

HIGHLAND LITERACY PROJECT



PHASE 1 EVALUATION



**Evaluation of the Schools involved in Phase 1 of the
Highland Literacy Project**

September 2006

HIGHLAND LITERACY PROJECT

EVALUATION OF PHASE 1

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HIGHLAND LITERACY PROJECT

Introduction

Context

In January 2005, Highland Council's Quality Development Team initiated a project with the aim of raising attainment in Reading in twelve identified schools across the region.

The project proposal stated:

"Both schools and the authority have identified the need to support attainment in reading through a focussed approach to the teaching of reading skills at all 5-14 levels. Highland Council's recent programme of study emphasised this approach. The aim of this proposal is to identify and support Highland schools where reading is an area of concern, and improve attainment of pupils".

This was in the context of

- a gradual decline in reading attainment in Highland schools
- an improving trend for writing attainment due to an authority focus on this aspect

As a result, the gap between reading and writing attainment was widening in favour of writing

One QDO had lead responsibility for this and two practitioners were seconded as Literacy Officers (LOs), initially for a period of six months, to develop and deliver the programme.

What began as a reading project quickly evolved to become a literacy project as it was apparent that the four key areas of literacy were intrinsically linked.

Selection criterion

National Assessment results for reading over the previous four years [2000 - 2004] were studied and the twelve lowest attaining schools were invited to participate. As a result this directly targeted:

- 69 teaching staff,
- 11 Head Teachers (two schools were a cluster),
- 3 Depute Head Teachers
- a number of Additional Support Needs teachers.
- 86 support staff
- approximately 1800 pupils

Three of the schools were large city schools, six were middle sized (4-6 teacher) town or village schools, 2 were smaller village schools and one was a remote single-teacher school. One of the city schools later withdrew from the project.

Rationale

Project Aim

'To work with staff in identified primary schools to raise attainment through the development of whole school best practice in the teaching of reading.'

The project was informed by;

- HMI advice
- Good practice in other authorities, including North Lanarkshire
- Current research
- HC Learning and Teaching Toolkit
- National Priorities for Education
- HC Programmes of Study for Reading, Writing, Talking & Listening.

HMI advice and research findings on the teaching of reading indicated that staff should;

- Improve questioning and discussion skills to improve comprehension
- Develop reflective questioning strategies for children
- Spend time teaching whole class reading as well as group reading
- Provide more thoughtful, focused reading activities
- Provide uninterrupted teaching time with each group
- Teach children to use information texts more frequently
- Teach children to make their own notes
- Provide lesson aims which should be clear and shared with the children
- Provide a wide selection of texts and genre which children use effectively to develop a reading habit
- Teach children how authors use language (Writer's Craft)

Project Priorities

Targets

- To teach Reading using a direct, interactive approach.
- To develop and promote a whole school approach to the teaching of reading through the use of collaborative learning strategies.
- To encourage children to make the link between Reading, Writing, Talking and Listening.
- To promote pupils success through training in self and peer assessment.
- To provide training for staff to enable them to teach Reading using a wide variety of strategies.
- To promote parental involvement in supporting their children in reading at home.
- To identify and provide any additional resources to further support the reading project.

Criteria for Success

- An improvement in attainment in Reading across the school.
- Direct and interactive strategies in the teaching of reading are adopted and taken forward by staff.
- An increase in staff confidence to apply these strategies in the teaching of Reading.
- Pupils can apply skills and collaborative strategies across the curriculum, which enable them to become more independent learners.
- An increase in confidence that allows pupils of all abilities to be able to and to enjoy engaging with texts.
- An increase in the number of pupils actively involved in reading for enjoyment.

- Parents actively involved in supporting Reading at home.

Supporting schools to succeed

Having identified the project priorities including targets and success criteria, the Literacy Team needed to identify *how* these criteria could be achieved.

An in-depth analysis of each school's attainment indicated that the biggest need for support was in the middle and upper stages so this identified the starting point. P4-7 staff and pupils were included from January 2005. When the project was extended past the initial six-month period, P1-3 staff and pupils were included from August 2005.

The project was methodology based, not resource based, and therefore direct modelling and support within the schools would be the focus. Additional training would be given on INSET and CAT sessions. No direct funding was available for schools to purchase additional resources although schools had been asked to make the project a priority in their own school development planning.

- Feb 2005 - April 2005 :
P4-7 staff and SMT received training through 1x CAT session and 1x INSET day
- March 2005 - June 2005:
Literacy Officers (LOs) modelled Reading for information and writer's craft lessons; Core reading was supported through direct discussion and advice with both SMT and each staff member; LOs observed class lessons and supported staff.
- August 2005 - October 2005:
P1 - 3 teaching staff, the senior management team (SMT) and support staff received training
- September 2005 - December 2005 :
Literacy Officers modelled Reading for information and writer's craft lessons; Core reading was supported through direct discussion and advice with both SMT and each staff member; LOs observed class lessons and supported staff.
- January 2006 :
SMT invited to a 'catch up day' to discuss how the school would continue the development of the project.

Methodology

To maximise impact, the literacy officers focused on three main areas:

- **Reading for Information**
- **Writer's Craft through reading.**
- **Core reading**

*Suggestions of how to include **reading for enjoyment** were made but this aspect did not become an additional focus until August 2005.*

Reading for Information¹

Rationale

¹Refer to Highland Literacy Project booklets 'Reading for Information P1-3' and 'Reading for Information P4-7'

Steps were decided upon, with the pupils being taught skills to become increasingly independent learners. Progression would be dependent on previous experience, although the expectation was that all pupils would have reached stage 3 by P4. Lessons would be taught at least once a fortnight.

Step 1 :

Whole class big book/shared text lesson, led by the teacher with the teacher recording the information.

Step 2 :

As step 1 but with the pupils independently recording their own information in trios.

Step 3:

Each trio is working on the same small text

Step 4 :

Each trio is working with a different small text.

Methodology

The pupils used NON - FICTION texts.

They worked in mixed ability trios (or pairs for younger pupils) with set roles of recorder, checker and reporter. Talking and listening rules were embedded regularly as these skills were vital to the success of the trio.

The trios discussed the cover, the genre and what information they would expect to be in the book, and the recorder then recorded their prior knowledge of the topic.

Opportunities were given for the reporter to report back throughout the lesson and pupils were taught not to repeat information.

Trios decided what they wanted to find out about the topic. This needed to be teacher led at the beginning.

Pupils were taught how scan the text for any difficult words and were given strategies for clarifying meanings.

Trios then read the text aloud. This was done up to 3 times.

Trios discussed, agreed and recorded the relevant information in note form and then shared this orally with the class.

Trios then returned to their prior knowledge and discussed briefly, whether each one was 'true', 'false' or 'can't tell'.

Finally pupils evaluated how well their trio collaborated, the reasons why and their plans for improvement.

Teachers were encouraged to use cross curricular texts for science, RME and topic work, etc. Towards the end of the project, Head Teachers were given guidance on how to further develop the skills needed for Reading for information.²

Writer's Craft through Reading³

Rationale

Writer's Craft would be taught as whole class lessons once a fortnight using a variety of extracts or big books. Through the modelling of these lessons, teachers were encouraged to extend beyond the strategies suggested at each 5-14 level for Writer's craft, as it was felt that the guidelines were restrictive.

² Refer to Highland Literacy Project booklet 'Moving on with Non Fiction'

³ Refer to: Highland Literacy Project booklets ' Teaching Writer's Craft through Reading in P1-3' and 'Teaching Writer's Craft through Reading in P4-7'

In addition, teachers were asked to discuss writer's craft during group reading sessions. The pupils used Fiction and/or Poetry texts during modelling, although the teachers were shown how to use a variety of genre for their own lesson. Usually, there were no right or wrong answers. Pupils were encouraged to talk about texts, give opinions and find the evidence to justify these.

Methodology

The pupils worked in mixed ability trios (or pairs for younger pupils) with set roles of recorder, checker and reporter. Talking and listening rules were embedded regularly as these skills were vital to the success of the trio.

A large copy of the extract was displayed and each trio was given a small copy.

The extract was read three times: by the teacher, by a few pupils and finally within the trio.

After each reading, there was a discussion about an aspect of the writer's craft eg tone, effect. This was led by the teacher, but discussed within the trio and then shared with the class. Several different aspects were studied in each lesson.

Trios located the evidence to justify their opinions. This was marked on either the large or their small copy using a highlighter pen.

These writer's craft lessons usually led on to an associated piece of writing such as continuing the extract using the author's style, expanding a character's description, writing a summary or writer's plan. These activities were completed immediately or during their next writing session either as a trio or on occasion as an individual.

Core reading⁴

Rationale

A fresh approach to core reading was promoted in schools. It was not possible for the literacy officers to model these lessons so guidance was given and implementation strategies highlighted.

