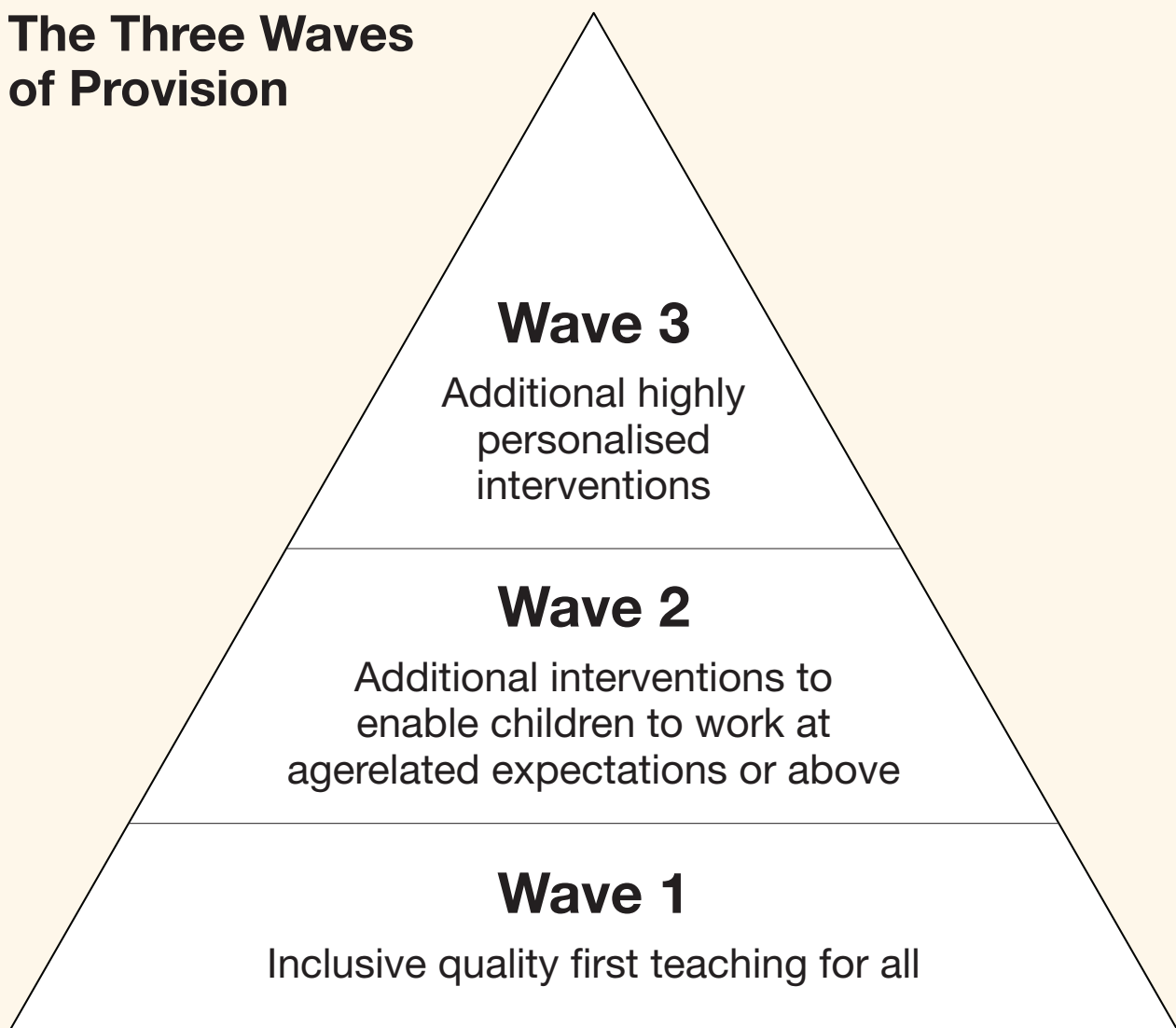


The Phonics Screening Check – Responding to Results

Advice for schools supporting the learner
with dyslexia-SpLD

This booklet is for the teacher who is worried about the progress pupils are making in literacy. The advice in this booklet follows the Three Waves of Intervention model.

The Three Waves of Provision



As a rough guide:

Wave 1 Intervention can be seen as classroom-based interventions.

Wave 2 Intervention can be seen as school-based interventions.

Wave 3 Intervention can be seen as external specialised interventions.

