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Award

DAC 84/25 – DE – CURRICULUM REFORM – IMPROVING LITERACY IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Department of Education

UK5: Transparency notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2026/S 000-011280

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-064ae1

Published 9 February 2026, 10:46am

Scope

Reference

DAC 84/25

Description

Literacy provision in Northern Ireland primary schools currently varies widely, with no system wide standardised approach to early reading instruction. Although the curriculum provides support and schools implement their own interventions, significant attainment gaps persist, particularly in Communication at Key Stage 2.

This research project is designed to address these gaps by evaluating the impact of a structured synthetic phonics programme, Read Write Inc., across a stratified and representative sample of schools. The aim is to generate robust, generalisable evidence to inform the new literacy strategy and curriculum reform. This initiative forms a core component of the Department's TransformED programme and directly supports the Minister's priorities for raising literacy outcomes system wide.

Contract 1. DAC 84/25 – DE – CURRICULUM REFORM – IMPROVING LITERACY IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Supplier

- [Ruth Miskin Literacy Limited](#)

Contract value

- £220,000 excluding VAT
- £264,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Earliest date the contract will be signed

9 February 2026

Contract dates (estimated)

- 10 February 2026 to 9 February 2029
- 3 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 80000000 - Education and training services
-

Other information

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Direct award

Direct award justification

Single supplier - intellectual property or exclusive rights

The selection of this programme as the basis of research in NI is due to a combination of factors that make it the only viable option for delivering this project to the required specification and within the necessary timeframe:

- Specialist nature and proprietary status: RMT is the sole provider of the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme, which is a Department for Education (England) validated Systematic Synthetic Phonics model. The programme's intellectual property, training model, and assessment tools are exclusively owned and delivered by RMT. No other supplier is authorised to provide access to these materials or deliver the programme with fidelity.

- Lack of viable alternatives: While other phonics programmes exist, none offer the same combination of structured pedagogy, embedded assessment, professional development, and implementation support. Read Write Inc. is used in over 8,000 UK primary schools and has been independently evaluated by the Education Endowment Foundation, which found measurable gains in reading, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. The Department has not been able to identify any other provider offering this level of evidence, scale and infrastructure in the current market that can deliver within the required timeline
- Urgency of delivery: The Department has committed to developing a new literacy strategy as part of the TransformED programme. This research project is a key action within that strategy and must commence as soon as possible to align with the academic calendar and policy development timelines. Delaying implementation would mean missing the opportunity to generate evidence within the required timescale, which is critical to informing the new literacy strategy and curriculum reform timeline.

Supplier

Ruth Miskin Literacy Limited

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PPDP-4286-BRNP

7 Sandy's Row

London

E1 7HW

United Kingdom

Email: SSDAdmin.CPD@finance-ni.gov.uk

Region: UKI42 - Tower Hamlets

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): Yes

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

Contract 1. DAC 84/25 - DE - CURRICULUM REFORM - IMPROVING LITERACY IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Contracting authority

Department of Education

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PTYH-9512-JWZZ

Rathgael House

Bangor

BT19 7PR

United Kingdom

Email: SSDAdmin.CPD@finance-ni.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/>

Region: UKN09 - Ards and North Down

Organisation type: Public authority - central government

Devolved regulations that apply: Northern Ireland

Other organisation

These organisations are carrying out the procurement, or part of it, on behalf of the contracting authorities.

CPD - Supplies & Services Division

Summary of their role in this procurement: Construction and Procurement Delivery - Supplies and Services Division, is a Centre of Procurement Expertise and provides a central procurement function for central government in Northern Ireland

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PVWG-8426-YWXV

Clare House, 303 Airport Road West

Belfast

BT3 9ED

United Kingdom

Email: SSDAdmin.CPD@finance-ni.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/topics/procurement>

Region: UKN06 - Belfast

Contact organisation

Contact [CPD - Supplies & Services Division](#) for any enquiries.