

# Year 1 Phonics Screening Check Consultation

## Consultation Response Form

The closing date for this consultation is: 14 February 2011  
Your comments must reach us by that date.

**THIS FORM IS NOT INTERACTIVE. If you wish to respond electronically please use the online or offline response facility available on the Department for Education e-consultation website ([www.education.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations)).**

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**Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential.**

Reason for confidentiality:

Name	Professor Trisha Maynard
Organisation (if applicable)	Chair, TACTYC
Address:	Director, Research Centre for Children, Families and Communities, Canterbury Christ Church University North Holmes Campus (Eg16b) Canterbury, CT1 1QU

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact the Department on 0370 000 2288.

By e-mail: [year1phonics.consultation@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:year1phonics.consultation@education.gsi.gov.uk)

If you have a query relating to the consultation process you can contact the Consultation Unit on 0370 000 2288 or via email [consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk)

Please mark an X in **one** box below that **best** describes you as a respondent.

<input type="checkbox"/> Parent / Carer	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Headteacher
<input type="checkbox"/> Other School Staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Authority(Please specify role)	<input type="checkbox"/> Child / Young person
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Professional Body / Association	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

Please Specify:

TACTYC is the *Association* for the Professional Development of Early Years Educators. We have over 400 members, including academics, local authority officers and practitioners in both the maintained and non-maintained sectors. Our aims are:

- To promote the highest quality professional development for all practitioners in early childhood education and care;
- To pursue matters of current educational concern and to act as a voice for all those who work with young children;
- To facilitate effective communication and support for early years tutors, trainers, advisers and practitioners in schools and other settings;
- To support the effective professional development of the early years workforce through the dissemination of national and international evidence-based research and practice;
- To further the educational well-being of all children.

Q1) Do you agree that this screening check should be focused on phonic decoding as described in paragraph 3.2?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

TACTYC considers that a screening test focusing on phonic decoding is not appropriate at this age/stage. Assessment against set targets drives provision: a simplistic focus on phonics will inevitably distort children's learning and limit the breadth of their experience. All our answers are predicated upon this view, which makes it very difficult to respond effectively to your questions which pre-suppose the test will happen. Our reasons for our view that phonics testing is inappropriate are well-researched and have considerable backing from established experts in the field. We have included detailed references in the final comments section at the end of the document.

Although phonics is a necessary part of learning to read, it is not sufficient in itself. Young children, especially those who do not get support in communication and literacy at home, need access to broad and rich provision which will promote their disposition to read, building on their interests and on what they already know. This fosters their motivation to read, and their understanding of the purposes of literacy. Although some five and six year olds are capable of the kind of analysis required for decoding, and many learn a great deal about letter-sound correspondence through wide experience of print, most are not ready for set programmes that do not allow enough time for consolidation and practice. Indeed they are not expected to be in most other countries where formal teaching of reading does not start until six or seven. In order to learn effectively, it is vital that learning is meaningful to young children (Whitehead, 2010). Systematic phonics is thus best introduced when it is relatively simple for children to acquire this tool, and to see the point of doing so.

Training children of five or six to decode text without regard to their understanding is not best use of time, and can result in children losing confidence in themselves as readers. It is essential to include comprehension and reading for meaning and enjoyment into the mix from the start. Positive attitudes to reading are vital as an important ingredient of learning to read. Children who find skills within reading difficult need to be given many opportunities to develop a positive attitude to reading materials, to feel positive about the act of reading and to see themselves as potentially competent. Very early or developmentally inappropriate training in phonic skills can lead to children being switched off reading. Reports on findings from Clackmannanshire (Johnson and Watson, 2004) do not publicise the relatively small improvement in reading for meaning, nor acknowledge the broad range of other activities that were involved in their project.

Dr. Greg Brooks, an expert cited in the supporting documentation for this consultation, has put on record his concern at the limitations of the approach that is to be imposed. Professor Brooks, a long-term advocate of phonics, believes the money set aside for the reading test would be better spent on providing the resources

that children need. Although an advocate for synthetic phonics, he completely disagrees with the proposed test and considers that it will inevitably cause teaching to the test and deflect attention away from more valuable areas of the curriculum. He points out that the research literature shows synthetic phonics works best in a broad and rich literacy environment: the effect of this test will be that children will be able to jump through these decoding hoops but not make much progress in reading (TES 7.1.2011).

