

## **Project Brief.**

### **Our aims and objectives**

The main focus of the Star Initiative at Brough Primary School was to raise achievement in writing in Years 3 and 4. With a particular focus on a large group of underachieving children.

We also decided to focus on:

- Using a variety of strategies to 'get ready' for piece of writing to allow the children to feel better prepared for the writing process.
- Using self/peer assessment to enable the children to identify a 'good' piece of writing.
- Increasing the children's enjoyment in the writing process.

### **Why we took part in the Star Initiative?**

At Brough Primary School, we already strongly believe in the merits of a creative curriculum and have adopted the key skills continuum based on the 6 areas of learning observed in the Foundation Stage (Mathematical Development, Knowledge and Understanding, Creative Development, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Communication, Language and Literacy) and therefore the STAR Initiative fitted into this perfectly.

One of the school's key priorities on our school improvement plan over the last few years has been to improve writing, with a particular focus on boys and underperforming groups of children. So, it has enabled us to combine using a creative approach to inspire and motivate our children whilst targeting one of our key priorities.

### **Writing concepts and skills targeted**

The main focus for improving our attainment in writing was identified as being creating and shaping texts (composition and effect as was). We adopted this as our whole school focus for our layered targets.

We also introduced:

- Literacy personalised targets for each child in the school to focus on the individual needs of the child. In Years 3 and 4, the focus became sentence structure and punctuation.
- aspects of the Roz Wilson approach to improving writing in the spring and summer term. This involved a weekly additional 'big writing' literacy lesson allowing the children to re-visit and revise different genres and an increased focus on YCOP (vocabulary, connectives, opener and punctuation.)

### **Artists in residence and key activities**

**We thoroughly enjoyed working with Gary Hammond. He worked in school for 4 consecutive Mondays starting from 14<sup>th</sup> January. He began by working with the children as a whole class to create a warm up activity that mirrored different water sounds. The previous week, the children had written poems with Jill Stubbs which Gary then added sound effects to using a large range of percussion instruments.**



**In the following weeks, the children, in our STAR lessons, added to these initial poems until they evolved into the opening of a setting narrative. These openings were then used with Gary as the basis of his sessions and the children were asked to concentrate on the descriptions (similes, metaphors, onomatopoeia, personification, adjectives and adverbs) and add appropriate sounds to create a class sound story. It resulted in class compositions based around rain, waterfalls and the sea.**



**Pat Suggitt, the ASL for dance/drama, also worked with us on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> February and Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May. On her first 2 visits she used our Literacy text 'The Water Babies' as a stimulus for drama work focussing on characterisation which they then used in their own under water adventure stories.**

**On her final visit, we had moved onto the topic of St Lucia so she worked with the children on celebration dances and then they had to create their own calypso style dances as inspiration of what it would be like to visit St Lucia for their stories from other cultures narrative.**



**Bob Tonks, came into school and introduced the water pole sculptures. The children based these on the same aspect of water that they had written their poems about and used bamboo, wicks and a mixture of materials to represent this water.**

### **Participating children and the focus group**

Years 3 and 4 were selected as the group to be involved in the project, primarily as the previous year there was a large number of children who had underperformed in Literacy. A third of this year group are also identified as having special educational needs (of which the majority of these are boys) which resulted in a 'can't write, won't write' culture.

In Years 3 and 4, there are 3 mixed age classes with a total of 96 children altogether. There were 38 children (40%) who were identified as underachieving in Literacy. We were then able to sub-divide these children into those that were working 2 sub-levels below their expected target (23%) and those that were well below their target (27%). It is important to note that our school uses the FFT data to determine end of year targets for each of the children so a child could be working at the level expected for their age but still 'underachieving' as they have not reached their personal end of year target.

Our focus group was then chosen predominantly from those that have been identified as working well below their personal end of year target but there are no obvious educational reasons for it. Linking back to the school's aims for this project, these children tended to be the ones that thought Literacy was "boring", "hurt their hands", they were "not any good at it" and they "didn't know what to write!"

### **'Action Research' employed**

At the start of the project, children were asked to complete 'An attitudes to writing' questionnaire and this was then repeated in May.

A work scrutiny was then completed by myself, Tracy Gillibrand (the Literacy co-ordinator) and Jill Stubbs in order to identify which aspect the layered targets need to focus on. It soon became obvious that the children were not performing sufficiently well in 2 aspects; sentence structure and punctuation and creating and shaping texts. We decided to focus on creating and shaping texts in the autumn term. The targets were introduced in the October and then reviewed in the January and then sentence structure and punctuation in the spring and summer terms (as the spring term was so short!!) Again the targets were given out at the beginning of the term in January and reviewed in the May.