Methodology

- Reading taught, not merely heard, using a variety of teaching methods
- Pupils use a variety of levelled materials and genre, not simply work through 'a scheme'
- The teaching of core reading is timetabled, not slotted into spaces. Infants- daily, middle/upper - three times a week.
- *All* pupils are engaged in an aspect of reading during these timetabled sessions.
- Teachers aim towards a maximum of three reading groups to allow for more direct teaching time
- Pupils who are individual readers are incorporated within a group with peer/adult support. In addition, they continue with their usual reading arrangements at another time.
- Pupils are trained in sustained reading through the use of whole books rather than extracts
- Support staff are timetabled to support reading groups
- Pupils work on before/during , after reading and follow up activities with increasing independence
 - Before/during: discussion using recall, prediction and prior knowledge. Text is then read silently, aloud in pairs and/or within the group and challenging words are clarified. This is an independent session from level B. In P1/2 the text is read *to* the pupils for the first read.

⁴ Refer to Highland Literacy Project booklets ' Teaching Reading in P1 and P2' ; ' Core Reading- Poetry, Plays and Non Fiction' ; 'Moving on with Reading in P2/3' and 'Core Reading in P3/4 - P7'

- After reading: This is a Teacher led oral session on interrogating the previously read text for comprehension. Writer's craft is also discussed. Pupils may also read aloud to the teacher.
- Follow up - Follow up activities are not work/text book led but require pupils to refer to and interrogate the text. These can be done collaboratively.
- In infants previously taught reading is practised at home. From the middle stages, reading books are kept in school with pupils being given a choice of material to read at home.
- In infants, phonics are taught synthetically and at a brisk pace but with traditional reading taught alongside and at the same time.

Key principles promoted in all aspects of reading:

- The connections between reading, writing, talking and listening are made and promoted
- *All* pupils are included.
- Lessons are stimulating and move at a brisk pace
- Lessons afford the pupils to be active, not passive learners.
- Collaborative strategies are used to support learning in *all* reading lessons
- Skills are taught which lead to pupils becoming more independent readers
- Through interrogation of the text, pupils are taught comprehension, authors/writer's craft, grammar, punctuation, spelling and research skills.
- There is a development of skills from p1-7, which can permeate into other areas of the curriculum
- Teachers *and* pupils develop questioning skills that promote deeper thinking.
- There is a greater use of self and peer assessment that informs next steps in learning

Spelling⁵

Towards the end of Phase 1, guidance was given on using collaborative strategies to teach spelling from P1-7.

⁵ Refer to Highland Literacy booklet "Strategies for the teaching of Spelling P1 - P7"

EVIDENCE SECTION

Sources of evidence

Following the implementation of the project, the gathered evidence was examined to determine the impact of the project, within the context of the success criteria.

Pre project

- National Assessment results over previous four years and predictions for session 2004 - 2005
- Standardised testing in reading (NFER) with ratio of 1:6 pupils. Pupils selected randomly from P3-6
- Discussion with individual pupils
- Discussion with Head Teachers
- Discussion with Teaching staff

During project

- Observations of class lessons

Post Project

- National Assessment results and prediction outcomes
- Standardised testing (NFER) with same pupils
- Pupil questionnaires
- Pupil self evaluation statements
- Teacher questionnaires
- Teacher self evaluations
- Head Teacher evaluations
- Support staff evaluations
- Staff training evaluations
- School's own in depth audit
- Audit section of SDP

Engagement of schools

All project schools followed the same timescale for staff training, when advice was given and when lessons were modelled for the teachers. However, the Literacy Officers noted that there were significant differences in the actual implementation of the strategies between each school. A few (9%) of the schools immediately engaged fully with the project, with their Head Teachers playing a significant role in supporting staff to adopt and develop the suggested approaches. After six months the majority (64%) had taken on aspects of the project, although less than half of the schools (18%) had adopted the project fully. After a year a few (9%) were only just beginning to engage with some aspects of the project.

Key findings

A whole school approach where staff engage immediately in the process has the highest probability for sustained improvement.

Overall Attainment:

- ✓ For those attaining the appropriate 5-14 levels, or better, the project has had a positive impact on raising attainment in almost all schools in both reading and writing.
- ✓ The gap between these schools and the Highland aggregate has been reduced.
- ✓ In national assessments, boys have made greater gains compared to girls. This was not apparent in standardised test results.
- ✓ The pattern for those exceeding appropriate 5-14 levels shows that boys have made significant gains in reading and writing.
- ✗ However for those exceeding appropriate 5-14 levels, girls did not demonstrate similar overall increases, particularly in writing where there is a gradual decrease. Early gains made have not been maintained. These gender differences have a significant impact on overall data for those exceeding in Phase 1 schools.

Specific points of relevance:

- Standardised tests show:
 - ✓ an average increase 2.31percentage points
 - ✓ all gained, with boys (2.4 percentage points) doing better than girls (2.0 percentage points)
- National assessment attainment results for those attaining appropriately (June 2004 to June 2006) show that:
 - ✓ most schools made significant gains over the two year period when compared to the Highland average
 - ✓ overall, a third of these schools now exceed the Highland average for both reading and writing with improving trends particularly at P3, P4 and P5
 - ✓ for both reading and writing, the gap between the Highland average and Phase 1 schools is steadily closing
- National assessment results for those exceeding appropriate levels over the same period show that:
 - ✓ the majority of schools had more pupils exceeding in reading, closing the gap between Phase 1 and Highland significantly in June 2005 but widening again in 2006
 - ✗ for writing the gap between Phase 1 schools and Highland has widened by 1%
 - ✗ the most able girls do less well than the most able boys

Learning:

- ✗ for many pupils working collaboratively during reading tasks was a new way of learning - these approaches are at an early stage in most schools
- ✓ The majority of pupils were confident about their reading ability
- ✓ Pupils are more confident, motivated and enthusiastic, and are taking more responsibility for their learning
- ✓ Pupils were positive about the new resources which staff felt had better motivated the children
- ✓ There has been an increase in the inclusion of all pupils
- ✓ There has been an increase in the enthusiasm and self-esteem of pupils who now felt More included
- ✓ Most pupils enjoy reading at home and the majority do have a male role model
- ✓ where parents were aware of the school's involvement in the project, most were positive about the methods and resources used. Their views and opinions had not been sought.

- * the role of parents was not well supported

Teaching:

- ✓ Staff are more enthusiastic about the teaching of reading
- ✓ staff make explicit links between reading, writing, talking and listening
- ✓ core reading and non-fiction are well established
- * writer's craft is yet to be well established
- ✓ Staff are becoming more reflective about their teaching practices and more supportive of each other. They are more confident in adopting new approaches when strategies are being implemented across all stages.
- ✓ There is a greater emphasis on the planning of, and quality teaching time for, reading
- ✓ Reading has been given a higher profile in most schools
- ✓ appropriate and stimulating resources helped motivate teachers to use interactive strategies
- ✓ The project has made connections with Assessment is For Learning
- * self- and peer-evaluation has yet to be firmly established

It is clear that members of staff need time to embed the strategies of the project fully in the coming sessions.

Meeting the criteria for success

An improvement in attainment in Reading across the school.

Standardised Testing (appendix 1)

Testing at the outset of the project showed:

- The average score of all 10 schools was 94.45, which was 5.55 below the notional norm.
- Gender differences were apparent in most schools. Boys averaged 91.4 and the girl's 96.24, making a gender difference of 4.8.
- The average score for P3 was 95, P4 was 92, P5 was 89 and P6 was 95, making a total range of 6.

At the end of the planned phase, schools were asked to re-administer the test to the same pupils. Results showed:

- An overall average increase of 2.31, bringing it to 96.76. The gap had been reduced with schools now being 3.24 below the norm. Boys' scores had increased by 2.4 and girls by 2.6.
- Gender differences were still apparent in most schools, one school having reversed the trend.
- When looking at individual stages, the range between the average scores of P3-6 [this session's P4-7] had reduced from 6 to 2.