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How this booklet links to the DfE's document called 'The phonics screening check - responding to the results: Departmental advice for Reception and Year 1 teachers'

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/p/responding%20to%20results%20final.pdf>

This useful guide is aimed primarily at Wave 1 intervention. Pages eight to eleven offer guidelines for recognising pupils who may require Wave 2 and Wave 3 interventions. It is this section that is supplemented by The Dyslexia-SpLD Trust booklet.

How this booklet links to The Communications Trust's document 'Communicating Phonics'

http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/18865/communicating_phonics_final.pdf

Children with speech, language and communication difficulties will require Quality First teaching (Wave 1) and may or may not require Wave 2 and 3 interventions. 'Communicating Phonics' offers a table, on page 9, for interpreting general response. This is a useful first step for a teacher wishing to identify the type of difficulty a pupil may be having. This is followed by a comprehensive list of different speech, language and communication difficulties, including examples of specific error-types for each that might be highlighted by the phonics screening check.

What is dyslexia?

Definition of dyslexia

Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling.

- Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed.
- Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities.
- It is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut-off points.
- Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor co-ordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia.
- A good indication of the severity and persistence of dyslexic difficulties can be gained by examining how the individual responds or has responded to well founded intervention.
(p31, The Rose Report 2009)

<http://www.interventionsforliteracy.org.uk/assets/Uploads/The-Rose-Report-June-2009.pdf>

Advice on administration of the Phonics Screening Check for the learner with Dyslexia-SpLD

The booklets from which the check is administered can be reprinted onto coloured paper (see the DfE section on access arrangements).

There is also some flexibility on how the instructions are given (see 'The Check Administrator's Guide', downloadable from the National Curriculum Assessment website).

For children who have difficulties following instructions, particularly when hearing them for the first time, teachers can practice the process in advance. To do this, similar real words and non-words can be printed onto sheets and the child allowed to practice the activity before the formal test itself. Samples of the words are available from the Department's website.

It may be useful, too, to practice the 'shift' between real and non-words. In the Check, the non-words are placed next to a picture of an imaginary animal to remind the child not to seek for a real word. The child is to decipher the 'imaginary' name of the 'imaginary' animal. It is possible that some children may need to practice this concept.

Additionally, during the check, real and non-words are presented in blocks of four, moving between real and non-words throughout the test. This may be difficult for some children. For example, '**blow**' as a real word would be scored incorrectly if pronounced to rhyme with '**cow**'. However, in the non-words, '**ow**' could be pronounced correctly to rhyme with either '**cow**' or '**blow**'. For some children, for whom reading takes much concentration, the shift from real to non-word and back again could induce errors not normally seen.

Interpreting results

Studying the results for the individual child:

On the marking sheet, identifying correct or incorrect is mandatory, but there is also space provided to identify what type of error is being made by the child. A selection of types of error is illustrated in this video from the DfE website, which is accompanied by a transcript for further information. Each error is described verbally as an aid to further analysis.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/assessment/keystage1/a00200415/year-1-phonics-screening-check-materials>

One example is of a child being presented with the non-word '**yed**' which is then read as if to rhyme with '**raid**'. This indicates that the child is correctly reading both the beginning and ending consonants, but is misreading the middle vowel sound. The teacher can analyse the errors made by the child and look for recurring error patterns. If the child's responses were not recorded in enough detail, the test could be re-administered by the teacher to obtain further information, or a similar process using real and nonsense words undertaken to allow further investigation into error patterns.

Does the analysis of error patterns suggest a direction for further support? Examples might include further work on:

- Specific phoneme-grapheme correspondences, such as 'ea' or the split digraph (magic 'e')
- Reinforcement of sound/symbol correspondence (Rose review encourages teachers to do this 'in a playful way')
- Work on alliteration, onset and rime
- Greater exposure to rhyme and other explicit analytic phonics (spelling groups such as those ending in -ight)
- Linking syllables to an 'out-breath' in multisensory teaching as a precursor to understanding the role of vowels (often also seen in spelling errors with missing vowels such as '**hlicoptr**' for '**helicopter**')

After this process, the teacher may want to consider the following questions:

Are the results surprising?

Surprising results suggest one of two conclusions, depending on the answers to the further questions below.