### **Involvement of school staff members**

The staff members involved in the STAR initiative at Brough Primary School were:

- **The STAR co-ordinator: Sarah Wilson**

As STAR co-ordinator I ensured that all the different aspects of the STAR project combined together to meet the aims of the project. It was especially important that members of staff new to the 'STAR way of working' were always referred back to the rationale of the STAR project as being a writing focus. There was a temptation for them, without this intervention!!, to become focussed on the creative aspects of the curriculum but forgetting that after these aspects it was essential the children had an opportunity to use it as a stimulus for their writing.

It is also essential that the STAR co-ordinator has excellent communication with the artists to ensure that everyone involved was fully aware of the aims of the project and what their part in achieving this was. I ensured that this communication was maintained constantly throughout the year as, inevitably in primary schools, it is necessary for flexibility and things will need to change!!

- **The Year 3 and 4 class teachers:** Sarah Wilson, Karen McPherson and Helen Macdon, Amanda Rozenbroek. All of the class teachers were involved in the initial planning stage of the project and plotting how the different dimensions linked together to create an enjoyable experience for all where increasing the quantity and quality of written work was paramount. We met every week to plan following weeks timetable and always plan as a whole team to ensure that all members of the team were fully aware of the final outcome and the steps needed to get them there.
- **The teaching assistants in Year 3 and 4:** Paula Harrison, Claire Clements and Janet Park. Each week the teaching staff formally met with the appropriate teaching assistants to discuss the week ahead and 'talk through' the planning and then regularly met on an 'ad hoc' basis to update them on any necessary changes to the planning and assess the progress of the children.

- **The Literacy co-ordinator: Tracey Gillibrand**

Tracey was involved in the initial scrutiny of work with myself and Jill Stubbs and then setting the relevant cross curricular targets for the Autumn and Spring terms, she advised and assisted in planning in our Literacy units and sourced resources to allow the topics to 'come alive.' She also advised us when moderating the writing levels each term to ensure they were accurate and the children were making appropriate progress and on track to reach their end of year target

#### **Start and end dates**

The project began at the start of the Spring term, 8<sup>th</sup> January, when our 'Water' theme was started with Jill Stubbs lessons on water sound poetry and Gary Hammond's residency. It then continued right through into the Summer term with our St Lucia topic.

#### **Performances**

Our STAR performance to the parents took place on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2008 and was very successful. We chose to have it in the Summer term as it allowed us to showcase all the different facets of the STAR initiative. The children:

- showed artwork inspired by water – mood boards and water pole sculptures.
  - read and performed their own water poems.
  - shared their descriptions of the water pole sculptures.
  - performed the sound stories created with Gary Hammond.
  - showed calypso dances from the work with Pat Suggitt.
    - sang some calypso songs.

### **Monitoring and evaluation procedures**

As previously mentioned in 'The involvement of school staff members' section, the Literacy planning was completed in weekly planning meetings to ensure that all members of the Years 3 and 4 team had an opportunity to share ideas and examples of good practice and was guided, when needed, by the Literacy co-ordinator.

Informal meetings between the team, including teaching assistants, were held on an almost daily basis to evaluate the impact of each lesson and to discuss the next step in the teaching and learning sequence.

The children's termly levelled pieces of work were moderated in year group meetings to ensure consistent levelling across the team. These results were then placed on the assessment tracker and analysed by the assessment team (which incorporates the assessment co-ordinator, SENCO and head teacher) to ensure that each child is making adequate progress and if not, the reasons behind this.

As a year team, we regularly met to analyse the children's 'teacher assessment' levels and to share our final outcome of each Literacy unit to ensure that the children were in the appropriate Literacy groups and therefore working at the correct level. We also used these sessions to address any other teaching and learning issues. For example, we noted early on that the children needed further input into the grammar aspect of Literacy so put in an additional 'grammar' lesson to accompany the existing Literacy lessons which solely addressed the grammar for writing units.

The Literacy co-ordinator collected in the layered targets tracking sheets each term to assess the children's progress, impact and implications for CPD and gathered a sample of each term's topic folders, including the STAR diaries to evaluate the overall impact of the STAR initiative and the implication of the new primary framework.

