



CASE STUDY REPORT

CLLD Consultant

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This study was originally published in 2010 as part of the 'What Works Well' initiative, part of the National Strategies for Education in England.

Abstract

Background: The purpose of the study was to narrow the gender gap in writing achievement by raising standards in boys' writing and increasing their motivation and confidence.

Aims: The main aim of the project was to narrow the gender gap in writing achievement by raising standards in boys' writing and increasing their motivation and confidence.

Methods: The participants included administrative and support staff, headteachers, National Strategies consultants, senior leadership teams, teachers, and external agencies. They were supported by CLLD Consultant training, Lead school presentations, networking with other teachers, sharing experiences and resources, and support and advice from an ICT adviser. Teachers attended 3 full days of training and had 3 days of non-contact time to work on the project. They adapted the environment and incorporated boy-friendly strategies to motivate boys to write. They used logs, interviews, observations, and pupils' work to measure progress.

Findings: The main findings of the Boys' Writing Project were that boys' confidence and enthusiasm for writing increased, and teachers improved their environments to support mark making and motivate boys to write.

Implications: The findings of this project suggest that providing boys with purposeful opportunities to write, using boy-friendly strategies and adapting the environment to support mark making can increase boys' confidence and motivation to write.

This abstract was generated by Camtree using a large language model (LLM) and added to the original report in 2023.

Keywords: Primary education; Communication, language and literacy

Introduction

What were your reasons for doing this type of development work?

At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage in 2009 the national gender gap in the area of writing of children achieving at 6+ was 19% points in favour of girls. Sefton's gap, was significantly higher with a 26% gender gap. To support the Narrowing the Gap agenda we decided to plan and deliver a Boys' writing project. Six schools involved with the CLLD programme were invited to carry out their own action research and a Lead school for CLLD agreed to support.

Who might find this case study useful?

- Administrative and support staff
- Headteacher
- National Strategies consultant
- Senior leadership team (SLT)
- Teacher

Description

What specific curriculum area, subject or aspect did you intend to have impact on?

- Communication, language and literacy

How did you intend to impact on pupil learning?

- Raise standards in boys' writing and therefore narrowing the gender gap in the number of children achieving 6+ in writing across the schools
- Increase the motivation and confidence of boys to write

What were your success criteria?

- Boys' confidence in telling stories will impact on achievement in writing
- Boys' motivation through the use of boy friendly strategies will impact on achievement in writing
- Impact to be measured over time through FS Profile/observations/ levels of involvement scale

What information or data did you use to measure progress towards your success criteria?

- Logs or interviews
- Observation outcomes
- Periodic teacher assessment
- Pupils' work

Describe the CPD approaches you used

Overview

This was run as a Sefton CLLD Project which included both central CPD training and in school support from the CLLD Consultant, Lead teachers from within a CLLD Lead school and supported by a Learning Development Manager working for one of Sefton's City Learning Centres. The three main training days are outlined below. Following the training days teachers audited their environments, conducted baseline assessments, observations and identified six boys to work with.

Over a six week period teachers made alterations to their settings to encourage mark making and planned and

developed projects incorporating boy friendly strategies.

Training:

- Session 1 Mark Making Matters and the enabling environment
- Session 2 Boy friendly Strategies to motivate boys to write
- Developing a project/use of PLODS
- Session 3 Boys and ICT/ creating story walks

Over the 6 weeks teachers had three further days supply cover to work on the project and an interim support visit from members of the Lead school.

The project culminated in a presentation at Universal CLLD training and a presentation to the Head teachers of the schools involved in the project.

Who provided you with support?

- External agency
- Middle leader
- Senior management
- Subject leader

How were you supported?

Teachers attended 3 full days of training with an additional 3 days non-contact time to work on the project.

Teachers had considerable autonomy to work on the project based upon the interests of their boys but they needs to demonstrate how they had adapted the environment and incorporated boy friendly strategies.

Impact

What has been the overall impact on pupil learning?

Boys were now confident and gained an enthusiasm for writing

Quotes you think are relevant to overall impact on learning

"The confidence this gave to previously reluctant writing was tangible and these boys have a greater understanding and appreciation of how they can use their excellent role-play skills to structure their writing!"