- 1) The child tested very badly on the day. Error patterns displayed during the check are very rarely present on other occasions, either for real or non-words. It is likely that no further action is required.
- 2) Some existing difficulties with processing grapheme-phoneme correspondence have come to light as a result of the test, meriting further exploration by the teacher.

How does the result compare to: previous reading assessments; other records of progress and overall attainment levels?

The check results may provide an insight into the child's previous assessment results.

Did the teacher have previous concerns about this child?

The child may have been displaying other examples of difficulty in the classroom, not related to their reading or literacy levels. Typical examples might be:

- Poor attention span
- Poor behaviour
- Difficulty getting ideas down on paper
- Difficulty following instructions
- Poor memory
- Disorganisation
- Clumsiness
- Untidy presentation of work
- Untidy handwriting
- Low self esteem
- Low motivation
- Low attainment in Maths

It may be possible to build up a more complete picture of the child's strengths and weaknesses and plan for further interventions, at Wave 1 and Wave 2 level (see below).

Considering further investigation into a child's learning needs

If you have taken a thorough, systematic approach to phonics teaching and an individual in your cohort has not met the standard of the check, it may be there is an underlying special educational need which needs addressing before that child can progress beyond decoding towards reading fluently.

Questions to ask when considering the outcome for a child who has not attained the standard

Is this the outcome I would expect for this particular child? If not, what are the possible reasons for this level of performance on the day? Were there specific home circumstances; challenging conditions in the area where check was carried out; if the child is a hearing impaired child, have they had a recent change in hearing aids; were there temporary hearing problems as in 'glue ear'; perhaps an unidentified sight problem?

Does the outcome from the check indicate:

- very limited knowledge of phonics?
- progress in phonics knowledge, albeit at a much slower pace than the majority of peer group?
- a pattern of errors that suggest a specific area of difficulty?

Are the child's phonological awareness skills established? (For example, sound discrimination; rhyme and rhythm, alliteration; oral blending and segmenting or low confidence /automaticity in these areas).

What is known about their progress in other areas of reading? (For example: ability to learn 'tricky' or phonically irregular words; concepts of print; enjoyment of reading and stories; comprehension of stories; ability to read aloud).

Are the child's speech, language and communication levels at age-appropriate levels? Has their hearing and vision been checked?

Indicators in phonics that a child is experiencing a special educational need

Children who experience difficulty in learning to decode using phonics may have problems linked to speech, language and communication needs, moderate learning difficulties, ADHD, dyslexia, or a history of hearing impairment (including intermittent hearing loss as a result of 'glue ear').

The following difficulties may be indicators that a child is experiencing a special educational need:

- Poor phonological awareness. You may notice that some children have great difficulty in discriminating between similar spoken sounds (like 'e' and 'i'), recognising when two words begin with the same sound or when words rhyme, segmenting the sounds in spoken words and blending sounds to make words. In the first instance, it would be advisable to make sure their hearing has been checked. Children with these difficulties will need repeated, supported practice in 'hearing' the sequence of sounds in order and in blending sounds. They may find it easier to work on long vowels than the short vowels that are harder to discriminate.
- Difficulties in recall of phoneme-grapheme links – not retaining the links at all, or remembering them one day and forgetting them another. These children will need multisensory learning – linking kinaesthetic images with visual and auditory images, for an example, tracing letters in a sand tray whilst saying their sound. They may also need what is called 'overlearning' – continuing to practice phoneme-grapheme links well beyond the point at which they appear to have been mastered.
- Slow speed of lexical retrieval. Many children with literacy difficulties recognise letters and sound out words too slowly. These children will need practice aimed at speeding up their letter recognition. This may include reinforcement with multisensory work, tracking and rapid naming activities.
- Difficulties in short term memory, which mean the child struggles to 'hold' a sequence of sounds in mind in order to blend them. These children may need to be helped to identify and use chunks that they already know, in order to reduce the load on short term memory when blending (for example, blending the /st/ in 'stand', then adding the /and/).
- Lack of basic concepts about print, such as the difference between a word and a letter; the understanding of directional principles in written English often at the very simple level of what 'first letter' means. It is important, when a child is struggling with phonics, to check that these basic concepts are in place.
- Listening and attention problems associated with speech, language and communication needs or ADHD. Some children may fail to learn phonics because they find it hard to focus their attention. They may need 1-1 teaching in quiet, non-distracting environments, and explicit help in developing listening and attention skills.

