

QUEENBOROUGH SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Queenborough School is a large primary school with an attached nursery, for children from 3-11 years of age. It is a popular school. Many pupils come from families with limited experience of higher education. Standards on entry are below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above average. Although Queenborough does have a relatively high number of pupils who are judged to have additional educational needs (just under 35% at present), extra support is provided and quality of teaching ensures that all pupils, as far as possible, reach their full potential.

"Pupils make good progress in their learning because of good teaching, high expectations and the concerted effort of all staff to provide the very best for all pupils."

OFSTED July 2006

There are few pupils from minority ethnic communities or who have a first language other than English. In September 2008, Queenborough became an all through primary school, previously a first school. Before Reading Recovery was introduced at Queenborough, the Senior Management Team were already taking an active role in promoting reading across the school by targeting children who were underachieving in reading.

From the outset, the Senior Management Team at Queenborough were passionate about the potential impact Every Child a Reader and the Reading Recovery programme could have on standards and achievement throughout the whole school. Standards in Reading at Queenborough have always been good however the reading levels of boys remained lower than those of girls. Barbara, the new headteacher, arrived in 2005 and was positive and excited about the possible introduction of Reading Recovery. The Reading Recovery teacher, Anna, works in a room dedicated to both the Reading Recovery and Better Reading Partnership programmes. The success of the initial group of children receiving Reading Recovery was excellent and this progress has been sustained through tracking and additional support provided where needed. End of Key Stage One results (2008) for these children reflect the excellent progress made.

	1	2c	2b	2a	3
Reading	0	1	1	1	1
Writing	1	1	2	0	0

All parents of those children who have received Reading Recovery are invited into school to observe a Reading Recovery lesson and parents are informed of their child's progress on the programme through letters and informal meetings. Parental response has been very positive and many feel that their children would not have made progress if it was not for the dedication of the staff at Queenborough. "I think the extra help X got whilst on Reading Recovery was fantastic. I have seen a vast improvement not only in her reading but also her confidence. Now she even reads from the T.V. Many thanks and keep up the good work!"

Parent, Year One Child

Many different visitors have observed both Better Reading Partnerships and Reading Recovery lessons at Queenborough; all of which are delighted at the successes.

"The session was wonderful, as were the BRP sessions! The morning I spent in Queenborough was one of the most encouraging school visits I have had since I have been working as a consultant. Perhaps it is being self critical that makes them so good."

Russell Kitto, Kent Literacy Consultant, February 2008

Anna used the principles and practice of Reading Recovery to help enhance Quality First Teaching and Learning. She held in house training for all teachers and teaching assistants (including teachers from a local primary school), highlighting the main principles that are used to deliver the daily lessons and how this can be transferred into the classroom. The teachers were shown how to carry out Running Record assessments and now use them regularly to ensure that children are on the correct reading level. All members of staff have observed a Reading Recovery lesson to see the principles in practice. Most members of staff were amazed at the content of a Reading Recovery lesson. Teachers were encouraged to spend some time giving the children a brief book introduction before sending a new book home.

Teachers and teaching assistants were trained to give more specific prompts for different areas of reading for example developing phrasing and fluency. Teachers were encouraged to develop strategies to encourage the children to be as independent as possible. Children at Queenborough are now taught effectively "how to read and not simply heard read." Anna reorganised the schools reading books and expanded the book stock in school, so that all the books are 'banded' according to difficulty and there are plenty of book sets. Teachers and teaching assistants asked the pupils what types of books they would be interested in reading and these were then purchased for individual classrooms.

Anna has developed a folder of resources for teachers and teaching assistants in helping them to assess the children's' reading abilities and levels using the Assessing Pupil Progress frameworks. As a part of this years Performance Management cycle, teaching assistants all have a target to continue to use Better Reading Partnership strategies to develop children's reading ability. They have been expected to target two children per term to hear read at least 3 times a week and keep a record of their progress over a term.

Anna organised reading meetings for parents to demonstrate how reading at Queenborough has developed and what they should be expecting from their child's' class teacher. This gave the parents an introduction to both Reading Recovery and the Better Reading Partnership programme and how children are identified for these interventions. Anna, along with dedicated teaching assistants at Queenborough regularly hold parents reading afternoons where the parents are invited to come into school and share a variety of books including big books, CD books, and story sacks with their children. These events are always well attended and parents' comments are always very positive.

"It was really nice to be able to see examples of books X gets to read at school."

Parent, Year One Child

"Thanks for the opportunity to spend time in school reading together."

