

# Primary National Strategy

## The Primary Framework: ensuring progress for children with literacy difficulties in Key Stage 1

*For many children, incipient reading difficulties can be prevented, or nipped in the bud, by thorough, early assessments of their performance, the information from which is then used to adjust and tailor work more closely to their needs. These adjustments can often be made effectively, so that the children continue to be taught in their regular settings and classes. Where this is not in their best interest, however, the arrangements for intervention advocated by the Primary National Strategy remain sound advice. That is to say, work should be adapted within the classroom, further support in small groups should be provided for those who need it, and individual programmes should be provided for those with the greatest need, some of whom will have special educational needs.*

Jim Rose (2006) *Independent review of the teaching of early reading*

### Intervention support for literacy in Key Stage 1

The National Strategies advocate a systematic approach to teaching based on three 'waves' of tailored support. Schools can use the 'waves' approach to plan, design and tailor effective and appropriate provision for all children.

- Wave 1 – The effective inclusion of all children in daily 'quality-first teaching'**  
 When applied to early reading, this means the provision of a rich language curriculum that fosters all four interdependent strands of language – speaking, listening, reading and writing – while providing access for all children to high-quality phonic work as part of quality-first teaching.
- Wave 2 – Wave 1 plus additional, time-limited, tailored intervention support**  
 Wave-2 provision is designed to increase rates of progress and secure learning for groups of pupils and to put them back on course to meet or exceed expectations for their age. This usually takes the form of a tight, structured programme of small-group support, carefully targeted and delivered by teachers or teaching assistants who have the skills to help pupils achieve their learning objectives. This can occur outside (but in addition to) whole-class lessons, or be built into mainstream lessons as part of guided work. Critically, intervention support needs to help pupils apply their learning in mainstream lessons, and it should therefore be fully compatible with mainstream practice.
- Wave 3 – Wave 1 plus increasingly individualised programmes, based on independent evidence of what works**  
 Wave-3 interventions are highly personalised to meet the individual needs of small numbers of children experiencing significant literacy difficulties. They include specifically targeted approaches for children identified as requiring SEN support.

### An evidence-based approach

High-quality phonic work, as defined by the Rose review, should be a key feature of literacy provision in all the 'waves' of intervention. At all three levels, it is also essential to use approaches that carry a strong evidence base of success. This is the focus of the *Every Child a Reader* programme, which addresses high-quality Key Stage 1 intervention at Waves 1, 2 and 3 and which, as with the Rose review, draws on the findings of independent research into approaches with a robust evidence base of success and observation of best practice.

## The Primary Framework: improving the teaching of early reading

The renewal of the Framework provides a unique opportunity to look again at how we can best support the teaching of literacy in order to secure the best learning for all children. In particular, the Rose report provides the opportunity and the challenge for schools and settings to review their practice in the teaching of early reading. The report makes a number of recommendations for effective teaching of early reading and for the reconstruction of the National Literacy Strategy's 'searchlights' model. These recommendations underpin the renewal of the literacy Framework. The electronic Framework for literacy provides high-level guidance for the teaching of phonics and word recognition, as well as detailed support for planning and teaching early reading.

The report advocates a systematic programme of high-quality phonic work, time-limited and reinforced throughout the curriculum with careful assessment and monitoring of children's progress as they move from 'learning to read' towards 'reading to learn', engaging with diverse texts for purpose and pleasure.

The recommendations relating to best practice in the teaching of phonics may be summarised as follows:

- Greater attention should be paid to the development of children's speaking and listening skills.
- High-quality, systematic phonic work should be taught discretely.
- Phonic work should be set within a broad and rich language curriculum that takes full account of developing the four independent strands of language – speaking, listening, reading and writing – and enlarging children's stock of words.
- High-quality phonic work should be a priority within 'quality-first' teaching, to minimise the risk of children falling behind in reading.

To be systematic, phonics teaching needs to be carefully

planned, reinforcing and building on previous learning to secure children's progress. It needs to be taught discretely and daily and needs to be engaging and multisensory. High-quality phonics programmes need to be followed consistently and with 'fidelity to the programme' to secure the necessary pace and progression.

