

Catch Up

**The Catch Up Programme and CD ROM
INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENTS
(July 2003)**

THE CORNWALL PROJECT

28 Cornwall schools were provided with an initial training session and Catch Up packs.

The study monitored the progress of children receiving the Catch Up programme over an academic year.

Main Reference/ Lead Researcher(s)	Diana Bentley, Chris Edwards (Primary Adviser for English in Cornwall)
Funding	Save and Prosper in partnership with Cornwall LEA
Date	September 1999 - September 2000
Number and selection of schools	28 schools were targeted that had not been successfully awarded funding for the ALS (staffing) but whose pupils were nevertheless considered to need additional support with literacy.
Number of pupils	53. One or two pupils from each school took part (34 boys/19 girls).
Age Range	Y3
Type of children	Low attainment (level 1 in reading in KS1 test)
Number in control group	N/A
Length of intervention	8 months
Reading test	Hodder Reading Progress Test Series In addition, Catch Up 100 high frequency words (reading and spelling) assessments and pupil questionnaires were administered.
Outcomes	Average gains for overall sample were 14.79m (ranging from -2 months to +33 months). In response to the question 'Do you like reading at school?' This figure increased from 64% at the beginning of the study to 79% at the end of the study. A smaller increase was noted relating to attitudes to reading at home (3%). 96% of teachers who delivered Catch Up found training and support materials in pack excellent to good.
Summary	The Catch Up programme appeared to make a difference to the pupils' reading and spelling abilities and also to their attitudes towards reading at school. It is important to note the absence of a control group and that the ALS materials were provided to all schools (and used with some pupils) during the term in which the study commenced, making subsequent interpretation of data more complex. The response of teachers to the training and support materials was very positive.

THE THETFORD STUDY

Children in Thetford EAZ received the Catch Up Programme delivered by literacy assistants, managed and supported by a teacher coordinator.

Pupils received two weekly individual sessions for one to three terms of the project, dependent on need.

Main Reference	Julie Lawes and Bill Smith
Funding	Thetford EAZ
Date	September 1999 - September 2000
Number and selection of schools	9 first and middle schools in Thetford
Number of pupils	200
Age Range	Y2-6
Type of children	Low attainment (level 1 or 2C in reading in KS1 test or Teacher Assessments)
Number in control group	N/A
Length of intervention	10 months
Reading test	Salford Sentence Reading Test
Outcomes	<p>After first 10 weeks: Average gains for the group 6.5 months</p> <p>After 10 months: On the whole it appeared that the more able readers of those selected only required one term's intervention and most of these pupils continued to make at least chronological gains for the remainder of the year.</p> <p>These pupils made average gains of 14 months (expected gains assuming that standardised scores remained constant, would be 8 months).</p> <p>Pupils with three term's intervention made average gains of 11 months. (Expected gains assuming that standardised scores remained constant, would be four months).</p> <p>Teacher questionnaires suggested that pupils had increased motivation in class and gained in confidence to write independently.</p> <p>Pupil questionnaires suggest that pupils were more confident about reading, following the intervention.</p> <p>52% of year 2 pupils whose predicted SATs reading test scores were level 2C or 1, scored 2B or above.</p>
Summary	<p>Findings suggest that children following the Catch Up Programme in the Thetford project, made excellent sustainable gains in a short space of time.</p> <p>This applied to children from year groups 2 to 6 and responses from schools were particularly positive regarding Catch Up as a year 2 intervention.</p> <p>The programme was successfully delivered by assistants, supported and managed by a teacher coordinator.</p>

THE MILTON KEYNES PILOT

The Catch Up Project was trialled in Milton Keynes with the aim of identifying the project's strengths and weaknesses before its launch in 1998. Representatives from schools took part in an initial training meeting followed by monthly meetings during the period of intervention.