"There was a great enthusiasm towards writing and a willingness to write more in their independent activities"

Quantitative evidence of impact on pupil learning

- Periodic teacher assessment

Qualitative evidence of impact on pupil learning

- Observation outcomes

Describe the evidence of impact on pupil learning

'Boys' confidence in writing is extremely high'. 'The boys now believe that they are writers and have become role models for the other children'.

What has been the impact on teaching?

Teachers returned together at the end of the project to present their findings not only to other teachers but also to their Head teachers and school improvement partners.

Teachers talked openly about how they had reflected on their environments both indoor and outdoor to support writing and felt that now they had a much better understanding as to how best to support boys and motivate them to write.

They reported that they themselves had been challenged to reflect upon the environment both indoors and outdoors to ensure that mark making resources were readily available and inspiring to boys. Teachers noted the importance of giving boys purposeful opportunities to write and commented on the increased levels of confidence demonstrated by the boys involved in the project.

Teachers also noted the importance of valuing the boys' storytelling in roleplay and using their stories to inspire them to write.

Quotes you think are relevant to the impact on teaching

'I found there was a lot of resources I could use in school which I could adapt for little or no cost. I called in a favour from my 6 year nephew to loan some action figures for role-play, picked up some stationary and other writing materials from bargain shops, found free mask templates on the internet and recycled items such as cardboard boxes to make a Crime Fighter Computer etc.'

'The children loved using pencils that had superhero stickers on them and by changing a community playthings dress up unit in to a super-hero HQ which could be moved where ever the children wanted, the writing followed them around!'

Evidence of impact on teaching

- Evidence from observation and monitoring
- Evidence from planning
- Teacher perceptions

Describe the evidence of impact on teaching

Teachers have been extremely resourceful and improved their environments to support mark making. Resources from eg IKEA were adapted and writing belts, both purchased and made by parents, were particularly effective. Mobile writing tool kits were created for the outdoors along with superhero clip boards etc.

Teachers have a renewed enthusiasm for using ICT, particularly 'Crazy Talk' and the 'Talking tins' and teachers have reflected more on the importance of making writing purposeful based upon the interests of the boys.

What has been the impact on school organisation and leadership?

As a CLLD Consultant working on an effective model for universal support for schools I believe that this pilot project has been instrumental in confirming my own belief as to the importance and the potential of schools networking and working together on specific projects/action research to further improve practice. This is one way forward: identifying schools who have the potential and capacity to lead projects and then clustering schools together in learning networks.

Evidence of impact on school organisation and leadership

not applicable

Summary

What is the crucial thing that made the difference?

- Having a real purpose for the project based upon Sefton data
- Key members of the CLLD lead school driving the project
- Funding which allowed teachers non contact time/training

What key resources would people who want to learn from your experience need access to?

- Photo story 3
- Crazy Talk animation
- Talking tins
- Mark making Matters DCSF

What CPD session and resources were particularly useful?

- CLLD Consultant training
- Lead school presentations- auditing environment/ developing a project
- Time to network with teachers involved in the same project
- Sharing experiences and resources
- LA Mark Making Matters Audit
- Support and advice from ICT adviser

If another individual or school was attempting to replicate this work, where would they start and what would the essential elements be?

- Interrogation of FSP data- analysis of gender differences in writing
- Audit of CLL provision - environment checklist
- Observations of boys and involvement in writing
- Identifying interest
- Using boy friendly strategies- use of ICT, roleplay, short purposeful writing opportunities

What further developments are you planning to do (or would you like to see others do)?

- Analysis of FSP data around children with EAL
- Creating dual language storysacks project

About Camtree

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About 'What Works Well'

This case study was originally published as part of the 'What Works Well' section of the National Strategies for Education in England. The National Strategies were professional programmes aiming for improvements in the quality of learning and teaching in schools in England. 'What Works Well' involved teaching practitioners from all phases and areas of education sharing accounts of real developments which had improved learning and teaching, and made a difference to pupil progress. 'What Works Well' case studies were designed to support practice transfer and include sufficient detail and resources to enable others to implement the effective practice described. Most were reviewed by experts prior to publication as 'User Generated Content' (UGC) under a licence which encouraged reuse and derivative works, but which precluded commercial use. This report was awaiting final approval when the National Strategies site was archived.

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