National assessments (appendix 2)

For those attaining appropriate 5-14 levels or better, statistics (June 2004 - June 2006) show that:

- for reading,
 - ✓ most schools (81.8%) improved their aggregate scores (a range of 4.8% to 23.5%) with the average Highland gain being 0.3%,
 - ✓ there is an improving trend with almost a third of schools now exceeding the Highland average
 - ✓ the gap between the Highland average and Phase 1 schools is steadily reducing: from 15.7% to 8.2%
 - ✓ there is an improving trend of attainment for the majority (66.7%) of year groups
 - ✓ in the majority of schools (64%) boys had achieved a higher % gain (9.7%) than girls (5%),
 - ✓ there is an improving trend for boys' attainment across the schools
 - ✓ improvement for girls is variable, but overall improving
 - × one school displays a steadily declining attainment trend in reading
- for writing,
 - ✓ most schools (72.7%) made gains (a range of 3.6% to 18.2%) with the average Highland gain being 1.4%
 - ✓ there is an improving trend with a third of schools now exceeding the Highland average
 - ✓ the gap between the Highland average and Phase 1 schools is steadily reducing: from 12.0% to 5.2%

- ✓ there is an improving trend of attainment in half of the year groups
- ✓ the average percentage gains for boys was 10.1% and 8.4% for the girls across the schools
- ✓ there is an improving trend for boys' attainment across the schools
- ✓ improvement for girls is variable, but overall improving

For those exceeding appropriate 5-14 levels, statistics (June 2004 - June 2006) show:

- for reading,
 - ✓ the majority of schools (54.5%) improved their aggregate scores (a range of 2.4% to 21.9%) with the average Highland gain being 2.2%,
 - ✓ the average overall gain for boys was 6.2% (Highland 2.3%) and for girls was 0.7% (Highland 2.2%), going some way to closing the gender gap
 - × Overall, a third of schools (36%) display declining trends in numbers of pupils exceeding

- for writing,
 - ✓ almost half of the schools (45.5%) improved their aggregate scores (a range of 2.1% to 25.5%) over with the average Highland gain being 1.9%
 - ✓ the number of schools performing better than the Highland average shows an improving trend
 - ✓ the gender gap for Highland in 2004 was 12.4% compared to 16.82% for those in the project. By 2006, Highland was 13.2 % compared to 8.78% for those in the project. Phase 1 schools had gone some way in closing the gender gap whereas the trend for HC was showing that the gap was widening
 - ✓ the average overall gain for boys was 6.25% (Highland 1.7%)
 - × Overall, almost half of schools (45.4%) display a decline in those exceeding

Whole school audit (appendix 3)

This audit shows that:

- most schools (80%) assigned a level 3 (good) or 4 (very good) to the statement “ *Almost all pupils have made very good progress from their prior levels of attainment in reading*”. The remaining 20% stated that it was too early to tell.

Conclusion

- The project has had a positive impact on raising attainment in almost all schools in both reading and writing for those attaining the appropriate 5-14 levels or better, and has gone a significant way in reducing the gap between these schools and the Highland average.
- Boys made more considerable gains, in comparison to girls in national assessment. This was not apparent in the standardised testing.
- The pattern for those exceeding appropriate 5-14 levels also showed boys made significant gains in both reading and writing. However, the girls did not show similar overall increases, especially in writing where there was a gradual decrease. Although some gains *had* been made in the first year, these were not maintained. These gender differences have had an impact on the overall data for those exceeding appropriate 5-14 levels in phase 1 schools. This is especially apparent when looking at sustainability. Again, these gender differences were not apparent in the standardised testing.

Action

- As the strategies for learning *how* to read a sustained piece of text is embedded, and pupils are familiar with the process of picking out the relevant information, they should have more confidence when completing an assessment. **School self-evaluation processes will need to ensure that the strategies are embedded across all stages through monitoring of plans, through observation of learning and teaching and by encouraging staff to share best practice.**
- To address the issue of the highest attaining girls, and in particular the sustainability of any gains, the Literacy officers will undertake further research into gender issues for high attaining pupils. **Guidance will then be issued to phase 1 schools. Further phases will be offered guidance during their initial training.**
The schools' tracking and predicting systems will play a major role in ensuring that 5-14 predictions take account of these pupils, and in particular girls.

Direct and interactive strategies in the teaching of reading are adopted and taken forward by staff.

Although some responses indicate "less than half", the percentage of staff is nonetheless significant. Staff statements are based upon feedback given but responses for all aspects were not given by all staff.

Teachers' questionnaires

Responses to questionnaires show that:

- ✓ almost all (91%) were now making explicit links between reading, writing, talking and listening and were helping pupils to also connect the four aspects.
- ✓ almost all (98%) felt that the project helped to make the link with other areas of the curriculum and in particular, Assessment is for Learning (AifL).
- ✓ less than half of teachers (27%) and support staff (32%) but most (82%) Head Teachers stated that the teaching of reading now had a bigger profile in their class/school with more emphasis on quality direct and interactive teaching time.
- ✓ less than half (39%) commented that there was a more focused structure and progression in place and that planning for reading had become more effective.
- ✓ all (100%) schools purchased additional resources to support interactive and direct teaching although the money spent varied considerably between schools. Less than half (23%) of teachers stated these new and/or increased resources had impacted on their teaching of reading and 18% planned to request further resources. Less than half (45%) of Head Teachers indicated that they would be supplementing resources over the next session.
- × less than half (16%) of teachers said that they were now using more meaningful follow-up activities during their reading sessions but 25% were happy to develop these further over the following school year.

Head Teachers' Evaluations of current Practice (March 2006) (appendix 4)

For non-fiction, responses show that:

- ✓ all schools have established the whole class lessons which are planned
- ✓ all schools have established the use of trios with clearly established roles to promote independent working
- ✓ all teachers reinforce listening and talking skills in literacy lessons
- ✓ most classes (82%) have non fiction lessons timetabled fortnightly, as recommended
- ✓ the majority of teachers have begun to promote self- and peer-evaluation

For writer's craft, responses show that:

- ✓ the majority of teachers (73%) have established whole class lessons which are held fortnightly (55%)
- ✓ the majority (73%) had established mixed ability trios with clear roles for pupils who had opportunities to highlight text (55%)
- ✓ less than half (36%) had established self- and peer-evaluation.

For core reading, responses showed that:

- ✓ all had reading planned and almost all (91%) had it timetabled appropriately
- ✓ most (82%) had reduced the number of reading groups
- ✓ all taught reading in school which was reinforced at home,
- ✓ all used a variety of materials for reading for enjoyment at home and most (82%) used chapter books which covered a variety of genres and had an appropriate number of copies,
- ✓ almost all made very good use of support staff to promote interactive learning

Whole school audit (appendix 3)

Responses show that:

- ✓ all schools evaluate the structure of the curriculum, courses and programmes, reporting pupils' progress, learning support, ethos, and effectiveness and deployment of staff as being good or very good,
- ✓ Almost all schools evaluated the teaching process, pupils' learning experiences, meeting pupils' needs, resources, aims and policy making and self evaluation as good or very good.
- ✓ Most schools had evaluated planning (80%) and assessment as part of teaching (77%) as good or very good.

Conclusion

- Core reading and non-fiction are well established. **Writer's craft is less well embedded.**
- A whole school approach and immediate engagement had the highest success.
- Overall, staff were now able to maximise the links between reading, writing, talking and listening and felt that the project made connections with national and local priorities.
- Appropriate and stimulating resources played a major role in the motivation of teachers to use interactive strategies with all schools purchasing additional materials for this purpose.

Action

- Schools should be encouraged to include literacy in as a continued development until such times as the SMT and staff feel confident that it should move to maintenance. **Appropriate resources may need to be built up over a number of years.**
- **Training will be offered by Literacy Officers to those who missed initial training.** However, it is suggested that new staff are supported by an appointed mentor within the school, who will model lessons and offer guidance in applying strategies.

An increase in staff confidence to apply these strategies in the teaching of reading.

Although some responses indicate "less than half", the percentage of staff is nonetheless significant. Staff statements are based upon feedback given but responses for all aspects were not given by all staff.

Questionnaires

Responses show that:

- ✓ a quarter of teachers (27%) felt *more* confident when teaching reading. A third (30%) were more enthusiastic about literacy. These figures rose to 45% and 55% respectively when Head teachers were asked about their staff
- ✓ a few teachers (7%) but most Head Teachers (82%) said that staff were more reflective about their own practices, and that it not only had encouraged discussion and support between colleagues, but that it had enhanced their professionalism
- ✓ a quarter of Head Teachers (27%) noted an increased pace of teaching and higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. A few (7%) were concerned about the inclusion of both high and low attaining pupils in mixed ability groupings
- ✓ the majority of Head Teachers (63%) felt that staff had engaged with the project with 27% stating that some staff had yet to engage. They suggested that a few would benefit from additional training
- ✓ almost all staff (94%) were confident to embed and/or develop the project strategies over the coming session whilst a few (2%) wanted additional staff training

Support staff were also asked to give their opinions of the project and responses show:

- × less than half (44%) had benefited from being part of the project. A few (8%) indicated that they had not yet engaged with the project.
- ✓ A third (32%) felt more confident when supporting reading and that there was now more staff discussion and peer support. 24% said that they were now more aware of *how* to support pupils with 20% indicating that they now had more responsibility in this area.

Staff Training

Overall, staff training was very well received. Teaching staff found the following activities the most useful:

- Ideas to teach writer's craft
- discussion with colleagues
- "lots of practical activities".

Support staff:

- found ideas to support core reading and ICT activities to be the most useful.

Overall, many felt that funding would be needed to implement the project fully with some indicating that time was needed to organise their resources and plan activities.

Conclusion

- **Where strategies were implemented as a whole school development, more staff appeared to be confident in their new approaches to the teaching of reading.** Overall, only a few indicated that they were not confident about implementing aspects.
- Staff were now confident to embed and/or develop the strategies over the coming sessions.
- Most Head Teachers thought that their staff were more reflective in their practices as a result of the project, although **only a few teachers indicated that they too thought that they were.**

Action

- For future phases, **staff will be encouraged to set up and develop a system of informal peer support to enable them to observe each other's practice and learn through discussion and self-evaluation.**
- **match funding has been introduced from Phase 2 to support the purchases of agreed resources.**

Pupils can apply skills and collaborative strategies across the curriculum, which enable them to become more independent learners.