Main Reference	Suzi Clipson-Boyles and Donna Stanton.
Funding	Oxford Brooks University, Caxton Trust
Date	September - December, 1997
Number and selection of schools	5 very similar schools with a mixture of children from private, rented and council owned houses.
Number of pupils	30 Six pupils from each school.
Age Range	Y3
Type of children	Low attainment (level 1 in reading in KS1 test)
Number in control group	N/A
Length of intervention	4 months
Reading test	None
Summary of outcomes	<p>Generally the Project was very well received by teachers and pupils alike.</p> <p>Positive comments related to all of the materials in the Catch Up pack, the children's attitudes and progress, teacher's attitudes and the effect on 'whole schools'.</p> <p>It was noted the teachers who attended the initial meeting at Oxford Brookes University were more enthused, organised and managed the Project better than those who were handed the information by another colleague.</p> <p>Teething problems were identified such as minor misprints in the pack, 'lack of planning time', 'time commitment of testing', 'organisational implications of the Literacy Hour' and 'lack of appropriate reading books in schools'.</p>

THE MILTON KEYNES CD-ROM PILOT

This small- scale study was set up to monitor and evaluate the practical aspects of the pilot Catch Up CD-ROM of literacy games 'Return to Red Planet'.

Each of four schools chose three or four pupils to work with the CD-ROM and chose pupils in parallel year 3 classes to act as a control group. These schools were not using the Catch Up Programme.

Main Reference	Suzi Clipson-Boyles and Heather Clarke.
Funding	Oxford Brooks University, Caxton Trust
Date	September - December, 1997
Number and selection of schools	4 schools in Milton Keynes
Number of pupils	Initially, 32, 8 pupils from each school.
Age Range	Y3
Type of children	Low attainment (level 1 in reading in KS1 test)
Number of pupils in experimental group	16
Number in control group	16
Length of intervention	4 months
Reading test	None, however semi structured interviews took place with staff and pupils involved. In addition pupils' progress was monitored relating to letter names, sound and blends and high frequency word check lists.
Summary of outcomes	Unfortunately, various factors (left or right handedness, gender, age, glasses etc) meant that the children could not be easily matched to allow for the statistical analysis of data. However, all of the children in the Catch Up group using the CD-ROM made excellent progress. Their teachers felt that these children had greatly benefited and progressed in reading, spelling, computer skills and self-confidence. It was also noted that their motivation and attitudes to reading also improved. Interview and observation feedback also suggested that the CD-ROM proved relatively uncomplicated and simple to use.

THE PILOT STUDY

Journal of Research in Reading, Volume 23, Issue 1, 2000.

Three groups of children were monitored over 10 weeks to compare the progress of those on the Catch Up Programme with those given a non-specific matched time equivalent intervention by the teacher and a control group.

Main Reference	Suzi Clipson-Boyles
Funding	Oxford Brooks University
Date	September - December, 1997
Number and selection of schools	<p>Fifteen from Oxfordshire, Milton Keynes and Berkshire.</p> <p>Schools were chosen to reflect a wide range, taking into account roll size, free school meals entitlement, ESL etc. Teachers attended an initial Catch Up training session.</p> <p>Three of the experimental schools were selected, then matched as closely as possible with 2 other sets of 3 schools; then pupils in control, alternative treatment and experimental groups were chosen by the same method in all cases.</p>
Number of pupils	105 (70 boys/35 girls)
Age Range	Y3
Type of children	Low attainment (level 1 in reading in KS1 test)
Number of pupils in experimental group	74 (17 of these were in sub-sample matched to controls)
Number in control group	17
Number in alternative treatment group	14
Nature of alternative treatment	'teachers were asked to spend time equivalent to Catch Up with selected pupils'.
Length of intervention	10 weeks
Reading test	Hodder Reading Progress Test Series
Outcomes	<p>Average gains for each group</p> <p>Catch Up: 8.6 months gain</p> <p>Matched: 3.5 months gain</p> <p>Control: 1.1 months gain</p>
Summary	<p>Findings showed that the Catch Up pupils made considerably more progress during the same period than both the other groups.</p> <p>This suggests that merely allocating 'extra time' was not enough to help the children make the accelerated gains of those pupils undertaking an individually focused framework, supported by proven strategies and inbuilt management systems i.e. The Catch Up Programme. ALS had not been introduced into schools at this point in time.</p>

THE NATIONAL EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

The National Experimental Study replicated the original Pilot Study over an academic year with a larger group of schools.

