Summer Reading Challenge 2009

Impact Research Report

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# Summer Reading Challenge 2009
## Interim Impact Research Report

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Key Findings

Children undertaking the Summer Reading Challenge saw it as an overwhelmingly positive experience. Those who took part in the Challenge tend to be already committed readers.

The Summer Reading Challenge can contribute towards preventing the ‘summer holiday dip’ in reading motivation and attainment. More children undertaking the SRC reported increased levels of enjoyment in reading than their counterparts who did not take the Challenge. Teachers judged that more children who had undertaken the Challenge either maintained or improved their reading performance than those who had not, and far fewer dipped in attainment after the summer.

The Summer Reading Challenge boosts children’s inclination to read at home and widens the reading range and repertoire of the children who participate. Children who undertook the Summer Reading Challenge read far more books over the summer than those who are keen readers but who did not undertake the Challenge.

Children’s choice of reading at home is wider and more varied than their school reading and in many cases more extensive than their teachers thought. All the children in the sample indicated their enjoyment of talking about reading with friends, family and teachers and those who undertook the SRC commented on valuing opportunities to talk about reading with librarians.

A number of children who were eligible for free school meals (FSM) gained in motivation after the Challenge and the majority read between one and six books. In addition, many of the children eligible for FSM who did not take the Challenge showed keenness and commitment as readers. Practical support should be given to children, those eligible for FSM and those who are not, whose family circumstances make it difficult for them to participate in the Challenge.

Children who have English as an Additional Language may need greater support in undertaking the Challenge. Whilst they showed keenness and read proportionately more than many of the children who had not taken the Challenge, interviews suggest that more could be done to support this group of young readers in the future.

Teachers see the SRC as beneficial, noting its contribution not only to raised levels of motivation and commitment to reading but seeing the social benefits and identifying its role in maintaining levels of reading competence. There was particular praise for the materials and website resources for the Quest Seekers Challenge. Any reservations teachers have are largely about communications and a lack of follow up in September.

Teachers themselves are keen readers. They place high importance on being enthusiastic readers themselves in order to encourage a love of reading in their classes tending to rely on their own knowledge or children’s recommendations to choose books for classroom use, rather than the library.
The role of the Headteacher is critical in supporting children’s readiness to engage with the Summer Reading Challenge. In those schools where the Headteacher was centrally involved more children were engaged with the Challenge and benefited from it.

The Summer Reading Challenge thrives best where there are strong links between schools, teachers, librarians and children’s and youth services.

Librarians appreciate what the Summer Reading Challenge offers. They value the ways it encourages links between libraries and schools and provides an opportunity to engage with children and their reading. The best recruitment and completion of the SRC occurs where the librarians are flexible and innovative.

The Summer Reading Challenge has the potential to reach more families whose circumstances do not always allow them the opportunity to use library facilities. Closer collaboration between agencies: schools, libraries, and youth services can strengthen community cohesion.

**Key Recommendations**

**For schools**
Identify particular groups of children and their families and offer practical support to help them to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge. Make personal contacts with parents and encourage siblings, older friends and reading buddies to arrange to accompany younger readers to the library.

Follow up and attempt to sustain the gains in commitment and achievement made by children who have participated in the Summer Reading Challenge by continuing to take classes to visit the local library and inviting librarians to school during the year to discuss reading enthusiasms more generally.

Use the expertise of local library staff to visit the school to advise on book availability, how to expand the range of books used in the classroom, and help develop in-school library facilities. In collaboration with local librarians, plan to include the Summer Reading Challenge in the reading curriculum of the school, directly linking summer and autumn texts and discussions about reading and organising events across the school or between schools.

Discover more about the interests and preferences of young readers’ home practices in reading all kinds of texts – paper-based and on screen – and use this knowledge to support their in-school reading.

Share teachers’ own reading enthusiasms and preferences with young readers, discussing reading as an everyday, pleasurable and satisfying activity. Establishing book-talk groups, perhaps in collaboration with the local library, with parents and with children of mixed ages, would enhance opportunities to talk about reading, and expand the reading repertoire of adults and children alike.
**For libraries**

Establish a policy of greater flexibility of lending arrangements, perhaps allowing for longer periods of loan and numbers of books borrowed at a time.