## The Project.

### **An overview of the project**

The overall umbrella title of the project was 'Water' which incorporated:

- Different aspects of water; fountains, waterfall, the sea, rivers.
  - The artist, Claude Monet
- Watery habitats culminating in an overnight sleep-over at the Deep.
- St Lucia and impact of man on the rainforests and coral reefs in particular.

### Our star diaries

All of the children's work, including the preparatory work, was completed in an exercise book specific to this project which we entitled star diaries.

As it was the second year our school had participated in the STAR initiative, we decided to build upon the STAR diaries from the previous year and ensure that there was a mixture of lined and plain paper in the diaries to encourage the children to write, sketch, and collect any ideas.

The associate advisor, Bob Tonks was very keen that the children should 'own' these books so the front part of the diary we dedicated to the children and allowed them to write their thoughts of the project, collect ideas and sketches. This section of the diary was not marked.

But we felt that as all of the children's Literacy work was also in this same diary and the focus was to improve attainment in Literacy, the back part of the diary was dedicated to any 'shared' work so that the teachers could mark the work allowing the children to edit, draft and improve their literacy work.

### Details of the artist's residency and their approach to working with children

As detailed earlier, we worked with Gary Hammond on producing a water sound story from a poem created with Jill Stubbs. Gary had a very relaxed way of working with the children which brought out the best in the children and allowed even the quietest children to contribute some ideas as he quickly established a 'have a go' atmosphere.



Gary was very centred on the objectives of the STAR initiative and that the focus was to improve writing and would encourage children to describe the sound that was been created using adjectives, onomatopoeia and similes. I was also very impressed that Gary allowed the children to develop their own ideas, however strange they

seemed!?, rather than just feeding them his own which gave the children an even greater ownership.

**In the resulting lessons, the children wrote their own descriptions, choose which sounds to add to it and when and which instruments would be best at depicting this sound.**

**How opportunities for writing were developed throughout the project**

**We choose to put the emphasis of our input into the spring and summer term and began our 'Water' topic in the spring term with our poetry unit, 'Creating Images.'**

**Unit 1: Poetry 'Creating Images'**

**We started by showing the children a slideshow of water images, which I had kindly been given by David Mell and which we then added 'water' sounds to. Whilst the children were watching this slideshow we asked them to note in their star diaries any words or images that sprang to mind.**



**These ranged from simple watery sounds 'drip drip' and 'plop' to images that they visualised when they heard this sounds 'raindrops trickling down the windows on a rainy day.' These ideas were then used to contribute to 2 poems, the first of which was taught by Jill Stubbs.**

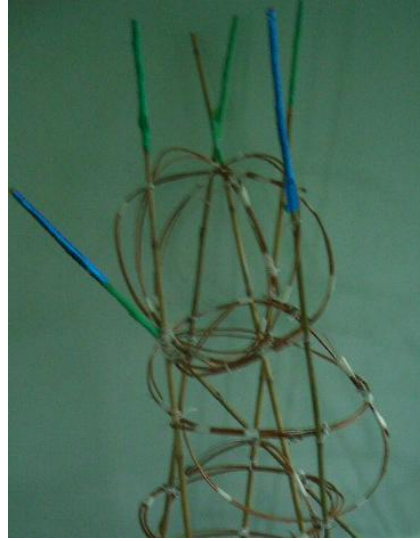
**We sourced a poem entitled 'Listen' by Clare Began which listed different sounds using onomatopoeia e.g.**

**"Listen! Far away the snort of a camel, the swish of boots in the endless sands and the whistle of silk and the clatter of ceremonial swords. . ."**

**Jill then used this poem as a framework for the children to create their own onomatopoeic poems about water. The children thoroughly enjoyed these lessons and the results contained some fantastic descriptions. . .**

**"Listen far away the crash of a distant crystal blue waterfall,  
A trickle of a shower like a waterfall trickling down to a river.  
A splash of tears dribbling down like a waterfall splashing to the river."**

**The second poem also used a variety of water poems as a model and the children had to use the same poetic techniques (onomatopoeia, simile, metaphor, personification) as a framework for creating their own poem based on a waterfall, fountain, river, sea or tear. These were based on the same water features as their water pole sculptures created with Bob Tonks.**



When the children had completed their sculptures, we also asked them to write a description of what each aspect of their sculpture represented e.g.