The recent OfSTED (2010) report on twelve primary schools which demonstrate outstanding results in reading attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (even though many are reported to be dealing with notable difficulties) indicates that this has been achieved by effectively mixing and matching approaches. The report/schools warns that rigidly interpreted tenets risk introducing an artificial ceiling and will reduce the motivation of children who want to explore books. It would have helped if OfSTED had referred to the statutory requirements of the *Early Years Foundation Stage* for a broad, play-based curriculum for children up to the end of the reception year and, according to many experts, well into KS1 (Fisher 2010). This is relevant when coupled with the well-researched recommendations of The Cambridge Review of the primary curriculum (Alexander, *et al.* 2009) and endorsed by evidence from NFER (Sharp, 2010) that this approach should continue at least up until the end of Year 1.

Ever since the *Early Learning Goals* have been put into place, a relatively low proportion of children have managed to achieve the literacy goals, particularly those for reading and writing, set for the end of the Reception Year. This suggests that the arbitrary expected level is not realistic for many children. Children who are not yet able to 'Link sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet', or to 'Use their phonic knowledge to write simple regular words and make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words', should arguably continue with the approach recommended for the Early Years Foundation Stage into Year 1.

As experts who know about child development are aware, trying to force the pace is counter-productive. Sally Goddard Blythe, Director of the Institute for Neuro-Physiological Psychology points out that 'Readiness for reading requires that all systems involved have received sufficient stimulation in the early years. This includes development of balance, coordination, postural control and fine motor skills to facilitate writing; control of eye movements and the ability to hear and say all of the sounds required for reading and spelling. These basic skills are nurtured not through direct teaching of reading and writing in the pre-school years, but through physical and imaginative play, singing, conversation, being told stories and being read to on a regular basis. Increasingly, the lacking ingredients in a child's early years are physical interaction with the environment and social engagement with adults and other children. Children growing up in areas of social deprivation are particularly at risk, as are boys who are naturally later at developing the fine motor and language skills needed to support reading, writing and spelling ... The foundations for these skills are laid down in the early years as a child's brain and body learn to work together through activity. Until successive governments focus attention on developing the whole child instead of trying to treat the symptom, we will continue to see similar depressing statistics" (INPP website). It is worth noting

that binocular vision, along with the ability to pronounce letters accurately, does not mature until the age of six or seven years.

An exclusive focus on phonics at the expense of direct experience, including rich opportunities for speaking and listening as well as reading and writing, cannot be justified; teachers' time would be better used in providing individual diagnosis and support for children who are in difficulties towards the end of Y1. This would involve a wider view of reading, including exposure to reading within the home as well as children's current interests, skills and attitudes.

It is to be hoped that this consultation will take into account any recommendations of the *EYFS Review* that bear on early reading and on transition into Y1.

Q2) Do you agree that the screening check should be a maximum of 40 items?

Yes

x No

Not Sure

Comments:

A wider assessment, including attitudes to reading at home, would be a more useful measure of such young children's abilities, skills and areas for development than this high stakes test. The relationship between early writing content, contexts, meaning and audience should be taken into account. Most teachers focus strongly on literacy in Y1 and are well equipped to identify any weaknesses and support progress. Additional support for this is preferable to putting in place a complex testing regime which will inevitably take time and resources in order to construct, pilot and implement. A new test of any number of items is not desirable. Layard and Dunn in *The Good Childhood Enquiry* (2009) report that children find testing to be a major cause of stress in school. Brooker *et al.*'s report (2010) shows that teachers and other practitioners are very much against a testing regime within the EYFS, describing this as a cause of tension and frustration.

Standardised reading tests already exist, which do not risk distorting the curriculum and early years pedagogy in the way that this proposal inevitably will.

The proposals in this consultation undermine the government's stated intention to trust teachers' professionalism. If it persists with what looks like a predetermined outcome, teachers and parents will know that the government's claim to rely on evidence to guide policy is questionable.

