdom)*²²

Systematic phonics instruction within a broad literacy curriculum appears to have a greater effect on children's progress in reading than whole language or whole word approaches ... Systematic phonics instruction should be part of every literacy teacher's repertoire and a routine part of literacy teaching.

Torgersen, Brooks and Hall 2006²³

English is a more complex language than other alphabetic languages such as Finnish or Italian — English has a 'deep orthography' as opposed to a 'shallow orthography'.²⁴ While some other alphabetic languages have close to 1:1 letter sound correspondence (each letter has one sound associated with it), written English has 44 sounds associated with the 26 letters of its alphabet — some sounds are represented by combinations of letters (eg. /sh/), and some letters are represented in spoken language by more than one sound (eg. the letter c can be /s/ or /k/).²⁵

English is thus more accurately described as a morphophonemic language than a strictly phonetic language, but most words are phonetically decodable; that is: they can be 'sounded out' using knowledge of the rules of written English.²⁶ This characteristic of English makes good phonics teaching *more* rather than less important — the complexity of English makes it difficult for children to learn the rules (and the exceptions) without careful and explicit teaching.



Effective phonics instruction: Explicit, systematic, and sequential

Some children need more instruction in phonics than others. Good phonics teaching allows for differences among children, and progresses as slowly or as rapidly as children need in order to master the necessary knowledge and skills.

Not all approaches to teaching phonics are equally effective.²⁷ Incidental or embedded teaching of phonics involves pointing out letter sounds in the process of reading words or texts; however, generally not as the first problem-solving strategy when a child is unable to read a given word. Incidental phonics teaching does not involve any direct teaching of letter-sound correspondences and is opportunistic rather than systematic or sequential — so there is no guarantee that children will learn all of the alphabetic code.

By contrast, explicit phonics methods teach directly and systematically. There are two main approaches to explicit phonics instruction: analytic and synthetic.

Analytic phonics involves analysing (breaking down) words into their parts. In analytic phonics instruction, children learn whole words first and they are taught sounds in the context of the words. Once all of the letter sounds have been taught, children are introduced to the process of blending sounds to make words.

In synthetic phonics, children are taught how to build up (synthesise) words from their smallest unit (graphemes) by teaching a carefully planned sequence of small groups of letters at a time, introducing blending after a few letter-sounds have been learnt. If children master these skills easily, teachers can introduce more letters and letter-combinations more quickly so that children start reading and writing more complex words as soon as possible. If children have difficulty learning letter-sounds and blending, teaching can keep pace with their instructional needs. Research indicates that systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) is the most effective way to teach children how to decode words.²⁸



Many children do not receive effective phonics instruction

There are numerous sources of evidence indicating that the literacy programs in early years classrooms do not consistently include explicit, systematic and sequential phonics instruction, and that many teachers lack the knowledge to provide this type of teaching.

State government rhetoric is often not reflected in literacy policies and programs

For example, the NSW government has made strong pronouncements on phonics — producing a phonics teaching guide and announcing the intention to annually audit and report on ITE courses to ensure they include “an integrated, explicit and systematic approach to the teaching of reading, with a range of models, including instruction on how to teach phonic and phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary knowledge and text comprehension and interpretation”.²⁹ At the launch of the FIVE from FIVE reading project in March 2016, NSW education minister Adrian Piccoli said, “Anybody who says phonics is not a necessary tool is kidding themselves”.³⁰ However, the central early literacy program in the NSW government’s Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (called L3) does not include explicit, systematic, and sequential phonics instruction.³¹

The Queensland government’s Prep-Year 2 literacy indicators include the ability to decode words, but the use of phonic ‘cues’ is third in the list of word recognition strategies, after ‘semantic cues’ and ‘grammatical cues’, consistent with the widely-used ‘Three Cueing Strategy’.³² The Queensland Year 1 literacy ‘Checkpoint’

assesses students against this definition of decoding. The suggested source of evidence for decoding ability is “During reading, children demonstrate their use of phonic, semantic and grammatical cues if they make errors, omissions and self-correct when reading unfamiliar words or groups of words.”³³ The assessment guidelines advise that “Teachers make judgments by matching evidence in each child’s response to the indicators being assessed.”³⁴ The indicator is either demonstrated or not demonstrated. It is difficult to see how such a blunt criterion could determine students’ phonics knowledge and skill level.

Peak professional literacy teaching organisations produce documents that do not support effective, evidence-based phonics instruction

Position statements and policy documents produced by peak literacy bodies use the language of evidence-based instruction, creating the impression that they support explicit phonics instruction, but instead misrepresent it.

For example, the Australian Literacy Educators Association (ALEA) ‘Literacy Declaration’ published in 2015 contains the following statement: “There is a need for explicit instruction in letter sound connections (phonics) and word analysis skills: this should always occur within genuine literacy events and in contexts meaningful to the student.”³⁵ The final clause in this statement nullifies the first. It shows that ALEA actually endorses incidental phonics instruction — pointing out letter-sound correspondences on an ad-hoc basis in the

process of connected text reading – a method that is ineffective for students who need multiple exposures to letter-sound correspondences, and which does not ensure that all phonic rules will be learnt by all students.³⁶

Similarly, a position paper published by Primary English Teaching Association Australia (PETAA) on approaches to early reading instruction says that “phonics and phonemic awareness are only one tool that children use to make meaning from texts”.³⁷ This statement indicates a lack of understanding of the cognitive processes involved in reading. Phonics and phonemic awareness are not skills for ‘making meaning’; they allow children to accurately identify a written word, the meaning of which they then hopefully retrieve from their memory if their vocabulary is sufficiently well-developed.³⁸

