

# For pupils needing support with reading, is "Reading Buddies" the solution?

Naomi Clark, Class Teacher, St Peter's RC Primary, Moray.

## What did you plan to do and why?

In our context, we have identified our need to raise attainment in literacy, this is part of our SIP. I was also interested to see whether the Reading Buddies initiative would have any effect on the children's reading for pleasure. As a school we are working towards our Silver Reading Schools award.

**PLAN:** Having identified a group of pupils from my own P6/7 class that were needing support with their reading, I approached the P2/3 teacher to see if we could launch a peer reading support with pupils that she had identified as needing support to remain on track.

**DO:** We agreed to let the pupils come together once a week for around 30 minutes first thing in the morning. The older pupils would have a supporting/mentoring role. The group was observed, but interaction from staff was minimum, to allow for interactions between the children to be less influenced by adults.

**COLLECT:** Termly reading assessments, pupil questionnaires, teacher reflections.

**REVIEW:** Middle of term 4 reflection and next steps for next year.

## What has happened in your enquiry?

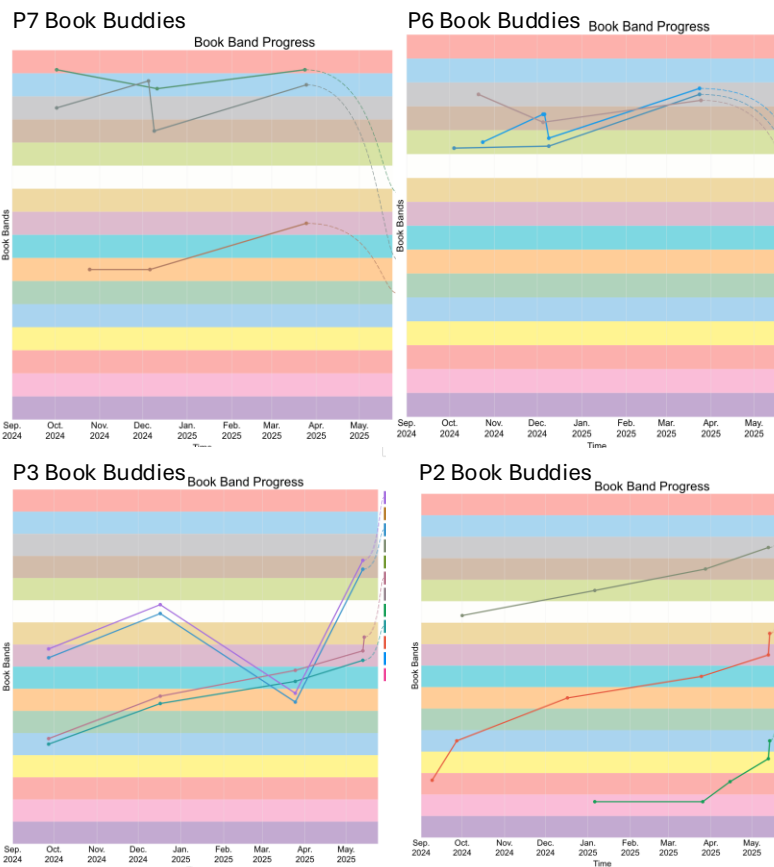
After initial identification of pupils that would be appropriate candidates to take part, which was done through examination of our school tracking documents and through conversation with the P2/3 teacher herself, we set a day that we thought would work best for a weekly session. From those identified children from the P6/7 class, they were then asked if they would like to take on the role of being a Reading Buddy. Together we came to an agreement of what the role would look like and what my/ the P2/3's teacher's expectations of them would be. In co-ordination with my colleague, we discussed which reading skills would be the focus for the Buddies to be working on. This changed depending on her class focus – for my students, this was consolidation of skills already learnt as well as extra opportunities to read. This has run from February onwards.

As much as possible, the Reading Buddies met each Wednesday morning. What I did notice during this enquiry was that sessions were interrupted due to other school events at times – an alternative day would have been better

## What impact has this enquiry had?

How do you know what the impact has been- what evidence do you have?

For each of the pupils involved, there has been a positive impact to the reading bands they have been assessed as being at (see progress graphs below). 77% of the pupils said that since having or being a Reading Buddy that they are reading more in general – in school or out with school. 100% of elder pupils said that they felt they had been "helpful" for the younger pupils. However, only 3/5 of them perceived themselves as having their reading improved. As an educator, I have noticed an increase in the senior buddy's willingness to partake in reading activities in general compared to previous terms.



## What are the implications and next steps?

Based on what you have found, what new questions do you have?

**My next steps for my setting would be;**

- Implement reading buddies between other classes in the school, to see whether the results can be replicated across other ages and stages.
- With the by-product of this enquiry being that these pupils have chosen to read more for pleasure without being prompted, could more peer-to-peer reading interactions be the key to increasing our school's overall reading for pleasure ethos?

**Personally,** the implications from this enquiry are that I wish to continue to use my passion for reading and promoting its importance to continue to build my school's ethos. I would like to collaborate with other professionals who have had success with Reading Buddies, either within my own ASG, council or wider. This enquiry has reminded me how much I enjoy working out a problem and has allowed me to continue to develop my leadership within reading.

## References

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