Although some responses indicate "less than half", the percentage of staff is nonetheless significant. Staff statements are based upon feedback given but responses for all aspects were not given by all staff.

With regard to pupils' effectiveness in applying collaborative working skills in their learning:

- ✓ a third of teachers (34%) and half of both support staff (52%) and head teachers (55%) observed that pupils worked collaboratively and enjoyed this approach
- ✓ a quarter of the support staff (28%) noted that pupils were more engaged and proactive in their learning, with increased motivation to learn
- ✓ A few teachers (11%) and less than half of the support staff (16%) and head teachers (36%) also stated that pupils' talking and listening skills had improved
- ✓ A few teachers (2%) noted an improvement in self and peer assessment
- ✓ there was insufficient evidence to comment upon cross curricular use of collaborative strategies

With respect to pupils' knowledge and application of the learning intentions,

- ✓ 9% of head teachers, 16% of teachers and 24% of support staff observed that there was an improvement in pupils' written work
- ✓ a few (11% of teachers, 12% of support staff) and 27% of head teachers noted that pupils were more aware of the author's devices, use of language and punctuation and were more able to interrogate the text;
- ✓ a few teachers (14%) also noted that pupils had an increased awareness of genre features and that there was an improvement in pupils' ability to locate information in a non-fiction book.
- ✓ Most pupils (78%), when questioned, were able to explain what a non-fiction book was and the majority (55%) were able to name 2 or more features found on the back cover of a book.

Conclusion

- For most pupils, working collaboratively during reading tasks had been a new way of learning. Some teachers/schools were able to embed the practice quickly and effectively whilst others did so gradually. **However, some have yet to do so.**
- Where pupils were regularly encouraged to use collaborative strategies, staff indicated that for the most part, they were able to work effectively and with increased independence.

Action

The advantages of collaborative learning will be further highlighted during staff training and school visits. Schools will be encouraged to include this peer and self-evaluation in their own whole school development of Assessment is for Learning. Additional strategies to successfully include pupils of differing abilities and attitudes will also be shared. Staff and pupils now need time to embed and develop these practices.

An increase in confidence that allows pupils of all abilities to be able to, and to enjoy engaging with texts.

Although some responses indicate "less than half", the percentage of staff is nonetheless significant. Staff statements are based upon feedback given but responses for all aspects were not given by all staff.

With respect to pupils' confidence,

- ✓ the majority of head teachers (73%) and support staff (60%) and less than half of teachers (41%) reported pupils were more confident in their approach to reading, had developed greater independence and were taking on more responsibility.
- ✓ the majority of head teachers (73%) and less than half of the class teachers (16%) observed that pupils are engaged with texts and proactive in their approach to learning.
- ✓ the majority of pupils (71%) were confident about their reading ability.

Regarding the nature of inclusion of all pupils in reading activities,

- ✓ most head teachers (82%), the majority (55%) of class teachers and less than half of support staff (40%) noted an increase in the inclusion of all pupils. 55% percent of head teachers, 27% of class teachers and 40% of support staff reported that this has had a positive impact on the pupils' enthusiasm and self-esteem.

With regard to pupils' enjoyment of engaging with text,

- ✓ the majority of pupils (63%) stated that they did enjoy reading at school.
- × When asked if they ever read with a partner or in a trio less than half of pupils (48%) noted that they read regularly with a partner/trio, 23% read occasionally with a partner/trio and 28% stated that they do not read with a partner/trio.
- ✓ Almost all pupils (96%) who read regularly and occasionally with a partner/trio in school, reported that they enjoyed collaborative learning. "It's not as boring as at home because there are people around who can help you with words.": "We get to see different people and help each other." "I might not have good intelligence but someone else might." "Trios can understand it more."
- ✓ a third of teachers (34%) and the majority of support staff (52%) believed that the interactive nature of the activities had directly influenced pupils' enjoyment of reading. 27% of teachers observed that pupils are now more enthusiastic about reading activities. However, a few teachers (9%) stated that the pace of their lessons was too slow and children were bored during the Writer's Craft and Reading for Information lessons.

Conclusion

- Staff felt there had been an increase in pupil confidence and independence.
- In most cases there had been an increase in the inclusion of all pupils and that this had had a positive effect on the pupil's enthusiasm and self-esteem.
- Although working collaboratively increased pupils enjoyment of reading tasks in almost every case, this practice had yet to be firmly established in more than half of the phase 1 schools.

Action

- as previous criterion.

An increase in the number of pupils actively involved in reading for enjoyment.

Although some responses indicate "less than half", the percentage of staff is nonetheless significant. Staff statements are based upon feedback given but responses for all aspects were not given by all staff.

- ✓ The majority of head teachers (64%), 16% of teachers and 12% of support staff stated that pupils were motivated by the variety of new materials including home readers
- ✓ less than half of teachers (48%) noted that pupils are reading regularly for enjoyment, with 32% of support staff indicating that pupils are now reading more often
- ✓ most children (76%) commented that they do enjoy reading at home, while almost all (93%) do read at home.
- ✓ all children surveyed have a reading role model at home and most (75%) have a male reading role model.
- ✓ the majority of pupils (70%) borrow books from a library (public, school, library van).⁶

Suggestions for how to include *reading for enjoyment* were made at training sessions but this aspect did not become an additional focus of the project until August 2005. A third of Head Teachers (36%) planned to promote this aspect further within their own school over the coming session.

Conclusion

- Where there had been a whole school approach to the promotion of reading for enjoyment, pupils reported favourable results in both the amount and the enjoyment of personal reading.
- Where schools had purchased new style home readers, staff generally felt that they motivated pupils.

Action

- To increase teachers' awareness of the impact of planned and timetabled Reading for enjoyment on both attainment and pupil learning outcomes, **this aspect will now be promoted as a key focus**, together with core reading, reading for information and writer's craft, from the beginning of the project. **Strategies will be highlighted such as paired and peer reading plus there will be a greater emphasis on the promotion of staff reading to pupils of all ages.**

⁶ Appendix 5 'Pupil responses'

Parents actively involved in supporting Reading at home

This aspect of the project is each school's own responsibility. Any input from the authority takes the form of advice and support only. 'Supporting the role of parents' was included in staff training and a leaflet for parents was distributed for Head teachers and their staff to amend and use as and when they decided. By June 2006,

- ✓ almost all schools (91%) had informed parents about the project. In addition to the leaflet, some schools had offered information evenings and afternoons, although 27% commented on a poor turnout
- ✓ a third of the Head Teachers (36%) indicated that they planned to involve parents more over the session 2006 -2007
- × there was insufficient evidence to evaluate how active parents are in supporting reading at home

Attention was drawn to the Home Reading Initiative Grant from Learning and Teaching Scotland and six of the phase 1 schools were successful in their applications, each receiving up to £1000. This was spent on purchasing separate books for P4-P7 to read at home, although a few schools supplemented their existing reading 'schemes' and one Head Teacher created reading sacks for P4 to tackle the disengagement of boy readers at this stage.

When asked about supporting the role of parents,

- × of those who responded (45%) most said that parents were positive about the methodologies now being employed, A few said reactions were mixed and indicated that parents did not like being included in the project. The remaining Head Teachers did not comment on this aspect.

Conclusion

- Almost all schools had kept parents informed about the project but **only a few had sought parental views and opinions.**
- Although some schools *were* successful in involving parents through a variety of open days and information leaflets, some had difficulty in attracting parents to workshops and information evenings.

Action

- Greater support and advice will be offered to schools, including a suggested timescale of when and how to involve parents. **The QDO with responsibility for supporting the role of parents is now actively involved with the project and has produced a CD ROM of guidelines and support materials,** which will be distributed to participating schools with appropriate guidance. The QDO will also be directly involved in sharing advice with Head Teachers.
A parental questionnaire will be offered for use in all project schools.

Making connections

Throughout the project the literacy officers constantly sought to make connections with other national and local priorities. Major links were made to, and developed for:

Assessment is for Learning⁷

Many of the key principals of this programme are concurrent with the literacy project, including:

Planning which:

- *Takes account of prior learning*
- *Specifies what learners are expected to learn and how/when learning is to be undertaken*

Teaching approaches which:

- *Engage and stimulate the learner*
- *Allow for regular review of progress towards learning outcomes*
- *Are varied to match learning needs and preferred styles of learning*
- *Promote positive social interactions*

Teacher-learner interactions which are marked by:

- *Sharing the purpose of lessons and reviewing prior learning*
- *Discussions which promote learning and building confidence, giving opportunities to express their thinking and use their initiative*
- *The valuing of all contributions*

Questioning which:

- *Allows time for thought*
- *Ascertains where learning went wrong*
- *Values all genuine responses and exploits them to promote further understanding*

Learners who :

- *Take responsibility for and are active in managing their learning*
- *Often set their own targets*
- *Adopt a collaborative approach*
- *Are confident about expressing their thinking, and listen to and respect others' ideas*
- *Review their own and their peer's progress and have a very good idea about improvement*

Assessment which:

- *Emphasises the formative, celebrating what has been achieved and reviewing what has still to be achieved to progress*
- *Is an appropriate blend of self, peer and teacher review*

Improving Scottish Education⁸

This consists of four signposts for improvement in the Primary sector recommended by HMIe after the 2002-2005 review. The following HMIe recommendations regarding best practice are promoted through the Highland Literacy project.

