



# Main evaluation findings: 16 August 2017

## Dr S Taylor





## Education and Sport Development

Department of Education and Sport Development  
Departement van Onderwys en Sportontwikkeling  
Lefapha la Thuto le Tlhabololo ya Metshameko

**NORTH WEST PROVINCE**



## basic education

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Basic Education  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

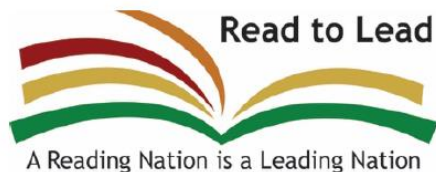
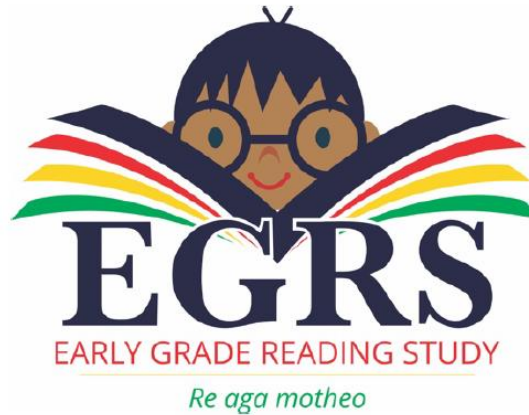


## planning, monitoring & evaluation

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Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation  
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UNIVERSITY OF THE  
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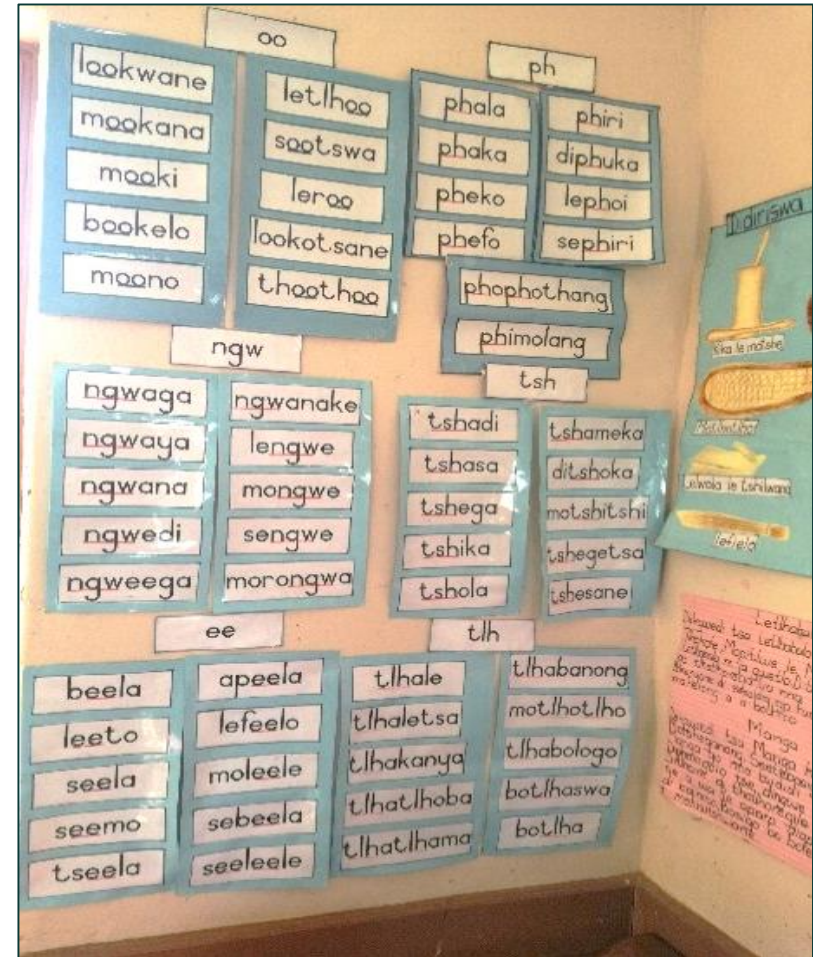
International  
Initiative for  
Impact  
Evaluation



**HSRC**  
Human Sciences  
Research Council

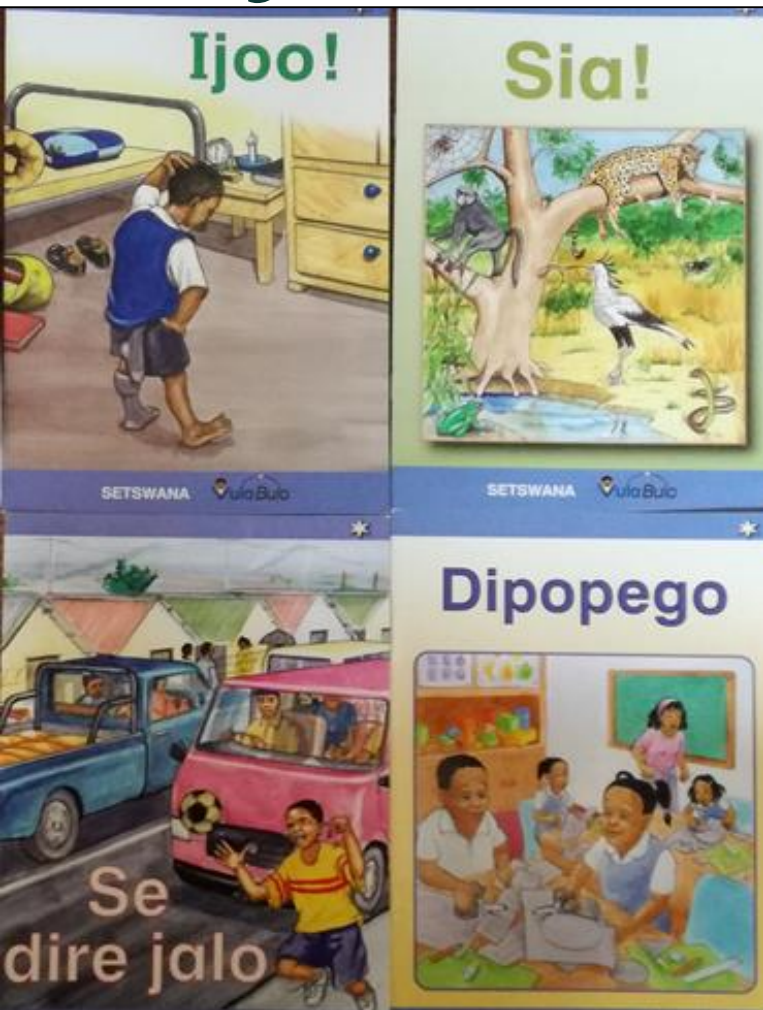
# Presentation Outline

- EGRS design & research significance
- Year 2 impact evaluation results:
  - Overall impacts on reading outcomes
  - When and where did it work?
  - Impact on classroom practice
- Recommendations and plans





# Motivation Behind This Project



- Reading is at the heart of the *quality* challenge in SA
  - **58%** of children not learning to read by grade 4 (Pre-PIRLS)
  - **Root cause** of school dropout in grades 10-12
- Robust impact evaluation
- Exploring mixed methods research for system-wide policy
- Developing partnerships – led by government