Among principals and employers of teachers, there is low confidence in the ability of new initial teacher education (ITE) graduates to teach reading

There is a widespread lack of confidence among principals in the preparation of graduate teachers to teach reading. In a 2015 discussion paper, the Australian Primary Principals Association, which represents primary school principals in all sectors, states that “Graduate teachers are not adequately prepared to teach without significant levels of support. They are not classroom ready. For example, over half of graduate (primary) teachers could not teach reading (54%) and mathematics (51%) to a reasonable level.”³⁹

A joint submission from the NSW Board of Studies and Teacher Education Standards (BOSTES), the NSW Department of Education and Communities, the Catholic Education Commission NSW and the Association of Independent Schools of NSW to the federal government’s Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) states that teachers, executive staff and employers regularly raised the issue of “a pursuit of a particular

favoured teaching approach(es) to the exclusion of alternatives (for instance, a refusal to include phonemic/phonetic skills except to a rudimentary extent in some institutions)” among the matters affecting the quality of teacher education.⁴⁰

Initial teacher education (ITE) students and qualified teachers have weak knowledge of the language constructs that underpin expert teaching of reading

Numerous studies have found Australian undergraduate ITE students, graduate teachers and practising teachers have weak knowledge of the structures of the English language.⁴¹ In the most recent of these studies, a large proportion of Australian early primary school teachers were not familiar with very basic linguistic concepts – 38% of prep teachers correctly defined phonemic awareness, 41% correctly defined a consonant blend, and 53% correctly defined a morpheme. Compounding this problem, teachers overrated their own knowledge, which indicates they were unaware of their limitations.⁴² This lack of knowledge is a serious deficiency because it undermines expert teaching of reading.⁴³ Teachers cannot teach content explicitly if they have insufficient explicit knowledge of the content themselves.

There is well established and well publicised research showing the importance of phonics instruction. That ITE courses still fail to provide graduate teachers with adequate knowledge and methods to teach phonics effectively, and that literacy policies and programs still fail to exhibit the hallmarks of evidence-based phonics instruction, makes it unlikely that this situation will change without a significant policy intervention. The Phonics Screening Check introduced in England in 2012 would act as a ‘circuit-breaker’ or ‘disruptor’, revealing how well students are actually learning phonics, and putting the onus on educators and policymakers to redress any gaps identified.

Ballarat Clarendon College and Bentleigh West Primary School

Ballarat Clarendon College in Victoria began using the UK Phonics Screening Check in 2015. The school teaches phonics explicitly and systematically, and uses the Phonics Screening Check to assess student progress in decoding against a validated and agreed standard.

Teachers use results from the Phonics Screening Check to determine where students have gaps in their phonics knowledge, to make comparisons between classrooms, to identify strengths and weaknesses, and to collaboratively improve teaching practice.⁴⁴

Teacher Reid Smith says the Phonics Screening Check is a simple and effective tool that can be used immediately.⁴⁵

Bentleigh West Primary School in Victoria has been using the UK Phonics Screening Check since 2014 as part of their explicit, systematic approach to phonics instruction. It is used to monitor the effectiveness of the school’s synthetic phonics program and track student progress in knowledge of phonemes and the alphabetical principle to ensure they have sufficient decoding skills. It has identified several students whose reading level appeared to be high but had been relying on sight word memory.

Learning Support Teacher Sarah Asome, who was awarded the Victorian Education Excellence Awards Outstanding Primary Teacher 2015, said that the Phonics Screening Check is extremely useful, and is quickly and easily administered by teachers, with no stress to students. Ms Asome believes schools should also be checking phonics skills earlier than Year 1.⁴⁶



The UK Year 1 Phonics Screening Check

Policy background: The National Strategies and the Rose Report

National assessments of literacy levels of students in England in the 1990s showed that large proportions of children were failing to achieve even the most basic reading skills by the end of primary school.⁴⁷

While phonics content had been a recommended component of early reading instruction under the National Curriculum from 1989, it was not consistently taught effectively as there was no direction to teachers about the method of instruction. Her Majesty's Inspectorate reports show that phonics teaching was 'neglected or weak'.⁴⁸

The National Strategies put in place from 1997 to 2011 were a systematic effort to improve standards in education through focussed programs to change teaching practice, based on evidence of effective methods. The first of these was a National Literacy Strategy in 1998.

The National Literacy Strategy was developed to address poor literacy levels among primary students generally, and wide literacy gaps associated with social and economic background. A review reports that prior to the Primary Literacy Strategy (before 1998), early reading was largely a 'whole language' approach and "in many schools systematic phonics teaching was frowned upon".⁴⁹

The National Literacy Strategy gave more guidance to teachers with the 'Progression in Phonics' professional development program, and Key Stage 2 (Grade 4) reading levels improved (from 65% achieving the target level in 1998 to 80% in 2005 according to official statistics; see Figure 5), but there was still concern about the number of students with very low literacy levels — one in five students nationally and one in three students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Furthermore, studies by Durham University academics indicated that the substantial rise in reading scores was in part an artefact of changes in standards, and that the achievement gains were overstated.⁵⁰

In 2005, the UK government commissioned Sir Jim Rose to conduct a review of best practice in early reading instruction. Part of the remit for the review was to make a specific judgement about the efficacy of synthetic phonics instruction — an unusual directive, as government policy had traditionally focussed on what to teach; leaving how to teach to the discretion of the profession.⁵¹

In 2006, the final report of the Independent Review of the Teaching of Early Reading (the 'Rose Report') was published by the UK Department of Education.⁵² Drawing on evidence from scientific research and from studies of high performing schools, the Rose Report found that the "best and most direct route to becoming skilled readers

and writers is the method known as systematic synthetic phonics (SSP).⁵³ The Clackmannanshire longitudinal studies of SSP were particularly influential.⁵⁴

The Rose Report recommended that all schools use SSP within a 'rich curriculum' that develops oral language, comprehension and writing.⁵⁵ It suggested that literacy curriculum and pedagogy move from the widely used multiple cueing 'Searchlights' reading framework that was endorsed in the National Literacy Strategy to the 'Simple View' model, which better represents the dimensions of reading development.⁵⁶

The Communication, Language and Literacy Development Strategy (CLLD) was introduced in 2006 to implement the recommendations of the Rose Report that all children should have systematic synthetic phonics instruction in the early years of school as part of a comprehensive literacy program.⁵⁷ The strategy included the development of a phonics teaching resource (*Letters and Sounds*), and providing specialist consultants to Local Authorities.

