



Three years on – developments in *Every Child a Reader* at St Teresa of Lisieux Infant School

St Teresa of Lisieux is a large infant school serving an area of high social deprivation. More than half of the pupils have free school meals. Gun crime and gang culture are evident in the area. Children begin school with very low attainment and many have speech and language difficulties.

Before the introduction of Reading Recovery to the school there had been seriously declining trends in attainment. Then, in 2004-5, the deputy headteacher Andria Palmer trained as a Reading Recovery teacher. She soon realised how powerful Reading Recovery expertise could be within the school – not just in accelerating the learning of children on the programme but also in widening the impact to reach more children. Subsequently, professional development was delivered to staff on issues such as book levels and banding, running records, phonics and assessment. Guided reading was monitored and the book stock expanded.

In 2005-6 *Every Child a Reader* funding helped two more teachers to begin training. This created a team approach. Andria trained TAs in the Better Reading Partnership and the implementation of layered interventions began. Higher achieving readers were also targeted. Teachers had not initially predicted any children to achieve Level 3 but by the summer term 8% were successfully reading Level 3 texts with good comprehension. Initial predictions of what children would achieve in their end of Key Stage 1 tests were exceeded, with gains in each reading level.

By 2006-7 all reading books in the school had been banded and everyone understood book levels. Home reading was reviewed and parents' meetings were held to explain the changes. A more formal approach to interventions was developed with the introduction of a provision map. Interventions were layered and delivered exactly where there was need. Parents were trained in the Better Reading Partnership and became dedicated partners to Year 1 and 2 children. Higher achieving readers enjoyed Reciprocal Teaching and subsequently became independent enough to manage their own reading sessions – reading to learn, rather than learning to read. Talking Partners was delivered to EAL children, Firm Foundations (a language development programme) became established in the two nurseries, and short 1-1 reading sessions were provided by Andria and another Reading Recovery teacher for children who needed a boost, to develop their confidence, and provide greater reading experience. For children with special educational needs who were still emergent readers in Year 2, short regular sessions of early phonics and the Reception Literacy Programme were delivered by a trained TA.

By the summer term excellent results were becoming evident. Teachers always knew exactly how each individual child was doing. Books had the correct level of challenge

and children were making very rapid progress. One Year 2 child who had still been struggling to read the very earliest reading books (Reading Recovery book level 2) in January was reading National Curriculum level 2 books by May. The number of Level 3 readers continued to rise with more and more children joining the Reciprocal Teaching groups. Almost all of the Level 2 readers were strong 2As or 2Bs and there were only five children still working towards Level 1 - a significant improvement.

End of key stage assessments in 2007 showed that the percentage of children achieving level 2B+ had risen by 20 percentage points since 2005, and stood at 60%. 23% of children achieved level 3, compared to 5% in 2005.

Next steps for the school will be further work to engage parents – especially fathers. Better Reading Partnership training will continue, with plans to extend training into the partner junior school. Following the significant growth in Level 3 readers the school is now beginning to compile evidence to complete the Challenge award for Gifted and Talented provision.