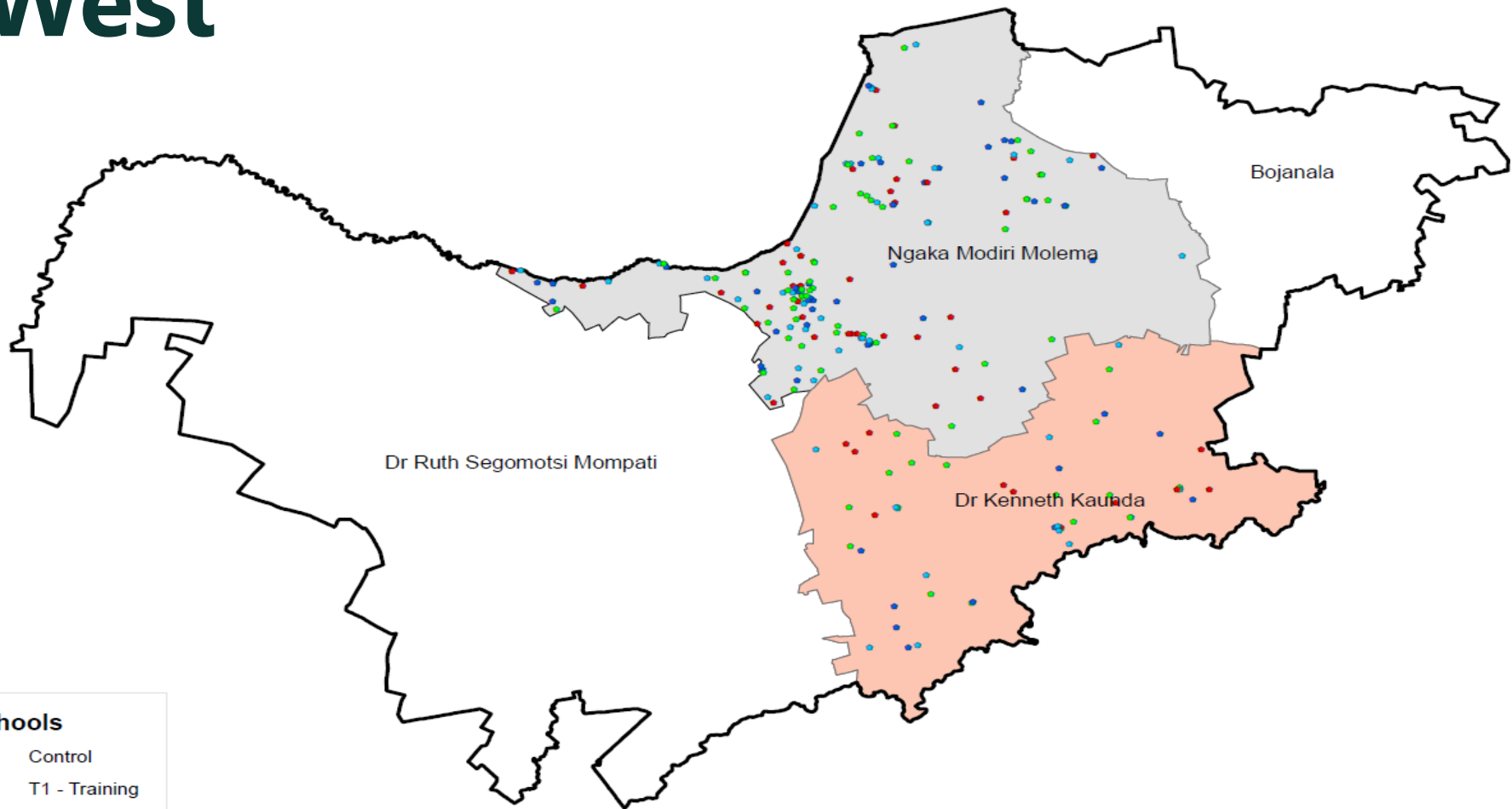
# Sample: 230 schools in North West

3 Interventions targeting HL literacy  
(Setswana)

<b>Control group</b>  (80 schools)	<b>“Training”</b> Lesson plans, reading materials + central teacher training  (50 schools)	<b>“Coaching”</b> Lesson plans, reading materials + on-site coaching  (50 schools)	<b>“Parent Involvement”</b>  (50 schools)
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2015: Grade 1  
2016: Grade 2  
2017: Grade 3 (Interventions 1 and 2 only)

# Sample: 230 schools in North West



## Schools

- Control
- T1 - Training
- T2 -Coaching
- T3 - Parents



# Theory of change: I1 & I2

- CAPS-aligned structured learning programme:
  - 1. Lesson Plans:**
    - Improve curriculum coverage, pacing and sequencing
    - Facilitate adoption of new instructional methods and increase the teacher's repertoire
    - (knowing ↔ doing)
    - Can ensure usage of additional resources
  - 2. New resources:**
    - Allow quality implementation of pedagogical methods
  - 3. Coaches:**
    - Ongoing contact provides an additional mechanism to implement, evaluate, and re-implement
- But:
  - Reduce teacher autonomy
  - Could stifle differentiated instruction

# Empirical backdrop

- **This project builds on earlier work in SA**
  - Systematic Method for Reading Success (Piper, 2009)
  - Triple cocktail of lesson plans, reading materials and coaching showed promise in Gauteng (Fleisch & Schoer, 2014)
- **Structured pedagogic programmes showing positive impacts elsewhere**
  - Highlighted by systematic reviews (Snilstveit et al, 2016; Popova et al, 2016)
  - Kenya (Piper, Zuilkowski & Mugenda 2014)
  - Liberia (Piper & Korda 2011)
- **Various questions remain**
  - Which mechanisms of these bundled programs work?
  - Under which conditions do LP work?
  - Does it depend on the type of monitoring and support?



# Theory of change: Parent Intervention

Weekly meetings are held and well facilitated

Parents attend weekly meetings

Parents update knowledge and beliefs

Parents change education support practices

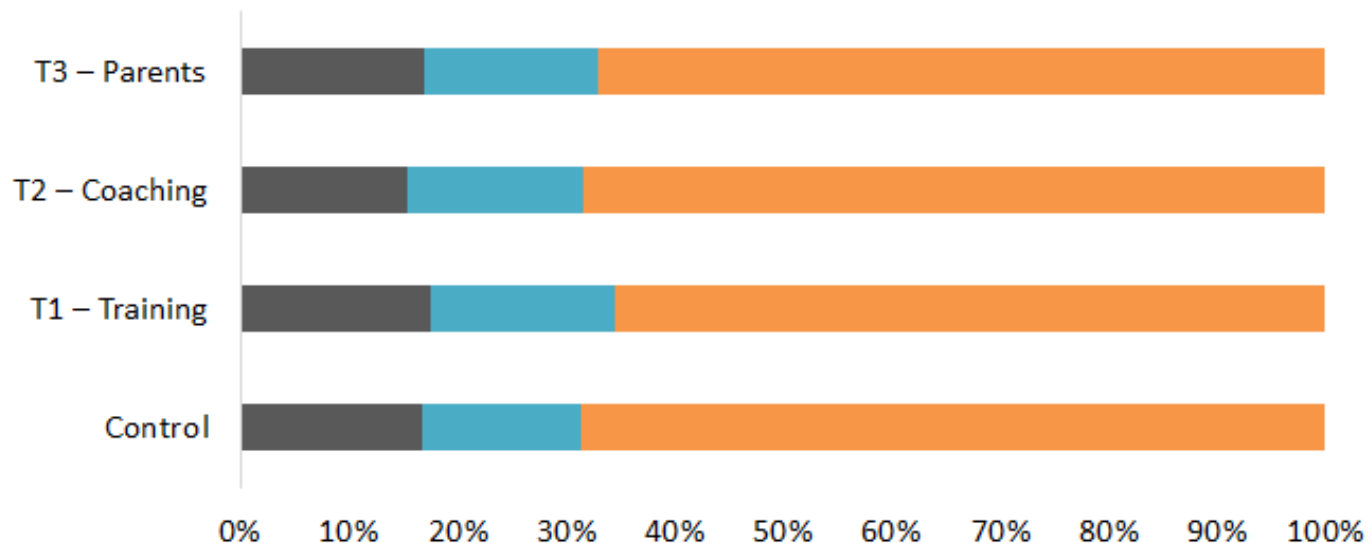
Changed practices at home impact on reading outcomes



# Year 2 Results (End of Grade 2)



# Attrition & repetition



## Attrition

Due to leaving school or to absenteeism

Related to gender, poverty and being in a specific district, but not to learner performance

## Repeating Grade 1

Strongly related to grade 1 reading achievement, to being in a specific district and to gender.