**"My sculpture represents a waterfall. The white spirals are the foam sliding down. The green whisks are the weeds pulling out the ground..."**

This allowed an additional, unplanned, opportunity for writing and for the children to use the poetic techniques that they had been studying in their Literacy lessons. We all felt that these 'unplanned' aspects to improve writing were imperative and it was amazing were these opportunities could be fitted into the timetable – listing adjectives to describe holidays, discussion on how they felt after sports day etc. This is an aspect we developed much further in this second year as it is necessary that the children are in a language rich environment at all times of the school day and not just in specified literacy or writing sessions.

### **Unit 2: Narrative: 'Stories from Imaginary Worlds'**

The 'Listen' poems created with Jill Stubbs were used as a basis for a setting description to be used to develop a water soundtrack with Gary Hammond. The children had to retain the poetic techniques and also include the sights, smells, smells and tastes that would be in their setting. Here is one child's example based on a waterfall poem.

**"Nearby, a glistening waterfall trickles down as fast as a private jet whilst an enormous bunch of people, with cameras, are admiring its beauty. They're waiting in Dalby Forest for the waterfall to explode like an erupting volcano and show its magnificent power.**

**The waterfall is like a firework exploding into the sky - it goes up like a twinkling ballerina dancing in the wonderful sky.**

**As I'm watching, I can smell the magnificent hot-dog stands and the fantastic pop corn stalls and I can nearly taste the peanuts in my mouth - the smell of them, the saltiness, it's deliciousness coming to my nostrils.**

**I glance over and see a relaxed family having a picnic - laughing! eating! ...."**



These openings were then used as the opening paragraphs to our underwater adventure stories. Also during this unit, the children had the opportunity to develop other setting descriptions based on clips from the BBC DVD 'The Blue Planet' focussing on adding tension and atmosphere to their setting stories.

### Unit 3: Non-fiction 'Explanations'

This unit, although taught in Literacy lessons, was based on our current Science topic 'Solids, Liquids and how they can be separated.' An explanation is often a difficult genre for the children to fully grasp and therefore was based on a lot of practical experience. In the Science lessons, we had been looking freezing and melting and the children had a go at melting chocolate and then seeing what happened to it when it was left at room temperature and then freezing water. We used the latter, freezing as the basis of this unit for the children to write an explanation on 'How to create ice cubes.'

### Unit 4: Non-Fiction: Persuasion

This was the first unit that linked to our St Lucia topic and began with looking at persuasive adverts and the persuasive techniques that advertisers use and then children writing examples of each themselves including: slogans, rhetorical questions, appealing adjectives and then created an advert for an imaginary product.

We then developed the idea of persuasive adverts into looking at travel brochures culminating in the children creating a page of a holiday brochure for St Lucia. This again gave the children the chance to draft and re-draft their own persuasive techniques including: an opening paragraph that summarises the location, emotive language, fact and opinion and powerful verbs. We spent a week drafting these ideas in our books before combining everything together to create some fantastically persuasive pages – I was ready to jump on a plane to St Lucia!!

We were also able to draw on our lessons with Pat Suggitt and persuade people of the 'carnival' culture we experienced during these lessons.

### Unit 5: Fiction: Stories from other cultures

Again this was linked to our St Lucia topic and began by looking at different texts set in different cultures including 'Gregory Cool.' We began the unit with children extracting information from the texts highlighting the similarities and differences between these countries and the UK and then used lots of different speaking and listening techniques for this unit including enjoying, hot seating and conscience alley concentrating on the main character of the text 'Gregory Cool.' These elements were then used in the children's own work in which they had to plan and write the next chapter of Gregory Cool.

At the time of writing, this is the unit we are currently doing but the children have certainly got lots of ideas from our drama work so it looks good so far and, hopefully, the children won't have the same problems as the beginning of the year and 'don't know what to write!!'

### Cross-curricular writing links

Over the last 3 years Brough School has adopted a creative curriculum which is becoming more 'topic' led and we have been encouraged to move away from teaching in discrete subjects and creating as many cross-curricular opportunities to teach the key skills as possible. These opportunities are highlighted later on in the report.

This cross-curriculum approach to writing has been even more so this year with the introduction of the 'big writing' sessions. This was something that I had heard mentioned at the STAR co-ordinator network meetings and it seemed to be the perfect way to address several of the issues our Literacy co-ordinator had also highlighted on her action plans. These were predominantly: children being given further opportunities to write outside the Literacy lessons and re-visit different writing genres and a whole school focus on improving the creating and shaping texts strand of the framework (or YCOP as we now know it at Brough!)

