

2019

Phonics screening check

Information for parents/carers, families and the general community

Most children start school with some understanding of reading. Some can already read. Children who understand the relationship between letters and sounds—known as ‘phonics’—will be at an advantage. Phonics is vital in learning to read.

Some children struggle with learning to read. It is important that these children are quickly identified so that teachers can plan for any specific support they may need. When this is done early, children have the best possible chance in life and learning.

The phonics screening check is a short, simple assessment that tells teachers how students are progressing in phonics. It takes only 5–7 minutes and is carried out by classroom teachers with each student individually. Teachers then analyse the results and, if necessary, plan for any additional support that students might require.

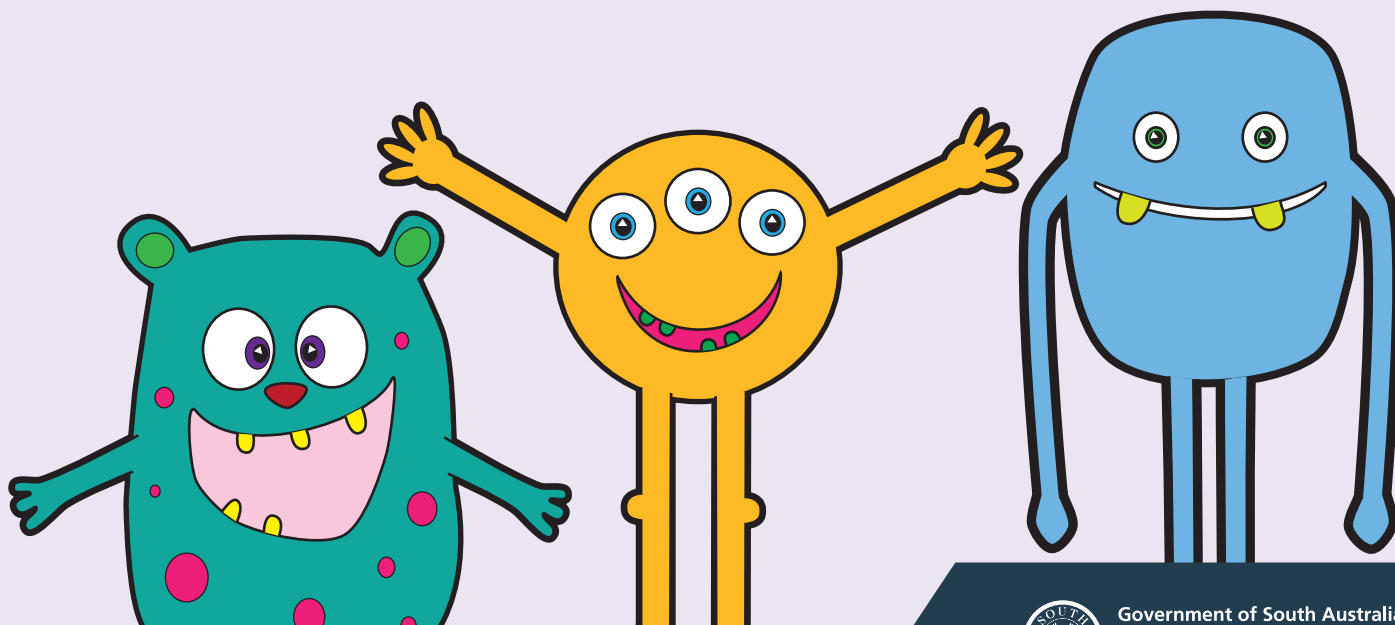
The phonics screening check was developed in the United Kingdom and the South Australian Department for Education trialled it in 2017 in 56 schools. The trial showed that not only did children enjoy it, but that it was straight forward to do. Principals and teachers thought the check had the potential to improve phonics teaching.

All Year 1 students in government schools will undertake the check in August 2019. To ensure high quality and consistency, Year 1 teachers and school leaders are being trained to use the phonics screening check during term 2, 2019.

The Department for Education is supporting schools with resources to undertake the assessment and to follow up with students who need additional support. The phonics screening check will be updated each year.

Phonics screening check materials will also be made available to Catholic and Independent schools in South Australia.

The phonics screening check is one important element of the Government of South Australia’s Literacy Guarantee, ensuring that all students have the best possible start in reading. The Literacy Guarantee is central to the improvement of literacy and numeracy for all students.



Government of South Australia
Department for Education