

## Waseem's story

Waseem was a very quiet little boy when he was six years old and in Year 2 at school.



He lacked confidence and did not participate in class discussions. He was unable to read at all when he began his Reading Recovery lessons. Now, in Year 3, he is a confident, fluent reader (working within Level 3 in National Curriculum terms). He acts as a 'Reading Buddy', reading at lunchtimes with older struggling readers. He recently addressed an audience of over fifty headteachers, teachers and parents at a conference to celebrate the success of *Every Child a Reader* in Birmingham. This is what he said.

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'My name is Waseem. I go to Benson Community School. When I started coming to Mrs Bains last year I could not read. Every day I had to read and write words and we used the magnetic letters.

I felt really good because then I could read. It helped me with all my work at school and at home. My mum and dad were proud of me. My mum used to test me at home and I could read the books easily. Coming to Mrs Bains also helped me with my spelling.

Now I am a Reading Buddy and I like to test and help other children with their reading. I enjoy being a Reading Buddy. I feel very proud of myself.

I think being able to read is FANTASTIC.'

Waseem went on to read the audience his favourite poem - one by Henry Longfellow.



Waseem's parents have been really impressed with his progress, not just in his reading but also in his self-esteem and confidence. His mother, who herself now comes into school to help with reading as well taking an active part in other school related activities, says ' Waseem is eager, confident and independent. Something was stopping him.....the barrier has gone. Now he has come out of his shell. Reading Recovery has given him a chance to explore every corner of learning. It has also opened up many doors for me. I can see now there are no limits to what you can achieve. Waseem has been given wings and he can fly!'