Identify a small number of local schools which have not previously been involved in the Summer Reading Challenge, or have only had a few children who participated. Target Headteachers specifically and make efforts to visit schools to promote the Challenge and to plan it into their reading programmes throughout the year. Organise conferences or network meetings with headteachers and local authority literacy consultants.

Establish an annual programme of links with schools so that visits to promote the Challenge can start early in the school year. Sustain gains made by children who participated in the SRC through post-Challenge contacts. Publicise the facilities offered by the library to support schools in developing the range of reading in school and in setting up more vibrant school libraries. Network with local authority staff with a responsibility for literacy in order to profile the Summer Reading Challenge at LA literacy events.

Expand the provision of media and types of text offered as part of the Summer Reading Challenge. Plan specifically for particular groups, for example, bilingual families.

Develop closer links with other agencies, for example, the youth service, to strengthen efforts to work with the community and develop greater community cohesion. Discover what other summer holiday activities are offered by the local authority and voluntary groups and seek to connect with them.

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**Fig. 1.1** *Draw yourself doing the Summer Reading Challenge, Liam Y6*
Section One  The Summer Reading Challenge

Background
The 2009 Summer Reading Challenge (SRC) is the 11th annual challenge. With ninety-seven percent of libraries in the UK involved, it is the UK’s biggest library promotion of children’s reading. Since its inception, evaluations of the SRC show that it has been successful in promoting children’s pleasure in reading, developing their independence as readers, extending their repertoires of authors and types of text, broadening their horizons and having a beneficial effect on their reading skills and levels of enthusiasm (SRC Impact Research Report, 2006). In addition, over the years children have sustained their enthusiasm for SCR, many of them returning to the Challenge each year. Teachers have also identified increased enthusiasm and motivation for reading, commitment to being library users and raised attainment in reading.

In 2009 it was decided that alongside the important data from perceptions by teachers, pupils and librarians, it would be useful to take a more strategically focused approach. The aims for the evaluation this year are:

• To produce snapshot surveys of the work of three local authorities and one school in Brighton undertaking SRC in summer 2009.

• To analyse how far the intentions of the programme have been met in these local authorities and to identify the impact on a sample of pupils drawn from:
  o children who struggle with reading
  o children who are disengaged from reading
  o children who have English as an Additional Language.

• To use teacher assessments, as well as pupils’ perceptions.

• To communicate the relevance of the SRC for children’s reading through case study evidence of successful aspects of ‘best practice’.

The evaluative research project was designed with these aims in mind.

This year’s challenge, Quest Seekers, was all about the power of the imagination aiming to encourage young readers to discover the joy of reading and nurture a life-long interest in books. It also promoted the library as a place of ‘wonder and excitement’, where librarians can offer children invaluable advice and guidance to help them through their quest as readers. The reading challenge website offered children the opportunity to participate through online discussions with children, librarians and authors, play games and review books that they have read. Every child involved was invited to read six books over the course of the summer holiday. Schools participated by encouraging children to join the challenge and celebrating their achievements in the autumn term, 2009.

Context
There is continuing evidence that children in England do not read independently or enjoy reading as much as many of their peers in other countries (Twist, Schagen and Hodgson, 2003; 2007; Sainsbury and Schagen, 2004). There is also evidence that children’s reading attainment is lower than in 2001 (Twist et al., 2007). Lack of enjoyment in reading does not seem to be related solely to reading in school, however. The PIRLS study of 2006 showed that young English readers are almost bottom of the international league tables in their views about lack of pleasure in reading outside of school (Mullis et al., 2006) and in a study of young people’s self perceptions as readers
for the National Literacy Trust (2008) ‘nearly half of self-defined non-readers stated that they never read outside of school’ (Clark et al., 2008: 4). In addition to this picture of dwindling enjoyment of reading is the research evidence linking reading with economic well-being. The PISA international study of 2000 indicated that finding ways to engage more young people in reading was likely to be the most effective way of creating social change (OECD, 2002:3).