Q3) Do you agree that the screening check should contain a mixture of words and non-words?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

The purpose of reading is to make meaning, extend understanding and gain pleasure from our rich language heritage. Young children's main purpose is to make sense of the world. Non-words are a confusing distraction, especially given the complexity of the English spelling system. There is no evidence in literacy research to support such a system.

The suggestion of a picture prompt, although arbitrary, underlines the point that children need a meaningful context to help them make sense of written words.

Q4) Are the different elements of phonic decoding knowledge introduced in the right section of the screening check?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

The pilot will throw some light on this but experience suggests that decoding is influenced strongly by children's interests and experience. For example, most can recognise the letters in their own name.

It is important to remember the influence of differing pronunciation and dialects and of the needs of children who are in the early stages of learning English who will be building up different links between letter and word shapes and sounds and sometimes with contrasting directionality of text.

Q5) Is mid-June the most appropriate time for this screening check to be administered?

If you answered no to this question, please suggest when you think the screening check should take place

Yes No Not Sure

Comments:

Y1 is too early for what would be a limited and limiting test. Teacher assessment using miscue analysis, reading recovery techniques or a standardised reading test for those causing concern would be more appropriate. Tests for various aspects of reading competence and skills are already in existence for teachers to draw on as they judge necessary. These take into account age difference, which is more significant the younger the children in any year group.

Q6) Is it correct that this screening check should be administered by teachers?

 Yes No

Comments:

Consistency is important, but so is continuity for children, who are highly influenced by the person who assesses them and the place in which it is done. They are more likely to be able to demonstrate what they can do when with their own class teacher, who is a familiar adult.

Q7) Should only one teacher in each school administer the screening check?

 Yes No Not Sure

Comments:

Being tested by a teacher or TA who does not know the class and who is not known by the children adds a difficult dimension, especially for children relatively new to school. More accurate results can be obtained through observation in the children's normal environment, noting their strategies and progress when they are reading for a purpose, together with links with their own use of writing. This has implications for moderation.

Information from parents should also be used as part of any assessment.

It is interesting to see that according to notes 7.3 and 7.4, there will be guidance to show how the screening check will be made accessible to children with SEN and other difficulties and we look forward to seeing this guidance in due course.

Whether the administrator is the class teacher or another teacher, there is a question about funding for cover while the tests take place.

It will be difficult to ensure that different tests to be used on different days are comparable.

Q8) Is providing video guidance to screening check administrators appropriate?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Video guidance can help with standardisation but it will not help the child act and behave at their optimum which is what is needed for a true positive assessment. Test conditions tend to prevent young children doing their best. This is probably the most realistic approach but it will be impossible to guarantee consistency or to anticipate all the issues that will arise. The tests, therefore, cannot and should not be used to compare different schools.

As yet there is no indication as to how much this guidance will cost or how it will be funded.

Q9) How long do you think the administration window should be?

1 day

2 - 3 days

4 - 5 days

Other

Not Sure

Comments:

The issue of keeping questions secure raised in the guidance indicates an awareness within the Department that there are high stakes for the test, for teachers as much as children. Teachers are not likely to 'cheat' although it will be hard for them not to encourage their pupils and 'teach to the test'. Most will undoubtedly feel the need to put undue emphasis on phonics throughout Y1 at the expense of other learning experiences that are more valuable for children of five and six. Children's physical and creative development and direct experience of the world all provide broad support for early reading.

Standardisation issues around the children's ages are also important. The age range of over 11 months represents a wide variation of life experience as well as development at such a very young age.

Q10) Is it necessary to have a different screening check for each day of the administration window?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

A screening check has the potential to be a useful tool to be drawn on at any time a teacher has concerns about a child, from Y2 through to the end of KS2 and beyond. It is helpful to have a well-researched and carefully conceived bank of non-culturally biased tests made available as part of a repertoire of support for teachers.

In fact such tests are already well established and used regularly by educational psychologists and schools.

Q11) Do you agree that schools should decide on the appropriate catch-up support for each child?

Yes       No       Not Sure

Comments:

In Year 1, the concept of ‘catch up’ itself is hardly appropriate, as most children are in the early stages of learning to read. There is a wide variation in the speed and sequence of development, the more so the younger the children are. Home background is also a crucial variable (Clarke and Hawkins, 2010). Children who do not have home learning environments that support phonemic and letter awareness need support for this in the Early Years Foundation Stage before they reach Key Stage 1, in the context of enjoyable experiences of speaking and singing as well as through the encouragement of reading and writing.

