



## Advisory Teaching Service Advice Sheet for Delivering Reading Interventions



### Structure and frequency

- Think about the learning environment – Is the pupil comfortable and able to concentrate.
- Consider frequency – daily or a minimum of 15mins x3 per week as this helps children learn and retain information more quickly and easily. Track attendance as this can impact on progress.
- Ensure it is time-bonded – between 9-20 weeks.
- Limit time away from High Quality Teaching in the classroom (avoid multiple interventions at the same time).

### Aims

- Ensure you know the purpose of the programme you are delivering and what skills you are aiming to develop. It is likely to have far greater impact if the intervention addresses a particular barrier to reading.
- Use recent 'entry' assessments to plan the focus area and consider the five key elements of reading: Phoneme awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.

### Delivery

- Be enthusiastic and positive! Aim to make sessions enjoyable and engaging.
- Follow the intervention guidance carefully. If you're new to it, watch others who are more experienced and then ask them to watch you.
- Think about the pace of each session, with only 15minutes, every minute counts.
- Start by discussing the text to spark interest. Pre-teach any tricky or important vocabulary.
- Make links to previous learning to help reinforce keys skills and make connections.
- Maintain consistency and routine – familiarity helps reduce anxiety and supports engagement.

### Adaptive approaches

- Revisit key phonemes and flashcards frequently, using multi-sensory methods. Continue overlearning even once the child appears confident, to support long-term retention.
- Select appropriately pitched texts, ensuring high-interest but low reading age options where needed, and matching books to the child's current phoneme knowledge.
- Use reading accuracy to guide book choice:
  - *95-100% accuracy = independent level (confidence building and rehearsal)*
  - *90-95% accuracy = instructional level (most words decodable; supports fluency and comprehension)*
  - *Below 90% accuracy = can lead to frustration (likely to hinder fluency and comprehension)*
- Provide visual supports e.g. word mats, phonic charts and adapt planning so the content aligns with the child's needs.
- Respond flexibly in the moment – draw quick diagrams, use analogies, adjust scaffolding and give clear examples and non-examples to reinforce understanding.

## Monitor impact

- Use entry and exit assessments to check starting points and progress.
- Review impact regularly – be sure the benefit of the intervention outweighs time away from the classroom.
- Use Running Records\* to check whether the reading level is appropriate, identify strengths and plan next steps. An individual intervention record can also help.
- Teachers should have clear oversight of reading interventions.
- Stop the intervention if it is not having the desired impact over a sustained period of time.

## Top Tips

- Use an evidence-based programme that is feasible, will help support high quality teaching and can be delivered consistently and effectively.
- Preparation is key – go over new/tricky words and spend time introducing the new text.
- Avoid making reading harder e.g. by waiting for the child to ‘work it out’ if they are stuck. If they struggle with a word (or question), tell them the answer, rehearse and revisit it during the next session (similar to the ‘flashback technique’ from Dancing Bears).
- Avoid pointing to each word one at a time when reading as this will reduce fluency. Instead use a reading ruler or glide your finger smoothly under the line.
- Prioritise fluency to support comprehension. Books must be mastered to the degree of automaticity to allow their focus to be on comprehension and expression. Read sections back to the child if needed.
- Avoid comments like “You knew this word yesterday”. Children with working memory difficulties may need repeated practice. Think about preserving self-esteem.
- End on a positive, using specific praise about what went well and what to focus on next time.
- Use assistive technology\*, such as Nesy, to support independent practice.
- Make links to classroom learning, using bridging activities/comments e.g. “Remember when we read this in the library? How did we do that successfully?”. To support consolidation, ensure good communication between the teacher and staff member delivering the intervention.

## Useful links/resources

- \*Running Records – see link/attached documents [spld-assessing-reading-using-running-records.pdf](#)
- \*Assistive Technology – see ATS advice sheet on Using Technology to Support Reading
- EEF Promising Projects – lists programmes with rigorous evaluations and high standards of impact and cost effectiveness [Promising Programmes | EEF](#)
- Early Intervention Foundation guidebook – highlighting the strength of evidence for a programme [Annex B: Early Intervention Foundation Guidebook to Evidence Based Programmes - GOV.UK](#)
- The Dyslexia SpLD trust - [list-view | Interventions For Literacy](#)