



Context, Focus and Purpose

There has been a concerted drive from Hope University to develop partnerships with secondary schools, especially those in challenging circumstances and those judged by Ofsted as Requires Improvement. (RI).

Over the year, the university has built strong partnerships with a hub of five schools, the main purpose being to develop professional opportunities for trainees and to support raising achievement of secondary aged pupils.

One school, Broadgreen International School (BGIS) had identified a key literacy challenge with eighty Year 7 pupils entering the school reading well below their chronological age. The so called “Reading Champions Programme” was seen as an opportunity to bring Hope trainees, parents and sixth form students together to undergo a paired reading training, so that they would then be equipped to support the reading development of the Year 7 pupils.

Broadgreen International School, located in Old Swan, serves an area where there is socio economic challenge. The school has 69% of their cohort in receipt of pupil premium funding. The most recent validated data for the school (2017) is shown in the table below.

School	Prog 8	Attain 8	Grade 5 + Eng/Maths	Grade 4 + Eng/Maths	Ebacc: grade 5 +	Attendance
Broadgreen International School	-0.43	39.2	38%	56%	19% (entry 38%)	92.6%

What we did

- 1) A strategic team was developed to plan, implement and evaluate the Reading Champions Programme with each member having clearly defined roles and responsibilities. The team comprised Scott McKenzie (English Faculty Leader BGIS), Peter Ingham (KS3 English Coordinator – BGIS), Karen Rogan (Senior Professional Tutor Hope), Ed Wright (Professional Tutor Hope / project operations), Philippa Salmon (Secondary Partnership Hope).
- 2) BGIS identified a target group of thirty pupils reading around 18 months behind their chronological age. These pupils also were to receive “Read and Feed” intervention with the school. The school held a parents’ afternoon to launch the programme and open up the opportunity for parents to become involved.
- 3) Six identified PGCE students from Hope, two BGIS sixth form students and eight parents undertook Paired Reading Training that was delivered by Karen Rogan at the school during a two and a half hour session.
- 4) Pupils were split into groups of three and designated a “Reading Champion” to work with their group over a period of six weeks from March to April. A Thursday

morning was designated from 8.30 – 9.10 giving a 40 minute reading session. Since Thursday also overlapped with the school's PSHEE session this minimised pupils needing to be removed from other lessons.

- 5) The pupils completed a questionnaire at the beginning and the end of the programme, the purpose of which was to gauge any changes in their attitudes, habits and levels of confidence in reading.
- 6) There was ongoing monitoring throughout the programme and adjustments made to plans in consequence of findings. A full team evaluation took place at the end of the programme.

Impact – Including data

Strengths of the Programme

1) Data taken from pupil questionnaires

This compared pupils' questionnaire responses from start of the six week project with their responses at the end. **The data clearly indicates that a significant number of pupils were much better engaged and enthused by the reading process at the end of the project than they were at the beginning. (See percentages in green that show end of project data.)**

63.3% of students in the survey admitted they did not regularly read at home (Down to 13.3%)

56.6% of students said that they found reading boring (Down to 16.6%)

53.3% of students said they didn't see the point in reading books (Down to 6.67%)

50% of students disagreed with the statement of enjoying reading in class (Down to 16.67%)

60% of students said they were not confident when reading (Down to 26.67%)

30% of students said that they often could not summarise what they had read. However, 33.3% of students were uncertain of their response to the question. (Only 16.67% of students reported that they still felt they could not summarise what they had read).

63.3% of students said they did not understand most of what they read. (No students reported that they didn't not understand most of what they read. (86.67% of students now felt they could understand the majority of what they had read.)

53.3% of students said they couldn't think of any strategies to work out the meaning of words (Down to 40%)

53.3% of students said that they could offer ideas for character motivations based on what they had read. Again, 10 of the 30 students (33.3%) were uncertain of their response. (Up to 86.67%. Students felt they could offer motivations based on what they had read.)

2) Positive feedback from Year 7 pupils

- 'I've enjoyed having something to do during form time'
- 'The stories keep me interested and they're not too hard'

- 'The teachers have made the stories fun'
- 'I have started reading out loud in class when we read as a class'
- 'I've been reading to my little brother at home'
- 'I had never finished a book before'
- 'Reading can be more exciting than I thought'
- 'I've looked forward to coming to read on Thursdays'

3) Positive feedback from sixth form students

- 'We've enjoyed meeting the year 7s because we don't really know them'
- 'This has helped me decide to be a teacher'
- 'Can we carry this on / be part of the next reading champions?'
- 'It has made me more confident because I didn't think I would be able to do it'

4. Positive feedback from parents.

- "He's reading at home much more regularly now and even helping his younger brother."
- "It's given me a much better idea of how I can help my own child."
- "My own reading skills have improved. It's something that we can do together and enjoy more."
- "She's talking about the books and her understanding seems better."

5. Positive feedback from Hope PGCES

- "I really enjoyed the intervention programme. It definitely helped the young students with confidence."
- "Due to the short time frame it was difficult to make progress, but the Year 7 pupils definitely did."
- "The logistics improved when we started working in the canteen."
- "I think I had a great relationship with my little team and I think with even more time they would have made great progress."

6. The Reading Champions Coaching Strategies and Record Book was a very effective means of recording pupil progress over time. The Hope trainees and parents completed the records diligently and detailed feedback was given on individual pupils.

7. Groups of 1:3 reading the same book together worked well and enabled focused support and discussion.

Areas of development of the programme

- There were some initial logistical and organisational problems at the start around venues, punctuality of pupils to the session, lists of pupils and books. **This was ironed out and a key contributor to better communication and organisational success was moving location to have everybody together in the dining room. This should be maintained for**

the future.

- A Hope trainee suggested that pupils should have their own record and objective book during which they could log, for example, the frequency of them answering questions or reading out loud in class. This is something we'll develop for next year.
- A Hope trainee felt the programme was too short and that 12 weeks would have been better, also the Easter break didn't help progress. "One student I worked with didn't stop at full stops. By week two he had mastered this, but after the Easter break he was back to doing the same thing. "This will be addressed by avoiding Easter.
- There was lack of consistency at times around the Reading Champions assigned to groups. This was partly due to some adverse weather and also due to some parents dropping out without notice, meaning that the team of champions changed from week to week.
- Some parents who had been trained in the paired reading programme dropped out. Some felt they did not have sufficiently good reading skills themselves to support other children, although they felt confident with their own child. Other said they were too busy to commit to the programme.

Next Steps

- 1) Reading tests will be administered towards the end of term to evaluate impact on the pupils' reading scores.
- 2) Broadgreen International School is currently in discussion about running the reading champions model again next year, this time using PGCE trainees on placement, more sixth form students and a different group of parents who are likely to be more confident and willing to be trained and committed to the paired reading programme.
- 3) Hope will explore running the same programme again with another school next year. The school has not been decided upon, but Alsop High School are in need of a bespoke project. There needs to be consideration of the capacity at Hope to deliver this model again, given some changes with Ed Wright and Karen Rogan's roles.
- 4) The BGIS dates will start earlier in the spring term to allow for six consecutive weeks without the Easter break getting in the way.
- 5) In June, the Year 7 pupils and parents will attend a celebration afternoon in the Hope University Chapel and to be presented with certificates of achievement.

To conclude, I would like to extend my thanks to Karen Rogan, Ed Wright, Scott McKenzie and Peter Ingham for supporting and implementing this project so successfully. Grateful thanks also to the Year 7 and Sixth form pupils at BGIS who participated so enthusiastically and parents who encouraged so well.

Philippa Salmon. May 2018.