



Nick Gibb MP
Minister of State for School Reform

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Mr R Nodding
Copeland Road Primary School
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Bishop Auckland
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Dear Mr Nodding,

I am writing to convey my warmest congratulations to you, your staff and your pupils for the very high standard of achievement in this year's phonics check.

The Department for Education wants to ensure that every child develops a firm grasp of phonics so I was obviously delighted to see your results. To be in the top 5% of schools, with at least 95% of pupils achieving the expected standard in the check, is a tremendous achievement and points to a high standard of phonics teaching in your school.

This year's figures show that almost all pupils who achieve the expected standard in the check go on to achieve at least the expected standard in Key Stage 1 Reading, which underlines the value of developing the ability to decode words effectively at an early age.

You have ensured that every Year 1 child in your school has a firm foundation for reading, from which they can develop further reading skills and become increasingly sophisticated readers. This will help them develop a lifelong love of reading.

Thank you for your work in this vital area of a child's early development and congratulations again to you and your staff for your hard work and professionalism.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Gibb MP