There have been a number of studies which suggest that learners can undergo losses in reading levels during the summer holidays (Anderson et al., 1988; Alexander et al., 2001; Borman et al., 2009) and that reading a certain number of books and frequency of leisure reading can help to prevent the decline (Kim, 2004). Most particularly, access to books is a key factor. This creates a problem for schools wanting to support children in reading over the holidays since they do not have the constant contact which might prompt children to engage in reading. However, summer break reading instruction does not seem to be the answer. There have been questions about the efficacy of instructional programmes where short term gains are not sustained (Kim, op cit.:170) and evidence that the quality and variety of texts is a critical factor in promoting longer term gains (Neuman, 1999). Such research also offers a challenge to libraries to encourage young readers, particularly, perhaps those whose home circumstances are more demanding, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, although in some areas pioneering work has been done (Hatton and Marsh, 2007).

In the US, there has been some attention to Free Voluntary Reading (FVR) defined as ‘reading because you want to’ as a way of developing active and discriminating reading habits (Krashen, 2004). Although there has been some concern about children turning away from books in favour of screen-based reading activities, a study of children’s on-screen reading preferences indicated that children have a wide range of reading habits, including, but not predominantly, on-screen reading and popular cultural texts (Bearne et al., 2007). In looking at factors which promote children’s engaged reading of books, recent research in England (Cremin et al., 2008) has indicated the importance of teachers’ own reading practices and knowledge and their experience of children’s texts in developing stronger and more committed young readers. Another recent study from the US, by Ross et al. (2006) offers a strong case for the library’s role in developing and sustaining engaged readership. Drawing on a wide range of research sources the study emphasises the value of popular culture, the social nature of reading, and in particular the role of libraries in promoting reading, and for making reading for pleasure a priority. However, in Lockwood’s study of well-motivated primary age readers in the south-east of England, just over half saw libraries as ‘boring’ places (Lockwood, 2008) although Maynard et al. (2008) report that just under half of the children in their large-scale UK survey reported often borrowing books from the public library.

This Impact Research report set out to assess the extent to which the SRC supports both reading attainment and reading motivation. The research included a range of children in different areas of England of different ages and with different social circumstances. Following the recommendation in the SRC 2006 Impact Research Report that the SRC should ‘Widen appeal so ALL children can participate’ (Reading Agency, 2006 Section 4) this study was designed to take a close look at the impact of the SRC on children who may be less motivated readers, those who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) and children who qualify for Free School Meals (FSM). However, as the report shows, very few less motivated readers were involved. This report identifies aspects of good
practice - those factors which are likely to support schools and libraries in developing a wider readership - and those which might be barriers to success.

Evaluation methodology
Although it was originally intended to focus on three local authorities, the evaluative research project was carried out through surveys in four local authorities with active library services with good links to education and one additional school in Brighton and Hove. This provided representative evidence of the efficacy of SRC across different demographics. The Reading Agency approached local authorities inviting them to participate and the final groupings of schools were in Coventry, Manchester, Staffordshire and Wiltshire. Thirty eight teachers in eleven schools of different sizes and in different geographical locations took part in the research.

In order to assess impact, the sample of children was drawn from those who had identified themselves as intending to take part in the SRC (the Focus group) matched with an equal number who were not going to take part in the Challenge (the Control group) (1). However, some of the original sample had to be excluded because of incomplete final data so that the final numbers were: Focus group: number = 75; Control group: number = 71 (2). There were roughly equal numbers of boys and girls (boys: n = 74; girls: n = 72). The Impact Research aimed to include children who struggle with reading as judged by their teachers and children who identified themselves as less motivated by reading. However, in the final sample there were very few of these children so that although their individual progress can be tracked, numbers do not allow for any generalisable conclusions. About a fifth of the children involved had English as an Additional Language (n = 31). The sample also included pupils who receive free school meals and those who do not (FSM: n = 48; not FSM n = 98). There was a spread of children across years 1-5 with roughly equal numbers of children in KS1 and KS2 (KS1: n = 70; KS2: n = 76) although because of the self-selecting nature of the sample, the number of children in year 4 was much lower than for other years. It was decided that for ease of data collection children who were in year 6 before the summer holidays would not be included.