The report gives a definition of high-quality phonic work, based on a recommended synthetic approach, in which the key features are to teach beginner readers:

- grapheme–phoneme (letter–sound) correspondences (the alphabetic principle) in a clearly defined, incremental sequence;
- to apply the highly important skill of blending (synthesising) phonemes in order, all through a word, to read it;
- to apply the skills of segmenting words into their constituent phonemes to spell;
- that blending and segmenting are reversible processes.

The report makes clear the two dimensions of reading: 'decoding' and 'comprehension'. These two dimensions are represented in a new conceptual framework – 'the simple view of reading' – as word recognition processes and language comprehension processes.

The new conceptual framework outlined in the report makes clear the important journey from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn, for pleasure and purpose' – becoming a fluent reader with the skills to access, engage with and enjoy a wide range of texts. It emphasises that the process of phonics acquisition is time-limited, whereas the development of comprehension is a lifelong activity.

The renewed Framework for literacy provides high-level guidance and more detailed practical guidance material to help headteachers and leaders implement the Rose report recommendations and to support teachers and practitioners in the teaching of phonics and early reading.

**It is not the purpose of intervention work to shore up weak teaching at Wave 1. Settings and schools should establish 'quality-first teaching' to minimise the risk of children falling behind and thereby secure the most cost-effective use of resources. High-quality phonic work should therefore be a priority within Wave-1 teaching.**

**Given that intervention work will be necessary, settings and schools should make sure that additional support is compatible with mainstream practice. Irrespective of whether intervention work is taught in regular lessons or elsewhere, the gains made by children through such work must be sustained and built upon when they return to their mainstream class.**

**Jim Rose (2006) *Independent review of the teaching of early reading***

### Bibliography

Hatcher, P.J. *et al* (2006) Evidence for the effectiveness of the Early Literacy Support programme, *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, **76**, pp 351–367

*Primary Framework for literacy and mathematics* (2006), DfES, London, 02011-2006BOK-EN

Rose, J. (2006) *Independent review of the teaching of early reading*, DfES, London

This publication is available for download from:

[www.standards.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk)

[www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications)

Copies may be available from:

### DfES Publications

**Tel:** 0845 60 222 60  
**Fax:** 0845 60 333 60  
**Textphone:** 0845 60 555 60  
**e-mail:** [dfes@prolog.uk.com](mailto:dfes@prolog.uk.com)

**Ref: 00064-2007LEF-EN**

© Crown copyright 2007

Produced by the  
 Department for Education and Skills  
[www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk)

The content of this publication may be reproduced free of charge by schools and local authorities provided that the material is acknowledged as Crown copyright, the publication title is specified, it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. Anyone else wishing to reuse part or all of the content of this publication should apply to OPSI for a core licence.

**The permission to reproduce Crown copyright protected material does not extend to any material in this publication which is identified as being the copyright of a third party.**

Applications to reproduce the material from this publication should be addressed to:

**OPSI**, Information Policy Team,  
 St Clements House,  
 2–16 Colegate, Norwich NR3 1BQ  
**Fax:** 01603 723000  
**e-mail:** [hmsolicensing@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:hmsolicensing@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk)

### Disclaimer

The Department for Education and Skills wishes to make it clear that the Department and its agents accept no responsibility for the actual content of any materials suggested as information sources in this document, whether these are in the form of printed publications or on a website.

In these materials icons, logos, software products and websites are used for contextual and practical reasons. Their use should not be interpreted as an endorsement of particular companies or their products.

The websites referred to in these materials existed at the time of going to print.

Tutors should check all website references carefully to see if they have changed and substitute other references where appropriate.

# The Primary Framework 2006: renewing the primary National Strategy Early Literacy Support programme

Early Literacy Support (ELS) was introduced by the National Literacy Strategy in 2001. It is a Wave-2 literacy intervention programme for children identified as needing additional support at the end of the first term in Year 1. The programme consists of screening procedures, 60 detailed additional literacy sessions and supporting guidance for teachers and teaching assistants. The sessions, usually led by a teaching assistant working with a group of up to six children, focus on key literacy objectives from Reception and Year 1 which are designed to bring participating children back 'into step' with their peers by the time they reach the end of Year 1. The maintenance of a close working partnership with the class teacher is crucial to the success of the programme, which has been independently evaluated as providing 'a cost-effective method of boosting six-year-old children's reading to an average level' (Hatcher *et al*, 2006). ELS forms part of the layered approach to intervention of the *Every Child a Reader* programme.

