

Case Study: Wilton and Barford Primary School - Wiltshire Family Learning Quick Reads Project

Our small rural primary school near Salisbury had been hosting a successful Family Learning Storybox programme. The families were invited to join up with the Quick Reads Reading Group to keep the families on board with their own and their children's learning, whilst reinforcing the message from the Storybox programme about being reading role models.

How it works

During the preceding Storybox programme, I presented the group with the book list of Quick Reads titles available; six books were selected to be read during the programme. The two hour sessions were planned to have a book review about the chosen Quick Read for the first hour and the second hour involved the children working together with their Mums and a crafty activity. Each week was introduced with a catch up about the week's chosen read; the adults also completed a review independently.

Successes and barriers

This was a great opportunity to keep the families learning together and to get the adults reading themselves. They all agreed that they had enjoyed having to read! The school were happy to host this programme and if the head teacher didn't provide a review, another member of staff completed a review sheet (left in the Staff Room each week for completion). One family were invited to join up as they had recently joined the school; the group provided a welcoming and sharing environment. Owing to the fact that the school were happy for the children to be released from their classes, this again provided a less intimidating environment. Four of the six learners have progressed from the Quick Reads project onto the family numeracy programme. It was a difficult time for everyone to be engaged with the programme as Christmas loomed. In hindsight, it would have been easier to have started after Christmas; however we couldn't have delivered in the given time. It was also a shame that not many parents were keen to enrol, this was largely due to 'time of year' which is demanding on family time.

Outcomes

Good outcomes inasmuch as the school are keen to keep the reading and family learning flag flying. They have introduced an adult lending library which will be placed in the school foyer. The adults enjoyed the chance to read the Quick Reads books; there were three reluctant readers who all said that the books were easy to read and they were delighted to start reading again. All the mums/staff said that they didn't have time to read and they found the books engaging and accessible. Reading

became a family affair: one family kept the shared book in their car dashboard and the adult members read the book whilst waiting for school pick ups! One Mum started to go to bed earlier so she could read her book. Four of the existing Storybox/Quick Readers are continuing with their learning on a further Family Learning numeracy programme. The Quick Reads offered a natural progression route for families to learn together. It is evident from evaluations that confidence has certainly grown in the group.

Evaluation

This has been a great opportunity to encourage families to get on board with reading. Also, as this was perceived to be 'family learning' it provided a welcoming environment as opposed to a 'reading group' which could have been a barrier as some of the learners were not confident learners/readers. Confidence grew within the group so that they could admit to wanting numeracy support. It was a shame that owing to the time of year and children's illness, attendance was not 100%. It is evident though that reading has become more important to the families and they are keen to engage with the lending library. The Family Learning Team now has a Quick Reads library which is constantly updated. Also, we have created some more reading resources to support the literacy programmes. I have started a Twitter account which I will share with the team; we can all follow! Family Learning is becoming part of the school timetable too. Personally, I would have liked (as always) to have more time to focus on this particular programme and to have extended it to more families.