A review of the National Literacy Strategies reports that prior to the CLLD (before 2006), many reception teachers saw phonics instruction as "irreconcilable with an essentially child-centred approach to learning".⁵⁸ Phonics teaching in reception classes was "incidental and unsystematic".⁵⁹

According to the above review, an independent evaluation of CLLD in 2010 found that schools had accepted the importance of systematic phonics teaching starting with the Reception year, and the majority of schools were using the UK government program *Letters and Sounds*.⁶⁰ The evaluation found that SSP had been "rapidly embraced" by teachers, however around half the teachers surveyed said that no single method of teaching reading is right for every child.⁶¹

Teacher views of CLLD outcomes were consistent and "overwhelmingly positive".⁶² The majority of respondents said their teaching practice and knowledge had improved and that student outcomes had improved as a result of the CLLD programme.⁶³ However, this evaluation has some problems — the sample was small, the survey questions were ambiguous, there was no verification of the reports of changed teaching practice, and the authors exhibited a lack of understanding of theories and components of reading. For example, they conflated the 'Simple View' of reading with phonics.

Outcomes at the end of Reception and Year 2 (Primary Key Stage 1) improved nationally.⁶⁴ An independent study by the Centre for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics (LSE) estimated the effect of introducing intensive training for teachers in systematic, synthetic phonics under the CLLD strategy on literacy achievement at age 8 (Key Stage 1 tests) and age 11 (Key Stage 2 tests). They conceptualise SSP as a teaching 'technology' that can be used by all teachers.⁶⁵

The LSE study included the results of four cohorts of pupils and found that the training had a greater impact on later literacy for the younger cohorts — those that had been in schools with SSP-trained teachers earlier and for longer (not all teachers were trained at the same

time).⁶⁶ While there was no persistent effect through to age 11 on average for all students, there was a strong positive effect for students with literacy deficits, and students from socioeconomically disadvantaged and non-native English speaking backgrounds.⁶⁷ They find the effects of the SSP training on reading test scores to be high, especially relative to the costs involved.⁶⁸ This study has training in SSP as the independent variable with no evaluation or verification of actual classroom instruction.

However, concerns have been raised about the quality and fidelity of the SSP training under the CLLD, which may have diminished the impact.⁶⁹ The *Letters and Sounds* program includes guidance on SSP principles but does not provide teaching resources. It was left to teachers to develop materials for use in the classroom, which means that quality can be uneven.⁷⁰

High performing schools teach systematic synthetic phonics

A 2010 OFSTED study called *Reading by Six: How the best schools do it*, identified 12 primary schools that were rated as 'Outstanding' and had higher than average Key Stage 1 (Year 2) reading results over three years.⁷¹ Notably, these schools varied widely in terms of socio-demographic characteristics.

The report found the teaching of reading in these schools had a common characteristic — "rigorous and sequential" instruction in all areas of literacy, including systematic synthetic phonics (all used *Read Write Inc.*, *Letters and Sounds*, or *Jolly Phonics*).⁷²

While the report authors acknowledged the placement of phonics within the broader literacy curriculum, they concluded that the "diligent, concentrated and systematic teaching of phonics is central to the success of all the schools that achieve high reading standards in Key Stage 1".⁷³ Provision of high quality reading instruction, and a commitment to ensure all children learn to read and the large majority learn to read well, is described as a "moral imperative".⁷⁴

A 2011 OFSTED study called *Barriers to Literacy* looked particularly at disadvantaged schools that were achieving literacy results at, or above, expected levels nationally.⁷⁵ The authors visited 45 early years providers and 61 primary schools (as well as secondary schools, colleges, adult and community learning, and independent training providers) over two years.

"The early years registered providers and primary schools visited understood the need to teach phonics rigorously and systematically and the importance of regular practice in reading. The primary schools visited in the second year of the survey all used a structured, systematic approach to teaching phonics. The teachers and teaching assistants led daily, discrete phonics sessions with groups of pupils for 15 to 30 minutes, depending on the age of the children."⁷⁶

The report recommended that schools should “teach phonics systematically as part of the teaching of reading and ensure that pupils’ progress in developing their phonic knowledge and skills is regularly assessed”.⁷⁷

In all the 22 primary schools visited during the second year of the survey, the authors concluded that synthetic phonics was improving standards in reading and writing, namely: teaching letter-sound correspondences; blending individual sounds together to read words;

and segmenting the individual sounds in words to spell them.⁷⁸

Some schools used published programs while others had developed their own in line with the principles of effective SSP. Phonics was taught enthusiastically and with fidelity by knowledgeable and well-trained teachers. The three highest-performing primary schools in the English national tests for 11-year-olds had long-established, exemplary practice in teaching phonics.⁷⁹