Further information on screening in-school, using both technology and non-computer based methods can be found following these links:

<http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/about-dyslexia/schools-colleges-and-universities/screening-and-assessments.html>

<http://bdatech.org/getting-started/computer-assessment-and-screening/#teacher>

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wesford-1-2nd-edition.pdf>

Should the child be referred for further assessment?

This question should be considered in discussion with the SENCO and the child's parents. Further investigations may be carried out at classroom or school level (see below). Many successful interventions can be implemented to good effect at Wave 1 and Wave 2 level.

For a further investigation of needs, can the child:

- label sounds with letters (which ones?) and conversely, know the sounds the letters make (automatically) – perhaps using familiar objects as cues
- recognise simple rimes for analogy (which ones?)
- manipulate sounds of spoken language, e.g. recognise syllables and phonemes and delete or add units of sound
- rapidly name a short sequence of objects / numbers
- track and identify a symbol from left to right
- apply visual sequencing - recognise and repeat a pattern of objects, numbers or letters
- apply temporal sequencing - remember step by step instructions for a short time but also order of e.g. three familiar sounds in quick succession
- recall earlier parts of a story to make sense of later parts
- understand print works from left to right and top to bottom and books read from front to back
- recognise and identify environmental print - common signs, logos or labels
- use a range of vocabulary to express wishes / describe interesting things
- recognise similarities and differences between visual symbols

If there is a significant deficit in any of these areas, this will need to be discussed with the SENCO. If further investigation is deemed necessary with a view to Wave 3 provision, suggestions for next steps are detailed on the following page.

Three Waves of Intervention

An introduction to the principles of the Three Waves of Provision can be found at:

<http://www.interventionsforliteracy.org/schools/the-wave-model/>

Wave 1 - Quality First Teaching

The majority of children achieve well through high quality classroom teaching. When children are being taught to read, Quality First Teaching provides high quality, systematic phonic work as part of a broad and rich curriculum that engages children in a range of activities and experiences to develop their speaking and listening skills and phonological awareness.

Further information on Quality First teaching can be found at:

<http://www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/media/downloads/inline/quality-first-teaching.1307962098.pdf>

Wave 2 - Small group and one to one interventions

Some children require additional support to achieve well. This can often be provided through small group, time limited intervention programmes delivered by a member of the school's classroom based support team that will advance children's progress and help them achieve in line with their peers.

Wave 3 - Intensive support

This is for those children who require the personalised approach of a programme that is tailored to their specific, often severe, difficulties. It is usually taught as a one to one programme by a teacher or a member of the support staff who has undertaken some additional training for teaching children with reading difficulties

A) Wave 1 interventions

Wave 1 interventions are based on principles of Quality First Teaching. It is thought that most educational needs of most children can be appropriately catered for at Wave 1.

A school can assess the teaching interventions and synthetic phonics programmes currently utilised by implementing a process of ongoing reviewing and monitoring. A whole school approach linking policy and practice should be in place with built-in timescales for evaluation and review. An emphasis on multisensory, structured, cumulative teaching programmes using inviting and accessible concrete materials are considered best practice. Appendix 1 contains a list of questions that may be useful to a school evaluating its provision for the dyslexic learner and those who are struggling with literacy levels. Matched funding for schools is currently available for selected synthetic phonics programmes and teacher training.

The Dyslexia-SpLD Trust website includes a collection of resources available to schools.

<http://www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/4/resources/17/resources-for-schools/>

For a comprehensive review of a whole school approach to dyslexia, information can be found from the BDA.

<http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/quality-mark-and-accreditation.html>

A selection of case studies is available below in Appendix 3. Good practice, presented as videos, are available online:

<http://www.interventionsforliteracy.org.uk/case-studies>

A summary of research on evidence-based practice is available in Appendix 2. Additionally, good practice include the formation of strong links with parents of children struggling with literacy. Some schools have found it helpful to hold 'open lessons' for parents to join in modelled activities and learn approaches to support their child. The case studies in Appendix 3 highlight the role of structured involvement with parents, including workshops and regular information from schools, such as pamphlets or newsletters. Further ideas are available from:

<http://www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/3/our-work/92/empowering-parents-and-carers/>

<http://www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/empower>

B) Wave 2 Interventions

For evidence-based programmes supporting literacy, Professor Greg Brooks has produced 'What Works: Interventions for Literacy'. These programmes have been stringently evaluated according to a selection of evaluative criteria. These are available in a school-friendly format:

<http://www.interventionsforliteracy.org.uk/interventions/>

C) Wave 3 Interventions

Wave 3 interventions are generally accessed after a formal identification and assessment of Dyslexia has occurred. Appropriate specialist input can be accessed via appropriate channels of referral which include Local Authority, private practice or the voluntary sector.