The impact was measured through analysis of:
- Teachers’ Assessing Pupils’ Progress (APP) assessments before and after SRC (3).
- Pupil perception surveys of themselves as readers, their attitudes and commitment to reading, before and after the SRC.
- Teachers’ before and after surveys including perceptions of what SRC has to offer and their views on what supports reading development.
- Reflective comments from teachers and librarians involved.
- Interviews with teachers, children and librarians.
(see Appendix 1 for Surveys before and after the SRC)

In order to gain useful data, it was recommended that the schools involved had APP processes for reading in place across the school, a Literacy Subject Leader who is a member of the Senior Management Team, an active and engaged local library and strong links with the local community. This was not possible in all schools but was generally the case.

A general launch meeting was held in London attended by Subject Leaders and other teachers from each of the schools involved and the lead librarian (primary) from each of
the local authorities. The Reading Agency gave the background of the SRC and librarians who had taken part before described their work. Rebecca Kennedy and Eve Bearne outlined the structure and aims of the Impact Research project and explained the process of the research. Regional meetings were held in September to give teachers and librarians some feedback about the information gathered at the end of the summer term, to discuss teachers’ reflections on the children’s experiences so far and to support the gathering of data to complete the research.

**Note**

1. There were 15 children from the original sample whose final data was not available after the summer holidays.

2. APP (assessing pupils’ progress) is designed to support ongoing assessment. One of its key features is to help teachers make reliable judgements related to national standards drawing on a wide range of evidence. See the QCDA website [http://www.qcda.gov.uk/13581.aspx](http://www.qcda.gov.uk/13581.aspx)
Section Two  Findings: the children
(See Appendices 2.1, 2.2. and 2.3 for detailed analysis of data)

2.1 The whole sample
This section begins with a view of the whole Focus group (those who undertook the Summer Reading Challenge) compared with the whole Control group (those who did not take part in the Challenge), their attitudes towards reading and their teachers’ view of their motivation and ability. It then focuses more closely on children within each part of the sample who were eligible for free school meals (FSM) and those who have English as an Additional Language (EAL). It was intended to have a similar focus on less motivated/competent readers but the number of children who recorded that they did not like reading or who felt that they were only ‘OK’ or ‘not very good’ at reading across the sample as a whole was relatively small and very few of those were from the Focus group, making it difficult to assess the effect of the SRC on this category of readers.

Before the Summer Reading Challenge
It was clear from the first set of data that children undertaking the Summer Reading Challenge tend to have positive attitudes towards reading. Before the summer, in every year group and across the sample, the children’s perceptions of their own reading were positive. Few indicated that they did not like reading or that they saw themselves as not very good at reading. Overall, however, the Focus group (those children who had opted to undertake the SRC) had more positive attitudes to reading and more optimistic views of their own reading ability than the Control group (those children who had not opted for the Challenge). As far as the children’s views of their own ability as readers was concerned, over half of the Focus group saw themselves as very good readers and just less than half of the Control group also put themselves in the highest category.

The teachers reported that most of the whole sample (Focus and Control groups combined) enjoyed reading in the classroom in a variety of contexts; half of them are described as enjoying reading at home although very few children across the sample were seen as users of the school/classroom or local library. Before the SRC the teachers rated the Focus and Control group children’s ability as readers as almost equal.

