



## Voluntary Phonics Check for Year 1 students

### Information for families

#### Learning to read

Families play a key part in supporting their children to read. Reading to and with your child for at least 10 minutes a day will help your child develop important reading skills.

Spoken language is made up of lots of different sounds. In English, there are only 26 letters of the alphabet, but these, individually or combined represent the 44 sounds. Seeing the connections between letters and sounds is a very important part of learning to read and spell. This is called 'phonics'. Studies have shown that phonics plays a crucial role in teaching children to read.

#### Can you tell me more about phonics?

Phonics is about understanding how the written letter and its sound work together. The goal of phonics is to help children to sound out (decode) written words as they read and spell. Sounding out means saying each sound in the word. We do this by teaching children the sounds made by a single letter or group of letters. We then teach them how to blend these sounds from left to right to read and write words.

#### Why should I know if my child understands phonics?

It is important to find out early if your child needs more help with phonics as they are learning to read. You and the teacher can then plan for what your child needs. It will be best for your child if you do this early. There is a phonics and reading awareness check for you on [the Literacy Hub](#). The Hub also has a voluntary Phonics Check for teachers to use for Year 1 students. It is called the 'Phonics Check'.

#### What is the Literacy Hub?

The Literacy Hub is online. It is free. It gives you, teachers and school leaders more ways to support literacy. The resources on the Literacy Hub are based on evidence about what works and does not work.

There are two checks you can do at home and activities that will help you to support your child's reading.

#### What are the checks for families to do with their children?

There are two checks you can do to find out more about how your child is learning to read.

The reading awareness check on the Literacy Hub lists some of the skills you might see your Year 1 child doing at home and when you read with them. You can then discuss these with your child's teacher.

There is also a families phonics check on the Literacy Hub with 20 words for you to try with your Year 1 child. Some of the words are made-up, this is to check the child's understanding of letter sound relationships. There is a pronunciation guide where you can make notes on how the child sounds out the word.

You might like to discuss these checks with your child's teacher who is the best person to tell you how you can support your child's literacy skills at home.

#### What is the online Phonics Check that teachers do with children?

The Year 1 Phonics Check that teachers do with children is quick and easy. It helps Year 1 teachers find out how much phonics knowledge their students have. The Check shows how well the children can 'decode'. It is there to help teachers find out which children may need more help in learning to read early. Helping these children will support their future success at school.

Participation in the Phonics Check is voluntary (your child does not have to do it). It is also free.

#### Do you need more information?

For more information visit [www.literacyhub.edu.au/families.html](http://www.literacyhub.edu.au/families.html).