## In Grade 2

3726 pupils remain in the sample



# Orally administered learner assessments



Letter sound recognition

EGRA item: 60 seconds



Word recognition

EGRA item: 60 seconds



Non-word recognition

EGRA item: 60 seconds



Paragraph reading

EGRA adapted item: 60 seconds



Reading comprehension

4 items based on paragraph



Phonological awareness

4 items



Writing

Letter dictation, word dictation, re-writing a short sentence



Maths

2 items



English

8 items: receptive & expressive vocabulary



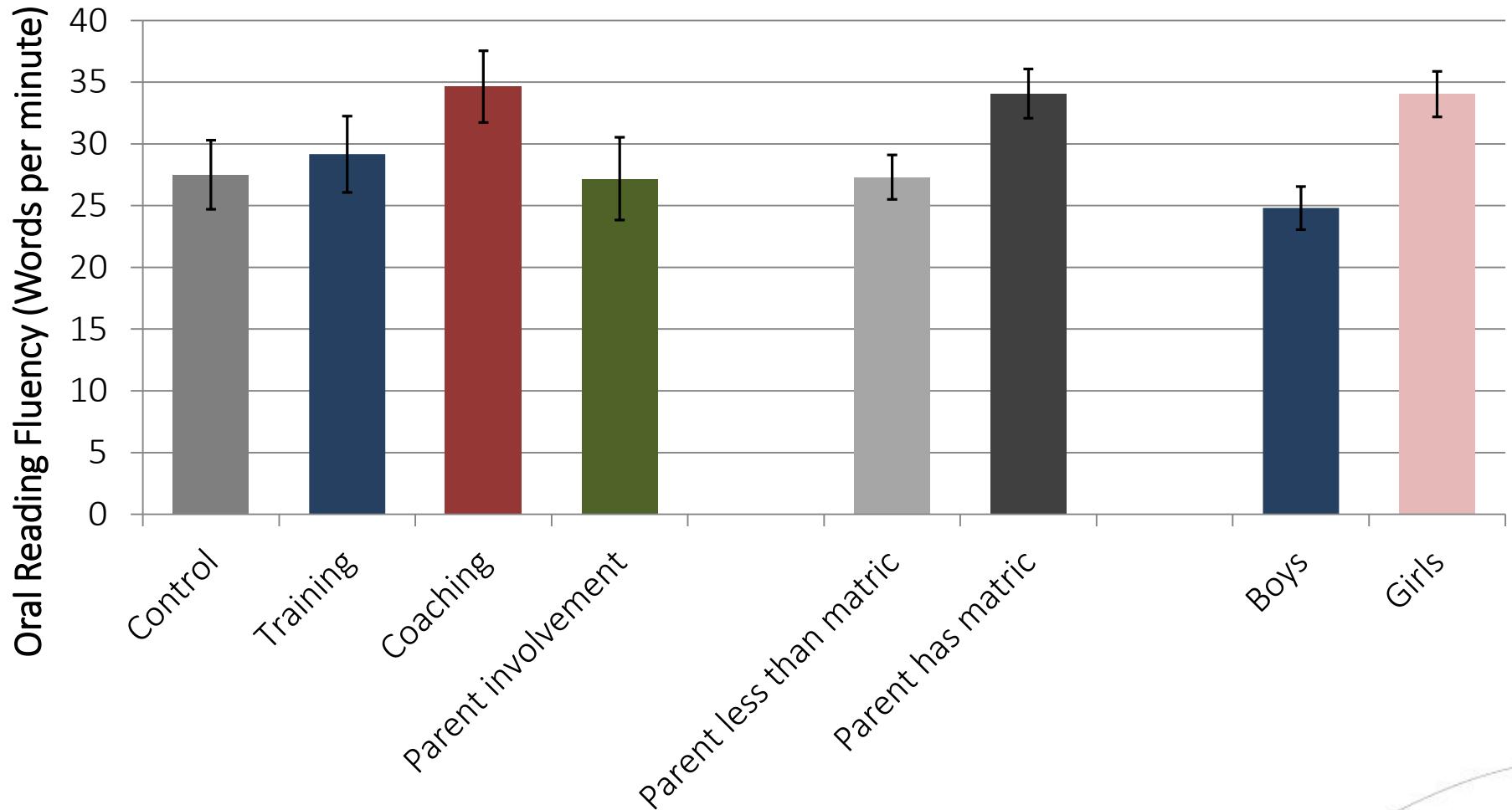
Composite score

Based on a factor analysis

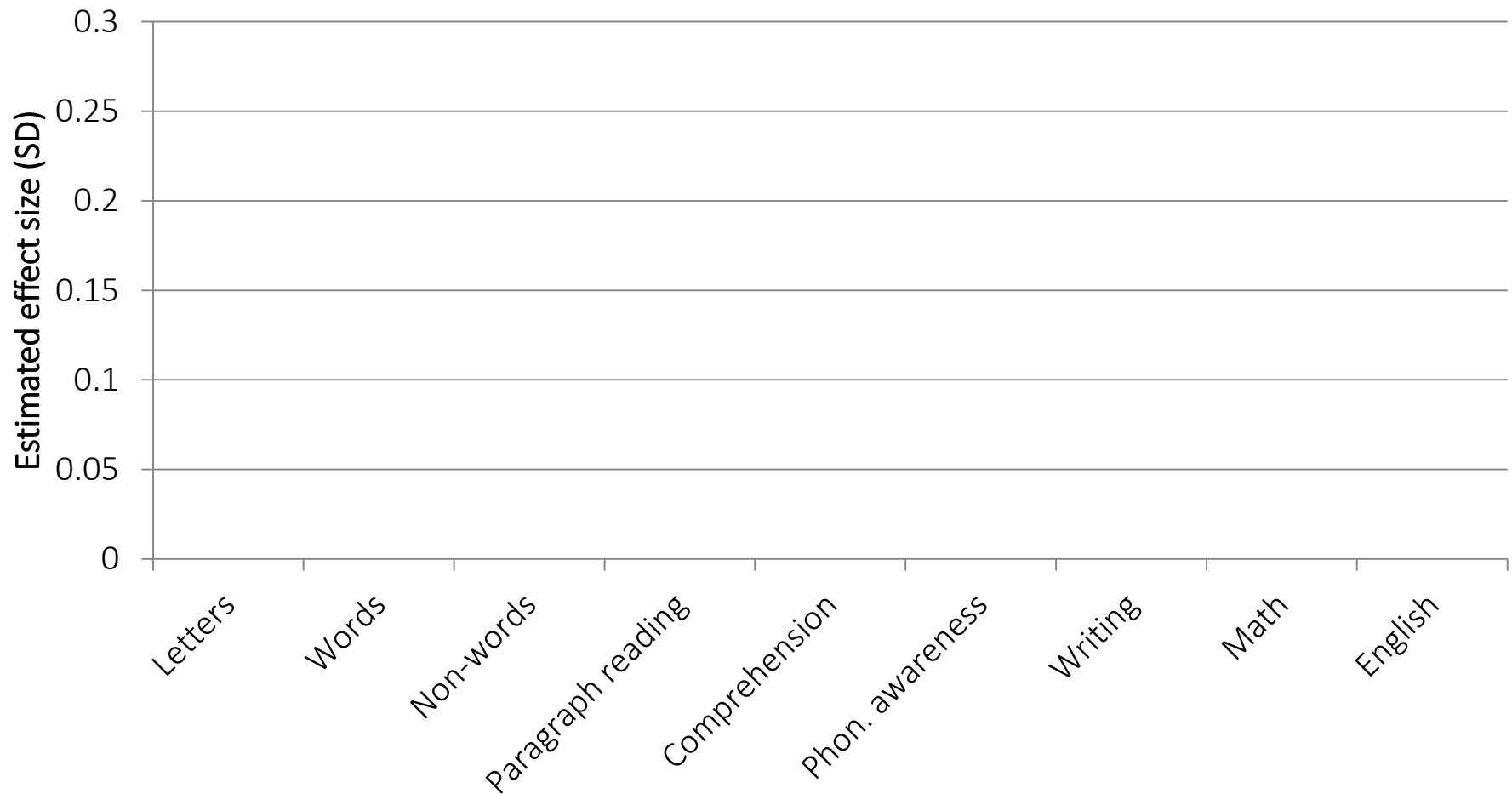




# Average Oral Reading Fluency: End of Grade 2



# Impacts on sub-tests

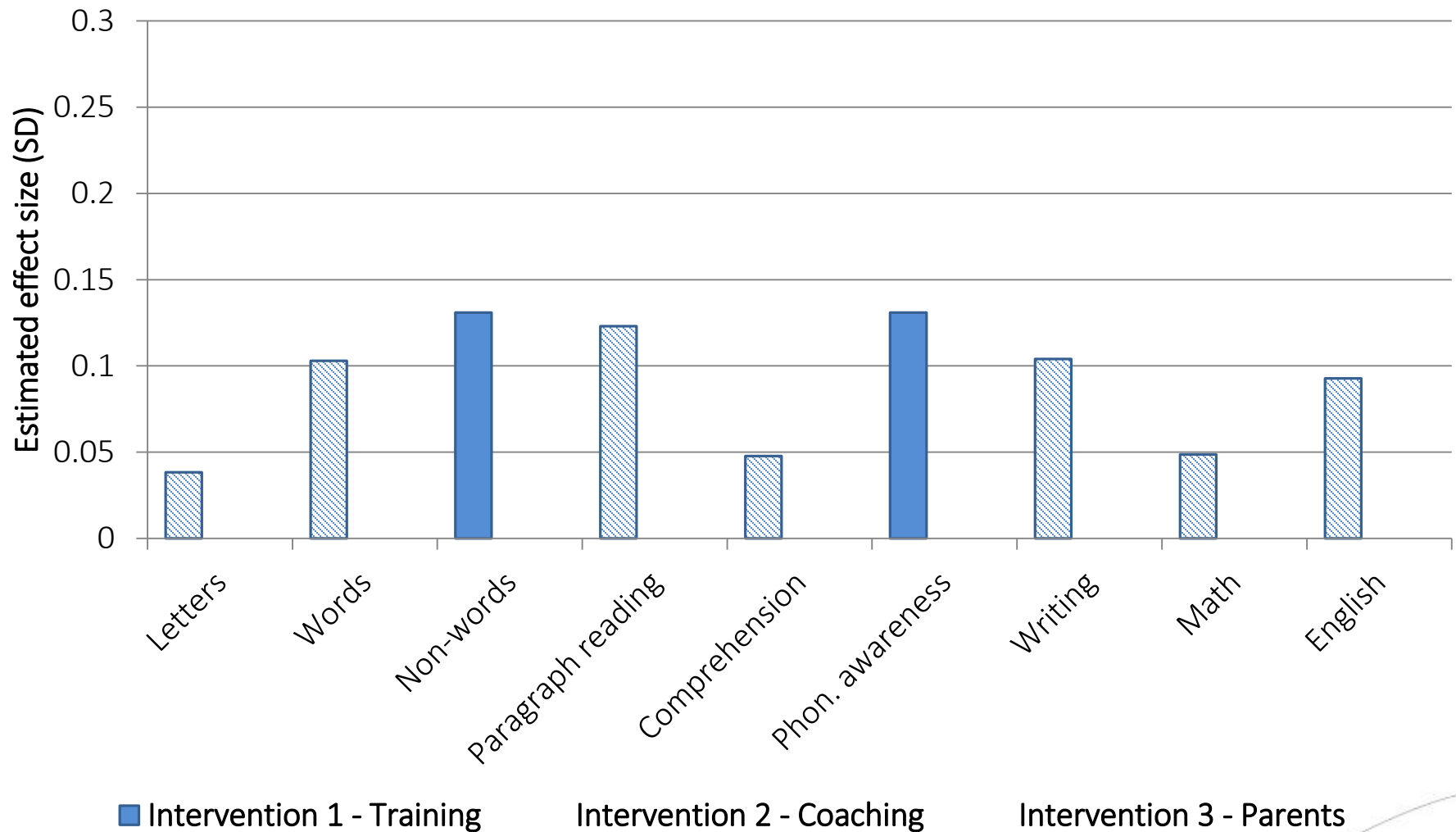


Intervention 1 - Training

Intervention 2 - Coaching

Intervention 3 - Parents

# Impacts on sub-tests

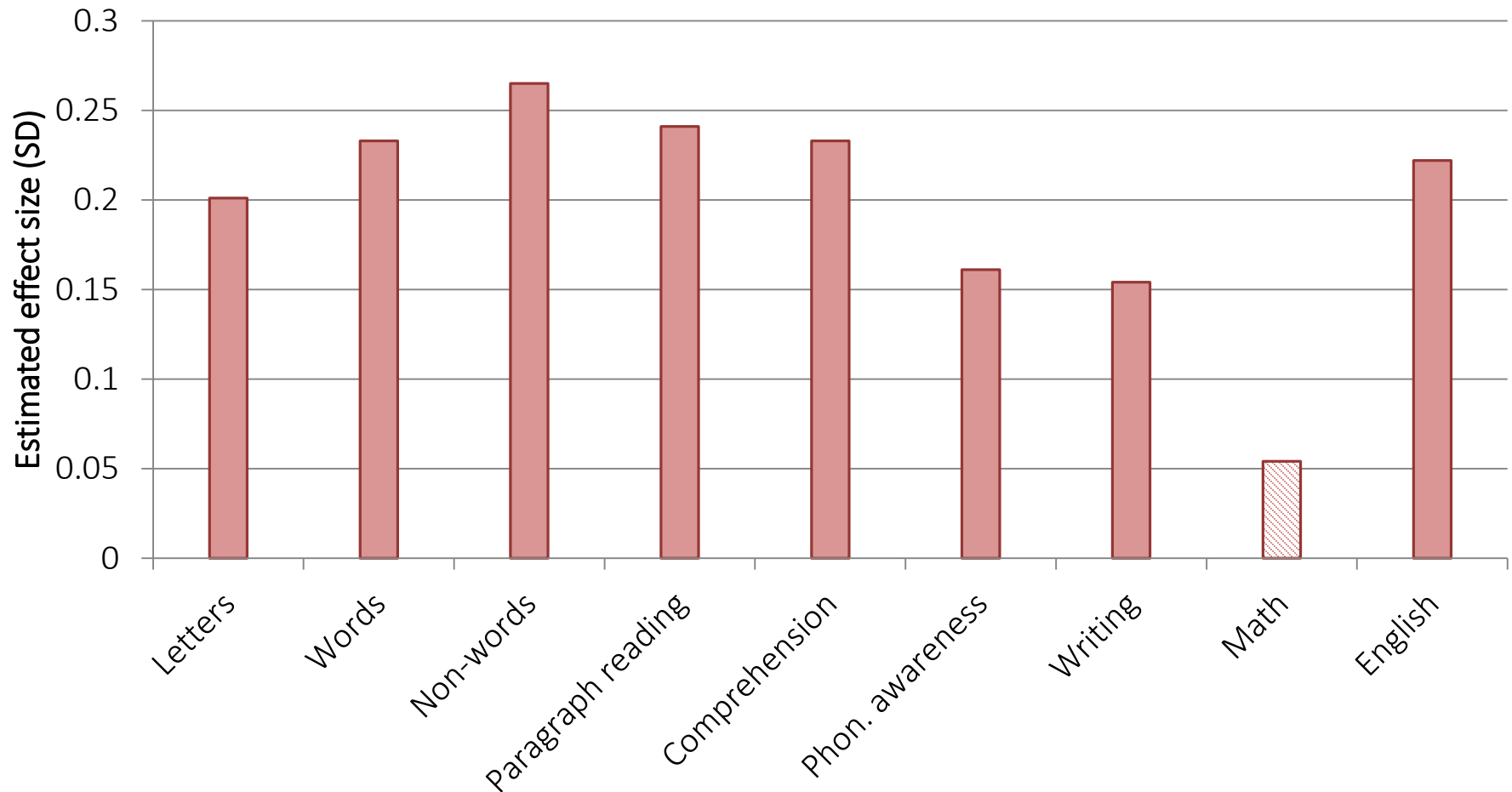


■ Intervention 1 - Training

■ Intervention 2 - Coaching

■ Intervention 3 - Parents