After the Summer Reading Challenge
The children’s views of enjoyment and ability
After the SRC, almost all the Focus group children who had recorded themselves as loving reading retained the highest level of enjoyment whereas far fewer of the Control group children still rated themselves as loving reading. Of the rest, after the SRC twice as many Focus group than Control group children recorded higher levels of enjoyment, indicating the success of the SRC in promoting enthusiasm for reading. Equally, far fewer Focus group children rated themselves as enjoying reading less. As far as reading ability is concerned, before the Challenge over half of the Control group and almost half of the Focus group had identified themselves as very good readers. After the summer this figure had dropped a good deal with far fewer children maintaining their view of themselves as very good readers. This may be a feature of children’s perceptions as they start the new school year in a higher class. Of the rest, after the SRC about a third of both the Focus and Control groups thought that they had improved as readers or maintained their levels of ability but rather more Control group children thought that their standard had declined.
The positive views of the Focus group after the SRC highlights the contribution the Challenge made to the children’s reading enjoyment and commitment during the summer. The main reasons the Focus group children gave for choosing to take part in the SRC included the already identified existing love of reading and an interest in what the challenge had to offer. Parental encouragement was also seen as a key factor and many of the children saw the SRC as an opportunity to improve their reading. The main reasons given by the Control group children for not taking part were practical problems about parents not having time or not being able to take them to the library, and holidays taking up much of the summer break. After the Challenge, the children who had participated identified the incentives or rewards as the best thing about the Challenge, followed by their own love of reading and the range, quality and number of books in the library. Environmental and social aspects of the library were also seen as important. They felt that the library staff supported them by recommending and helping them to choose books, giving encouragement and supporting them with their reading skills. There were, however, a few children who felt that the libraries and staff did not help. In comparison with schools as an environment for reading, the children felt that libraries offered more choice of books and text types, greater comfort and peace for reading, more freedom and independence in choosing (or not choosing) particular reading matter. They also appreciated the technology available and the social aspects of the library as important to their enjoyment of the Challenge (See Case Studies 6.2 and 6.3).

**Teachers’ judgements of reading motivation and achievement**

After the SRC the teachers’ perceptions of the most highly motivated Focus group children hardly changed. In addition, the teachers noted that almost twice as many Focus group as Control group children had improved in motivation. In terms of judgements of reading ability, based on pre-summer and post-summer APP assessments, more Focus group children had maintained their levels of reading achievement or improved on their previous levels, some quite strikingly. Far fewer Focus group children were judged as having gone down in ability. There is continuing concern that children’s levels of literacy tend to dip during the summer holidays. Any intervention which helps to stem this will benefit children as they move into a higher class after the summer (Doddington et al., 1999; Galton et al. 2003). The nature of the sample (already highly motivated readers) and the timing of the assessments mean that shifts of motivation and ability may not be great, however the patterns of differences between the children’s perceived motivation and the reading scores before and after the summer strongly indicate the impact of the SRC in maintaining motivation and helping to prevent the ‘summer holiday dip’ in reading achievement.

Some comments from teachers highlight the impact on individual children:

*His mum commented on how fantastic the SRC was for H. He really got into it and he has literally learnt to read over the summer.* Teacher, Brighton

*G. now changes his book frequently and loves looking through the free reading box to make his selection.* Teacher, Staffordshire

*A was always a good reader but she has grown in enthusiasm during the holidays and keeps asking Mum to take her to the library.* Teacher, Coventry

*D was a boy who liked short texts and mainly read comics and magazines. Now he's walking around school with novels, reading them avidly.* Teacher, Coventry
2.2 Children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)

Less than a third of the whole sample were children eligible for FSM. Of these, just less than half undertook the Challenge. This means that the results need to be considered in the light of relatively small numbers (See Appendix 2.2 for detailed analysis). It is also worth noting here that although eligibility for free school meals is taken as an indicator of low socio-economic status, there is likely to be considerable variation in the home literacy environments of the families who have FSM (van Steensel, 2006) and it is wise to avoid making judgements about the quality of support for reading available in those families whose children qualify for FSM.

Changes in children's self perceptions of reading enjoyment and competence

Before the summer, the Focus group FSM children had slightly less positive views of reading overall in relation to the rest of the Focus group. In line with the general picture of keen readers engaging with the Challenge, the FSM Focus group children described themselves as enjoying reading more than those who did not take the Challenge and none of them said they did not like reading at all, in contrast with the FSM Control group. After the SRC, almost all of the FSM Focus group children who had said they loved reading maintained that high level of perception and of the rest a large number noted that they enjoyed reading more after the Challenge.