Further information can be found at:

<http://www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/media/downloads/inline/trust-offer-to-schools-and-pathfinders.1340719863.pdf>

<http://www.interventionsforliteracy.org.uk/schools/specialist-advice-and-support/>

Teacher continuing professional development

Professional development and a culture of ongoing learning lie at the root of Quality First teaching. Teaching schools are currently exploring ways of supporting other schools in their cluster in order to embed professional development into all schools.

Two free, comprehensive tools may be particularly helpful in respect of provision for the dyslexic learner: The Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) and The Literacy and Dyslexia-SpLD Professional Development Framework.

The IDP Dyslexia module is now available for download:

<http://www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/4/resources/17/resources-for-schools/>

The Literacy and Dyslexia-SpLD Professional Development Framework provides both a needs analysis of essential skills and knowledge plus a resource base which can be tailored to meet the specific needs of the school or individual teacher. There is also a downloadable Powerpoint presentation available on the site covering particular resources to support the teacher administering the phonics screening check.

<http://framework.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/schools-getting-started/>

Appendix 1

Questions designed to support a whole-school approach to literacy provision:

- How, if at all, would forming ability groups support your approach to tracking and responding to children's needs? If you choose a whole class teaching approach, would some children benefit from small group or one-to-one work, perhaps held as 'booster sessions', in addition to main class activity?
- How does your chosen phonics programme support you to identify groups of children that fall behind in their progress?
- As phonics is only one aspect of reading, there is a chance that groups of children can catch up well in phonics learning, but fall behind in other areas of literacy. How could you monitor children's learning to spot early gaps in their broader literacy knowledge?
- What do you know about how identifiable groups in your cohort like to learn? For example, this year, Cobden Primary School has a cohort mainly of boys, so their approach is active. They have outdoor learning boxes and note pads so children can dress up and write notes as part of the game. The boys also respond to competitive learning – if they score a goal they can take a letter and their team can make a word. Could you adapt your learning approach to each year's cohort?
- As the emphasis of the check is very much on children's progress and all children securing these essential skills, how will you share messages of what individuals – including those disapplied from the check - need to learn or apply with Year 2 and Key Stage 2 colleagues?
- Once you have tried more intensive input, or early intervention, do children respond as you expected? If not, what steps could you take to explore a more personalised approach to their learning?
- How are individuals performing in other areas of reading? For example, would they choose to pick up a book and enjoy exploring it, or resist? How could you further investigate what is behind any reluctance to engage in wider literacy?
- Could the learning environment for individuals be improved? For example, are the acoustics of a good standard in your classroom? Are there sources of noise or distraction which might hinder some children taking their learning on board?
- What resources do you have available to carry out further investigation to determine the nature of these children's particular difficulties and the barriers to the acquisition of phonics and broader literacy that these create?
- What strategies do you have in place to enable children with SEN to access the phonics teaching you provide?
- What access does your school have to specialist advice on children with specific needs to support your response to findings of further investigation?
- Once this advice and support has been provided, do you feel confident the bespoke teaching programmes are appropriate for that child's specific SEN or disability?
- How do SEN-specific programmes support you to track the progress of children's learning?
- How often do you receive updated support and training on SEN as part of your CPD?

Appendix 2

Research to support choice of Interventions

One-to-one tutoring has a greater effect if delivered by teachers themselves rather than teaching assistants or volunteers (Brown et al 2005; Ehri et al 2007). But it can be difficult to conclude whether success is due to the tutoring, or to a wider programme which the tutoring may be part of (Strayhorn and Bickel, 2003). Peer-to-peer support can have a positive impact on pupils. Low attaining pupils can be successfully targeted through effective group and pair work (Topping and Bryce, 2004).

Teacher effectiveness is essential in pupil outcomes of lower attaining children (Barber and Mourshed, 2007; Rudd et al, 2002). Strategies which are beneficial for low attainers include early intervention, direct, targeted instruction from the teacher, clear learning goals, constructive feedback and well planned pair and group work (Sammons et al, 2006). Tailoring teaching to the appropriate needs of individual pupils makes for an effective learning experience, particularly for low attainers. Personalising the curriculum for pupils has been found to be effective (Dunne et al, 2007). Cooperative learning (pupils working in mixed ability small groups) can be particularly effective in increasing the attainment of low ability pupils (Slavin, 1995).

