

Pinfold Primary School

Pinfold Primary School is located in Hattersley, Tameside, which is part of Greater Manchester. It is a two form entry school with 372 full time children on roll. Government indices of multiple deprivations show Hattersley to be one of the most deprived communities in England (lowest 5%). Long term unemployment, many fractured families with higher than average social services involvement and high levels of free school meals exacerbate low expectations leading to poor levels of health with the potential for educational underachievement.

During 2005, Steve Clark, Head teacher was visited by the Reading Recovery Teacher Leader who suggested that many of the children were not at the correct reading level. Eventually, via a grant raised through Hattersley Neighbourhood Partnership, funding was secured to provide for the initial appointment and training of a Reading Recovery Teacher, Dee Shenton (September 2005). Funding from *Every Child a Reader* (ECaR) later helped to secure her permanent appointment as a reading specialist in school.

Embracing the philosophy of banding books, Dee set about ensuring that every child was on the correct reading level. Pinfold has now levelled all reading material and all members of staff, including many Governors, spent over a year undertaking this task and expanding the book stock in school, so that all the books were ‘banded’ according to difficulty and there were plenty of book sets available. The result was that all the books for individual and guided reading now match the needs of the children.

All the staff have now been trained in taking running records and the use of the ‘Benchmark Kit’. Working closely with Year 1 teachers and support staff, Dee has ensured that all Year 1 and Year 2 children are benchmarked, thus enabling them to be continuously tracked and monitored on their journey of learning through the school. She has encouraged and supported the professional development of colleagues, enabling them to develop their own knowledge and skills and has helped raised staff confidence in delivering intervention programmes.

Staff began to notice improvement in pupils’ behaviour and motivation not only in their reading but in their general attitude towards learning. “*We don’t have as many problems now when they come into KS2*” says the current Year 3 teacher. This contributed to Ofsted’s description of school as an “oasis of calm”. (Nov 07)

***“I think the work being done is wonderful, reaching out to children much earlier and identifying their particular needs is something I am extremely proud of”* the literacy Governor, herself a retired Head teacher, informed staff on her last visit. The number of children identified as at risk of exclusion has fallen from 33 in 2006 to zero in 2009.**

Pinfold was part of the national Early Reading Development Pilot (ERDP) and as a school, they quickly realised the importance of Letters and Sounds. Developing a strong relationship with Jennie Burlinson, Foundation Stage/KS1 Co-ordinator, Dee has been instrumental in ensuring the effective teaching of daily phonics for twenty minutes across the Foundation Stage, KS1 and KS2. Tracking the pilot group (currently Year 3) has shown a marked improvement in grapheme/phoneme correspondence, use of reading strategies and a significant improvement in children's writing ability. The impact of implementing systematic phonics teaching across key stages, with teaching targeted to the children's learning needs, has had a direct result on opening the door for communication between all members of staff at Pinfold. Essentially what has happened is that all of the interventions in place came together under the reading/inclusion umbrella and did not sit alone, as can so easily happen.

Dee has been at the heart of a range of the targeted interventions that have been put in place at Pinfold. Working closely with Steve, the Head teacher and Anne Knowles, the Inclusion Co-ordinator, she has been responsible for initiating intensive detailed assessments of identified children in KS1 who need additional literacy support. The school has developed its literacy provision map to include Fischer Family Trust Wave 3 literacy (delivered by a trained teaching assistant giving individualised support) and Dee provides a high quality ongoing programme of professional development to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of the work of teaching assistants.

A significant further addition to the whole school literacy provision has been the Better Reading Partnership (BRP) programme. All support staff from nursery to KS2, including five teaching assistants (who provide the one to one support) and the Reading Recovery teacher (who provides co-ordination and quality assurance) have been trained by the local authority. This additional provision has enhanced the existing Wave 2 opportunities provided by the school and delivered by trained teaching assistants. These now include Early Literacy Support in Year One, Y3 Literacy Support in Year Three and Further Literacy Support in Year Five. Results for Better Reading have been exceptional; 41 children from KS1 and KS2 have now accessed the programme and have made an average increase of 15.01 months reading age during this ten week programme! Follow up assessments of these children indicates that this progress is sustained over time. This is a high impact strategy. Luke aged 7, identified as developing behavioural problems during Year 1, said: *'I learnt to read, I am good at reading and my writing is good too'*. His behavioural issues have disappeared and he is now motivated and contributing positively within the classroom and around the school

Lisa, an experienced teaching assistant who now delivers BRP to 10 children per week, had originally only worked in KS2, generally allocated to a particular class. The biggest challenge for her was taking her out of what she termed her *"comfort zone"*. At first she had reservations and was not happy, *"I don't think it is a good idea and isn't the best use of my time."* With a little encouragement Lisa's role changed and she started to work across the Key Stages. No longer limited to supporting children in only one class, her support was targeted at learning needs across the whole school.

Within two weeks of working with identified children Lisa came back to Dee and said *“I cannot believe the difference I am making with these children, their motivation is high and they smile as I collect them from class.”* Lisa now supports other TAs within school, she has been observed by staff from other schools within Tameside, using the two-way screen based at the Reading Recovery Centre, and Pinfold now acts as a leading practice school for Better Reading within the LA Partly as a result of this work, the LA has developed a specialist reading support team, made up of experienced Reading Recovery teachers and One of the aims of this group is to extend BRP into Secondary schools.



Lisa working with a Year 2 child on the Better Reading Partnership Programme

Dee has also been instrumental in co-ordinating and organising a peer mentoring scheme for Reading Buddies. The impact of this can be seen each dinnertime when children are queuing outside her door either wanting a reading buddy or offering to be one. The children are really switched on to reading! Caitlin, aged 7 who takes part in the Reading Buddies scheme said, *‘I love reading, it makes me happy, when am I having a reading buddy’?*

The impact of having a Reading Recovery teacher with drive and enthusiasm in school has been tremendous. The interventions enhance the effectiveness of the overall literacy provision; a positive reading culture is the result. As a result of ECaR funding, the Head teacher decided to train a second Reading Recovery teacher, Anne Marie Kinder, in September 2007. With further funding via ECaR, Dee has now been trained as a Fischer Family Trust Wave 3 literacy trainer and, for the next three years, she will be involved in training and the delivery of Continuing Professional Development, quality assurance and problem solving for 21 schools delivering this programme across Tameside.

One of the effects of having ECaR in Pinfold is that the whole staff now have a greater understanding of the reading process and have developed their knowledge and skills in terms of how to teach reading effectively. They are all now working in the same direction and the various reading initiatives are linked to the whole curriculum and not seen as just an ‘add on’. The result is that, since Reading Recovery started, more children leave school reading at the national average and in Key Stage 1 attainment in writing is above the national average. What cannot be measured, however, is how happy, calm and contented our children are. The Head teacher commented that, *“when Ofsted inspectors leave saying we are outstanding we must have something right!”*

Applying Reading Recovery principles is fundamental to the ethos of the school. As a result of ECaR and the presence, as a key member of staff, of a skilled Reading Recovery teacher, all the teaching assistants in Pinfold have had high quality training and continued professional development, which contributes to the effective delivery of a wide range of Wave 2 and 3 interventions and enhances quality first teaching.