



## Preparing your school for the Early Reading Inspection

Inspectors pay particular attention to pupils reading below age-related expectations across the whole school. See *School Inspection Handbook p87: 293*

In reaching an evaluation against the 'quality of education' judgement, inspectors consider the following areas.

### **A. Teach with fidelity to an SSP programme**

*'The school's phonics programme matches or exceeds the expectations of the national curriculum and the early learning goals. The school has clear expectations of pupils' phonics progress term-by-term, from Reception to Year 2.'* SIH p87: 293.

### **B. Make a strong start in Reception**

*'Reading, including the teaching of systematic, synthetic phonics, is taught from the beginning of Reception'* SIH 2019

### **C. Ensure cumulative progression of sounds and books**

*'The sequence of reading books shows a cumulative progression in phonics knowledge that is matched closely to the school's phonics programme. Teachers give pupils sufficient practice in reading and re-reading books that match the grapheme-phoneme correspondences they know, both at school and at home.'* SIH p87: 293.

### **D. Build a team of expert reading teachers**

*'The school has developed sufficient expertise in the teaching of phonics and reading.'* SIH p87: 293.

### **E. Reach the lowest 20% pupils**

*'The ongoing assessment of pupils' phonics progress is sufficiently frequent and detailed to identify any pupil who is falling behind the programme's pace. If they do fall behind, targeted support is given immediately.'* SIH p87: 293.

### **F. Develop pupils' listening comprehension and language by reading aloud and talking about stories, poems and non-fiction books**

*'Stories, poems, rhymes and non-fiction are chosen for reading to develop pupils' vocabulary, language comprehension and love of reading. Pupils are familiar with and enjoy listening to a wide range of stories, poems, rhymes and non-fiction.'* SIH p87: 293.

### **G. Leaders ensure every child reads in their school**

*'[...] determined that every pupil will learn to read, regardless of their background, needs or abilities. All pupils, including the weakest readers, [must] make sufficient progress to meet or exceed age-related expectations.'* SIH May 2019 p87: 293.



**Can the Headteacher, Reading Leader, Senior Leaders, Teachers, TAs clearly explain the points below and give evidence of how this is achieved?**

### **A. Teach with fidelity to an SSP programme**

#### Training

1. SSP training and CPD is booked with an accredited training provider.
2. The SSP provider shows teachers how to teach the lowest 20% pupils to read, including those with SEND.

#### Resources

3. The SSP programme sets out daily expectations for teaching the NC elements listed below.
4. Correct resources are particular to the SSP programme (sound charts, friezes, sound and word cards, cumulative texts).

#### Teaching

5. Sufficient time is given to teach phonics, reading and writing.
6. Teachers and TAs (who are teaching reading) understand the specific activities in the SSP programme.
7. Teachers and TAs teach these activities confidently.
8. Teachers pay particular attention to pupils who fall behind during SSP lessons.
9. The pace of teaching is not slowed for pupils who fall behind.

#### Progress and assessment

10. There are clear term-by-term expectations of progress from Reception to Y2.
11. The reading leader/ class teacher assesses pupils using an individual termly/half termly reading assessment to record letter-sound knowledge and word reading (using assessments in the SSP programme).
12. Assessments are used to organise pupils efficiently to maximise progress.

#### Slowest progress pupils

13. SSP lessons are of the highest standard to reduce the amount of extra support needed.
14. Pupils who fall behind are identified immediately using the SSP programme's assessments.
15. These pupils receive extra daily practice following the school's SSP programme.

#### Parents

16. Parents are informed of the SSP programme adopted: what is taught and how they could provide extra practice to develop fluency; how the school will provide extra practice to prevent serious problems developing.

#### Reading

1. Respond speedily with the correct sound to graphemes (letters or groups of letters) for all 40+ phonemes, including, where applicable, alternative sounds for graphemes.
2. Blend spoken sounds into words\*.



3. Read accurately by blending sounds in unfamiliar words containing GPCs that have been taught.
4. Read words containing taught GPCs and –s, –es, –ing, –ed, –er and –est endings.
5. Read other words of more than one syllable that contain taught GPCs.
6. Read common exception words, noting unusual correspondences between spelling and sound.
7. Read aloud accurately books that are consistent with their developing phonic knowledge and that do not require them to use other strategies to work out words.
8. Re-read these books to build up their fluency and confidence in word reading.

### Questions Ofsted inspectors might ask...

*Note: These questions are in the public domain.*

- Do you know what you want children to learn term-by-term, so that by the end of Year 1 they can meet the requirements of the PSC?
- What phonic knowledge do you want your children to have by the time they finish Year 1?
- How does this set children up for the next stage in their learning?
- How do children increase reading fluency?
- Where are the children currently up to? Which children are not at this point? Why? How are you going to remedy this?

### B. Make a strong start in Reception

Reception teachers:

1. Timetable daily SSP lessons from the second week in Reception.
2. Ensure at least 20 minutes is given to teaching of phonics, reading and writing right from the start, building to at least 45 minutes by the end of the year (this may be one session or organised throughout the day).
3. Follow the same SSP programme as Y1 and 2.
4. Know how to cope with 'staggered' starts.
5. Identify pupils who are falling behind, by the third week in school.
6. Give all pupils practice in reading letter-sound correspondences and oral sound-blending a few times each day.
7. Give daily extra practice to pupils falling behind in a small group or individually.
8. Ensure extra practice matches the school's SSP programme.
9. Display the necessary friezes and charts for the SSP programme at the right height
10. Ensure all pupils sit where they can see the teacher and resources during SSP lessons.
11. Teach SSP in a quiet space to help pupils focus.
12. Set up frequent meetings to show parents how to help their children practise reading sounds and words at home.