Overall, there is evidence that lower-attaining pupils need help from tailored phonics-based interventions, in addition to ordinary teaching, to catch up. Greg Brooks, researching what works for pupils with literacy difficulties and the effectiveness of intervention schemes, found large-scale interventions represent good value for money and follow-up studies show that pupils can maintain their gains or even make further gains. Brooks found that primary schools can help pupils by: targeting their comprehension skills directly; working on their self-esteem and reading in parallel; improving their phonological skills within a broad and language-rich curriculum; and using reading partners to assist in intervention schemes (Brooks, 2007).

An interactive version of Greg Brooks' report has been designed as a tool for teachers. 'Interventions for Literacy' is available online.

www.interventionsforliteracy.org.uk

Where low attainers are children with EAL new to an English school, Lori Helman (2009) recommends that "once teachers [...] have an understanding of the background language and literacy experiences of their student [through observing conversations or writing in English or the pupil's home language] they can use this knowledge to plan differentiated instruction for their students. Helman recommends this plan is based on: a) following a systematic sequence of phonics instruction; b) using active learning strategies to teach and practice skills; c) integrate vocabulary study into phonics instruction" – good practice cited as "connecting phonics instruction to meaningful text", for example "short poems or stories which have several examples of a phonics feature embedded within"; and "d) checking understanding using frequent informal assessments."

Appendix 3

Case Studies

Case Study provided by The Dyslexia-SpLD Trust. Progress in reading and self confidence through a combined reading and phonics-based intervention

Primary School 6

One of our pupils (age 6) was a shy child, lacking in confidence and anxious when she was asked to read. She had a history of intermittent hearing difficulties and had received speech therapy. Her parents were aware of her difficulties in literacy and they told us they were concerned about her progress.

One of our teaching assistants received training (4 days followed by tutorial support) in a local reading intervention programme and during the ten weeks of the spring term, the pupil received thirty sessions of support, both individually and through group work.

The content of the programme included reading a variety of texts, phonological instruction and writing. The teaching assistant described how this was the first time she had worked with a structured programme of intervention, and she was able to see the impact.

The pupil, who had been given the lowest rating for general confidence at the start of the intervention, improved substantially and appeared able to concentrate better. She made significant progress in terms of her phonological skills, her word identification, and the level of text she was able to decode.

At the end of the ten-week intervention, her score on a standard reading test had risen to from 5.5 years on a 6.8 years. This translates into an average of 6 months progress per month! Her parents were thrilled and they told us they were delighted with the difference the intervention had made.

Case studies supplied by the Department for Education. Regular assessment and supporting different abilities

Primary School 1

Every teacher frequently uses the phonics tracker and reviews children's progress every half term. We monitor more than phonic decoding, we monitor children's writing too. We spot gaps in knowledge, such as spelling 'ground' as 'grownd' because they only know the 'ow' sound in 'brown'. We know then we need to introduce the 'ou' variation. We have a 'use it or lose it' approach. If we spot consistent mistakes, we revisit these with the whole class. We plan, follow the plan and revisit the plan! If it's not taken on board, we know which children to support.

Primary School 2

From the start, the Reception class is split into ability groups and these are continued into Years 1 & 2. Parent workshops are provided early in the year to reinforce learning. The children are exposed to phonics every day in their appropriate groups. Teaching assistants are trained and confident taking the groups – we place a lot of importance on training. We assess our pupils understanding every six weeks, taking into account our phonics programme and teacher assessment. Where children fall behind considerably we offer before school support.

Primary School 3

We carry out a phonics assessment half-termly and provide 3 additional sessions a week for children who struggle, often revisiting 'phase 3' sounds. It's been important for us to make sure booster sessions are always in addition to children being exposed to higher level sounds. After trying streaming children by ability, we found our lower ability children weren't being exposed to 'phase 4' and 'phase 5' sounds. We found that streaming works to push our brightest, but whole class input is more beneficial for the rest, with the 'booster sessions' during 'use and apply'. During whole class teaching, questions are differentiated for children in different phases and lower ability children are exposed to the activities for phases 4 and 5.

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