We, therefore used every opportunity we could to focus on writing when planning our curriculum this year and, as you'll see from below, we certainly achieved this. Links to writing, outside of the Literacy lessons were planned for and included:

#### **During our 'Water topic',**

- Completing regular star diary entries.
- Researching the artist, Claude Monet
  - Creating a non-chronological report about Claude Monet
  - Writing descriptions about our water pole sculptures.
  - Writing thank you letters to Pat Suggitt and Gary Hammond
- Writing an account about a day in the life of a child living in a developing country.
  - Wrote instructions on how to make their underwater soft toy
  - Created persuasive posters to advertise their underwater soft toys.

#### **During our St Lucia topic the children:**

- Researched different aspects of St Lucia.
- Created persuasive posters to protect the coral reef
- Wrote an explanation of the journey of a banana, from St Lucia to our fruit bowls.
  - Create a glossary of words connected to St Lucia
  - Wrote descriptions of how the coral reef is damaged.
- Wrote arguments on the pros and cons of developing Rodney Harbour Bay.
  - Researched rainforests and rainforest animals.

In March, we fully introduced our big writing sessions. As we were putting a large emphasis on improving writing in Years 3 and 4, we made the decision to include this as well as our 5 Literacy lessons rather than adopt it as the fifth lesson (as Years 5 and 6) thus providing yet another opportunity for writing. In these sessions we have wrote:

- Recounts – a postcard from St Lucia
- Instructions - 'How to pack a suitcase for a holiday in St Lucia'
  - Non chronological reports on rainforest animals
- Instructions – 'How to pack a rucksack for an overnight visit to the Deer'
  - Recounts about our overnight visit to the Deer

- **NARRATIVE – CONTINUE FROM OPENING OF GIVEN STORY.**

**Project Evaluation.**  
***A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE PROJECT***

**Whole School Development**  
We used the STAR initiative to

**Staff Development / CPD**  
BIG WRITING TRAINING  
Using multi-media texts

**Approaches to Teaching and Learning**  
CHILDREN TO BE INVOLVED IN THEIR OWN LEARNING – LEARNING CONVERSATIONS, SETTING OWN PERSONALISED TARGETS, PEER + SELF ASSESSMENT, SUCCESS CRITERIA SHEETS

- Cross-Curricular aspects**  
As detailed earlier in this report, the CURRICULUM at BROUGH IS VERY MUCH BASED AROUND A CROSS-CURRICULAR APPROACH. DURING THE STAR INITIATIVE, THERE WERE LINKS WITH:
- Art – Monet inspired water and sea-scapes, 'sea creatures' string printing, class textile collage, water pole sculptures.
  - Dance/drama – characters from 'The Water Babies', calypso dances.
    - Geography – destruction of coral reefs.
    - Science – 'watery' habitats.
  - I.C.T – internet research, multi-media texts including creating own PowerPoints and photo stories.
  - D.T – creating a 'sea creature' soft toy for a younger child.

**Arts Development**  
HOW CHILDREN'S SKILLS IN ART BEEN DEVELOPED?

**WORKING WITH ARTISTS AND PERFORMERS**

**Networking and the Wider Community**

***Attendance at regular STAR network meetings***

## Other Issues for Evaluation Report

Contact details of artists used with recommendations for future projects in schools

Gary Hammond – percussionist  
e-mail: [gary@garybongo.karoo.co.uk](mailto:gary@garybongo.karoo.co.uk)  
telephone number: (01482) 441947 or (07721) 502659

Pat Suggitt – RST for drama/dance  
Kingsway Primary School, Goole  
telephone number: 01405 763716

We would highly recommend all the above artists for use in other schools and indeed, we ourselves hope to use them again next year. They all planned their work to meet our objectives and adapted and modified their work as necessary to meet the individual needs of the school and the children.

### Links to the Primary Framework

We were in the fortunate position at Brough to have already begun trialling the new Literacy Primary Framework and received our training from our Literacy co-ordinator in the previous academic year (2006/2007). Therefore, from September 2007, all of the Literacy units were taught using the Primary Framework.

During the STAR Initiative, Years 3 and 4 used the following units as a basis for their literacy plans:

#### Year 4. Poetry unit 1 – Creating Images

This is the unit we used to begin our 'Water' topic as it focussed on creating a vivid picture for the reader. During this unit we:

- Performed and responded to 'water' themed poetry using art.
- Wrote our own 'water' poem using a planning frame derived from another poem.
- Jill Stubbs also worked with us on writing water sounds poem based around the poem 'Listen.'

