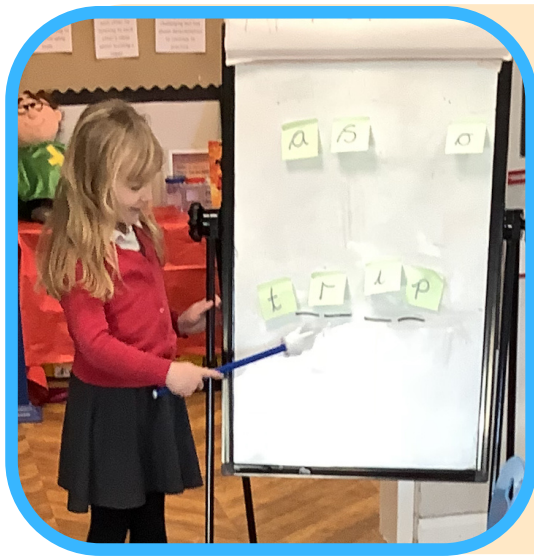


‘No need for gimmicks’

St Leonard’s C of E Primary Academy, UK, March 2022

We spoke to Laila Sadler, English leader at St Leonard’s Primary Academy, about the impact that Sounds-Write has had in the few months since it was implemented.



- School: **St Leonard’s C of E Primary Academy**
- Location: **St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex, UK**
- Pupils on roll: **407**
- Age range: **5 - 11**
- Free school meals: **40%**
- English as additional language: **18.3%**
- SEN Resource base pupils: **11.6%**

Why did you choose Sounds-Write and how did you implement it?

We chose Sounds-Write because we wanted to ensure our teaching staff were secure in their subject knowledge and had a clear, in-depth understanding of how to teach phonics and spelling effectively for all pupils. We finished the training in October 2021, so we are at the very early stages of our Sounds-Write journey, but we are already seeing a positive impact across Reception and Key Stage 1. The effective implementation of Sounds-Write has included developing practice through planned coaching opportunities for teachers to observe each other using the scripts. It has been hugely beneficial to practice the scripts with fidelity whilst responding to errors, and it has given teachers the added opportunity to reflect and learn from the experience.

How did you find the training and support provided by Sounds-Write?

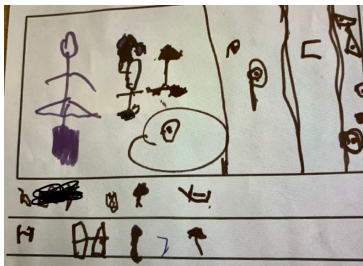
The Sounds-Write training is comprehensive and covers everything from the history of the writing system, to how children learn to read and spell, to how to teach children the skills and knowledge needed to read and spell. Many of our staff have shared that they have learned so much from the course and that this new knowledge has directly impacted their daily practice. Once you have completed the training, you can join the Sounds-Write Facebook group. This has lots of resources, and if you have any queries, you can post on there and someone will respond promptly - so you always feel supported.

What has been the reaction from the children and parents to the adoption of Sounds-Write?

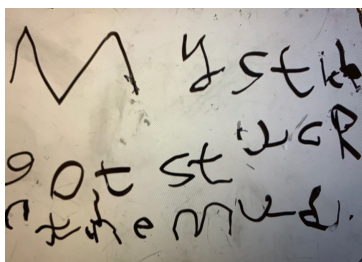
The children enjoy the clear structure of a Sound-Write lesson. This has been particularly evident for children who have additional needs, as they can anticipate and know what to do next. This lessens their cognitive load, so that they can focus on learning the knowledge and skills being taught. The confidence of the children has grown. Parents have been impressed with how quickly the children have learned to read words in Reception, and many have commented on their child's quick progress and fluent reading of age-appropriate books.

What impact has Sounds-Write had on pupil progress?

In a short amount of time, we are already seeing the benefits of the Sounds-Write approach. Our Reception children are already reading and writing words with confidence, as was observed in our most recent Ofsted inspection. In Year 1, the majority of children have mastered blending and segmenting, and those who need additional practice have made phenomenal progress from their starting points. We attribute this to the constant practice of the skills of blending and segmenting throughout each lesson.



Progress before and after three weeks using Sounds-Write (Reception child)



Phonics Screening Check Scores for Year 1 children in the bottom 20%

	December 2021	January 2022
Pupil A	3/40	13/40
Pupil B	6/40	20/40
Pupil C	12/40	20/40
Pupil D	15/40	26/40
Pupil E	16/40	25/40
Pupil F	17/40	30/40

What would you say to other schools considering Sounds-Write?

It has been the best investment in staff development, showing how the latest research in reading is transferred into practice in real-life classrooms. We rate Sounds-Write so much and are looking to implement it in Key Stage 2. Not only is it an effective approach to teaching reading and spelling, but it is so easy to plan for. All you need is yourself, post-it notes and a whiteboard. The focus is truly on the science of teaching reading - no need for gimmicks.