

What Impact does the Introduction of Reading Buddies Have On Learner Motivation and Enjoyment of Reading?

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What did you plan to do and why?

- I planned to introduce reading buddies between a P7/6 class and a P1 class for a 20min session once a week for a 6-week block
- A calm reading area set up at the back of the stage with the curtains closed, fairy lights, blankets and cushions for the floor were suggested by the P7/6 class.
- From conversations with learners, it was clear that not many children in my establishment read regularly for pleasure. Only 2 out of the 26 children surveyed read for pleasure daily. Whilst 19 children indicated that they liked someone to read to them; 16 of the 26 children admitted that no one read to them on a regular basis.
- From the literature it was clear that some aspects of enjoyment of reading come from the social interaction. It is hoped that if children enjoyed this experience, then the programme could be continued and by targeting children in P1 it is hoped they will develop a love of reading as well as making the programme sustainable.
- My establishment has a high percentage of SIMD 1 and 2, research shows that Reading for Pleasure (RfP) is more important for educational achievement than socio-economic status. Could an increase in RfP help to close the poverty related attainment gap?

What has happened in your enquiry?

- Pre and post intervention survey carried out to collect data via Microsoft Form
- P7/6 completed Form independently
- P1 completed Form with assistance from their buddy
- 6 weekly sessions that lasted approximately 30 minutes each– tried to have same buddy but due to absences this didn't always happen.
- First 15mins P7/6 given time to read by themselves.
- P1s read their reading book to P7/6s and then choose a book for their buddy to read to them. Most of the time there were enough buddies, the odd time a teacher or ASNA stepped in or buddies doubled up.
- Older learners were encouraged to engage in discussion with younger learners about what they were reading. Talk about the story, what they liked best, what they thought was going to happen, the language used (rhyming words).
- Learners seemed excited about coming, reminding me, 'We've got buddy reading tomorrow' or 'I like reading with my buddy'.



What impact has this enquiry had?

- Pre-intervention only 7.7% of learners read daily, post-intervention this increased to 25% of learners.
- Pre-intervention only 19.2% learners said they liked someone reading to them, this increased to 31.3% in the post-intervention survey.
- Pre-intervention only 3.8% of learners were read to by someone daily, this changed to 12.5% post-intervention.
- Enjoyment of reading with a buddy was rated 5 out of 5 by 59.4% learners.
- 53.1% learners rated reading with a buddy more enjoyable than reading alone.
- 90.6% learners would like reading buddies to continue.
- 65.6% learners feel they now read more for pleasure than they did before the intervention.

Observational impacts:

- Learners at the start were reluctant to take part, didn't put much effort into it.
- Could see confidence growing from week to week and could see increases in interactions.
- Lots of good discussions between some learners.
- One girl with Autism who rarely takes part in class work was actively seeking out her buddy by the end of the 6 weeks, saying how much she enjoyed reading with her buddy and liked showing of her reading skills.
- Class teachers commented that "Some children who didn't seem keen at the start, began to look forward to the sessions and were a good partner for their buddy." (Mr. Kelly, P7/6 Teacher).

What are the implications and next steps?

- If reading buddies were to continue next session – what would it look like? How could we make it sustainable?
- Could we extend reading buddies into the nursery? Develop those good habits at a young age.
- How does the inclusion of a recorded 'bedtime' story in homework affect how often learners read for pleasure?
- How can we as an establishment encourage parental engagement in reading for pleasure? – Info sessions, come and read with me sessions?
- Lunchtime reading clubs have been introduced and have been popular. A parent has volunteered to help run these clubs – hopefully this continues next session.
- Applying to the Reading Schools programme.

References

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