#### Year 4. Narrative unit 2 – Stories set in Imaginary Worlds

During this unit we:

- Identified the mood and atmosphere created in different 'watery' settings using the DYA 'The Blue Planet.'
- Wrote our own underwater adventure stories.

#### Year 4. Non Fiction unit 3 – Explanation texts

During this unit we:

- Write our own explanation texts based around 'How water becomes ice'

#### Year 4. Non Fiction. Unit 4 – Persuasive texts

During this unit we:

- Created our own travel brochure page for St Lucia
- Produced persuasive posters to protect the coral reefs around St Lucia

Year 4. Narrative. Unit 3 – stories from other cultures

DURING THIS UNIT WE:

- Wrote the next chapter of the story, 'Gregory Cool' concentrating on paragraphing, using dialogue, developing the setting and character.

Year 4. Non-fiction. Unit 2 – information texts

DURING THIS UNIT:

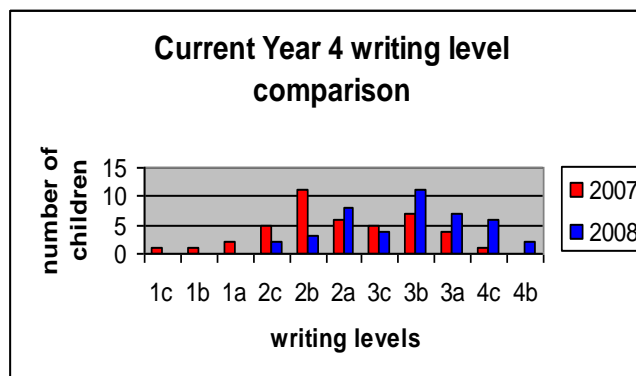
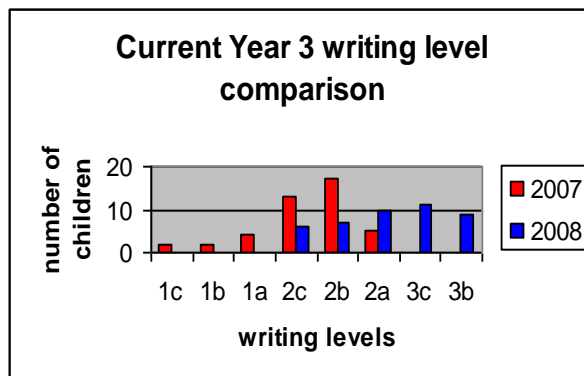
- Children worked with Jill Stubbs, using Microsoft Photo Library 3, to create an information text about 'The Deep' using their overnight visit as stimulus.

## Outcomes of Action Research.

### Results of Action Research

As the PAT tracker and any other data concerned with the children's writing levels looks at the SAT results it was decided that this is the data we would use. Therefore, we compared the end of year SAT results in 2007 to the end of year SAT results in 2008.

It was decided it would give a more accurate picture if Year 3 and 4 were sub-divided into the discrete year groups.



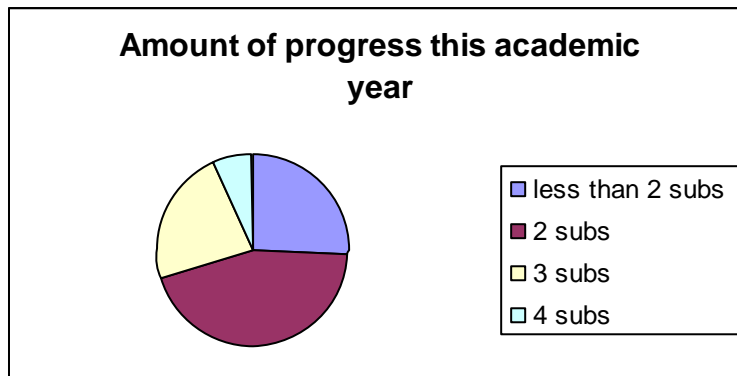
Looking closely at the data for the current Year 3 children shows that in the 2007 SATs, 49% of the children were working below the national level expectation for that age (2c or below) where as in the 2008 SATs only 30% of children are working below the national level (2b and below).

So, more importantly, that means that in 2007, 51% of the children were at or above the national level expectation in writing where as now, in 2008, 70% of the children were working at or above the national expected level. An increase of 19% - well done Year 3's!!

