

Sound Play—Ready for Reading

Bristol Early Years Teaching Hub

What is the aim?

National data indicates a significant gap in reading skills between Reception aged children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Many practitioners in pre-school Early Years (EYs) settings have limited knowledge of and are therefore not confident in phonological awareness and teaching early literacy. This means that children are often starting school lacking in confidence to progress quickly with the phonics teaching that they will have as part of the statutory curriculum in Reception.

The Sound Play programme is for EYs Practitioners working with 3-4 year olds and aims to increase their knowledge and confidence in teaching phonological awareness to support early literacy.

This programme will support children including those from disadvantaged / diverse groups to arrive at school with increased motivation and readiness for phonics teaching (Systematic Synthetic Phonics Schemes) in Reception and beyond.

The programme includes three professional development (PD) sessions to support a Lead Practitioner's (Ready for Reading Champion) knowledge and practice in the teaching of phonological awareness through songs, rhymes, games, stories and books. Each session will include an action research gap task and participants will receive a toolkit of Sound Play resources to support teaching and learning with children. The Ready for Reading Champion will be supported to share their learning with their staff team and make a difference to children's progression in early literacy skills.

The programme has been designed by drawing on high-quality evidence and the expertise of the team at Bristol EYs Teaching Hub.

An evidence-informed approach to support the teaching of early reading in Early Years settings ahead of formal phonics teaching in Reception.

We are looking for 12 early years settings to participate in the Sound Play programme and provide feedback for future development. We hope the programme will provide:

Amongst practitioners -

- increased key person understanding & knowledge of the role of Phonological Awareness (PA) in supporting early reading development and confidence in how to model these through specific songs, rhymes, stories, games and adult interaction

Amongst children -

- a sense of excitement, motivation and the skills to play with sounds through songs, stories and rhymes and increased ability to copy/manipulate the smaller units of sounds that they hear. knowledge acquisition across the curriculum.

Settings that deliver the programme and complete the required feedback will receive a thank you payment of £2,000 for their involvement.

What will the programme involve?

The programme is taking place from September 2023 -December 2023. This includes:

- Ready for Reading Champions attending three training sessions to support their understanding of the programme and to learn new skills for using songs, rhymes and games and books and stories.
- Ready for Reading Champions completing gap tasks between each training session to cascade Sound Play learning to their team, practice implementing the strategies learnt and audit provision in their own settings.

- Practitioners identifying children experiencing difficulty in being able to discriminate and manipulate sounds and support them via new strategies and skills learnt.

Sound Play settings participate in feedback activities such as surveys, interviews and focus groups to share insights about implementation with the delivery team.

- A full privacy notice and other relevant data protection information will be made available for you to review prior to signing a memorandum of understanding.

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How will you be supported to deliver the programme?

- Settings have access to a toolkit of resources to support implementation, including song/story lists, audit tools, assessment proformas, story books and props.
- Settings are supported by three two-hour training sessions across programme delivery.
- Ready for Reading Champions have access to a Sound Play Facilitator for ongoing support with gap tasks and action planning.

Key dates

- **Sound Play Introductory webinar**—September 2023
- **In person training sessions**—October and November 2023
- **Online support with gap tasks and action planning from Sound Play Facilitator**—October-December 2023
- **Feedback collection from Sound Play Facilitator during gap task weeks**—October-December 2023
- **Online Sound Play Support Forum**—December 2023

Next steps

If you have any questions about the programme, please contact the Sound Play Team:

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