**Choosing a Phonics Scheme**

By ensuring high-quality phonics teaching the government wants to improve literacy levels to:

* give all children a solid base upon which to build as they progress through school
* help children to develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information

In April 2021, they published the revised core criteria for effective systematic synthetic phonics teaching programmes and launched a new process to [validate complete systematic synthetic phonics teaching programmes](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-teaching-materials-core-criteria-and-self-assessment/validation-of-systematic-synthetic-phonics-programmes-supporting-documentation). This process is for both previously assessed programmes and new applicants.

A number of publishers have completed a self-assessment process based on these criteria, which were then reviewed by independent evaluators. A total of 9 systematic synthetic phonics programmes were validated in this round, 5 of which are newly validated for use in schools.

**List of validated systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) programmes**

The following is the current list of validated SSP programmes:

* Bug Club Phonics
* Essential Letters and Sounds
* Letterland
* Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised
* No Nonsense Phonics
* Phonics International
* Read Write Inc.
* Reading Planet Rocket Phonics
* Success for All Phonics

Floppy’s Phonics, Jolly Phonics, Sound Discovery, Sounds Together and Sounds-Write did not choose to submit a self-assessment for validation in June 2021 round and have until 28 February 2022 to do so.

There will be further opportunities for publishers to [submit their systematic synthetic teaching programmes for validation](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-teaching-materials-core-criteria-and-self-assessment/validation-of-systematic-synthetic-phonics-programmes-supporting-documentation). The list will then be updated in autumn 2021 and then again in spring 2022, resulting in one final list of complete SSP programmes that meet the revised core criteria.

[Contact details and web addresses](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/choosing-a-phonics-teaching-programme/contact-details-for-the-validated-systematic-synthetic-phonics-ssp-programmes) for currently validated SSP programmes are available.

**Letters and Sounds**

* There is no expectation that schools using Letters and Sounds well, and achieving excellent results, will need to change to a new programme
* Current Letters and Sounds training, delivered by DfE validated English Hubs, will continue until July 2023, so there will be continuity for schools who are already using the programme
* There is no suggestion that Letters and Sounds will disappear - there are a choice of validated SSPs based on Letters and Sounds

**What to do next…..take your time!**

* There is no statutory requirement for schools to choose one of the SSP programmes on the validated list. However, validation status indicates that a programme has been self-assessed by its publisher and judged by a small panel with relevant expertise and that both consider it to meet all of the [Department for Education (DfE) criteria](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-teaching-materials-core-criteria-and-self-assessment) for an effective systematic synthetic phonics programme.

When planning a change of SSP programme, the following should be carefully considered:

* Start-up costs
* Annual subscriptions
* Long term budget commitments
* Progression and pace of the programme
* Programme resources and books
* How it is delivered
* Staffing
* Training
* Logistics/space

For more guidance on choosing an SSP programme that is best for your school, speak to your local [English Hub](http://www.englishhubs.org/). English Hubs can offer guidance on the details of each validated programme above, to help with your decision.