## Questions Ofsted inspectors ask

*Note: These questions are in the public domain.*

- How soon do you start to teach children letter-sound correspondences?

### C. Ensure cumulative progression of sounds and books

1. Decodable reading books are organised in the given sequence in their chosen SSP programme i.e., reading books build letter-sound correspondences cumulatively. Books are *not* sorted by traditional 'Book-Banding' criteria based on a mix of methods, i.e. sequential 'decodable' books are not mixed with texts that rely on repetition, prediction and 'look and say'.
2. Pupils read texts/books that closely match the letter-sound correspondences they can read at home as well as in school.
3. These texts/books contain few exception words, as listed in the school's SSP programme.
4. Pupils are *not* asked to read books that require them to guess words or deduce meaning from pictures, grammar or context clues, or taught words using whole word recognition.
5. Pupils practise sounding out the words in the story and read exception words before they read the text/book.
6. Pupils re-read these texts/books at school and home to build fluency.
7. Pupils falling behind are given extra practice to re-read these texts/books.
8. Pupils continue to read books in a progressive sequence until they can decode unfamiliar words confidently.
9. As soon as pupils can read unfamiliar words confidently, they read wider literature and no longer read books in the school's levelled reading programme.
10. Teachers keep records of the books pupils read in school and at home.
11. Pupils practise reading books at home once they have read them at school.
12. Parents know how to increase their children's fluency in reading sounds, words and books, at each point in their children's learning.
13. Teachers provide extra reading practise for pupils who do not practise at home.
14. Parents understand the difference between stories to share and stories that children read aloud.

## Questions Ofsted inspectors ask

*Note: These questions are in the public domain.*

- Which books do children take home?
- Are the books children take home to read closely matched to the phonics in the books they are reading in class?
- How often do children change their reading books?
- How often do parents listen to their children read at home?
- How do you support parents to help their child read at home?

**D. Build a team of expert reading teachers**

The Headteacher:

1. Has appointed a reading leader with expertise in and experience of teaching phonics.
2. Gives the reading leader dedicated time to fulfil the role (see below).
3. Ensures all grades of management (including the headteacher), teachers and teaching assistants attend the SSP provider's training.
4. Ensures that SSP training is provided for new staff.

The Reading Leader:

1. Meets frequently with the headteacher to discuss the impact of each teacher on pupils' progress, particularly the lowest 20%.
2. Coaches reading teachers (who need extra support) during SSP lessons.
3. Coaches reading teachers who support pupils who have fallen behind.

**Questions Ofsted inspectors ask**

*Note: These questions are in the public domain.*

- How do you develop your staff?
- What phonics training has your staff had?
- How do you know that all staff have the same knowledge and skills (including new staff and NQTs)?
- How has your training and development helped you teach children so they remember what you teach them?

**E. Reach the lowest 20% pupils**

The Reading Leader:

1. Ensures SSP lessons are of the highest standard to reduce the number of pupils who need extra support.
2. Uses the programme's SSP assessment to identify immediately pupils falling behind
3. Organises extra daily practice for pupils falling behind, following the school's SSP programme.
4. Builds a profile of pupils receiving extra support (SEND, EAL, speech delay, attendance, time in school, previous teaching).
5. Provides regular CPD for teachers in both the content and teaching manner to support pupils falling behind.
6. Fast tracks late-entry pupils to catch up with their peers.
7. Designates a member of staff to improve attendance for these pupils.
8. Engages the support of parents, where appropriate.

**Questions Ofsted inspectors ask**

*Note: These questions are in the public domain.*

- How do you assess children's progress?
- How often do you assess it?



- What systems do you have in place to spot quickly if children are falling behind?
- What support is put in place for children who fall behind?
- How are the lowest 20% supported with their reading?
- How do you ensure that new children catch up if they are behind their peers?

### **G. Develop pupils' listening comprehension and language by reading aloud and talking about stories, poems and non-fiction books**

1. Timetable a daily 20-minute storytime.
2. Have a list of quality stories to read aloud to pupils each half-term, including traditional and modern stories.
3. Show enjoyment of each story using their voice and manner to make the meaning clear.
4. Read aloud, re-read and talk about stories to build familiarity and understanding.
5. Teach new vocabulary in the context of the story.
6. Provide extra small group storytimes for pupils with delayed language acquisition.
7. Help pupils retell the story and take on different roles in imaginative play
8. Organise appealing book corners.
9. Show parents how to read aloud and talk about stories with their children and send home quality books.

### **Questions Ofsted inspectors ask**

**Note: These questions are in the public domain.**

- How often do you read to children?
- How do you select the books that you read to children?
- How do you decide upon the stories and texts children will get to know really well?
- Which books have you enjoyed reading to your children recently? What made you choose that book?
- Can children talk about their favourite books and explain why they like them?
- How do you ensure storytime is engaging?
- How do you get parents to love reading to their children?

### **G. Leaders ensure every child reads in their school**

1. Leaders implement SSP thoroughly to ensure *all* pupils learn to read.
2. Leaders are committed to supporting teachers to enable them to do this.
3. Leaders are confident that teachers and TAs (who are teaching reading) teach each SSP activity with understanding and confidence.
4. The headteacher makes the teaching of phonics and reading fundamental to the progress of all pupils. Over time, the vast majority of pupils meet the standard of the Year 1 phonics screening check. Pupils with SEND who have not met the standard of the check make good progress in learning to read from their individual starting points.



## Questions Ofsted inspectors ask

*Note: These questions are in the public domain.*

- How do you ensure reading is prioritised in your school?
- What were your last Phonics Screening Check (PSC) results?
- If they were high, how does your phonics programme enable you to achieve this year after year?
- If not, what plans do you have to improve your school's PSC score?