

“It’s working wonders - children we never thought would read are reading.”

We spoke to Victoria Nicolaou (Deputy Headteacher of Primary) who told us about the impact *Read Write Inc. Phonics* has had on her pupils.

Introducing *Read Write Inc. Phonics*

Ofsted identified reading and writing as an area for improvement during our 2013 inspection. We were using a variety of approaches for different year and ability groups. We tried to pick the right programme for each child. Our approach lacked consistency and continuity.

I attended Ruth Miskin Training's first Special School workshop, where I was convinced – Consultant Trainer Rebecca Loza showed us the impact of a consistent Phonics programme. We chose the most supportive package – two days of training and three Development Days (they've been crucial to our progress).

The children

The children love it and would get upset on the rare occasions we've taken *Read Write Inc.* off timetable!

All our classrooms are *Read Write Inc.* classrooms – we have charts on the walls, Fred the Frogs and speed sound cards everywhere. The consistency and structure helps the students – they know what's expected, and what's coming.

They love the rhymes and the visuals. We usually

The progress and impact after one has been enough to know it's working wonders – children we never thought would read are reading.

School Name: **Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee School**

Location: **Horsham, West Sussex**

School Type: **Special School (SLD, PMLD, ASD)**

EAL: **4.5%**

Free school meals: **28.2%**

Pupils on roll: **91**

Age range: **2 - 19**

slow everything down for our pupils. Our Trainer recommended teaching *Read Write Inc. Phonics* at the same pace as mainstream schools. This took us a long while to get our heads around, but it worked. The speed and repetition help embed the sounds. Many of our pupils need lots of practice.

Many of our pupils are most passionate about the creative arts, but now they're begging for Phonics. The staff feed off the students' excitement and passion. Everyone gets behind it.

Our Special Support Assistants (SSAs) have noticed a real improvement in behaviour – the consistent behaviour management techniques (e.g. the silent stop signal) work really well. Certain pupils need a quick one-to-one Speed Sounds session in the morning to calm them down ahead of the school day.

*“Since we started using *Read Write Inc. Phonics* my group have progressed so much. They learned all the set 1 sounds and can now blend. The sound rhymes have been helpful - the group enjoy learning them and really do remember them, enabling them to form letters as well when writing.*”

“We are moving on to new sounds but revisit

embedded sounds at the end of each session – the group anticipate and enjoy this familiar routine.

“My group are always keen to have phonics sessions and are eager to find out what the new sound and rhyme is. Read Write Inc. has been a fantastic success for us.”

Fiona Haley, Special Support Assistant (SSA)

Bespoke Support

Our Consultant Trainer, Rebecca, has been into school for three Development Days – to coach our staff and help with teaching and data analysis. She has helped us design a bespoke tracker that tells a much more detailed story about our pupils' learning. The teacher handbook sets everything out, saving us time.

Parents

Every child has an annual review with their parents and teachers. This year, our first with Read Write Inc., the parents exclaimed, “Our children are reading at home!”

We ran parent workshops – they were fascinated and many have asked for regular progress reports.

Reading unlocks communication and makes all other learning possible. The parents now ask the teachers what they can do at home to help – they are involved in the learning in a way they weren't always before.

“We are absolutely delighted to see Alfie's confidence improve in his reading and writing, he enjoys sitting for longer periods with a book at home and spending more time reading the words and signing the actions. His handwriting has greatly improved. Alfie is able to independently control a pen when writing and writes smaller letters and words.”

Parent of Alfie, 6

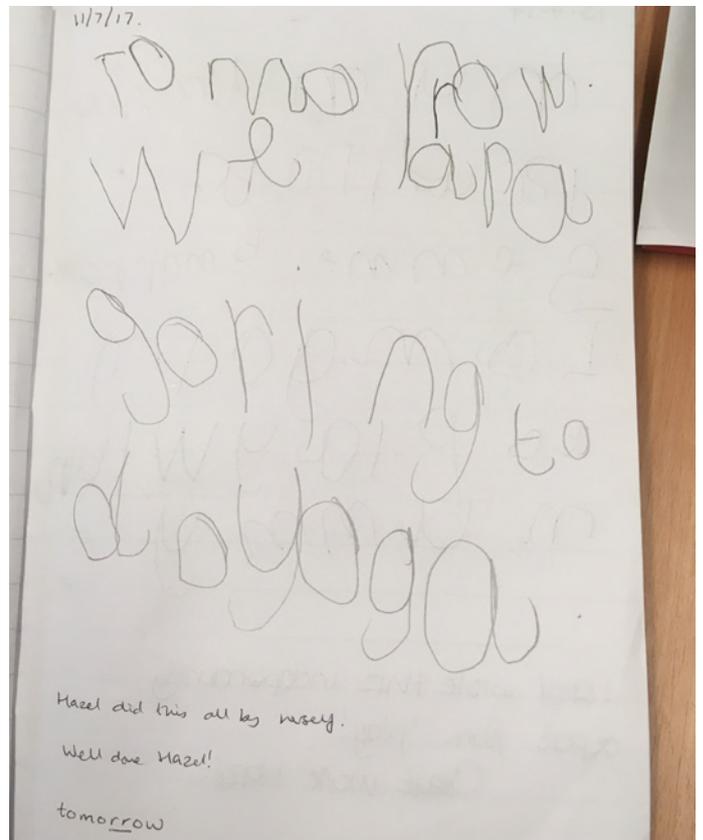
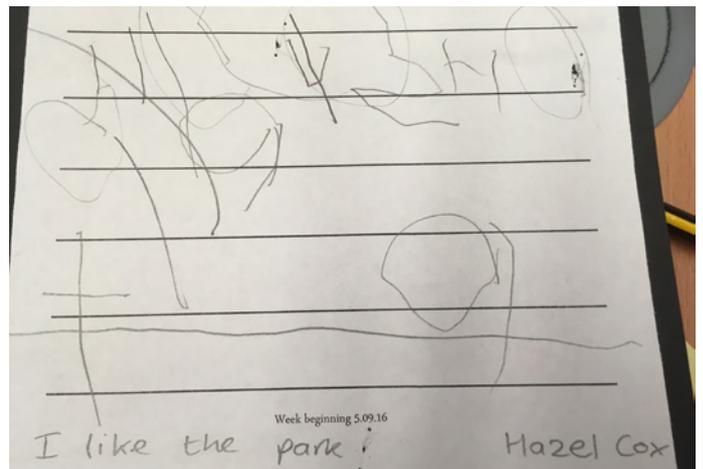
The largest impact I have seen...

...is with our non-verbal children. Many of them have severe and complex needs.

Often non-verbal children find it hard to work in pairs or groups, so they are taught one-to-one. They find the programme calming. It is multi-sensory, especially with our adaptations.

Some of our non-verbal pupils have started making sounds as they trace the letters. These are children that struggle to communicate verbally but are now trying to read out loud for the first time!

For other non-verbal pupils, who have been able to read for a while, we did not have an effective tool to assess their reading ability. The assessment tracker we developed with Rebecca has enabled us to know much more about what these pupils can do, so we can plan more effective lessons for them.



Writing progress made by one student, 10, between Sept '16 (upper image) and Jul '17 (lower image).