Department for Education

Monitoring of 595T Systematic Synthetic Phonics Training Report

Date of Visit: 16 October 2012

Venue Visited: Hilton London Euston

Training Provider: Jolly Learning Ltd

Lead contact: Megan Entecott   megan@jollylearning.co.uk

Trainer: Sue Lloyd

Course: How to implement and use Jolly Phonics

Course Duration: 09.15-15.45

No of attendees: 47

How the training conforms to the DfE CORE and TRAINING criteria	
Criteria	**Evaluator's comments**
The training promotes high quality systematic synthetic phonic work as the prime approach to decoding print i.e. a phonics 'first and fast' approach.	The training strongly and unequivocally promoted systematic synthetic phonics as the prime approach to be used by learner readers when decoding text. Some helpful context was given including appropriate reference to the Rose Report. The model of the 'simple view of reading' was explained. Whilst the emphasis of most of the training was, appropriately, on teaching children to decode phonically, due acknowledgement was paid to the important aspect of comprehension. It was made clear that, through effective systematic synthetic phonics teaching, young children will quickly achieve accurate, speedy and effortless reading. Alternative, unhelpful reading strategies, such as word-memorising and guessing from context were discussed and the reasons for their ineffectiveness explained. The contrasting effectiveness of systematic synthetic phonics was evidenced with reference to the Clackmannanshire and other studies.
The training promotes the expectation that children start learning phonic knowledge and skills using a systematic, synthetic programme by the age of five , with the expectation that they will be fluent readers having secured word recognition skills by the end of Key Stage 1.	These expectations were made very clear in the training which continually stressed the importance of children starting systematic synthetic phonics early, progressing quickly and becoming efficient, effective and enthusiastic readers by or before the age of seven. A systematic programme for achieving this was fully explained and modelled during the training.

The materials and approach promoted are designed for teaching discrete, daily sessions, progressing from simple to more complex phonic knowledge and skills and covering the major grapheme/phoneme correspondences.	The training related directly to the 'Jolly Phonics' programme, which provides detailed outlines for discrete daily lessons covering a full progression through the early stages of phonics learning. Effective, fast-paced delivery of these was clearly and engagingly explained by the trainer. A supportive programme for interactive whiteboard presentation of these lessons was also demonstrated. Emphasis was, very importantly, placed on the application of the phonics skills learned to the children's reading and writing. Practice in this begins to be built into every lesson once the first group of sounds has been learned.
The training demonstrates how children's progress is assessed.	Assessment was clearly and strongly addressed in the training. Regular assessment was recommended and several practical models/materials to support this were shown and discussed.
A multi-sensory approach is promoted so that children learn variously from simultaneous visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities which are designed to secure essential phonic knowledge and skills.	The Jolly Phonics programme introduced and demonstrated in the training constantly uses auditory, visual and kinaesthetic activity when introducing, revising and applying the sounds. In this programme, very short stories and helpful actions support the introduction and early memorising of each sound, Children need quickly to master and use these sounds for blending and segmenting. Teaching that is interactive, lively and multi-sensory continues to be encouraged throughout the programme.
Training demonstrates that phonemes should be blended , in order, from left to right, 'all through the word' for reading.	These related and reversible processes are introduced and practised at appropriate stages in the programme. This sequence is fully explained and by the trainer and the importance of both processes continually stressed.
Training demonstrates how words can be segmented into their constituent phonemes for spelling and that this is the reverse of blending phonemes to read words.	
Training demonstrates how children should apply phonic knowledge and skills as their first approach to reading even if a word is not completely regular.	A useful discussion of 'high-frequency' words was held and trainees' attention drawn to the extent to which they were already decodable or contained GPCs that children would not know in the early stages of their learning. The trainer explained and demonstrated how, after identifying known sounds, children should be helped to

Training promotes that children are taught high frequency words that do not conform completely to grapheme/phoneme correspondence rules.	learn the words for automatic reading. This learning of 'tricky' words is consistent and cumulative through the whole programme.
Training promotes fidelity to the teaching framework for the duration of the programme, to ensure that these irregular words are fully learnt.	
Training promotes that as pupils move through the early stages of acquiring phonics, they are invited to practise by reading texts which are entirely decodable for them, so that they experience success and learn to rely on phonemic strategies.	The training very strongly promoted the use of decodable texts at the appropriate stages of children learning to read and provided a clear and persuasive rational for this. Several examples were given and others, available through the Pro5/DfE catalogue, pointed out. It was continually stressed that, in the early stages of learning, children, particularly the least able, need texts that they can read using their current level of decoding skill and do not put them in a position where they have to guess words.
Training relates directly and wholly to the use of materials which meet the phonics 'Core Criteria' OR Training is generic; applicable to any of the programmes that meet the phonics core criteria.	The majority of the training related directly to the 'Jolly Phonics' programme, already assessed as meeting the 'Core Criteria'. Reference was also very helpfully made to other similarly assessed schemes of decodable readers. *However some direct and explicit reference was made to materials which have not been assessed as meeting the criteria so that, whilst this criterion was very largely met, it cannot accurately be said to have been fully met.*
Trainers have relevant experience of teaching children to read.	The trainer has extensive teaching experience of demonstrable effectiveness. She was able to make helpful reference to her own teaching of systematic synthetic phonics and provide practical and anecdotal examples of how effective this had proved.
Training takes account of the trainees' existing knowledge and experience.	This is a full training programme and properly does not assume prior knowledge.

Training secures teachers' knowledge and understanding of: - all the basic phonemes of commonly used English words (normally accepted as around 44 in number) - all the main grapheme representations of each of these phonemes as used in written English - how phonemes should be blended, in order, from left to right, 'all through the word' for reading - how words can be segmented into their constituent phonemes for spelling and that this is the reverse of blending phonemes to read words.	Within the limits of the available time, teachers were well briefed in understanding the phonic code at their own level, as well as learning how to teach it effectively. Good materials were provided to model the sounds and correctly blending and segmenting them. The Jolly Phonics Handbook is available to reinforce this learning and support follow-up. Before mastery is achieved, however, some trainees will need to practise further, hopefully with systems set up in their school to support this.
Teachers are equipped effectively to use the materials promoted to: - achieve each and all of the outcomes implied in the Annex A Criteria - use, adapt or supplement the materials to support children who begin to fall behind the expected learning schedule - Deliver them in an effective and engaging way	There is every reason to think that schools that make the necessary commitment to the training, and follow it through assiduously, will be in a position to fully meet the required outcomes and thus set and achieve the highest standards for their young children.

General comments:

This was excellent training. It gave clear, strong messages, fully supported with all the information, advice and modelling of practice needed to help teachers along the road to effective delivery of systematic synthetic phonics. It was presented with the expertise and conviction that come from substantial experience of effective practice. It met all but one of the criteria very well indeed and was prevented from full compliance only by including brief reference to materials not currently assessed as meeting the core criteria. Hopefully, this can easily and quickly be remedied.

The training visited fully met all but one of the agreed criteria.

G.Askew

17.10.12