

Media Release

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



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MORE SUPPORT AND BETTER RESOURCES FOR PHONICS PLUS

The Labor Government is making best practice common practice in the Education State with new resources to support student literacy with systematic synthetic phonics in every classroom.

Deputy Premier and Minister for Education Ben Carroll announced \$5 million in funding for primary schools to fast-track the transition to the mandated Victorian reading approach a year earlier.

Speeding up the transition of the phonics rollout from three years to two, the funding will enable primary schools to purchase resources, such as mini whiteboards, letter tiles and decodable texts, which are key to setting up a successful literacy program.

The Labor Government has also made the full suite of Phonics Plus lesson plans for Prep classes available. These resources will help reduce teacher workload so they can spend less time preparing lessons and more time engaging with students.

With this additional support, 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 from 2025, becoming mandatory in 2027.

Systematic synthetic phonics is a structured approach to reading that explicitly teaches the relationship between sounds and letters to read words. Phonics Plus lesson plans for Grade 1 and 2 students will be available through the first half of 2025.

The Government will also introduce a new mandatory Grade 1 literacy assessment for all government primary schools that will replace the currently mandated English Online Interview in 2026. Year 1 Phonics Check takes 10 minutes, compared to the current 40 minutes, further reducing teachers' workload.

These checks will provide teachers and schools with more detailed information about students' knowledge of phonics, which is the foundation of learning to read well. Teachers can then intervene at a crucial time in their education where lesson adjustments can make the biggest difference.

Schools will have all of next year to facilitate this transition to phonics checks and will have the option of using either the existing English Online Interview or the Year 1 Phonics Check before it becomes mandatory in 2026.

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 Deputy Premier and Minister for Education Ben Carroll

"We are proud to set our youngest students up with literacy skills for life and reduce the workload of teachers with the roll out of the Phonics Plus program and lesson plans across the state."

"The evidence shows that explicit teaching and the use of systemic synthetic phonics instructions gets results – we'll continue to reduce the workload of teachers through the new Phonics Check, helping teachers to gather more detailed information about students' literacy skills in a fraction of the time."

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