1. Signpost to improvement in independent learning

⁷ Highland Council Learning & Teaching Policy and Toolkit

⁸ HMIe 2006

"By P7, pupils should have developed good skills as independent learners. Features of growing independence in learning are that pupils:

- *Know how to work with others;*
- *Respect and value the ideas and opinions of others;*
- *Know how to seek help and where to find information;*
- *Know what questions to ask and have developed independent research skills;*
- *Can communicate orally and in writing on their own and with others;*
- *Can use available time well;*
- *Can evaluate their own strengths and areas for improvement"*

2. Signpost to improvement in Learning and Teaching

"Teachers engage pupils in high quality interactions designed to extend their thinking

- *Pupils' learning experiences are stimulating and active;*
- *Pupils become more engaged with their learning, see its relevance and experience success;*
- *Teachers have a wide repertoire of well understood approaches and can use and adapt these effectively;*
- *Pupils gain increasing independence as learners as they progress through the school;*
- *Teachers and pupils engage in dialogue about evaluating and improving the process of learning and teaching"*

3. Signpost to improvement in meeting the needs of all learners

"Schools have a clear and shared commitment to equality and inclusion for all, well thought out approaches to learning and teaching and a strong ethos of self evaluation and improvement

- *Schools have clear strategies in place to ensure that lower attaining pupils are supported to progress at a pace which will bring their attainment closer to that of their classmates."*

4. Signpost to improvement in leadership

"Learning and teaching is placed at the heart of the school"

- *Expectations of what staff and pupils can achieve are high;*
- *Vision and creativity are used to ensure that staff focus on both the quality of how pupils achieve as well as what they achieve;*
- *Feedback to staff is based on thorough and shared knowledge of current good practice within school and beyond"*

A Curriculum for Excellence

Applying the four capacities outlined in 'A Curriculum for Excellence' to pupils' learning experiences in literacy, the following bullet points highlight aspects that are also promoted through the Highland Project.

1. Successful Learners use Language to:

- *Access texts which are visual, digital, media and print (ancient and modern)*
- *Learn independently by searching, selecting, processing and transforming information*
- *Learn as part of a group by talking and clarifying their understanding of texts*
- *Make reasoned evaluations by developing an awareness of how and why texts are made.*
- *Link and apply different kinds of learning by reflecting on writer's and presenters' ideas and craft*

2. Confident Individuals use Language to:

- Relate to others and learn from them by talking clearly, listening attentively and responding appropriately
- Critically analyse a range of texts

3. Responsible citizens can:

- Develop knowledge and understanding of the world and Scotland's place in it by reading and discussing fiction and non-fiction texts
- Develop their reading skill so that they can interpret, critically examine and analyse different types of texts which exist in a complex society with a high volume of information.

4. Effective Contributors use Language to:

- Explore fully the meanings, implications and standpoints in texts
- Apply critical thinking in new contexts by posing and reflecting on questions

ISSUES AND ACTIONS

Issues arising from Phase 1

From the beginning of the project, several issues had to be resolved to ensure its success. Some of these could be addressed as phase 1 progressed but the majority could only be adopted for later schools.

Issue: Funding

No Authority funding was set aside for schools to purchase additional resources. Many had dated and insufficient materials to allow for the complete implementation of the project.

Action

The Authority allocated funding to Phase 2 and phase 3 schools. To ensure each school's commitment to the project, this funding matched monies pledged by individual schools and **all purchases were to be in agreement with the Literacy officers.** In addition, **phase 2 schools were given a completed application for the Home Reading initiative grant.** This has also been included in the project model for Phase 3 schools.

Issue: Selection of project schools

It soon became apparent that by inviting schools from amongst the authority's lowest attaining in reading, the project had created significant problems. Many schools resented being singled out and saw it as a reflection on their professional ability to teach and/or manage reading. Many staff were defensive and were therefore fairly 'closed' to any suggestions of how the teaching of reading might be improved. This made it difficult for the Literacy Officers to promote change.

Action

Word of mouth became the strongest tool for change. As staff saw first hand the benefits of the project, most were willing to try them in their own setting. Much discussion of the strategies then took place with the Literacy Officers and between their peers. Where the Head Teacher supported the project fully, any problems were resolved and the initiative gained momentum within these schools.

In phase 2 of the project, it was agreed to invite schools using different criteria. These were to be schools who had recently been inspected and had literacy as an action point or schools where their Quality Development Officer had discussed and agreed the schools' inclusion with the Head Teacher for specific reasons. Only schools where the staff were committed to participate would be accepted. A different approach was also to be taken by the authority - project schools had to use *all* the strategies suggested, they could not opt in and out.

In phase 3, an open application was agreed where schools, in conjunction with the relevant QDO had to make application, giving justification for inclusion. **This approach will be repeated for phase 4 of the project with attainment being taken into account.**

Issue: Timescale of implementation

The authority originally allocated funding for six months. It was decided that Literacy officers would focus their work with P4 - P7 classes as attainment tended to dip at in these stages. There was only one INSET day during the six-month period, so much had to take place in individual schools at CAT sessions. There was also a problem of schools in the far north being unable to travel to Dingwall for the INSET. As the project timescale was extended, staff in P1-3 were only able to be included at a later date which resulted in a more disjointed approach.

Action

Once the Authority agreed to allow a year for the implementation of phase 2, **it was decided to follow a whole school approach, with P1-7 being included from the outset**. Training could be offered on the two November INSET days and in *each* of the region's areas thus reducing travelling for staff. This also had the benefit of staff working with and supporting each other. This new revised timescale would also allow for **'catch up' days for Head Teachers** to meet to discuss any issues and to share any successes. The project is now being seen as a five year process.

Issue: The project format

Phase 1 had to cope with the problems of working with an emerging project, rather than one that was established. Strategies were continually changing as it was seen how to improve them and some new aspects were added, often at the request of individual staff, school or the lead Quality Development Officer for the project.

Action

Each aspect was discussed and adapted, as necessary throughout Phase 1. Phase 2 had the benefit of a much more established and concise project. New aspects could be included from the beginning, rather than added on, such as phonics and Reading for enjoyment. The project's approach continues to change and adapt, but at a much slower pace.

Issue: Supporting the role of parents

Overall, this area was the least successful for phase 1 schools. Although many had offered information evenings, these were usually poorly attended with some parents being unaware of the project at all.

Action

It was decided that this area would be given a much higher profile in phase 2, with increased support from the literacy officers. **A parent information leaflet** would be offered at the very beginning and Head teachers would be encouraged to adapt it to suit their school and to distribute this to all parents. With strong input from the QDO with responsibility in this area, **a CD ROM was created containing materials to help each school towards better support of parents**. This Quality Development Officer would be invited to speak at a 'Catch Up' day when head teachers would also be asked to share their own ideas for including parents.

For Phase 3, the QDO managing the "Supporting the role of parents" budget has, in principle, committed funding for core and associated schools.

Issue: Project evaluation

When the project began in January 2005, the remit was to raise attainment in reading and phase 1 schools were selected on this basis. Attainment was therefore the main focus for evaluation through the use of National assessments data and standardised testing. As the project evolved it became clear that other aspects, such as the validity of each schools' self-evaluation processes and the need to evaluate learning and teaching needed to be encompassed. To ensure validity, pre- and post-evaluations were required.