Box: Criteria for Ensuring High Quality Phonic Work

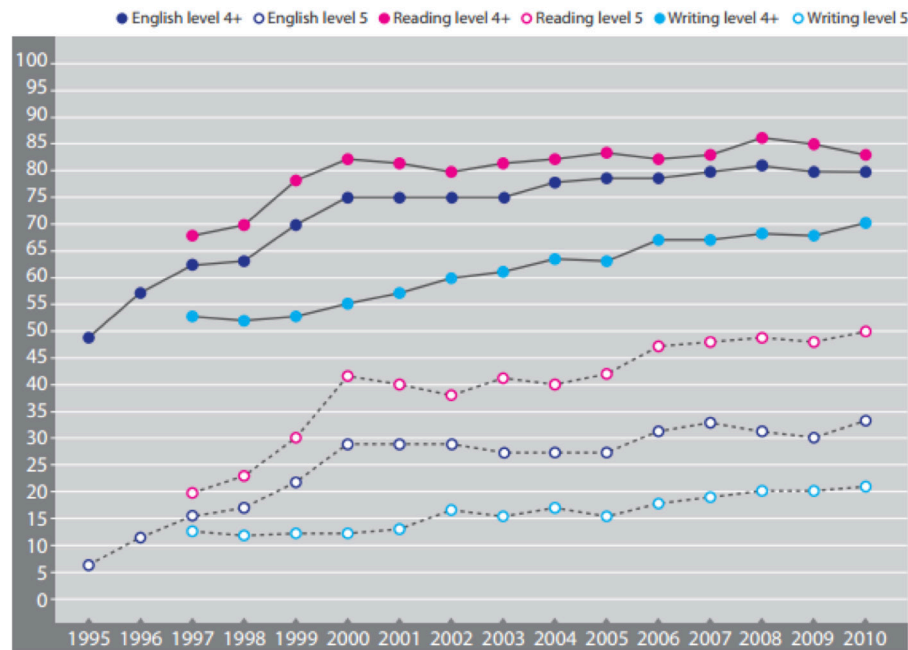
The UK Department for Education published a guide for schools with the essential criteria a high quality systematic synthetic phonics program should meet.⁸⁰

Core criteria for a SSP programme:

- Presents high quality systematic, synthetic phonic work as the prime approach to decoding print, i.e. a phonics ‘first and fast’ approach
- Enables children to start learning phonic knowledge and skills using a systematic, synthetic programme by the age of five, with the expectation that they will be fluent readers having secured word recognition skills by the end of key stage one
- Is designed for the teaching of discrete, daily sessions progressing from simple to more complex phonic knowledge and skills and covering the major grapheme/phoneme correspondences
- Enables children’s progress to be assessed
- Uses a multi-sensory approach so children learn variously from simultaneous visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities that are designed to secure essential phonic knowledge and skills
- Demonstrates phonemes should be blended, in order, from left to right, ‘all through the word’ for reading
- Demonstrates how words can be segmented into their constituent phonemes for spelling and that this is the reverse of blending phonemes to read words
- Ensures children apply phonic knowledge and skills as their first approach to reading and spelling even if a word is not completely phonically regular
- Ensures children are taught high frequency words that do not conform completely to grapheme/phoneme correspondence rules
- Provides fidelity to the teaching framework for the duration of the programme, to ensure that these irregular words are fully learnt
- Ensures that, as pupils move through the early stages of acquiring phonics, they are invited to practise by reading texts which are entirely decodable for them, so they experience success and learn to rely on phonemic strategies

Explanatory notes: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/298420/phonics_core_criteria_and_the_self-assessment_process.pdf

Figure 5. Percentage of students at level 4+ and level 5 in Key Stage 2 English, reading and writing, 1995-2010



Source: The National Strategies 1997-2011⁸³

Rationale for introducing the Phonics Screening Check

After a period of improvements in reading attainment from 1995 to 2000, progress in the number of children meeting or exceeding the reading targets (Level 4 or higher) at age 11 had stalled at around 80% on average.⁸¹ While there had been improvements in literacy teaching in general, it was still inconsistent. Reports on early literacy teaching suggested that despite the CLLD strategy some schools and teachers were not giving phonics instruction sufficient emphasis, with subsequent poor reading results.⁸²

In 2010, UK Minister for Schools Nick Gibb announced that his government would pilot a Phonics Screening Check with the intention of introducing the Check to all Year 1 students.⁸⁴ It is described as a “short, simple assessment to make sure that all pupils have learnt phonetic decoding to an appropriate standard by the age of 6”.⁸⁵ Children who did not achieve the expected level should receive appropriate intervention and retake the test in Year 2. The Phonics Screening Check became statutory across all English primary schools in 2012.⁸⁶

Around the same time, the UK government introduced a policy of ‘matched funding’ to support schools to improve phonics teaching. Over 2011 to 2013, the government provided up to £3000 per school to match their spending on approved phonics teaching resources and professional development.⁸⁷

In July 2015, Minister Nick Gibb announced the availability of eight Phonics Partnership Grants of £10,000 to enable schools with high achievement in the Phonics Screening Check to share their practices with schools with the potential to improve.⁸⁸

Development of the Phonics Screening Check

The framework for the Phonics Screening Check was developed by a committee comprising Department for Education officials, assessment specialists, and teachers, in consultation with four phonics experts – Jennifer Chew, Ruth Miskin, Rhona Stainthorp, and Morag Stuart.⁸⁹ A sample check of the first specification of the Phonics Screening Check was trialled with 17 schools in 2010, after which a number of adjustments were made.⁹⁰

The Phonics Screening Check was piloted in 300 schools in 2011. Only one third of pupils achieved the expected level, and one quarter of schools reported they taught phonics systematically rather than via a ‘mixed methods’ approach.⁹¹ An independent evaluation of the pilot found the majority of teachers (74%) thought the Phonics Screening Check accurately assessed students’ phonic decoding ability, and around half of teachers reported the Phonics Screening Check had helped them to identify pupils with phonic decoding skill gaps they were not previously aware of.⁹² Some adjustments were made to the presentation of the pseudo words as a result of the evaluation before the Phonics Screening Check was rolled out to all primary schools in England in 2012.