## Why is ELS being revised?

ELS is being revised in order to bring it into line with the renewed Primary Framework for literacy and, specifically, to ensure that it is consistent with the 'simple view of reading' and the recommendations of the *Independent review of the teaching of early reading* (the Rose report, March 2006).

*The simple view of reading proposes that skilled reading entails development of a set of processes by which the words on the page are recognised and understood (i.e. word recognition processes), and development of increasingly sophisticated language comprehension processes, by which texts as well as spoken language are understood and interpreted. Learning to read therefore involves setting up processes by which the words on the page can be recognised and understood, and continuing to develop the language comprehension processes that underlie both spoken and written language comprehension. Both sets of processes are necessary for reading, but neither is sufficient on its own. Children who cannot adequately recognise the words on the page are by that fact alone prevented from fully understanding the text; however, recognising and understanding the words on the page is no guarantee that the text will be understood.*

*Different kinds of teaching are needed to develop word recognition skills from those that are needed to foster the comprehension of written and spoken language. (op. cit. p. 77)*

## The new conceptual framework for teaching reading: the 'simple view of reading'

**Primary Framework 2006 and Primary Framework for literacy and mathematics: Supporting guidance for headteachers and chairs of governors 02009-2006BKT-EN**



It follows that when practitioners and teachers undertake reading activities, including shared, guided and discrete teaching of reading, they need to think carefully about which component of reading they intend to focus on.



The simple view of reading emphasises the critical importance of the development of word recognition skills as the key focus for learning and teaching in the early stages of reading. The revised version of ELS will therefore give greater prominence to helping children to develop their word recognition skills by emphasising the development of mastery of the alphabetic code and the application of phonic knowledge and skills to develop automaticity in word reading. In keeping with the new conceptual framework (the simple view of reading), the ELS programme will maintain its focus on speaking and listening skills, phonological awareness, vocabulary development and language comprehension. The programme will also continue to stress the importance of 'learning-to-learn' skills in helping children understand their learning and targets, and of recognising progress towards achieving these.

As before, it is essential that the provision of ELS operates **within the context of** and **in addition to** day-to-day high-quality teaching of early reading for all children, including those in the intervention group. The assumption therefore is that all children have access to an effective discrete phonic programme that supports progression and pace in learning and meets the criteria that the DfES is developing and will publish, building on the guidance set out in the Primary Framework 2006. An example is the forthcoming Primary Strategy material (replacing *Playing with Sounds*) which will support high-quality phonic teaching in schools and other settings.

## How will ELS change?

### Introductory materials and supporting guidance for teachers and teaching assistants

These will be rewritten to align with the Literacy and Speaking & listening strands of the primary Framework 2006.

### Screening and selection

These materials will be revised to take account of the Literacy strands of the Primary Framework, including those addressing speaking and listening, and in order to make direct use of the phonics tracking materials provided in the Framework which enable teachers and practitioners to assess children's progress through the phases of phonic progression. Accurate assessment of children's phonic knowledge and skills is crucial to ensure that the intervention focuses on the right children, and is implemented before literacy failure has become embedded.



### The ELS sessions

These will be reconfigured to give greater time and prominence to phonics and word recognition skills, and to follow the teaching sequence promoted in the Primary Framework. The existing emphasis on speaking and listening and 'learning-to-learn' skills will be retained.

**Revisit and review** recently and previously learned grapheme-phoneme correspondences, blending & segmenting skills and application in reading and writing.

**Teach** new grapheme-phoneme correspondences; skills of blending and segmenting; and reading and writing high-frequency words.

**Practise** new grapheme-phoneme correspondences; skills of blending and segmenting; and reading and writing high-frequency words.

**Apply** new knowledge and skills through shared and guided reading and writing activities.

**Progress checks** will be revised to align with the phonics tracking materials provided in the Framework, which enable teachers and practitioners to assess children's progress through the phases of phonic progression.

### Continuing professional development

A new package of CPD materials will be developed to support the implementation of the revised ELS programme. These will include professional development modules and video exemplification designed for tailored use by schools, and will focus on the effective teaching of early reading as well as on the ELS sessions themselves.

### When will the revised edition of ELS be available?

The revised ELS programme and accompanying CPD materials will be available in autumn 2007.