Action

Additional methods of evaluation were incorporated into the latter stages of phase 1, with Head teachers, teaching and support staff and pupils being asked to evaluate how the project had affected their learning and teaching. The school also completed an audit that would be used as part of their school development plan for the forthcoming session. **Throughout the whole project, teachers were asked to self evaluate their lessons on a regular basis.**

Phases 2 and 3 were asked to complete a whole school audit at the beginning of the project as part of the schools' own evaluation process, in addition to repeating the process at the end. This would enable a direct comparison. Before training began, Head Teachers, teaching staff and support staff completed questionnaires where they were asked to describe their current practice and would be asked to reflect again at the end. Pupils were interviewed and notes taken by the Literacy officers at the beginning and again towards the end of the project. In addition, pupils were taught the skill of self-evaluation. It had been decided to **re-design the staff and pupils questionnaires to make them more concise, using a scaling process for answers. An additional section is also to be included in the pupils' self-evaluation section to allow for pupils to plan for improvement.**

Summary of issues for future action

Issue	Action
<p>Gender issues for most able girls not exceeding appropriately Declining attainment for those exceeding appropriate levels Writing attainment gap Instances of specific declining attainment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOs to further review current research on gender issues. • Schools to keep a close focus on progress of most able, particularly girls through tracking/predicting systems and staff discussion. • Further advice to be issued to Phase 1 schools, and incorporated in future training. • Bring any specific attainment issues to the attention of relevant link QDO
<p>Collaborative learning not well established</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make further links with AifL • advantages of collaborative approaches to be further emphasised at future inset and training
<p>Further development of inclusive approaches</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional strategies for inclusion of pupils with differing abilities to be researched and shared
<p>Developing the role of parents in supporting literacy at home</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant QDO involved in project from Phase 2 • parental leaflet made available • CD rom support pack to be issued to schools when each ready to implement this aspect • funding identified in principle for phase 3 schools - QDO
<p>Embedding writer's craft</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMT to monitor plans and monitor classroom practice for self-evaluation
<p>Developing self- and peer-evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schools to be encouraged to incorporate as part of AifL development
<p>School self-evaluation processes support embedding of processes and improvement in attainment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to SISE 2 training • Literacy focus maintained in schools until well established and become maintenance item • Evaluation of pupils' work and learning experiences built into school's monitoring programme.
<p>Resource building in subsequent years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOs to continue to update schools with advice on appropriate resources.
<p>Sustaining best practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOs to provide additional training for new/returning members of staff through open inset events in CDP calendar • Schools encouraged to appoint "best practice" practitioner as literacy mentor • Staff in future phases to be encouraged to set up informal peer support

Issue	Action
	systems to improve self-evaluation and classroom practice
Reading for enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • now promoted as a key focus in later phases • strategies such as paired and peer reading to be promoted
Funding needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • match funding provided to schools from phase 3 - £25000 per phase • resources agreed with LOs before purchase • Home Reading grant application supported in phase 2 and 3
Selection process for project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • selection criteria changed since Phase 1 • selection criteria for phase 4 to be agreed with QDT
Project evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • phase 2 and 3 evaluation processes evolved to include baseline audit of school practice, pupil interviews twice, etc • staff and pupil questionnaires to be redesigned to provide more evaluative feedback • additional section to be added to pupil self-evaluation to allow them to plan for improvement

Appendix 1

Standardised Testing - random sample

Phase 1 - Summary of Results

school	Average score				Average difference		
	2005	2006	2005	2006	girls	boys	total
1	*1.						
2	91.1	91.8	Girls 95.6 Boys 86	Girls 96.4 Boys 86.6	+0.8	+0.6	+0.7
3	91.3	94.3	Girls *2 Boys	Girls *2 Boys	*2.		+3.0
4	89.9	94.7	Girls 92.5 Boys 87.3	Girls 98.3 Boys 91.2	+5.8	+3.9	+4.8
5	*3 106.4	107.2	Girls 104.8 Boys *4	Girls 106.7 Boys *4	+1.9	*4.	+0.8
6	90.7	93.6	Girls 92.2 Boys 89	Girls 93.6 Boys 93.6	+1.4	+4.6	+2.9
7	90.7	95.0	Girls 89.2 Boys 92.25	Girls 96 Boys 94.75	+6.8	+2.5	+4.3
8	99.0	101.0	Girls 99 Boys 99	Girls 102 Boys 100	+3.0	+1.0	+2.0
9	90.5	92.1	Girls 92.1 Boys 88.7	Girls 93.3 Boys 90.7	+1.2	+2.0	+1.6
10	93.4	93.9	Girls 93.3 Boys 93.4	Girls 96 Boys 91.25	+2.7	-0.27	+0.5
11	101.5	104	Girls 107.5 Boys 95.5	Girls 107.5 Boys 100.5	=	+5.0	+2.5

Total average of all phase 1 schools	2005	2006	2005	2006	girls	boys	total
	94.45	96.76	Girls 96.25 Boys 91.4	Girls 98.25 Boys 93.8	+2.0	+2.4	+2.31

Notes

All tests were administered by school staff and marked and collated by Literacy Officers

*1. Head Teacher chose not to use Standardised testing

*2. Sample too small

*3 Unexpectedly high result for random sample - does not match National assessment results

*4. Sample too small (85% tested were girls, 15% were boys)

APPENDIX 2

5-14 Aggregate Attainment (P3, P4, P6, P7)

School	Reading				Writing			
	2004	2005	2006	gain	2004	2005	2006	gain
Highland	80.8	80.1	81.2	0.3	75.1	75.6	76.5	1.4
1	61.9	62.5	66.7	4.8	64.2	71.1	68.3	4.1
2	54.9	58.9	61.8	6.9	55.6	52.7	61.5	5.9
3	71.8	84.2	81.1	9.3	70.8	75.0	89.0	18.2
4	69.2	80.0	77.8	8.6	66.0	86.7	82.1	16.1
5	60.2	72.3	83.7	23.5	62.8	69.9	80.8	18.0
6	55.3	62.5	66.1	10.8	59.6	66.7	63.2	3.6
7	71.4	83.3	66.7	-4.7	50.0	83.3	66.7	16.7
8	46.0	51.7	65.3	19.3	63.2	53.9	63.9	0.7
9	67.0	65.3	56.2	-10.8	60.0	58.1	58.4	-0.6
10	77.8	81.5	90.5	12.7	70.4	74.1	66.7	-3.7
11	81.0	80.8	87.5	6.5	71.4	65.4	83.3	11.9
Average	65.1	71.2	73.0	7.9	63.1	68.8	71.3	8.2
Sch/HC aver.gap	-15.7	-8.9	-8.2		-12.0	-6.8	-5.2	

(Shaded cells indicate that score is above the Highland average.)

Comment:

- ✓ Most schools made significant gains over the two year period in comparison to the average Highland gain.
- ✓ 9% of schools exceeded HC averages in reading in 2004, 36.4% exceeded in 2005 and 27.3% exceeded in 2006.
- ✓ 0% of schools exceeded HC averages in writing in 2004, 18.2% exceeded in 2005 and 36.4% exceeded in 2006
- ✓ For both reading and writing the gap between the Highland average and Phase 1 schools is steadily closing.
- * One school displays a steadily declining attainment trend in reading, with writing being broadly maintained.
- * One school's pupil base is too small to draw valid conclusions.

5-14 Aggregate Exceeding (P3, P4, P6, P7)

School	Reading				Writing			
	2004	2005	2006	gain	2004	2005	2006	gain
Highland	37.1	36.5	39.3	2.2	23.2	24.2	25.1	1.9
1	32.8	36.8	38.1	5.3	19.4	27.4	26.2	6.8
2	14.3	20.2	26.8	12.5	16.5	17.8	20.5	4.0
3	31.0	43.3	39.2	8.2	20.8	42.1	42.5	21.7
4	34.6	38.3	27.8	-6.8	22.6	30.0	17.9	-4.7
5	10.8	37.3	32.7	21.9	17.0	13.3	14.4	-2.6
6	38.3	16.7	19.6	-18.7	4.3	6.3	29.8	25.5
7	14.3	33.3	16.7	2.4	12.5	16.7	0.0	-12.5
8	16.1	27.0	35.7	19.6	10.3	10.1	12.4	2.1
9	9.0	12.6	5.6	-3.4	4.0	2.2	1.1	-2.9
10	33.3	22.2	33.3	0	33.3	18.5	33.3	0
11	38.1	19.2	25.0	-13.1	42.9	11.5	16.7	-26.2
Average	21.3	27.9	27.3	6.0	18.5	17.8	19.5	1.0
Sch/HC aver.gap	-15.8	-8.6	-12.0		-4.7	-6.4	-5.6	

(Shaded cells indicate that score is above the Highland average.)

Comment:

- ✓ Most schools (63%) made gains over the three year period in comparison to the average Highland gain for reading and writing.
- ✓ 18.2% of schools exceeded HC averages in reading in 2004, 36.4% exceeded in 2005 and 0% exceeded in 2006.
- ✓ 18.2% of schools exceeded HC averages in writing in 2004, 27.3% in 2005 and 36.4% in 2006
- ✓ For reading the gap between the Highland average and Phase 1 schools is inconsistent, but has decreased slightly. The significant gain in 2005 has not been maintained.
- ✓ For writing the gap between the Highland average has widened slightly.
- * 36.4% (4) of schools display declining attainment trend in reading, with 45.4% (5) displaying a decline in those who exceed in writing.
- * One school's pupil base is too small to draw valid conclusions.

5-14 Aggregate Attainment(P3, P4, P6, P7) and by stage
Reading 2006

School	Agg	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
Highland	81.2	41.4	82.6	80.6	90.8	82.2	79.3
1	66.7	30.4	73.0	48.3	75.6	60.7	81.3
2	61.8	18.2	69.2	65.5	81.1	45.5	68.6
3	81.1	14.3	84.6	80.0	94.1	81.8	76.5
4	77.8	28.6	90.0	76.9	78.6	58.3	84.2
5	83.7	25.0	85.7	81.5	85.0	89.7	77.8
6	66.1	22.2	70.0	73.3	45.5	68.8	53.3
7	66.7	n/a	0.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	n/a
8	65.3	9.5	69.6	72.4	84.2	79.2	36.4
9	56.2	10.0	43.5	52.6	90.0	85.7	46.2
10	90.5	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	66.7	85.7
11	87.5	n/a	100.0	88.9	100.0	100.0	71.4
Average	73.0	28.7	71.4	76.3	84.9	76.0	68.2
Hc/sch gap	-8.2	-12.7	-11.2	-4.3	-5.9	-6.2	-11.1

(Shaded cells indicate that score is above the Highland average.)