In principle, and in line with the government’s stated intention to trust teachers’ professionalism, it is right that schools, in consultation with parents and specialist hearing or visual support staff, speech therapists or educational psychologists, should decide on the support that is appropriate for each child for as long as necessary.

Most importantly, if children have learned at their own pace to read and write and enjoy the printed word, and are not placed under unjustifiable and inappropriate pressure to perform reading acts before they are developmentally ready, then only a minority of children will require such support.

Q12) Is it right that the repeat administration of the screening check should take place in the Autumn term?

If you answered no to this question, please suggest when you think the screening check should be repeated.

Yes       No      Not Sure

Comments:

Whenever any repeat of the proposed phonics screening test takes place, it will tend to reinforce a single, limited approach to reading in the minds of practitioners. This will be emphasised in the case of any pupils who demonstrate that they are not yet confident or competent readers.

Q13) Is 10 seconds long enough to be able to conclude that the child could not read the word?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Processing time needed varies from child to child, but is likely to be longer with decontextualised words. Regardless of their ability and experience, the youngest children in the cohort cannot be expected to formulate a confident answer: for some, decontextualised decoding will take much longer than 10 seconds. Decontextualised decoding is inappropriate and very off-putting for most young children (Gee, 2004).

Q14) Should some element of self-correction be allowed as part of this screening check?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Self-correction is an important skill within learning to read, which is promoted in Reading Recovery. It should be encouraged, not discounted. If any test is to assess young children's reading ability fairly and accurately, self-correction must be allowed.

It will be difficult for many children, who see their teachers as enablers, to deal with the fact that they will presumably not be given any cues or encouragement. Young children need continual support and encouragement if they are to develop appropriate learning dispositions, self-esteem and confidence in their own abilities. It is vital that we do not put children off reading because they interpret it as an activity that makes them feel unsupported and inadequate. This could especially happen with children from families who offer little literacy or language development support.

Graphemes with alternative pronunciations will be included in the screening check. We propose that real words should be pronounced correctly for pupils to receive a mark (for example, 'cow' could not be pronounced to rhyme with 'blow' even though this would be a plausible attempt phonically).

This approach would help to ensure that children learn accepted pronunciations of words. For the non-words in the screening check, we propose that graphemes could be pronounced in any way which is phonemically accurate (so, a non-word ending in the 'ow' vowel digraph could be pronounced to rhyme with 'blow' or 'cow').

Q15) Is this approach to scoring alternative pronunciations of graphemes appropriate?

Yes

x No

Not Sure

Comments:

The proposal to introduce non-words is already confusing for children. This coupled with regional differences in pronunciation (e.g. bath, book) and variation in teachers' accents, makes the definition of correct pronunciation problematic in general, and specifically in a test situation. Children are very able to discern and come to terms with these factors, especially orally, but it does take time. This proposal would discriminate against children (and their teachers) who do not use received pronunciation, compounded by the added confusion of the introduction of non-words.

Introducing different rules for two parts of the test would make it more challenging to moderate.

When determining how to make the screening check accessible for as many pupils as possible we will consider the best approach for children with visual or hearing impairments, children with dyslexia, children with speech, language and communication difficulties, and children with autism.

Q16) Are there any other groups we should consider in particular?

Comments

Children in the early stages of learning English and those whose homes do not offer a background of literacy skills will also be at a disadvantage. Identifying and addressing their difficulties is already an integral part of special and individual needs provision in all schools. All these groups would be able to show more clearly what they can do in a supportive context linked to their interests rather than in a one-to-one test situation.

Children who find testing stressful and are easily upset by trying to get things correct need consideration, as do children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties who find any kind of right or wrong situation challenging and potentially damaging if their self-esteem is fragile.

Children who are already fluent readers would not benefit from this test.

Q17) Should the minimum requirement for reporting the results to parents be a simple recognition of whether the pupil has reached the expected level?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

'Expected level' is an arbitrary concept which ignores the variable nature of children's learning and development in the early years. Parents need clear information that is understandable and enables them to help their children as best they can.

