

## THE LONG TERM EFFECTS OF READING RECOVERY ON NATIONAL CURRICULUM TESTS AT END OF KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

Currently 7% of all children leave Key Stage 2 with no useful literacy (below National Curriculum Level 3). This figure has remained static in spite of the success of the Primary National Strategy in raising standards for more able children. Children selected for Reading Recovery are the lowest attaining 20% of readers and writers in their Y1 and Y2 classes. They tend to have made little if any progress in literacy learning in spite of a full year of formal literacy teaching. These are the children most likely to fail to reach national targets in tests at the end of KS1 and KS2.

**End of KS1:** In National Curriculum tests at the end of KS1 (1 year after RR) two in three of those who had been the lowest attaining children reached Level 2. This included all children who had received Reading Recovery, including those who were only part way through their programme and those who had not achieved the accelerated learning which is the aim of the programme. Given that these children had made very little progress in their first year at school, and would be predicted to reach Levels W or 1, this suggests that the number of children failing to reach national targets could be reduced by two thirds with Reading Recovery. Children who achieved accelerated learning in Reading Recovery (81% of those who completed their programme) were spectacularly successful in End of KS1 Tests, with eight out of ten reaching Level 2 or above.

	All children		Children who achieved accelerated learning	
	Number	%	Number	%
Level W	52	4	4	0
1	453	31	228	20
2c	435	30	389	35
2b	346	24	330	30
2a	151	10	149	14
3	14	1	14	1

### National curriculum tests in reading for Reading Recovery children at end of KS1

**End of KS2:** At the end of KS2 (5 years after RR) children had maintained the gains demonstrated at KS1. In a sample of more than 600 children who had received Reading Recovery five years previously, including those who did not achieve accelerated learning, half of the children reached Level 4 and above in National Curriculum end of Key Stage tests, and only 20% failed to reach level 3. That is 20% of the lowest attaining one fifth of the age cohort, or 4% of the whole age cohort, suggesting that Reading Recovery could almost halve the number of children leaving Key Stage 2 with no useful literacy, and very significantly increase the number of the lowest attaining children progressing to Level 4 and above.

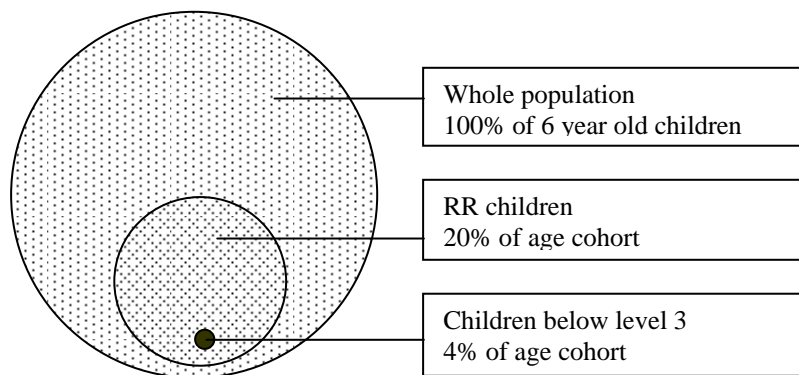
These long-term outcomes are particularly significant given that the 600 children involved were generally from schools serving areas of high social deprivation, in receipt of additional funding (for example, through regeneration schemes). The lowest achieving 20% in these schools tend to be children with very substantial difficulties indeed.

	All children		Children who achieved accelerated learning	
	Number	%	Number	%
No level	131	20	60	14
Level 2	4	0	1	0
3	185	28	116	27
4	266	41	207	47
5	65	10	53	12
Total	651		437	

### National curriculum tests in reading for Reading Recovery children at end of KS2

Children who had achieved accelerated learning in Reading Recovery at age six were even more successful at age 11, with 59% reaching Level 4 and above, and only 14% failing to reach Level 3.

It should be borne in mind that these children received Reading Recovery in 1997 and 1998. Since then the Reading Recovery implementation has shown year on year improvements in the number of children achieving accelerated learning, and the levels of text reading reached by those children. It may be expected that these year on year improvements will lead to higher proportions of ex-Reading Recovery children reaching Level 4 and above in End of KS2 National Curriculum tests in the future, and even fewer failing to reach Level 3. The implementation in England has always been targeted to areas of particular difficulty, in some LEAs it is almost exclusively targeted to failing schools, so that the sample of children is inevitably skewed to the most challenging. If the programme were more widely available, truly serving 20% of the age cohort, a higher proportion of the children would be expected to achieve accelerated learning, with even greater likelihood of achieving national targets at end of KS2.



Even in the most challenging circumstances, five years after their Reading Recovery programme half of the children who received the intervention reached Level 4 and above in National Curriculum tests at end of KS2, and only one in five failed to reach level 3. Given that these were initially the lowest attaining children, who had made very little progress in learning to read in their first year in school, and were the children most likely to fail to reach national standards, this represents a considerable long-term advantage for children who received the Reading Recovery programme.