Percentage of Phase 1 schools exceeding Highland average for reading
2004 - 2006

%	2004	2005	2006	trend
Aggregate P3,4,6,7	9.1	27.3	27.3	✓
P2A	18.2	36.4	9.1	×
P3A	27.3	45.5	45.5	✓
P4B	9.1	36.4	36.4	✓
P5B	18.2	27.3	36.4	✓
P6C	27.3	9.1	36.4	?
P7D	9.1	18.2	27.3	✓

*5-14 Aggregate Attainment(P3, P4, P6, P7) and by stage
Writing 2006*

School	Agg	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
Highland	76.5	50.7	86.7	76.3	89.0	77.5	66.3
1	68.3	34.8	83.8	55.2	75.6	57.1	71.9
2	61.8	0.0	72.0	65.5	70.3	48.5	62.9
3	89.0	0.0	100.0	90.0	88.2	81.8	76.5
4	82.1	50.0	100.0	84.6	78.6	58.3	85.7
5	80.8	54.2	85.7	81.5	95.0	89.7	66.7
6	63.2	44.4	100.0	66.7	81.8	68.8	26.7
7	66.7	n/a	0.00	100.0	100.0	100.0	n/a
8	63.9	38.1	72.7	58.6	94.7	79.2	45.5
9	58.4	0.0	65.2	52.6	100.0	71.4	46.2
10	66.7	100.0	100.0	25.0	83.3	33.3	71.4
11	83.3	n/a	100.0	88.9	100.0	80.0	71.4
Average	71.3	35.7	79.9	69.9	88.0	69.8	62.5
Hc/sch gap	-5.2	-15.0	-6.8	-6.4	-1.0	-7.7	-3.8

(Shaded cells indicate that score is above the Highland average.)

*Percentage of Phase 1 schools exceeding Highland average for writing
2004 - 2006*

	2004	2005	2006	trend
Aggregate P3,4,6,7	0.0	18.2	36.4	✓
P2	36.4	18.2	18.2	×
P3	27.3	45.5	45.5	✓
P4	27.3	45.5	45.5	✓
P5	18.2	45.5	45.5	✓
P6	27.3	9.1	45.5	?
P7	36.4	27.3	54.5	?

Same pattern at P2 and P6 as for reading

APPENDIX 3

AUDIT FOR READING - JUNE 06

- 10 schools returned Audit, 1 school did not return Audit
(Numbers given as percentages)

No	Quality Indicator	Themes %	4	3	2	1
CURRICULUM: How good is your reading development?						
Complete the audit below for your school by ticking the appropriate box.						
1.1	Structure of the curriculum	• The teaching of reading is timetabled and given appropriate focus	90	10		
		• National and local advice has been taken into account in developing reading	90	10		
		• Reading experiences are planned to permeate the curriculum.	50	50		
1.2	Courses and programmes	• The programme includes a whole school approach allowing continuity and progression from nursery to P7.	60	40		
		• The components of the reading programme have balance and breadth between them.	30	70		
		• All staff have received comprehensive guidance on the programme, learning and teaching approaches, support for pupils and assessment and recording.	60	40		
ATTAINMENT IN READING						
2.1	Overall quality of attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost all pupils have made very good progress from their prior levels of attainment in reading <p>* Audit stated ‘too early to tell’</p>	50	30		20*
LEARNING AND TEACHING						
3.1	Teachers’ planning	• Teachers’ plans show clear learning outcomes.	50	50		
		• Assessment strategies are clearly stated.	40	60		
		• Staff make effective use of assessment information to identify pupils’ needs and plan next steps in learning.	20	70	10	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities, including homework are planned in a way which makes effective use of the pupils' and teachers' time. 	10	70	20	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where appropriate, there is collegiate planning. 	50	40	10	
3.2	The teaching process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching processes match pupils' learning needs and preferred learning styles. 	50	50		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They make effective use of ICT. <p>* 2 school's indicators missing</p>	10	20	40	10
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are well planned opportunities for whole class, group, trio, pair and individual activities. 	90	10		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent learning skills are developed through reading activities 	90	10		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers share the purpose of reading lessons with pupils. Their explanations and instructions are clear. 	50	50		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils' contributions are encouraged and valued. Praise is used well. There is an effective reward system. 	100			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers question skilfully and involve all pupils. 	70	20		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where there are weaknesses in children's knowledge and understanding, efforts are made to ascertain where learning has gone wrong and countermeasures are put in place. <p>* 1 school's indicators missing</p>	80	10		
3.3	Pupils' learning experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The learning environment is stimulating and challenging. Pupils work well and enthusiastically on reading tasks and activities. 	80	20		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pace of learning enables pupils to make good progress in their coursework. 	60	40		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils take responsibility and become actively involved in their own learning. They know what they need to do in order to improve. 		90	10		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils work collaboratively in a variety of circumstances involving groups of differing compositions and sizes. <p>* 2 school's indicators missing</p>	60	20			
3.4	Meeting pupils' needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading tasks match the needs of individuals. <p>* 2 school's indicators missing</p>	60	20			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils contribute to their own learning targets. <p>* 2 school's indicators missing</p>		60	10	10	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning needs are identified and barriers to learning are addressed. Support staff contribute effectively to meet pupils' needs. 	60	40			
3.5	Assessment as part of teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are agreed assessment methods for reading which are clearly matched to identified purposes. 		70	30		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are a range of approaches to assessment, including self and peer assessment. 		70	30		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers evaluate their aims and tasks in reading and make effective judgements. 	4	4	2		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about pupils' progress and attainment in reading is regularly shared by teachers and pupils. <p>* 2 school's indicators missing</p>	30	50			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment information is used to evaluate learning and teaching and inform future provision. 	10	60	30		

3.6	Reporting pupils' progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports include helpful information, about individual progress in reading and inform 'next steps' 	50	50		
SUPPORT FOR PUPILS						
4.4	Monitoring progress and achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil progress in aspects of reading is tracked from stage to stage to ensure continuity. 	60	30	10	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils evaluate their own progress as part of the monitoring process. 		30	30	10
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff make effective use of information gathered in profiles in order to negotiate realistic learning targets with pupils. <p>* 1 school's indicators missing</p>	10	50	20	10
4.5	Learning support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach to reading is inclusive. Difficulties are overcome by the appropriate deployment of support staff and the use of resources and strategies, including ICT. 	50	50		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmes are well designed and suitably differentiated to enable all pupils to participate fully and maximise progress across the curriculum. <p>* 4 school's indicators missing</p>	50	10		
ETHOS						
5.2	Expectation /achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff expectations of pupils' achievements are high. The importance of praise is a motivating and positive aspect of reading experiences. Pupils' have high expectations of themselves. 	70	30		
RESOURCES						
6.2	Provision of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are adequate and suitable resources for the teaching of reading and for all other reading experiences, including a wide variety of genre. 	20	50	30	

6.3	Organisation and use of resources and space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resources are efficiently and effectively organised. There is a sharing of resources across the school and easy access at all times. <p>* 1 school's indicators missing</p>	40	50		
6.5	Effectiveness and deployment of staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff work together to provide suitable expertise and delivery of the reading programme. <p>* 1 school's indicators missing</p>	80	10		
MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND QUALITY ASSURANCE						
7.1	Aims and policy making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reading policy gives appropriate detail regarding the aims, approaches and content of the reading programme <p>* 1 school's indicators missing</p>	40	50		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The staff have participated actively in the development and review of this policy. 	60	40	10	
7.2	Self-evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are involved in self evaluation in order to improve the quality of reading experiences. 	60	30	10	

APPENDIX 4

HEAD TEACHER' S EVALUATION OF BEST PRACTICE - MARCH 06

NON FICTION	% established	comment	Frequency of comment
Whole class lesson	100	Head covers this through CCR	
Fortnightly	82	Held weekly	
		Teachers tend to teach in time blocks	2
		Will settle over the session	
Mixed ability trios/pairs	100	P6/7 use reciprocal teaching instead	
Established roles	100	From P3 onwards only	
Trios working independently - same text	73	Lack of resources	
		Only up to P5	
Trios working independently - different text	100		
Established peer/self evaluation	73	Looking at AifL strategies linked to literacy	2
Talking and listening skills reinforced in lessons	100	Linking to HC planning sheets	
Good selection of NF materials	73	Money being committed to improve resources	
		Needs extending in infants	
Appropriate use of Support Staff	82	Few support staff	
		Good use to enable all pupils to be included	
Inclusion in forward plans	100	Yes but need to specify texts	
Monitoring of NF lessons by HT/DHT	73	Informal only until 2006/7	2
		Planned for term 2	
		Reading audit planned for next session	
		Some, by DHT	

