

**DfES Press Release July 7<sup>th</sup> 2005**  
**PRIMARY LITERACY TEACHING:**  
**PHONICS PILOT SCHEMES AND *EVERY CHILD A READER***

Pilot schemes to examine the practical questions of building on the phonics teaching already present in primary schools and early years settings, and further catch-up classes for children with severe literacy problems will be introduced in selected primary schools from September, Schools Minister Andrew Adonis announced today.

200 primary schools and linked early years settings will trial options based on the Primary National Strategy's *Playing with Sounds* programme, to examine a number of different issues such as the pace of phonics teaching in the Foundation Stage, the application of phonics through play-based approaches to learning, and the ongoing support and training needed to build capacity in early literacy. The pilots will provide the Rose review with valuable further evidence to consider ahead of its final report early next year.

And in an innovative partnership, the Department for Education and Skills has pledged £5 million over the next three years to the *Every Child a Reader* project developed by a coalition of charitable trusts including the KPMG Foundation and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, working with the Institute of Education. The project will channel a total of over £10 million to place specialist literacy teachers in schools across twenty local education authorities. Trained in the delivery of *Reading Recovery*, these teachers will provide tailored tuition for 30 minutes every day for three to four months to around 4000 children with the severest literacy difficulties.

Evidence from both schemes will inform the independent review of literacy teaching led by Jim Rose, as will proposals from Ofsted to review schools' practice with phonics, welcomed today by Andrew Adonis. They will also ensure that a renewed Literacy Framework drawing Mr Rose's recommendations can commence promptly in all schools as soon as possible, and inform the work on a single quality framework for early years education.

Andrew Adonis said:

“The Literacy Framework has delivered rapid improvements in children’s literacy over the last seven years, with 78% of children now reaching the expected level for their age in English. International evidence shows that standards are high and rising, with our children ranked as the third best readers out of the 35 countries which took part.

“These schemes will provide the Rose review with further valuable evidence from the classroom in addition to its examination of many other teaching methods. Our partnership with KPMG, other business and charitable funders and the Institute of Education will also help children who need extra help with their reading now, and provide us with valuable information on how intensive early literacy support can be provided in the future.”

“I also welcome proposals from Ofsted to review schools’ practice with phonics. Together, these developments will ensure we are able to hit the ground running with a renewed Literacy Framework in 2006 for the benefit of all children.”

Jim Rose said:

“I welcome the work that the Department is doing to support the *Every Child a Reader* Project and the introduction of the phonics pilots into 200 schools and early years settings. This work extends the evidence base that I can draw upon in making my recommendations. It will provide an invaluable insight into classroom practice, including how best to support children with literacy difficulties, which are fundamental considerations for my review.”

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

1. 200 schools and linked early years settings will be selected this summer to start trialling options from September 2005 for varying the pace at which phonics is taught with a view to completing phonics teaching by the end

of the Foundation Stage.

2. Reading Recovery targets the very lowest attaining six-year-olds, who would normally be predicted to achieve well below their peers throughout their time in school. Studies have shown that more than two thirds go on to achieve the expected levels for children of their age at the end of Key Stage 1 and over half, without any further help, are still achieving average levels for their age four years later at the end of Key Stage 2.

. The *Every Child a Reader* project will commence in selected schools in the following local education authorities from September: Bristol, Liverpool, Birmingham, Middlesbrough, Sheffield, Brent, Greenwich, Southwark, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hackney.

3. Phonics already lies at the heart of the literacy framework and it is recommended that teachers provide direction instruction in phonics every day for children age 4-6.

4. Standards in English in primary schools have never been higher. All the evidence - national test results, international comparisons, and Ofsted reports - make this clear. In English 78% of 11 year olds reached the expected level for their age in the 2004 tests. This represents an increase of 15 percentage points since 1997.

5. In the PIRLS international study published in 2003, England's 10 year olds achieved the third highest scores in reading literacy out of the 35 countries which took part. The TIMMS study published in 2004 found that the mathematics performance of England's 10 year olds had increased more since 1995 than any other country taking part in the study.

6. During 2003/04, Ofsted inspectors found that around three-quarters of primary teaching in English and mathematics was excellent or good, whereas in 1997/98 just over half of teaching overall was judged excellent or good.