

# 2025 phonics screening check summary

The phonics screening check is administered to all year 1 students in South Australian public schools.

It is a short, simple assessment of 40 words. It helps teachers measure how well students are learning to decode and blend letters into sounds. Words at the beginning of the check are the simplest and then become increasingly complex.

## Key findings

The 2025 data shows 66% of students can correctly decode 28 words or more. This is 23 percentage points higher than 2018, which shows the focus on phonics has made an impact over time. The median was 32 words correctly decoded, which is well above the expected achievement of 28 words and consistent with the 2024 median.

- 66% of all students who actively participated in the 2025 PSC scored at or above the expected achievement score. This is a decrease of 4 percentage points from 2024 to 2025.
- 67% of females scored at or above the expected achievement score compared to 65% of males.
- 40% of Aboriginal students scored at or above the expected achievement score. This is a small decrease of 2 percentage points from 2024 to 2025.
- 68% of students speaking English as an additional language or dialect scored at or above the expected achievement score. This is a decrease of 4 percentage points from 2024 to 2025.
- 69% of students from metropolitan schools scored at or above the expected achievement score of 28 words decoded correctly, a decrease of 4 percentage points from 2024 to 2025. This is compared to 58% from non-metropolitan schools, a 5 percentage point decrease from 2024 to 2025.
- In schools serving the most disadvantaged communities, 35% of students scored at or above the expected achievement, a decrease of 5 percentage points. This is compared to 79% of students in schools serving the least disadvantaged communities, stable from 2024 to 2025.

## Participation

The 2025 phonics screening check was implemented between 4 and 29 August.

- 413 schools administered the check.
- 11,350 year 1 students actively took part (from 12,043 student records).

A higher percentage of year 1 students participated in the 2025 phonics screening check, ensuring all students including those most disadvantaged are being checked and supported to improve.



# Teacher professional learning

Over 750 teachers and school leaders attended professional learning for the phonics screening check.

Teachers were provided with resources to ensure they can respond to the results of the check and design learning for students. The resources are built on and enhanced each year.

## Support provided to schools

Schools were provided with temporary relief teacher days for each year 1 teacher. The release time allows teachers to:

- attend professional learning
- implement the check with students
- respond to the results.

## How teachers use the results

Teachers use the results to:

- identify students who are struggling in learning to read
- plan appropriate student learning
- improve reading and literacy for students that will continue throughout their schooling.

## Achievement score

In 2018 expert advice was engaged to map words in the phonics screening check to the Australian Curriculum. It was advised it is generally reasonable to expect year 1 students to decode 28 out of 40 words in the check. A range of scores would be expected.

## Historical comparative findings

- There has been a cumulative improvement of 23 percentage points from 2018 when only 43% of students were able to correctly decode 28 words or more.
- Students unable to decode any of the words correctly remains steady at 2%.

See the department's [phonics screening check webpage](#) for more information.