Structure and format

The technical development of the Phonics Screening Check was highly specific and followed psychometric testing protocols.⁹³ A new check is devised each year and must follow the designated structure.

The check comprises 40 items, all of which are phonetically decodable words. The check has two

sections, each of which has 20 items relating to specific phonic content. The items in each section progress from easier to harder. There are 20 real words and 20 pseudo-words.⁹⁴ The real words are drawn from an online word database and then cross-checked to determine their suitability for children.⁹⁵

There are explicit requirements about the construction of items, including:

- Words in each section must be of the specified orthographic type and must use the specified group of graphemes.
- Between 40% and 60% of the real words will be less common words that students are less likely to be able to recognise by sight.
- No bigrams (two letter combinations) will be included that are uncommon or impossible in English (eg. mk) and no more than 25% of bigrams will be those classified as medium frequency.
- Pseudo words will not be homophones for real words (eg. beek)
- All pseudo words will be one syllable words due to the difficulty of inventing words of more than one syllable with a definitive pronunciation (because of the effect of stress placement on vowels).
- Pseudo words cannot be in the 'orthographic neighbourhood' of real words — that is, they cannot closely resemble a real word.

Pseudo words

The use of pseudo words has been one of the most controversial aspects of the Phonics Screening Check.⁹⁶ Pseudo words are included because pupils will not have encountered them before and therefore will not be able to read them as remembered 'sight' words. As such, pseudo words tap the child's grapho-phonemic knowledge in ways that the reading of real words cannot reliably do, given the influence of prior knowledge on the reading of some real words. Such prior knowledge varies from child to child and is impossible to control for in the context of a simple screening check. A further rationale for the inclusion of pseudo words is the fact that new words constantly enter the language, (e.g., product names, science-fiction characters in novels) and can only be read the first time they are encountered by virtue of decoding skills.

Some children memorise a large number of common words as sight words — that is, they remember what the whole word looks like from its shape, rather than decoding the word using knowledge of letter-sound relationships (phonics). It is common for teaching of sight words in initial reading instruction to occur alongside the use of predictable texts, often containing pictures that correspond closely to the text.

Children who have memorised whole words by sight appear to read well until they reach a point in their schooling where the range of vocabulary in the texts and books they are required to read exceeds their memory, and/or when they are asked to read texts that do not

contain accompanying pictures on each page.⁹⁷ If these children have not learned to decode, they will not be able to read new or unfamiliar words, so it is important to identify children who have gaps in their phonic decoding skills and knowledge. Pseudo words fulfil this purpose.

When the Phonics Screening Check was introduced, some people argued that pseudo words are an invalid test of reading ability as they do not have any meaning, and that they disadvantage English language learners and good readers, who would attempt to read them as real words. For example, a survey of teachers by an education union was reported to find that good readers 'corrected' pseudo words such as *strom*, which they read as *storm*.⁹⁸

There are two counters to this argument against pseudo words. Analyses by the UK Standards and Testing Agency found that the pseudo words in the Phonics Screening Check that resembled real words were not read incorrectly more often than other pseudo words, which suggests this was not a common occurrence and therefore not a significant issue.⁹⁹ High correlations between scores on the Phonics Screening Check and other literacy measures, both in the year before and the year after, indicate good readers are not disadvantaged by the inclusion of pseudo words.¹⁰⁰

Furthermore, it can be contended that children often 'correct' unfamiliar words to read them as familiar words when reading, even if it is a real word. Such 'corrections' are often in fact errors. Some reading experts have argued pseudo words are the only true test of decoding. According to cognitive scientists Professor Anne Castles and colleagues, "To assess how well a child can use GPC [grapheme phoneme correspondences], we must give the child a task which can only be done by using such correspondences: that task is reading aloud non-words."¹⁰¹

Validity and reliability

A team of psychologists specialising in reading development conducted a validity and reliability study of the Phonics Screening Check at the time of the first national implementation in 2012.¹⁰² They compared students' results on the Phonics Screening Check with their results on a number of standardised reading tests measuring phonic decoding skills, spelling, single word reading, reading comprehension, phonological awareness, expressive vocabulary, and maths. The objectives of the study were to determine whether the Phonics Screening Check was a useful measure of decoding skills and whether it accurately identified children at risk of reading difficulties.

The study found the Phonics Screening Check had convergent validity — it correlated strongly with teacher-assessed and standardised measures of phonic decoding, comprehension, single word reading, and spelling — and discriminant validity — it was moderately correlated with vocabulary and maths scores, indicating it measures skills specific to the literacy domain rather than general ability. The Phonics Screening Check was found to accurately identify pupils at risk of reading

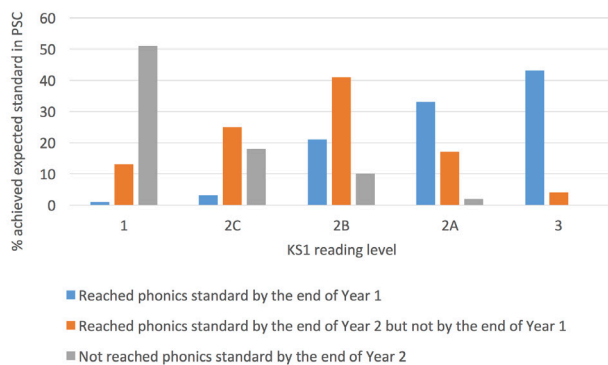
difficulties, with a tendency to overestimate rather than underestimate risk.¹⁰³