# Impacts on sub-tests



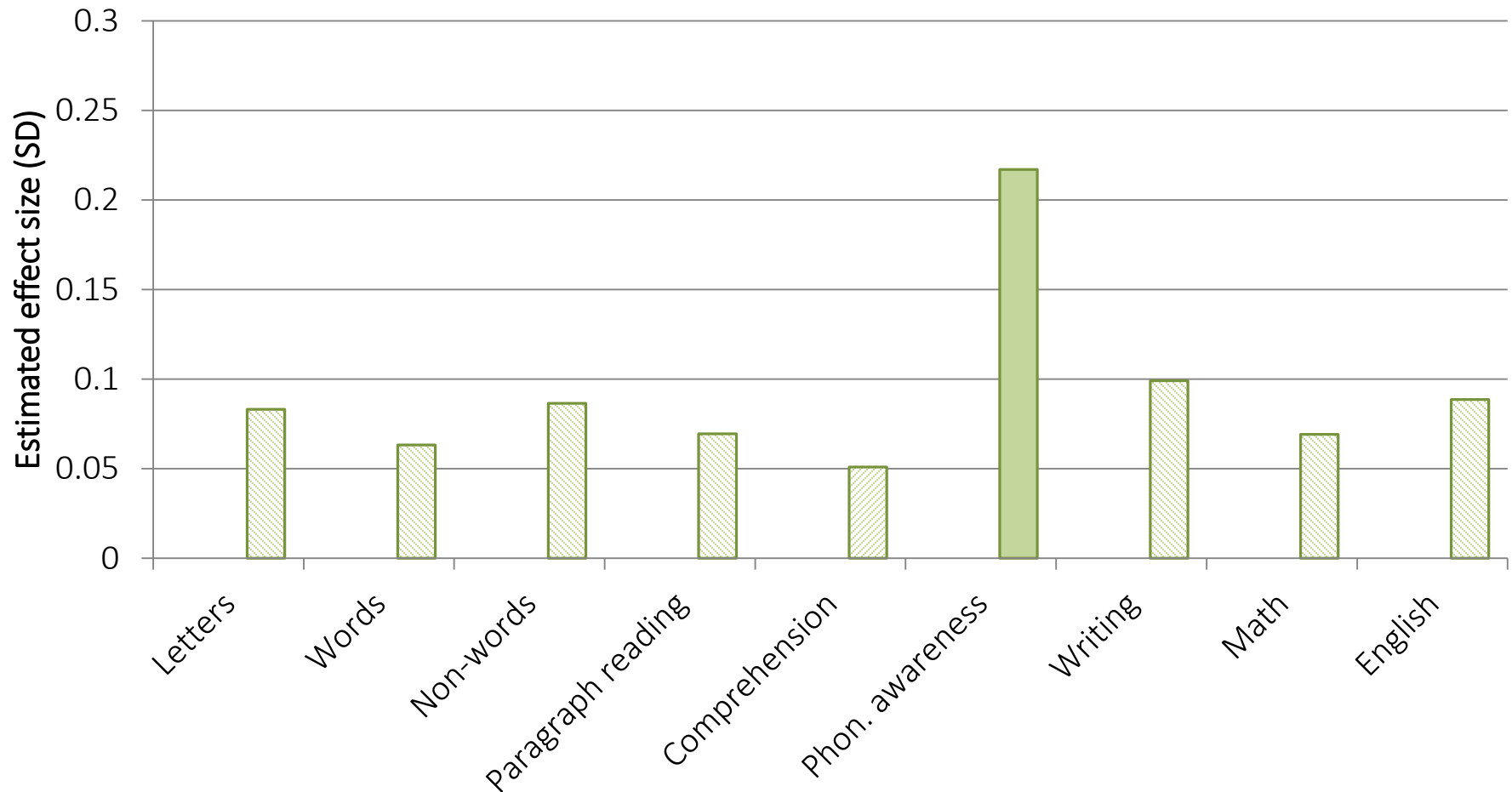
Intervention 1 - Training

Intervention 2 - Coaching

Intervention 3 - Parents



# Impacts on sub-tests

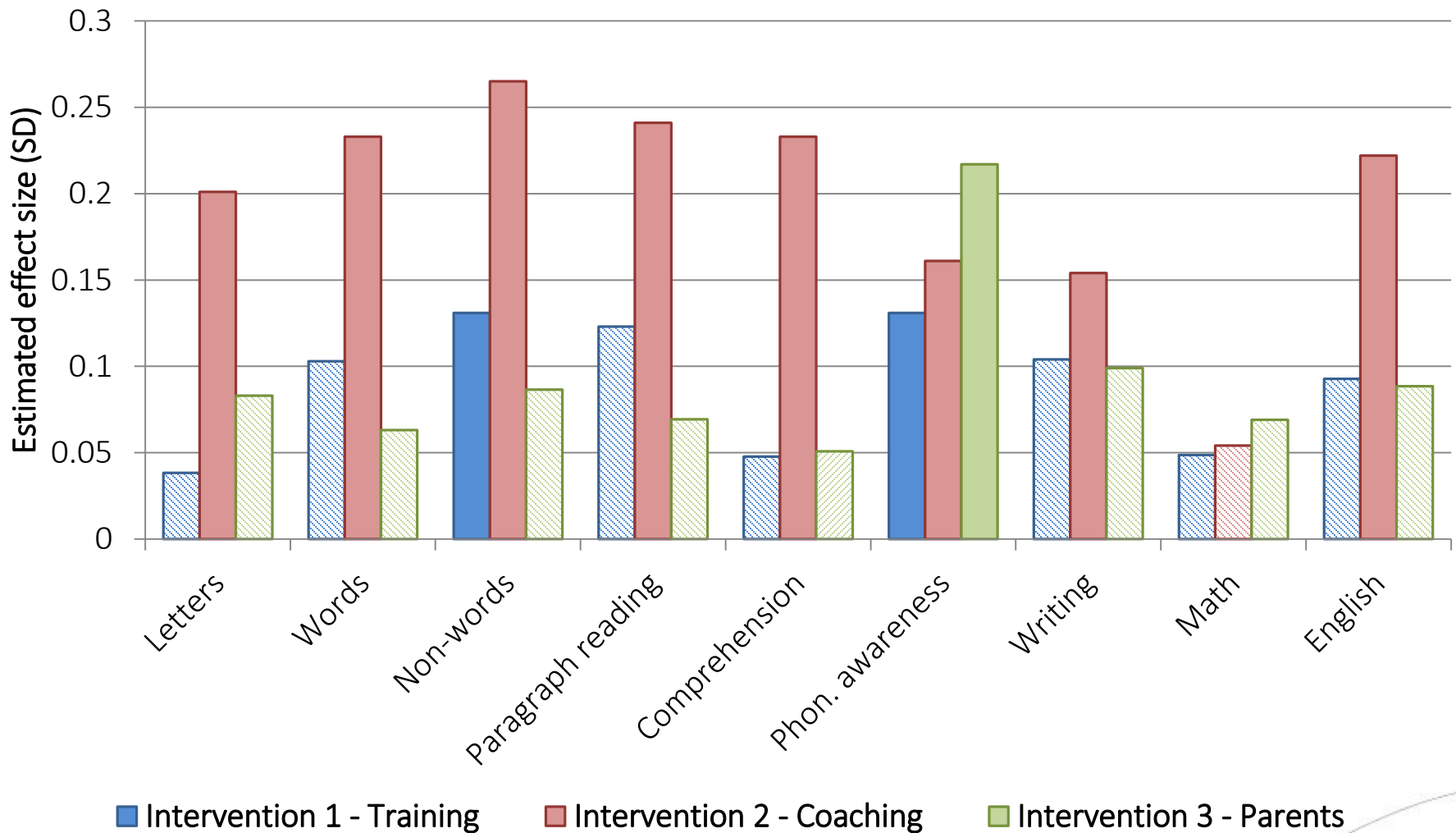


Intervention 1 - Training

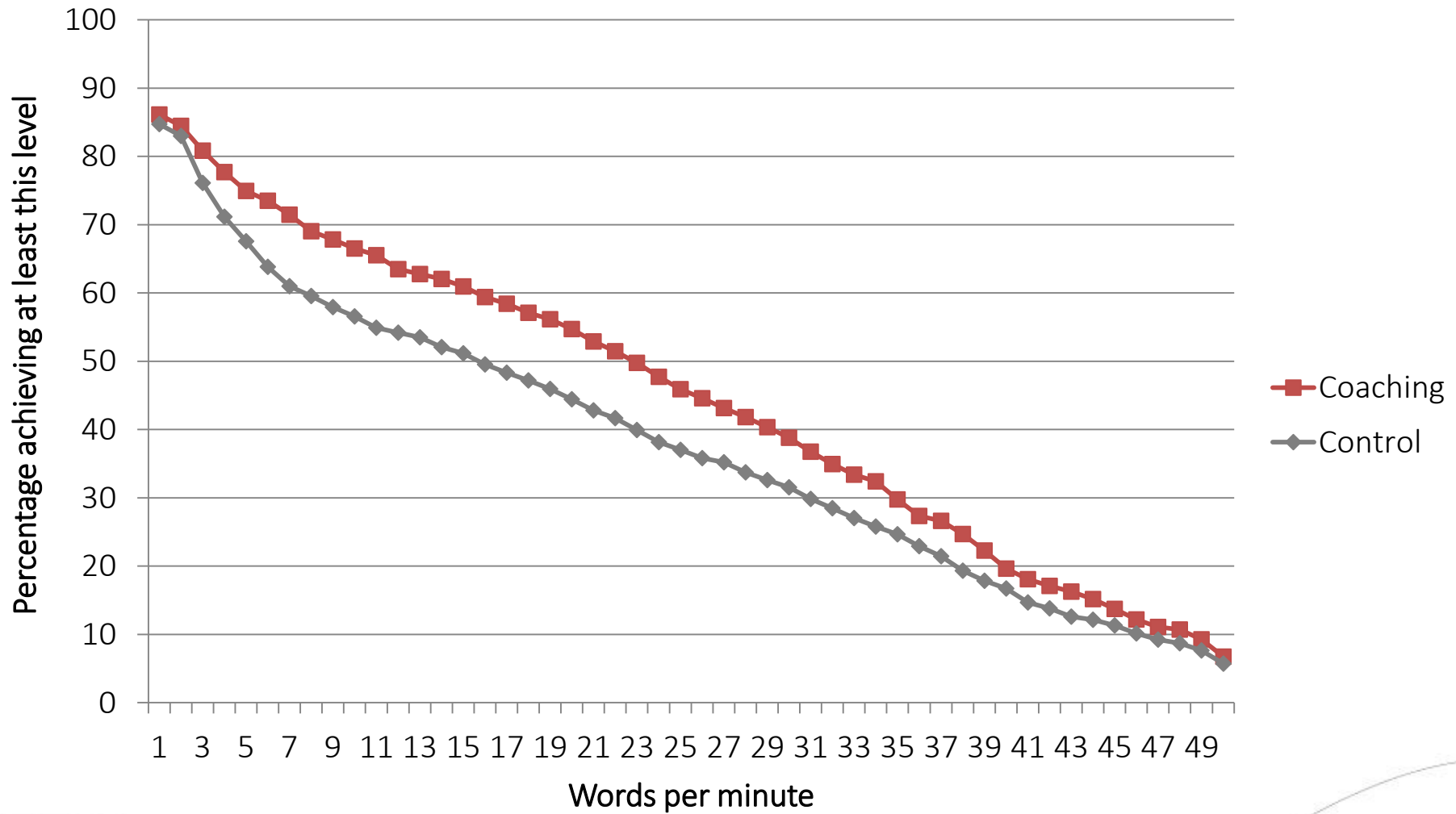
Intervention 2 - Coaching

Intervention 3 - Parents

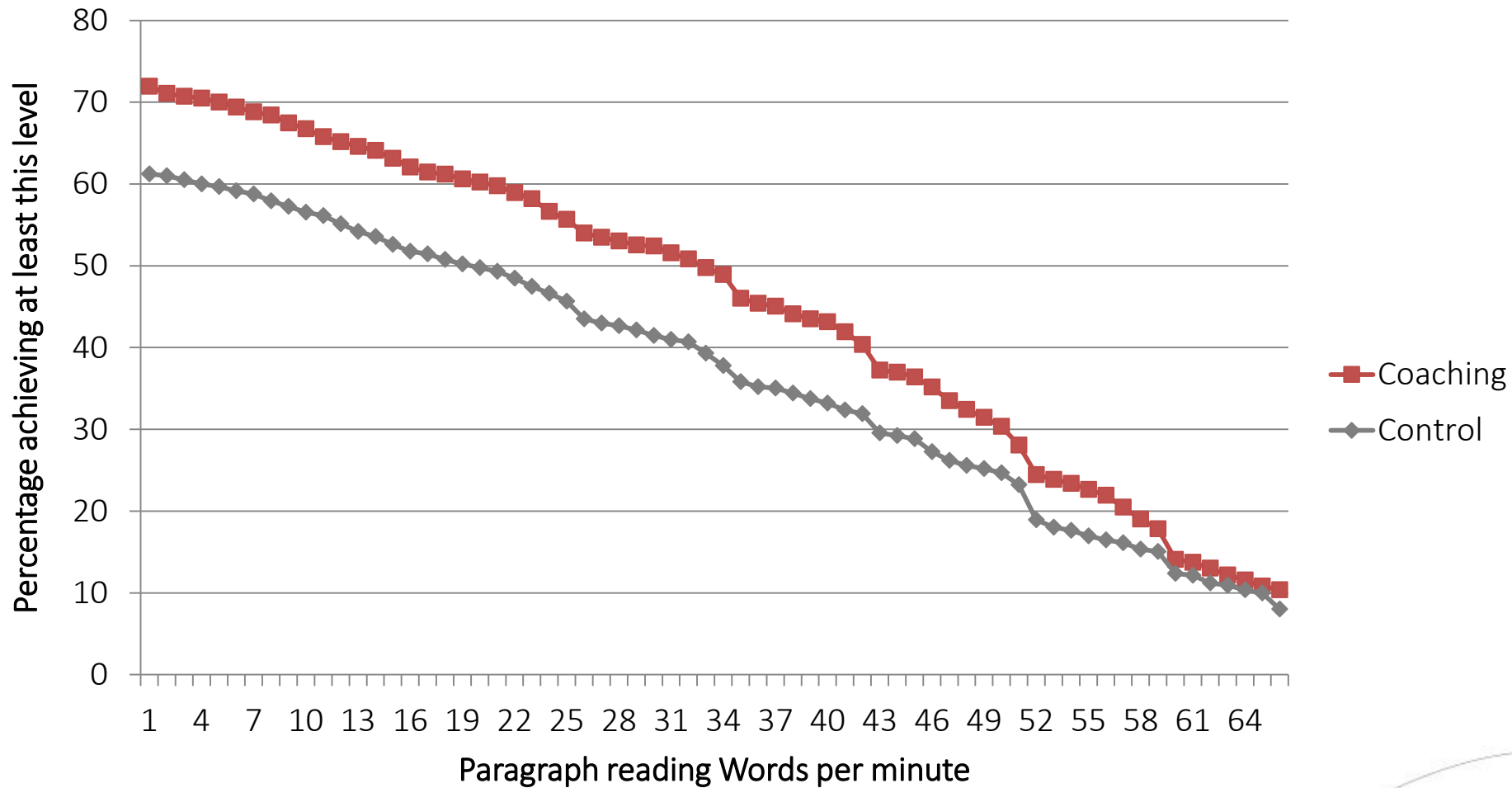
# Impacts on sub-tests



# Word recognition: Coaching and Control



# Oral Reading Fluency: Coaching and Control





# Main results:

## Impact