Parent, Year Two Child

For those children who do not receive reading support at home, Queenborough provides a similar reading afternoon where teaching assistants share books with children. Teachers at Queenborough are confident that the teaching assistants they work with are teaching the children the skills they need to become confident, independent readers. The Senior Management Team organised a reading questionnaire for parents to complete about their views on reading. Parents' views were very positive and Anna responded to parents' comments by writing a letter addressing any burning issues. Letters are sent home highlighting to parents how to best support their children with reading at home.

Initially three members of staff were trained in the Better Reading Partnership Programme. A further 3 members of staff were trained later in the year and this enables Queenborough to reach approximately 50 children a year across a range of age ranges. The results of these children have been excellent. The progress of these children is regularly monitored to ensure that each child is continuing to make progress. If any child is identified not to be making progress we therefore put an intervention in place to avoid any child slipping back. As a school, Queenborough targeted 22 Year Two pupils and the results for reading for the academic year 2007/2008 were the best yet. These children all met or exceeded their predicted SATs level.

No. of children who did not meet their prediction	No. of children that met their predicted level	No. of children that exceeded their predicted level
0	5	16

The success of Better Reading Partnership is dependent on a whole school commitment to improving reading. Trained adults needed dedicated time to work with their children and the Better Reading Partnership co-ordinator needed time to monitor and train teaching assistants. This work is all fully supported by the Senior Management Team. It is intended that ALL teaching assistants will be trained to deliver the Better Reading Partnership programme, therefore ensuring that EVERY child is a reader.

The standards (using 2008 data) in reading reached in end of Key Stage One national assessments are above local and national figures at all levels, with 97.8% of children reaching level 2 and above and 48.9% reaching level three. The school's average point score has seen a steady rise over the last four years. The impact of the continued whole school focus on reading, the continued implementation of Reading Recovery, Better Reading Partnership and other intervention programmes has seen achievement in reading at all levels reach a four year high.

The Senior Management Team ensures that Governors are regularly informed about the impact of both Reading Recovery and Better Reading Partnership through input at Governor Meetings and through the headteacher's termly reports.

Barbara employed a teaching assistant, Sharon to be a Bookworker. Her main area for development in this post is to encourage a love of books and reading. Sharon is also one of the Better Reading Partnership teaching assistants. Teachers feel confident to speak to Sharon if they have any concerns over individual pupil's reading. Sharon will take the time to listen to pupils read and then suggest ideas to the class teacher and teaching assistants about next steps to take to improve their reading. In addition to this, Sharon works with small groups in the library to share books, and where necessary, spend time working on the 'Sounds Write' phonics scheme.

Teachers and teaching assistants identified that 'Sounds Write' does not work effectively in the Nursery and Reception classes and therefore it has been identified that Queenborough school should undertake full staff training in using 'Letters and Sounds' in order to complement the existing programme.

Reading Recovery has proved to be the foundation upon which whole school literacy has been based and implemented. The success of Reading Recovery has proved the importance of high expectations within the whole environment for EVERY child. Queenborough School continues to meet the Reading Recovery standards and guidelines. Reading Recovery and Better Reading Partnerships have not only raised the standards of the children's' reading ability but also have had a very positive impact on self-esteem, behaviour and confidence. It is the belief of every member of staff at Queenborough that every child can and will read; thus every child a reader and no child will underachieve in this area. This will ensure that all children will be able to access all areas of the curriculum and enjoy their learning.

ASK Consultant Quotes

After observing a Reading Recovery and Better Reading Partnership lesson...

The session was wonderful, as were the BRP sessions! The morning I spent in Queenborough was one of the most encouraging school visits I have had since I have been in this job. Perhaps it is being self critical that makes them so good.

Russell Kitto, Literacy Consultant, February 2008

Dear Christine and Jen,

First of all, just wanted to say how thrilled I am that RR is getting such a good (and well-deserved) press, must be very gratifying for you both.

Reason I'm emailing is to give you some fantastic news. If you've already heard, please ignore.

I was delivering a Key Stage 1 guided reading course today at the Hop Farm. I knew one of the delegates who teach at Queenborough. She was telling me that Anna Hughes is over the moon as one of her RR children has achieved a L3 in reading!! How wonderful is that?

They have been having a big push on reading over the last year. Anna screened all Yr 1 pupils at end of last year to identify exactly their strengths and weaknesses; they're using BRP; have guided reading securely in place and have also given individual reading support to those pupils who never read at home. Holly shared the KS1 reading results.....

Out of a cohort of 40something, 22 achieved L3 in Reading. WOW! As you know, the school is in a deprived area and pupils enter the nursery with very poor language skills. This achievement really gives the lie to teachers/ schools who say "What can you expect with children like this?" doesn't it?

It's moments like this that gladden your heart about the future of education, isn't it?

Sue Winter, Literacy Consultant, May 2008