Performance on the Phonics Screening Check is highly correlated with performance on other literacy measures, both preceding and following it. An analysis comparing scores on the Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL) scales that are assessed at the end of the Reception year (one year prior to the Phonics Screening Check) found pupils who scored higher on the CLL scale had higher Phonics Screening Check scores.¹⁰⁴

Achievement of the expected standard/threshold score in the Phonics Screening Check is also good predictor of reading level achievement in Key Stage 1 tests. 97% of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Phonics Screening Check in Year 1 in 2015 also achieved the target level of 2 or above in Key Stage 1 tests in 2015. Conversely, very few students who achieved the expected standard in the Phonics Screening Check in Year 1 failed to achieve the target reading level 2 or above in Key Stage 1 the following year. The proportion of students who failed to achieve the expected standard in the Phonics Screening Check at Year 2 and went on to achieve at a high level in Key Stage 1 tests approximated 0%.

In an evaluation of the Phonics Screening Check published in 2015, researchers from the National Foundation for Educational Research concluded “Pupils are unlikely to reach the expected standard in reading and writing at the end of key stage 1 without being able to demonstrate the phonics skills measured by the PSC.”¹⁰⁵

Figure 6. Key Stage 1 reading levels by prior Phonics Screening Check result, 2015



Source: Key Stage 1 National Tables 2015¹⁰⁶

Administration, time and cost

The Phonics Screening Check is presented to students in printed format (Appendix 1). Each pseudo word has a drawing of an alien adjacent to it, to remind students that it does not have to sound like a real word. Students are asked to read each word aloud and the teacher marks each answer as correct or incorrect on a printed score sheet (Appendix 2).

The guidelines for the Phonics Screening Check stipulate that it be administered by a teacher who is familiar to the pupil taking the assessment.¹⁰⁷ In most cases, it is the child’s classroom teacher who gives them the Check. There are potential problems with objectivity in this scenario but it was decided on balance to allow this for a number of reasons: to reduce potential anxiety for young children; to simplify logistical arrangements for schools; minimise disruption; and so teachers could personally see which children had difficulties with particular aspects of the Check.

An evaluation by the Department for Education calculated the costs associated with the introduction of the Check and its on-going annual cost to schools and government to be around £400-500 per school, or £10-12 per pupil per year. According to the report, “The cost is “very low” compared to other education interventions in the Sutton Trust Teaching and Learning Toolkit”.¹⁰⁸ As this includes the costs in the initial years of producing the test and training teachers to administer it, the ongoing future costs are likely to be less. The major cost is teacher relief to cover classes while the test is being administered. The test takes 5–10 minutes per student to administer.

Reporting of results

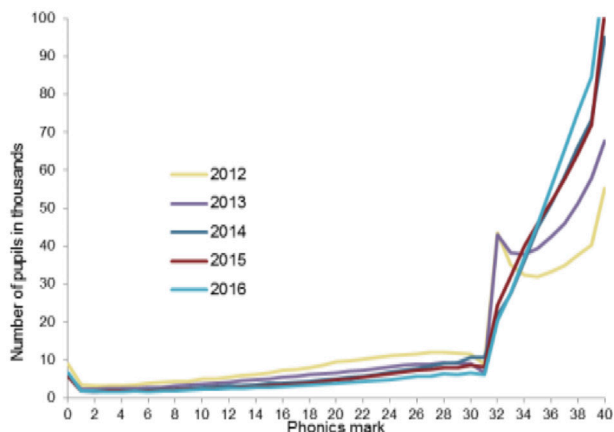
The Phonics Screening Check is not a ‘high stakes’ test to the extent that it directly affects funding, and there are no penalties or rewards for students or schools for their performance — however a school’s results are included in their OFSTED inspection reports. Schools provide their results to Local Authorities which then submit the data to the Department for Education by a specified date. Intervention and support is offered to students and schools who do not achieve the expected standards. A letter of congratulation is sent to schools that have more than 95% of students achieving at the expected standard.

Individual student results are reported to parents, and individual schools can compare their results with the schools in their Local Authority and against the national statistics. Individual school results are made available to OFSTED but are not publicly reported in such a way that would allow ‘league tables’ to be created. National and Local Authority results are published online and schools can choose to make their results public.¹⁰⁹

In the first two years of the Phonics Screening Check, teachers were advised that the expected standard or ‘pass mark’ for the Phonics Screening Check would be 32 correct items out of 40. The national results for that year showed a noticeable ‘spike’ in the distribution of scores at 32 marks. It was hypothesised that teachers may have marked up students close to the threshold score — only 2% of students got a mark of 31 and 7% a mark of 32.¹¹⁰ A Department for Education analysis estimated that any possible marking up activity may have overestimated the proportion of children achieving at or above the expected standard by 4 percentage points.¹¹¹

In 2014 and 2015, the threshold mark for the expected standard was not communicated to schools with a consequent change in the distribution. Rather than a spike in the distribution, there is a sharp increase in scores above 31.