Three groups of children were monitored over this period to compare the progress of those on the Catch Up Programme with those given a non-specific matched time equivalent intervention by the teacher and a control group.

Main Reference	Suzi Clipson-Boyles
Funding	Oxford Brooks University and Caxton Trust
Date	September 1999 - September 2000
Number and selection of schools	98
Number of pupils	123 1 or 2 pupils from each school took part (76 boys/47 girls). The schools were randomly selected from a national database - once they agreed to participate they were sent a pack and offered no further support
Age Range	Y3
Type of children	Low attainment (level 1 in reading in KS1 test)
Number of pupils in experimental group	34, sub-divided into two groups, one of which used the CD ROM
Number in control group	43
Number in alternative treatment group	46
Nature of alternative treatment	'teachers were asked to spend time equivalent to Catch Up with selected pupils'.
Equivalence of groups	3 parallel groups were created taking into account variables such as roll size, free school meals entitlement, ESL etc.
Length of intervention	8 months
Reading test	Hodder Reading Progress Test Series
Outcomes	Average gains for each group Catch Up: 11.5 months gain Matched: 10.22 months gain Control: 8 months gain However, where teachers had implemented Catch Up fully, mean reading age gain was 15 months, occasional use resulted in gains of 7.3 months. Only seven teachers used the CD-ROM with the children. The mean reading age gain for the CD-ROM schools (8.43 months) was less than the schools who did not use it (14.60 months). However, most CD-ROM schools implemented Catch Up occasionally, which may account for difference.

	82% of teachers who delivered Catch Up found training and support materials in pack excellent to good.
Summary	<p>Findings suggest that where the Catch Up Programme was delivered fully, these pupils made considerably more progress than the pupils in the other two groups.</p> <p>It is important to note that ALS was introduced in the same year and used with some pupils in the study, making subsequent interpretation of data more complex.</p> <p>The response of teachers to the training and support materials was very positive. The research into the effectiveness of the CD ROM was inconclusive.</p>

THE WAKEFIELD PROJECT - MINSTHORPE PYRAMID

Eight schools in the Minsthorpe Pyramid were provided with an initial training session and Catch Up packs.

The study monitored the progress of children receiving the Catch Up programme over an academic year. The teachers met twice during the year to report on progress and difficulties and at a closing conference.

Main Reference	Diana Bentley, Pauline Thorburn, link Adviser for this group of schools.
Funding	LEA Teacher Resources Budget (former TVEI).
Date	September 1999 - September 2000
Number and selection of schools	8 schools in the area.
Number of pupils	39. Approximately five pupils from each school took part (25 boys/14 girls).
Age Range	Y3/Y4
Type of children	Low attainment (level 1/2C in reading in KS1 test)
Number of pupils in experimental group	34, sub-divided into two groups, one of which used the CD ROM
Number in control group	n/a
Length of intervention	7-9 months
Reading test	Hodder Reading Progress Test Series.
Outcomes	<p>In addition, all pupils were tested on an end of KS1 reading comprehension test.</p> <p>Average gains for overall sample were 14.5 months (ranging from -5 months to +37 months). It was also hypothesised that 43% of the sample would reach level 4 at the end of KS2 (by calculating the number of pupils in the comprehension test scoring level 2a or high level 2b, more than 21 marks).</p>
Summary	<p>The Catch Up programme appeared to make a positive difference to the pupils' reading. It is important to note the absence of a control group. An additional identified strength of the project was that of providing a shared focus for discussion within the Pyramid.</p>