

SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OBTAINED IN ST.MICHAEL'S USING JOLLY PHONICS

1. FIRST GROUP (TRIAL COHORT) SUMMER TERM 1997

- 66 Reception children
- two classes
- taught for one term in Reception
- tested end of Summer Term, 1997

RESULTS:

On average reading and spelling ages were 6 months ahead of chronological age.

2. SECOND GROUP (FULL YEAR COHORT) AUTUMN TERM START 1997/98

- 90 Reception children
- three classes
- one full year of teaching
- tested end of Summer Term 1998

RESULTS:

On average – Reading Ages: 1 year ahead of chronological age
- Spelling Age: 17 months ahead of chronological age

- ◆ no significant difference in literacy skills between boys and girls
- ◆ no children with English as an additional language on the SEN Register
- ◆ SEN pupils benefitted from early identification and intervention
- ◆ few children move beyond Stage 3 of the SEN Code of Practice
- ◆ no significant difference in literacy skills between children eligible for free school meals and others

IMPORTANT FEATURES OF THE PROGRAMME

- ◆ the phonics programme is taught first
- ◆ key words are not taught as sight vocabulary
- ◆ reading books are not given out until all phonemes have been taught
- ◆ non-text big books are used at first for sharing and story telling

THE HEAD'S VIEW

- We wanted to use a phonics based system that incorporated phonics and irregular words to give our children the appropriate skills for reading and writing.
- As a school we released our Special Needs Teacher to work with parents, making materials and discussing the programme.
- Our Head of Infants led a Reception Parents meeting to encourage partnership between home and school. The Head and Special Needs Teacher were also present.
- The Infant Department agreed to trial the Phonics programme, initially in the two Reception classes.
- At the end of one term (Summer 1997) on average pupils were six months ahead of their age in Reading and Spelling. The following year Reception pupils were one year ahead of their chronological ages in Reading and seventeen months ahead in Spelling. Reading and Spelling standards had been raised; fluency and accuracy in written work had increased.

Benefits

- An early start phonics programme that gave children key reading and writing skills.
- All reception teachers using the same approach ensured common aims, shared expertise and focused teaching.
- All children were expected to develop good listening skills and appropriate classroom behaviour as they participated in focused teaching.
- The excellent results in Reception encouraged all staff so the use of the programme widened to include the whole of Key Stage 1.
- Standards in Reading and Writing have risen dramatically where children use the phonics programme.

THE SENCO'S VIEW

- Starting a phonics programme in Reception ensured that all pupils were given the same opportunity to acquire literacy skills.
- 'Slow-to-start' children were quickly identified and put on the Code of Practice ensuring that their needs were clearly identified, targets for action set and support put in place.
- The multisensory approach helped children with weak auditory and visual memories.
- All pupils were taught key skills for reading: matching letter to sound and blending. All were taught key skills for spelling: hearing the sounds in words and matching the sounds to letters.
- Older SEN children, higher up the school were taught reading and writing skills using a phonic, multisensory approach and made significant progress.

Benefits

- Literacy skills for all pupils were significantly raised.
- SEN pupils benefitted from early identification and intervention.
- There is no significant difference in literacy skills between boys and girls.
- No children with English as an additional language are on the SEN Register.
- Few children move beyond Stage 3 of the Code of Practice.
- The children's listening skills improved; they can sit and attend for longer periods, responding appropriately in focused lessons.
- Early identification of difficulty, appropriate support and emphasis on skill acquisition ensured maximum opportunity for all SEN pupils.
- Socio-economic background is not a factor in acquiring literacy skills.