Figure 7. Year 1 Phonics Screening Check mark distribution, 2012-2016



Source: UK Department for Education 2016¹¹²

Disapplication and discontinuation

The Phonics Screening Check administration guidance allows for certain students to be exempted or ‘disapplied’ from taking the Check. The criteria for disapplication are:

- Pupils working below the level of the Phonics Screening Check
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Pupils who use British sign language
- Pupils who are selectively mute.¹¹³

Teachers are permitted to make adjustments to the Check for children with special educational needs, disabilities, or a “behavioural, social or emotional difficulty”.¹¹⁴

The guidelines for disapplication give teachers complete discretion over which pupils should and should not take the Check. The guidelines are very lenient, stating that “If a pupil has shown no understanding of grapheme-phoneme correspondences, you may decide that the pupil should not participate in the Phonics Screening Check.”¹¹⁵ Among schools surveyed in 2013, 55% of Year 1 teachers reported that they had disapplied pupils.¹¹⁶

Teachers are also permitted to stop the Check early at their discretion. The guidelines do not give direction to teachers about criteria for the decision to discontinue the Check and do not state whether the pupil’s score is to be recorded in the school’s data.¹¹⁷ In 2013, 41% of Year 1 teachers reported discontinuing the Check with at least one pupil because the child was ‘becoming distressed’, the child was becoming ‘tired or distracted’, or the child was ‘beginning to struggle or getting several words in a row incorrect’.¹¹⁸

The lack of clarity and regulation around disapplication and discontinuation potentially affects school and national statistics. Permitting pupils who do not know letter sounds to be exempted from the Check, and allowing teachers to stop the Check at any point for unspecified reasons dilutes confidence in the national data at the lower end of the test score distribution.

Impact of the Phonics Screening Check: National Statistics

The proportion of children achieving the expected standard (threshold score of 32 out of 40) on the Phonics Screening Check in Year 1 has increased each year, from 58% in 2012 to 77% in 2015.¹¹⁹

Children who do not achieve the threshold score are required to take the Phonics Screening Check again in Year 2. The latest statistics from the Department of Education show that by the end of Year 2, 90% of students have reached the expected standard.¹²⁰

Importantly, the proportion of Year 1 children achieving the maximum score (40 out of 40) has also increased — from 9% in 2012 to 16% in 2015.¹²²

Figure 8. Percentage of children meeting the expected standard in the Phonics Screening Check in Years 1 and 2, 2012-2016

	Year 1	Year 2	Improvement from Year 1 to Year 2 (Percentage points)
2016	81%	91%	14
2015	77%	90%	16
2014	74%	89%	20
2013	69%	85%	27
2012	58%	Not applicable	

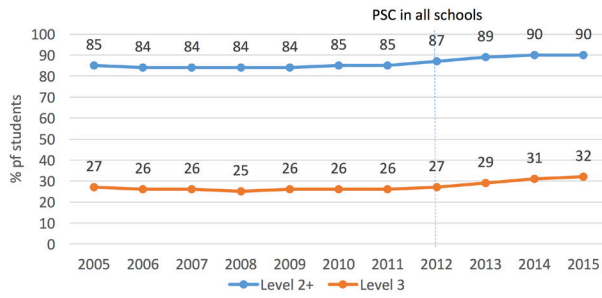
Source: UK Department for Education 2016¹²¹

There has also been an improvement in Key Stage 1 (Year 2) reading and writing results since the introduction of the Phonics Screening Check. The proportion of students achieving at or above the target reading level hovered around 85% from 2005 to 2011 but steadily increased to 90% in 2015. There was an even greater improvement in writing in the same period — a seven percentage point increase.

A five percentage point increase in the proportion of children achieving the target level perhaps understates the change. Put another way, the number of children who failed to achieve the target reading level fell by 33% over the four years since the Phonics Screening Check started. The improvement was not just at the minimum standard — a similar proportion of students moved into the higher achievement levels over the same period.

Statistics for 2016 have been published, but the Key Stage 1 achievement standards have changed and are not comparable with earlier years.

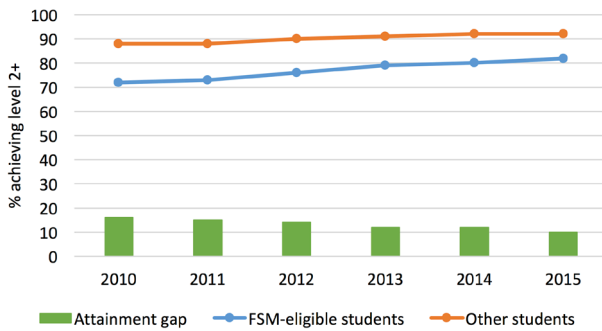
Figure 9. Percentage of students at Level 2+ and level 3 in reading at Key Stage 1, 2005-2015



Source: UK Department for Education 2015¹²³

The attainment gap associated with low socioeconomic status in Key Stage 1 tests has also narrowed considerably. The difference in the proportion of children eligible for free school meals (due to low income) and other students to attain the target reading level of level 2+ was 15% in 2011 and 10% in 2015 – a 33% reduction in the attainment gap.

Figure 10. Attainment gap between children eligible for free school meals (FSM) and other children at Key Stage 1, 2010-2015



Source: UK Department for Education 2015¹²⁴

Findings of evaluations 2013-2015

Evaluations of the Phonics Screening Check have taken place each year from 2012 to 2014 (published the following year). The report conducted in 2014 and published in 2015 tracked developments over the three years of the Phonic Screening Check implementation. It found the proportion of teachers who said the standard of the Check was 'appropriate' increased over the three years, and that most teachers had become familiar with the procedures.¹²⁵

The evaluation also found a majority of schools had made changes to their teaching practices to improve phonics instruction in response to the Phonics Screening Check, mainly: faster paced lessons, longer duration, more frequent, more systematic, and better monitoring and assessment of student progress. Most schools said they also taught other strategies for word reading alongside phonics but it is not clear from the evaluation report what this means in practice. The report concludes that "the national results show an improvement in performance in phonics, as measured by the Check, which would be consistent with adjustments to teaching methods reported".¹²⁶

It is not possible to definitively show that the Phonics Screening Check itself led to the improvements, or to what extent other policies such as matched funding contributed to the results. However, without the introduction of the Phonics Screening Check, the impacts of other policies would not be known.