WRITER'S CRAFT	% established	comment	Frequency
Whole class lesson	73	Using Literacy World	
Fortnightly	55	Weekly at present	
		Occasionally	
		Taught regularly - but not fortnightly	
Mixed ability trios/pairs	73		
Established roles	73		
Trios highlighting texts	55	Sometimes through core reading.	
Established peer/self evaluation	36	Not monitored	
		Links to AifL work	
Talking and listening skills reinforced in lessons	73		
Good selection of WC materials	73		
Connection made with writing	73	Strong links being made.	
Appropriate use of Support Staff	73		
Inclusion in forward plans including indication of devices/ materials used	73	Area for development Have developed own plans	
Monitoring of WC lessons by HT/DHT	55	Monitoring in 2006/07	3
		Head Teacher unable to comment	

CORE READING INFANTS	% established	Comment	Frequency
Fewest number of groups per class	82	Group numbers being decreased. Pupils set for reading	
Reading timetabled 4/5 times per week	91	Good use of CA time Other groups undertaking language work while teacher teaching reading. Not in P1 -weekly only at present - focus on phonics	
Variety of publishers/authors/style	64	Only occasional use of other materials. Mostly ORT	
Appropriate number of copies of each title	82	Resources being audited Increasing from sets of 8 to sets of 10	
Variety of genre	73	Mostly fiction in school	2
Reading taught at school and reinforced at home	100		
Variety of materials for Reading for enjoyment at home	100	Book packs Library books home	3 2
A variety of Follow Up activities	91	Pupils work through reading skills worksheets Using ideas from project booklet	
phonics taught synthetically			
Parents informed of changes	91	Information letter. Workshop cancelled due to low response rate Information evening/afternoon Parents viewed resources	3
Children working independently/trios/pairs/group	91	Mainly independent and pairs only P1s just beginning to work in groups fro reading - not yet pairs or trios	
Established peer/self evaluation	73	Through AifL 2 stars and a wish	

CORE READING INFANTS	% established	Comment	Frequency
Talking and listening skills reinforced in lessons	100		
Appropriate use of Support Staff	91	Support staff enjoy extra responsibility	
Inclusion in forward plans	100		
Monitoring of Core Reading lessons by HT/DHT	55	Most lessons informally monitored - CTs asked to self-evaluate.	2
		Monitoring in 2006/07	3
		Audit planned for May 06.	2

CORE READING - MIDDLE & UPPER	% established	Comment	Frequency
Fewest number of groups per class	82	Staff are working to reduce numbers of groups	
Reading timetabled 3 times per week	91	Reading timetabled within language - not taught as per project Staff teach 4 reading sessions per week (due to number of groups)	
Use of Chapter Books, 12-15 titles per year.	82		
Appropriate number of copies of each title	82	Resources being audited Increasing numbers in each set	
Levelled to 5-14 Levels	73	Levelled to reading scheme	3
Variety of genre	82		
Separate Home Readers for Reading for Enjoyment	73	Reading books going home	3
		Working on book packs	
		Setting up school library	
		Pupils read for 20 minutes per evening	
A variety of Follow Up activities	82		
Parents informed of changes	91	Parents info evening	3
		Parents info letter	3
Children working independently/trios/pairs/group	82	Occasionally	
Established peer/self evaluation	73		
Talking and listening skills reinforced in lessons	100		
Appropriate use of Support Staff	91		
Inclusion in forward plans	100		

CORE READING - MIDDLE & UPPER	% established	Comment	Frequency
Monitoring of Core Reading lessons by HT/DHT	73	Head also supports a group. Staff support for groups is rotated each term	
		Audit in May 06	2
		Formal monitoring 2006/07	3

POLICY ISSUES (PHASE 1 ONLY)	% established	Comment	Frequency
<u>Reading Policy</u> has been updated to take account of developments	45		
<u>Reading for Enjoyment</u> - increased focus throughout school	100		

APPENDIX 5

Pupil Response Sheets

(Data: Pupils from 10 schools, 40 pupils surveyed from Primary 4-7)

Key Questions	Responses		Interesting or enlightening comments	Summary Notes
How often do you read in school? (3 or more times)	63% read 3 or more times in school			The <i>majority</i> of pupils read 3 or more times in school
Knowledge of what a non-fiction book is (%)	78% knew what a non-fiction book was			<i>Most</i> pupils knew what a non-fiction book was
What would you find on the back cover of a non-fiction book? (responses with less than 2 or 2 or more correct ideas)	Less than 2	2 or more		The <i>majority</i> of pupils were able to name 2 or more features found on the back cover of a book
	45%	55%		
Do you enjoy reading at school? (figures rounded up)	1: 3%	6: 5%	<p><i>“Sometimes it’s boring stories; the good part is that some stories are exciting.”</i></p> <p><i>“We just got a whole heap of new books!”</i></p> <p><i>“I like reading at school because it’s quieter.”</i></p> <p><i>“It’s not as boring as at home because there’s people around you who can help with words.”</i></p> <p><i>“Better than grammar, not as good as PE.”</i></p> <p><i>“Don’t like the teacher watching you; a bit embarrassing; more mistakes when the teacher is listening.”</i></p> <p><i>“I enjoy the Classics and like to read out loud...”</i></p> <p><i>“I’m a ready person.”</i></p>	<p>The <i>majority</i> of pupils enjoy reading at school</p> <p>A figure above 8/10 would constitute an enjoyment of reading at school</p>
	2: 5%	7: 13%		
	3: 13%	8: 23%		
	4: 5%	9: 15%		
	5: 13%	10: 25%		
	63% of children enjoy reading at school.			
Do you ever read with a partner/in a trio?	Yes	48%	<i>“I don’t like to. I don’t like reading out loud.”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Less than half</i> of the pupils read regularly with a partner/trio • <i>Less than half</i> read occasionally with a partner/trio • <i>Less than half</i> do not read with a partner/trio
	Sometimes	23%		
	No	28%		

If so, do you enjoy this? (numbers of pupils who answered yes/number of pupils who have/do work in pairs/trios)	96% of children who do work in pairs/trios said they enjoyed this way of working.		<p><i>“Yes. We get to see different people and help each other. No-one is left out.”</i></p> <p><i>“If you don’t get something your friends are there for you.”</i></p> <p><i>“I might not have good intelligence but someone else might.”</i></p> <p><i>“Trios can understand it more.”</i></p>	Almost all pupils who regularly or sometimes read in a trio/with a partner enjoy this
Do you get reading homework?	<p>Yes (as preparation or reinforcement of pages in school): 45%</p> <p>No (home readers/library books): 48%</p> <p>Not included: 8%</p>		<p><i>“I like being able to choose my own home readers.!”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than half of children surveyed get reading homework as preparation or reinforcement of pages done in school (as per project guidelines) • Less than half take home readers/library books home (as per project guidelines) <p>Not included in statistics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One respondent was a P1 child who should get reading homework • One was a child with ASN (Wellington Square) • One child did not answer question
Do you enjoy reading at home?	<p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3 3%</p> <p>4</p> <p>5 5%</p>	<p>6 3%</p> <p>7 10%</p> <p>8 18%</p> <p>9 15%</p> <p>10 43%</p>		<p>Most children enjoy reading at home</p> <p>A figure above 8/10 would constitute an enjoyment of reading at home</p> <p>76% of children enjoy reading at home.</p>
Children who read at home	yes	no		Almost all pupils read at home
	93% read at home	8% do not read at home		

Percentage of pupils with a reading role model at home	Any reading role model	Male reading role model	<p><i>“Dad reads the newspaper and big books and falls asleep!”</i></p> <p><i>“Mum’s boyfriend reads medical stuff because he’s a builder.”</i></p>	<p>All children have a reading role model at home. In addition, most also have male role model</p>
	100% of children have people at home who are seen to read	75% of children have a male at home who is seen to read		
Do you borrow books from the library (school, public, van)?	70% of pupils surveyed borrow books from the library		<p><i>“Well, I did once! I take a book from the school library once a week but I don’t read it.”</i></p>	The majority of pupils borrow books from a library (public, school, van)
What do you like to do after school?	Outside activities	74%		<p>The majority of pupils do outside activities; a few watch TV or play on the playstation; a few choose to read.</p> <p>8% mentioned other activities: violin/music lessons, stay at school, draw</p>
	Watch TV/ play station	8%		
	Read (book, comic, etc)	13%		
Do you have a television in your room?	Yes	75%		<p>Most pupils surveyed have a television in their rooms</p>
	No	25%		
On a scale of 1-10 (10 being the best) what kind of reader do you think you are?	1: 3%	6: 15%		<p>The majority of pupils surveyed were confident about their reading ability</p> <p>Children awarding themselves 8 or above would demonstrate a confidence in their reading ability</p>
	2	7: 8%		
	3	8: 13%		
	4	9: 33%		
	5: 5%	10: 25%		
	71% felt confident about their reading ability			