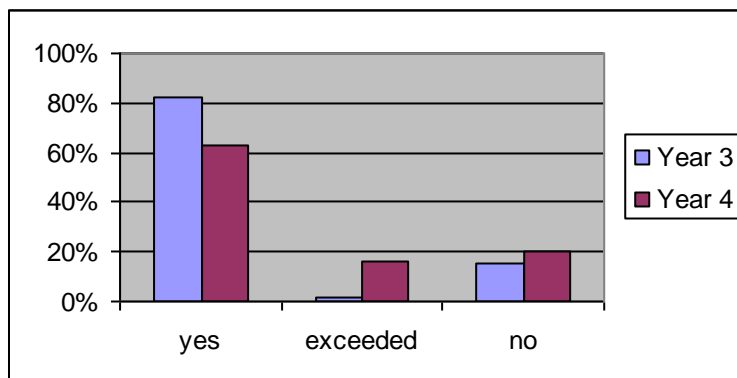
In Year 4, 60% of the children are working at or above the expected level now compared to 53% last year. An increase of 8%. We decide as a high number of children in this year groups are SEN, it was imperative to analyse this data further.

We decided to look at the value added for each child which showed that 77% of the children had made 2 sub-levels or more progress this academic year with 23% of these children

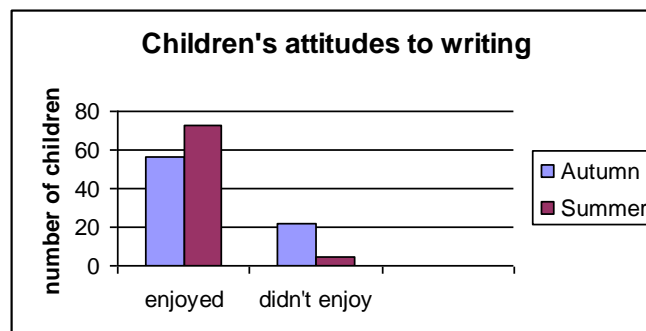
making 3 sub levels progress and 7% making 4 sub levels progress which we were particularly pleased with.



Although the amount of progress each child is made is very important the achievement against the end of year target for each child is also very critical. This target is tracked back from the Fisher Family Trust expected level at the end of Year 6 and at the end of each term, each child is assessed against how likely they are to achieve this end of year target. It was therefore important at Brough School to also analyse this aspect of the results.



Although the quantitative data is one way of showing progress of the children. It is also important to assess how the children achieved against the aims of the STAR project, of which one of the main measurable aims was to increase the number of children who enjoyed Literacy.





From these responses it is clear to see that the children's attitude to Literacy has transformed and that the majority of them now enjoy Literacy lessons and this has impacted on the progress made.

Also see the children's responses to STAR section as an indication of the success it has had in increasing the children's confidence in Literacy and as inspiring their work.

#### Implications for future education provision in school

The STAR approach to learning very much mirrors the ethos already adopted at Brough Primary School, with greater flexibility between curriculum areas and adopting the 'excellence and enjoyment' approach to learning been the key.

It is hoped that this can only go from strength to strength and that we will continue to build on an already opened ended approach to the subject areas and create even further opportunities for these areas to cross over.

The STAR initiative has clarified in our minds the importance of making learning varied and that children do, in fact, learn more when they are practically involved in the activity. This has already been taken on board by the senior leadership team and key co-ordinators who are in the process of adapting our curriculum further so that the emphasis is on the learning of key skills and outcomes rather than the learning of facts.

It has certainly been apparent this year about the success of 'big writing' in Key Stage 2, both for the children and the teachers and it has already been planned for this to be introduced in Key Stage 1 thus ensuring that in future years the children already have a greater understanding of the text types they have been taught and have had numerous opportunities throughout the year to re-visit each of them.

#### Outline the 'legacy' for your school – what you will do differently in future.

The success of STAR, for a second year at Brough Primary School has allowed different members of staff to become involved over the 2 year period. Already, this year I have observed, my STAR project partners move to a different year team and begin to modify and adapt their curriculum so that it continues to retain the fantastic 'creative' opportunities but so that there is also an underlying 'educational value' behind it too. The perfect curriculum – fun and learning at the same time, who could ask for more! It is therefore the hope that when some of my current team members move into different year team in future years this approach to learning continues to cascade with them.