Conclusion and Recommendations

There have been marked and measurable improvements in early reading achievement in England since the introduction of the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check in 2012. It followed significant reforms to early reading instruction after the Rose Review, including the mandating of systematic synthetic phonics instruction in all schools.

In Australia, the policy context is different but the rationale is the same. Australian students' rates of literacy achievement have been low by international standards for almost a decade, and there is a persistently large group of students with very low reading ability.

The Australian Curriculum includes phonics; however this does not mean that phonics is being taught effectively – the purpose of the curriculum is to specify content but not pedagogy. Literacy policies and programs developed by state and territory governments and non-government authorities generally fall short of the criteria for effective, evidence-based phonics instruction.

A Year 1 Phonics Screening Check for Australian schools would have substantial benefits at a relatively low cost. It would be a 'circuit-breaker' policy that would demonstrate how well phonics is being taught across the country and in individual schools, and supply the impetus to drive improvements in teaching. At the student level, it would provide early identification of students who are

struggling with this essential foundational reading skill and need intervention or further specialist assessment.

Australia is in the fortunate position of being able to learn from the experience of the implementation of the Phonics Screening Check in England and to make some careful adjustments to maximise its positive impacts.

Recommendation 1: Australia should seek permission to use the UK government's Phonics Screening Check structure and item generation database.

There are no good reasons for Australia to independently create its own assessment. The UK Phonics Screening Check has been meticulously developed to rigorous specifications. Since using exactly the same assessment materials in the same year would require coordinating the timing of the Check in schools, it would be preferable to generate different words using the same item generation specifications. This would allow the Check to be implemented at different times in each country but would also provide comparability.

There may be merit in creating a more sophisticated digital platform for the Check which would provide diagnostic information to teachers but this should be weighed up against simplicity and cost.

Recommendation 2: Have clear specifications about exemption and discontinuation.

Under the UK guidelines, teachers have almost complete discretion about which children should not take the Check and when to stop the Check early (discontinuation). Australian administration guidelines for the Phonics Screening Check should have clear specifications for exemption from taking the Check, which should be verified by the school principal. Students who do not have any letter-sound knowledge should not be exempt unless there are explanatory circumstances such as disability, special educational need, or they are recent immigrants from a non-English speaking background. The guidelines should also define the criteria for discontinuation of the Check (for example, if a stipulated number of words in a row are read incorrectly).

Recommendation 3: Conduct a pilot study before implementing the Phonics Screening Check nationally. Consider conducting a controlled trial to assess the impact of the Phonics Screening Check.

A pilot study in a representative and stratified sample of schools prior to a national implementation is highly advisable. If all schools and students in the pilot study demonstrate strong phonics ability, it may be considered unnecessary to make the Check mandatory. A pilot study will also allow any technical or practical difficulties to be rectified before a national roll-out.

There is also merit in the idea of a controlled trial before national implementation. A controlled trial would involve implementing the Phonics Screening Check in one group of schools and comparing their performance on the Check and progress in other reading measures over a period of time. A controlled trial would provide evidence of the impact of the Phonics Screening Check and justify its implementation on a national scale. The greatest drawback of a controlled trial is the substantial delay to the introduction of the test and the potential benefits for students as witnessed in English schools.

Recommendation 4: Explore ways to avoid the 'spike' in the score distribution at the threshold (expected standard) score.

A key criticism from both supporters and opponents of the UK Phonics Screening Check is the accelerated frequency or 'spike' in scores at the threshold score of 32 out of 40. The spike in scores suggests a number of students who were close to the threshold score may have been 'gifted' extra marks. The threshold score is no longer made public before the Check, but teachers would reasonably expect that it has not changed from previous years. While the importance of the spike in the score distribution has been down-played by some, it would be preferable to minimise its occurrence in Australia.

There are a couple of ways this might be achieved. One is to score the Check in real time electronically rather than using pen and paper. A tablet or phone app could be used by the teacher to score correct and incorrect responses as each child does the Check. If the score was recorded directly into the device without showing the cumulative total, it would reduce the temptation to encourage an extra correct response in order to reach the threshold score.

Another option is to include 'dummy' items. The Check might include an extra 5–10 words that are not the real assessment items, but the administering teacher does not know which items will be counted in the student's score.¹²⁷

Recommendation 5: Resist arguments to expand the Phonics Screening Check to become a comprehensive literacy assessment

The Phonics Screening Check is effective and cost-effective because it is simple and quick to administer, and provides clear quantitative data and qualitative information that is not already being collected and reported in a systematic way. While phonics is not the only essential skill for literacy, and no advocate of effective, evidence-based early reading instruction would argue that it is, phonics is arguably the weakest component of early reading programs. A Phonics Screening Check would direct attention to ensuring all children acquire this foundation for reading.

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Appendix 1

Section 1

beff



shup



doil



charb



Section 1

chin

deck

horn

queen

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/532604/2016_Phonics_screening_check_pupils__materials_-_standard__STA167501e_.pdf

2016

Phonics

Screening check: answer sheet

First name	
Last name	

Screening check responses: Please tick the appropriate box for each word. The use of the comment box is optional.

Section 1			
Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
lig			
mep			
gax			
emp			
beff			
shup			
doil			
charb			
frex			
criff			
haps			
barst			
chin			
deck			
horn			
queen			
tram			
press			
self			
keeps			

Section 2			
Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
jigh			
woats			
rird			
phope			
glips			
floost			
splam			
stribе			
stair			
haunt			
lied			
wove			
drank			
treats			
scram			
stroke			
arrow			
forest			
wishing			
brighter			

Total correct	
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About the Author



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