More sophisticated, informative and effective sharing with parents is desirable in order to engage them in their children's progress. This sort of feedback to parents is a sensitive area which needs particularly skilled practitioners.

Q18) Should parents be told whether the pupil had reached the standard on each section of the screening check, even if this makes it longer?

Yes No Not Sure

Comments:

The guidance relating to this question is revealing. It states that questions might have to be longer to produce a reliable result (para 8.2). There is a grave danger that results will be misunderstood, making parents unjustifiably anxious and liable to put unnecessary and unwarranted pressure on children and schools.

A continuing dialogue with parents would be a more effective way of keeping them informed of their child's progress and enable parents to let staff know of developments in literacy in the home.

The extent to which information is shared with children should also be addressed.

Q19) Do you agree that it is reasonable to include the results in RAISEOnline?

 Yes No Not Sure

Comments:

As any results would reflect a very limited aspect of learning to read, including them in RAISEOnline would give them undue emphasis and add to the increasing pressure being put on young children to pass tests and practitioners to teach to those tests.

Q20 a) Do you agree that parents should be informed about their school's performance?

 Yes No Not Sure

Comments:

It depends what this question covers. Most schools already send out information about performance, moderated by the School Improvement Partner, and OfSTED routinely reports on trends following an inspection.

It would be extremely unhelpful if either of these mechanisms were drawn into an accountability exercise when schools have been told that they are free to work in ways that suit their particular catchment. Short term 'successes' in early reading are no guarantee of later attainment (Suggate, 2009) and a focus on simplistic performance measures can be counter-productive.

20 b) Do you agree that school by school results should **not** be published in the Achievement and Attainment Tables?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Comparative school-by-school results could be misinterpreted, leading to pressure from OfSTED and local authorities to set targets which are counter-productive. Many Year 1 teachers already find that they cannot give enough time to children to consolidate their understanding due to the relentless pace of many phonics programmes and the pressure for measurable outcomes.

Q20 c) Do you have any comments about how best to make data available?

Comments:

Data from a phonics test is of greatest value within the school, where teachers have access to a range of data, including contextualising information about the catchment as a whole as well as knowledge and understanding of individual children's development and learning.

There could be benefit in using already available, properly constructed phonics tests that could be drawn on diagnostically by teachers where they have concerns about individual children throughout KS1 and KS2.

Q21) Do you agree that national, regional and local authority level results should be published from this screening check?

Yes

x No

Not Sure

Comments:

Samples from most primary schools would not be statistically significant (a cohort of at 60 or more is needed to give valid and reliable data).

Schools that make a principled professional judgement to delay direct teaching of phonics until children are older than Y1, preferring to provide a more differentiated and richer approach, would risk being mis-represented.

There is a concern that the youngest children in Y1, who would still be 5 and will have had significantly less pre-school experience, will be particularly disadvantaged. It is already known that children, particularly boys, in this cohort are disproportionately represented in children mis-diagnosed with special needs (Sykes *et al.* 2009). Their results, in particular, are likely to cause counter-productive, but avoidable, anxiety in parents.

Q22) Do you have any further comments about the proposal for this screening check?

Comments:

TACTYC members strongly believe that this test should not be introduced and certainly not made statutory. It is contrary to the evidence we have about good practice (UKLA, 2010) and incompatible with the Secretary of State's stated intention that he will trust teachers' professional judgement.

Since the expected costs and benefits of the proposals are not made clear, this consultation does not meet Criterion 3 of the Government Code of Practice on Consultation. The time and resources required to develop the proposed phonics test would be better deployed in providing opportunities for detailed diagnosis and as much differentiated support as possible to children in Y1, which is a key time for the development of reading through a range of approaches, including phonics.

Systematic teaching of phonics is arguably more effective later when children understand the structure of language and can learn quickly, confidently and successfully, as they do in other European countries. Children who are already fluent readers gain no benefit from a test of their ability to decode words.

The pressures which would inevitably arise from such a test would be counter-productive, leading to increased disaffection and consequent lowering of achievement compared with other countries. The recent drop in the position of the UK revealed in the PISA studies correlates with the focus on early achievement in reading and writing demanded by the Early Learning Goals for literacy which significantly and unacceptably limit the experiences of children in the reception year.

