

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Medical Research



Thursday, 13 June 2024

MAKING BEST PRACTICE COMMON PRACTICE IN THE EDUCATION STATE

The Allan Labor Government will embed evidence-based teaching and learning in the Education State – responding to the latest evidence by putting explicit teaching in every classroom. This includes best practice teaching of phonics in the early years.

Minister for Education Ben Carroll today announced the updated Victorian Teaching and Learning Model, which will be implemented in all government schools across the state from 2025 with explicit teaching at its core.

All students from Prep to Grade 2 will be taught using a systematic synthetic phonics approach as part of their reading programs, with a minimum of 25 minutes daily explicit teaching of phonics and phonemic awareness.

This will be a core component of a comprehensive reading program that also includes explicit teaching of oral language, vocabulary, reading fluency and comprehension.

Systematic synthetic phonics is a structured approach that explicitly teaches the relationship between sounds and letters to read words.

The latest NAPLAN results show that Victoria leads the nation, ranking first or second in 16 of the 20 measures and scoring the with the best overall results in Year 3 literacy and numeracy.

Focusing on the foundational skills to teach reading including phonics will reflect evidence-based practices used in schools Australia-wide and internationally that are achieving strong learning outcomes.

The evidence is clear from Victorian schools and reviews conducted by research organisations like the Australian Education Research Organisation and the Grattan Institute – showing explicit teaching works best for the largest number of students, particularly capturing those who may be struggling.

The weight of evidence at home and abroad has become clear and compelling – with studies from the United States, United Kingdom and across Australia now recommending systematic synthetic phonics as the most effective method to teach children to read.

Schools and teachers will be supported to implement these approaches through the provision of high-quality, practical lesson plans first in English and Mathematics and then in Science and Design and Digital Technologies.

These resources will play a significant role in reducing teacher workload as well as supporting the delivery of high-quality teaching in every school that's backed by evidence and research.

These reforms will ensure Victoria continues to lead the nation in education investment and outcomes – cementing the state's position as the Education State.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Ben Carroll

"The evidence shows that explicit teaching and the use of systemic synthetic phonics instructions gets results – while we already lead the nation in NAPLAN results, we're always looking to improve, especially in relation to lifting outcomes for disadvantaged students."

“We want to ensure that every student in a Victorian government school is taught to read using the evidence-base that fosters the strongest outcomes.”

“The reforms and the rollout of the lesson plans will reduce teacher workload and equip them with high quality, best practice materials so they can spend more time with their students and less time planning.”