The introduction of the new Literacy framework has been a success in our year team and next year we will continue to use this but with some key modifications that we have learnt from this year. As writing is, and continues to be, such a key focus in our school we believe that it is important to use the speaking and listening activities to create a 'buzz' for the topic and generate ideas but that it is also important that the children are given many opportunities to actually write things. Therefore, next year, we are going to ensure that there is greater flexibility with the framework phases and that days are added to or removed depending on the individual needs of our classes.

## Perceptions

### PERCEPTIONS OF PUPILS-BEFORE THE PROJECT

In October 2007, before we began the Star Initiative, we asked the children to complete a 'My thoughts on Writing' questionnaire. The results were very enlightening and showed that:

- the majority of our children felt 'a block' when it came to putting pen to paper and didn't know what to write.
- ¼ of the children (of which the majority were boys!!) said that they did not enjoy writing. Children said: "It's hard work and I get tired", "I don't know what to write" and "I'm not very good at it."
- They were also unaware of how they knew that they had done a good piece of work. They believed it was a 'good' piece of work if they had got a sticker, a good comment or was used as a good example to the rest of the class.

Oh dear, we obviously had a lot of work to do on children recognising success criteria and how to improve their work.

### PERCEPTION OF PUPILS – AFTER THE PROJECT

The children thoroughly enjoyed participating in the Star Initiative and the majority of them felt that it had an impact on their Literacy skills. They wrote that:

- "It was fun making up my own ideas",
- "I think that Gary was great because the music made me think deeper into the sentences I write"

And who could argue about the value of our participation in the Star Initiative when one child writes:

- "I have loved every moment of the Star Project and it has been a great success. I really hope we do it again because it has helped me with my Literacy and it has been great fun learning all these new interesting words, metaphors and similes. I especially liked working with Mrs Stubbs as it has increased my vocabulary and my use of similes and metaphors." I promise you no bribes needed to be given!!!

We also completed the 'My thoughts on Writing' questionnaire again in May and this time they showed that the children were:

- 99% now enjoy Literacy work.
- They were able to list a large number of ways how they know they've done a good piece of writing including it meeting their targets of adverbs and adjectives, self-assessment, meeting aspects of the success criteria.
- The children were also much more aware of how ideas could be generated to help them know what to write including doing drama, modelling and demonstrations, planning sheets and 99% of the children said that these did help them with their writing and they now know what to write

## Perceptions of parents

### Perceptions of visitors, including LA

GARY HAMMOND, OUR ARTIST IN RESIDENCE OFTEN COMMENTED ON THE HIGH LEVELS OF LITERACY THAT THE CHILDREN HAD AND EVEN ON THE FIRST VISIT WAS IMPRESSED THAT THE CHILDREN WERE ABLE TO CONFIDENTLY TELL HIM NOT ONLY WHAT AN ADJECTIVE AND ADVERB WERE BUT ALSO SIMILES AND METAPHORS. HE SAID AT STAR INITIATIVE PERFORMANCE TO THE PARENTS:

"I HAVE WORKED WITH MANY SCHOOLS BUT THE CHILDREN AT BROOKLYN HAVE REALLY IMPRESSED ME. THEY HAVE HIGH LEVELS OF LITERACY, HAVE GOOD IDEAS AND ARE CONFIDENT SPEAKERS AND PERFORMERS..... EVERYONE SHOULD BE VERY PROUD."

AND OF COURSE, WE ARE!!

### *Head teacher's perceptions*

THE STAR INITIATIVE HAS GIVEN THE TEACHERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO PLAN CREATIVE, ENJOYABLE LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND SEE THE EFFECT THIS HAS ON RAISING ENTHUSIASM AND ACHIEVEMENT FOR CHILDREN.

HAVING THE LUXURY OF A SECOND YEAR IN THE PROJECT HAS ENABLED THE PRINCIPLES OF STAR CASCADE THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL. WORKING ALONGSIDE TRUE ARTISTS LIKE GARY HAMMOND HAS BEEN A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE FOR ALL CONCERNED.

ON BEHALF OF THE SCHOOL, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE WHOLE STAR TEAM.

*Signed:*

*SARAH WILSON*  
*STAR Initiative Co-ordinator 2007/08*



**STAR INITIATIVE~ 2007/08**



**SUPPORTING THROUGH THE ARTS**

**PRIMARY STRATEGY ~ LITERACY (WRITING  
FOCUS) ~ FOCUSED SUPPORT**

**BROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL**



**Final evaluation REPORT**