We would also add that we are concerned at the way questions in this consultation response are formulated – they appear to assume that the tests will go ahead anyway, whatever comments are made. It would be preferable if consultations were much more open-ended and allowed for respondents' opinions to be respected and acknowledged rather than putting respondents in a straight-jacket.

Presumably there will be consultation with parents and children on these proposals.

*N.B. Where we have indicated 'Not Sure' in the document does not mean we are not sure – we are absolutely certain that the phonics testing for young children is inappropriate. However, the way the consultation wording is formulated means that we have no choice in our responses.*

**Details of references made in this response:**

- Alexander, *et al.* (2009) *Children, their World, their Education: Final Report and Recommendations of the Cambridge Primary Review*. London: Routledge.
- Brooker, L. *et al.* (2010) *Practitioners' Experiences of the Early Years Foundation Stage*. London: DfES Research Report RR029.
- Brooks, G. (2011) *Phonics expert labels Year 1 test plans 'a waste of money'*. Available on line at: [www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6066997](http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6066997) (accessed 22 January, 2011)

- Clarke, C. and Hawkins, L. (2010) *Young People's Reading: The importance of the home environment and family support*. London: National Literacy Trust.
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- Sykes, E., Bell, J and Rodeiro, C. (2009) *Birthdate Effects: a review of the literature from 1990*. Available on line at [http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/ca/digitalAssets/169664\\_Cambridge\\_Lit\\_Review\\_Birthday\\_d3.pdf](http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/ca/digitalAssets/169664_Cambridge_Lit_Review_Birthday_d3.pdf) (accessed 21.1.2011)
- Torgerson, C.J., Brooks, G. and Hall, J. (2006). A Systematic Review of the Research Literature on the Use of Phonics in the Teaching of Reading and Spelling. London: DfES Research Report 711.
- UKLA (2010) *Teaching Reading: What the evidence says*. Leicester: UKLA. Available online at: [http://www.ukla.org/resources/details/ukla\\_publishes\\_teaching\\_reading](http://www.ukla.org/resources/details/ukla_publishes_teaching_reading) (accessed 21 January, 2011).
- UKLA (undated) *UKLA Statement on Non-Word Reading Tests*. Available online at: [http://www.primaryreview.org.uk/downloads/pdfs/UKLA\\_On\\_Nonword\\_Test.pdf](http://www.primaryreview.org.uk/downloads/pdfs/UKLA_On_Nonword_Test.pdf) (accessed 21 January, 2011).
- Whitehead, M. (2010) *Language and Literacy in the Early Years 0-7(4<sup>th</sup> edn)*. London: Sage.

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

**Please acknowledge this reply x**

**Email address for acknowledgement: [mwendyscott@btopenworld.com](mailto:mwendyscott@btopenworld.com)**

Here at the Department for Education we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

Yes  No

All DfE public consultations are required to conform to the following criteria within the Government Code of Practice on Consultation:

Criterion 1: Formal consultation should take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the policy outcome.

Criterion 2: Consultations should normally last for at least 12 weeks with consideration given to longer timescales where feasible and sensible.

Criterion 3: Consultation documents should be clear about the consultation process, what is being proposed, the scope to influence and the expected costs and benefits of the proposals.

Criterion 4: Consultation exercises should be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at, those people the exercise is intended to reach.

Criterion 5: Keeping the burden of consultation to a minimum is essential if consultations are to be effective and if consultees' buy-in to the process is to be obtained.

Criterion 6: Consultation responses should be analysed carefully and clear feedback should be provided to participants following the consultation.

Criterion 7: Officials running consultations should seek guidance in how to run an effective consultation exercise and share what they have learned from the experience.

If you have any comments on how DfE consultations are conducted, please contact Donna Harrison, DfE Consultation Co-ordinator, tel: 01928 438212 email: [donna.harrison@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:donna.harrison@education.gsi.gov.uk)

**Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation.**

Completed questionnaires and other responses should be sent to the address shown below by 14 February 2011

Send by post to:

Phil Elks  
School Standards Group  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT

Send by e-mail to: [year1phonics.consultation@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:year1phonics.consultation@education.gsi.gov.uk)