for those with 2 years of interventions

**Control:** 2 years of school

**Training:** About **19%** of a year of learning

**Coaching:** About **40%** of a year of learning

**Parents:** About **13%** of a year of learning

# Who benefits most from the interventions?

- **Boys** catch up to some extent
- Impact concentrated in **urban schools**
- **Large-classes** benefited most



# Changes: Teaching practice and Parent behaviour

- Sources of information
  1. **Background questionnaires** in all 230 schools
  2. 60-school **lesson observation study**
  3. 8 **case studies**
  4. Class Act **monitoring data**
    - teacher curriculum coverage
    - attendance records of teachers & parents



# Changes: Teaching practice

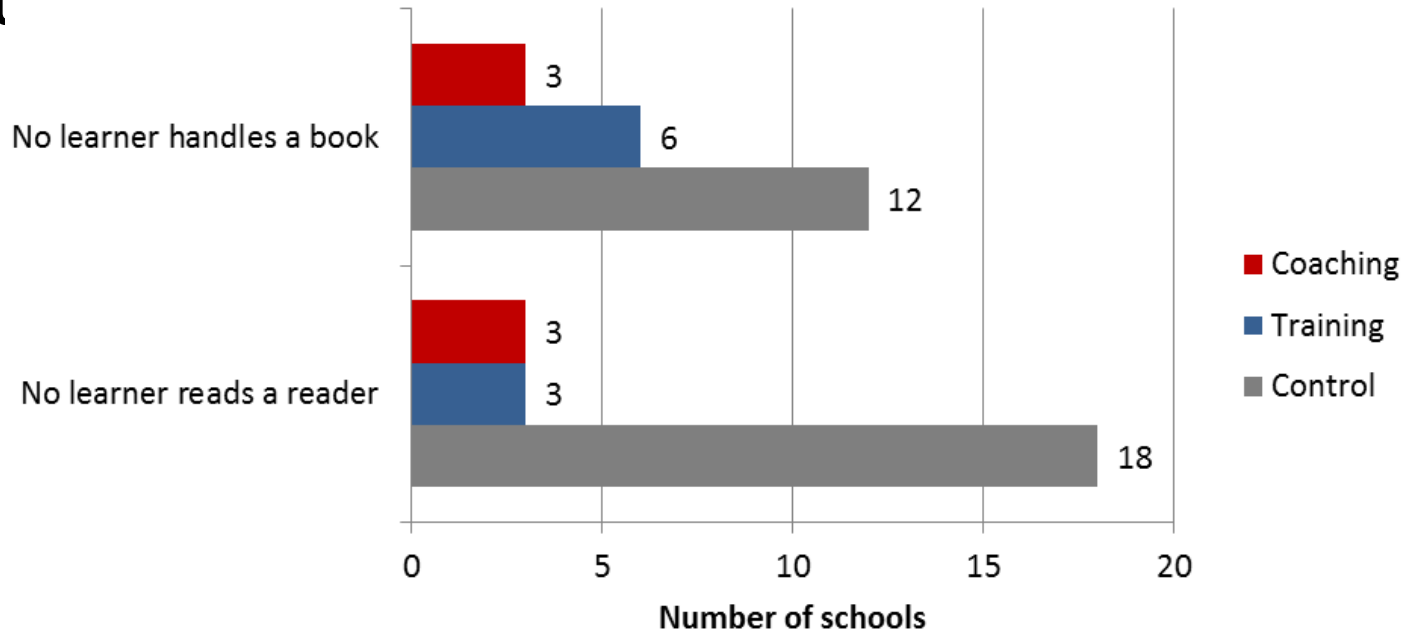
## Teachers' experiences of professional support

	Control	Training	Coaching	Parents
"I feel supported and recognised for my work"	53%	62%	82%	49%
"I regularly meet with people who provide mentoring and curriculum support"	52%	57%	84%	45%

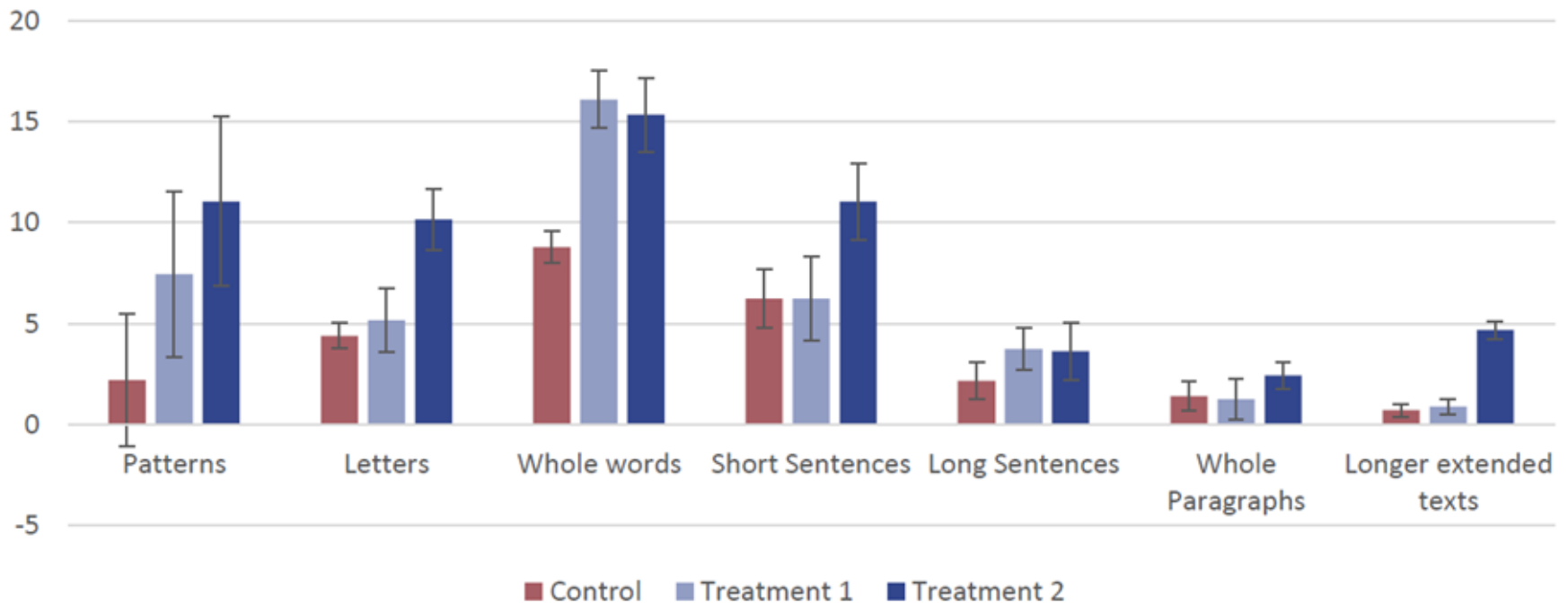


# Changes: Teaching practice

- More opportunities to read and handle reader



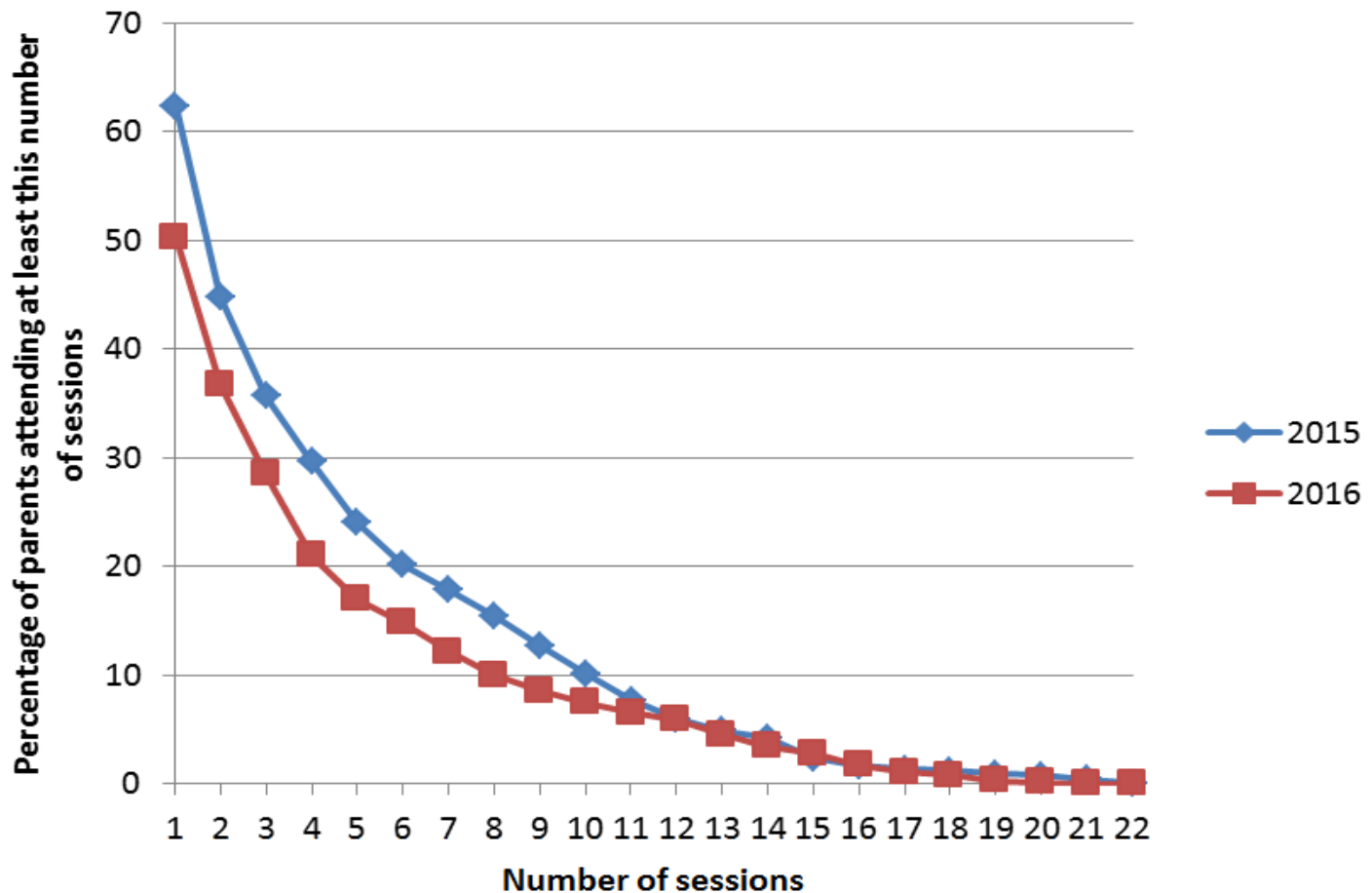
# Changes: Teaching practice





# Changes: Parent behaviour

Parent attendance challenge



# Case Study Findings

- 2 sets of 4 case studies:
- Data Collection:
  - Lesson observation
  - Teacher interview
  - Document review

# Case Study Findings

- **Successful areas of the programmes:**
  - Daily use of the EGRS lesson plans and EGRS curriculum coverage trackers
  - Regular phonics, handwriting, group guided reading and individual seatwork (writing)
  - The writing activities in the EGRS lessons encouraged teachers to give more writing tasks, and learners were completing written work on most school days

# Case Study Findings

- **Factors inhibiting programme impact:**
  - **Large classes** made it difficult for teachers to provide individual attention
  - An **absence of a culture of reading** for enjoyment and limited exposure of Grade 2 learners to books besides EGRS readers and DBE workbooks
  - Teachers displayed a **‘restricted’ understanding** of what it means to teach children to read independently
    - Over-reliance on teacher-directed strategies (e.g. telling learners what words were)



# Conclusions, recommendations & plans

## 1. Structured pedagogic programmes can make a difference:

- Aligned to the NCS
- With high quality reading support materials

## 2. Coaching better than direct centralised training:

- Scant evidence about effective large-scale teacher support modalities;
- On-site coaching, including modelling of lessons, can be a cost-effective strategy;
- Promotes deeper understanding of the methodologies
- Promotes persistence in sticking to the programme

## 3. Direct centralised training better than 'train-the-trainer' models:

- Direct in-service training of teachers (4 two-day workshops over the



# Conclusions, recommendations & plans

## 4. Existing subject advisers cannot fulfil the role of a coach:

- Low ratio of subject advisors to schools (especially in the Foundation Phase);
- Different recruitment process, oversight structures and modus operandi

## 5. Prioritize schools for special support:

- On-site coaching interventions could be implemented in priority schools (e.g. 100 or 500 schools in a province)
- The cost for 100 schools would be about R6 million at current prices.

## 6. Develop reading norms in the African languages:

- Reading norms cannot simply be adapted from one language into another;
- It is a complex exercise requiring longitudinal data.
- The EGRS data could be used





# Conclusions, recommendations & plans

## 7. Learning from EGRS:

- Other large scale intervention initiatives (e.g. NECT) could draw on the lessons of the EGRS and extend successful programmes to selected schools and districts.

## 8. Parental involvement needs further research & may be promising:

- The catch 22 of parental involvement
- Remains a potentially *cost*-effective intervention

## 9. Learning what works in deep rural settings:

- Further research is needed to establish what might work in deep rural settings.

# Conclusions, recommendations & plans

## 10. Measuring long-run EGRS impacts:

- Future data collections on the same sample of learners

## 11. EGRS for EFAL in Mpumalanga:

- EGRS 2 is underway measuring the effectiveness of two alternative interventions on EFAL (USAID funded)

## 12. Early Grade Mathematics Study:

- EGMS over the next 2 to 5 years, beginning with a scoping study to identify and design promising interventions

*Every child is a National Asset*

*Thank you!*

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