In terms of self perceptions of their reading ability, before the SRC relatively more FSM children in the Focus group than non FSM children rated themselves as very good readers (the top category), although a greater proportion of FSM children saw themselves as just ‘OK’ or ‘not very good’ at reading (the bottom two categories). After the SRC children eligible for FSM, as well as those who were not, showed a considerable drop in their views of themselves as very good readers. Since both groups showed this drop, it may be that after the experience of the SRC the Focus group children as a whole now see reading in a broader sense and so rate themselves more realistically.

Teachers’ judgements of reading achievement and motivation

From the teachers’ judgements of reading attainment and motivation, the picture is also less positive. Using APP judgements, the teachers noted that similar proportions of children eligible for FSM maintained or increased their reading scores in comparison with the non FSM Focus group, although the number of FSM Focus group children is small compared with the whole group. However, compared with the children who are eligible for FSM but who did not undertake the Challenge, the FSM Focus group did not fare so well, with more proportionately being judged as having dropped a sub-level or two. This may be related to the numbers of EAL children in the FSM Focus group who were judged by their teachers to have regressed during the holidays (see following section p 24).

Numbers of books read during the holidays

The majority of the children eligible for FSM who undertook the Challenge read between one and six books, rather fewer than their counterparts who took the SRC but did not qualify for FSM. The children who did not undertake the Challenge also recorded the number of books read during the holidays although these cannot be verified since the numbers are self-reported and not noted independently by librarians. However, it is noticeable that only children who did not undertake the Challenge (the Control groups) noted that they did not read any books at all during the summer. At the other end of the
scale, an anomalously high proportion of the FSM Control group read more than seven books, and this group recorded the highest number of children reading more than twelve books. Quite a few of these were younger children who were keen picturebook readers so tended to read more books than their older counterparts. However, if these numbers are in any way indicative of reading habits, it seems that children who are eligible for FSM can be committed readers, whether they find it possible to undertake the Challenge or not.

**Teachers' comments on individual children**

It was not possible for teachers to provide detailed evidence about every child eligible for FSM. However, from their reflections, the teachers’ responses generally indicate a variable picture of this group. Although government agencies use FSM as a measure of deprivation, it is not necessarily an indicator of low literacy standards or low parental support, indeed several of the teachers commented on children who are eligible for free schools meals and who did not take the Challenge as being keen readers with very supportive reading homes. A strategically targeted approach to support families whose circumstances do not make it easy for their children to undertake the Challenge would reap benefits. The teachers commented on how valuable the SRC would be for children who were not able to undertake it this year. A’s teacher describes her as ‘a good reader of above average ability’ and ‘a delight’. She enjoys reading for pleasure and despite not taking part in the Challenge she read over the summer holidays through choice. Her teacher notes that ‘Progress was certainly maintained.’ Similarly, D is seen as a reluctant reader who is making slow progress. Although she did not undertake the SRC, she noted that she read eleven books over the summer and that her favourite was *Beauty and the Beast*. D believes that she reads more at school because there are ‘more books’. R is also described as a reluctant reader who is making slow progress but again he records reading seven books during the holidays. L was not able to take part in the SRC but her teacher comments that:

*Mum and dad are supportive and do take the time to read with her at home so she is making slow but steady progress in term time. She does try hard and enjoys 1:1 reading with an adult.*

Equally, although D did not undertake the Challenge, she is described by her teacher as a confident child who reads well at home. Her teacher says that ‘the whole family see themselves as readers.’ D believes that she reads equally at home and at school because ‘I like reading in the book corner and I read my books on my bookshelf at home.’

The SRC was ideal for some children eligible for FSM who are already committed readers.

H’s teacher reported that she is a child who seems to make progress naturally:

*She has definitely improved since the summer and has raised her reading level. Furthermore, she enjoys reading and reads for pleasure – the SRC was ideal for someone like her.*

JJ did not at first sign up for the Challenge but then decided to undertake it and read five books during the holidays. His teacher says ‘He is a confident reader but quite picky about what he reads.’ JJ commented that his choice of reading materials had not changed but that he now enjoyed going to the library because ‘it has more books and it is easy to concentrate.’
C’s teacher identifies that following her participation in the Challenge, C has now made ‘library links for life.’ She independently selects higher level books and is ‘clearly more enthusiastic about her reading, choosing to share what she has read.’

H is viewed by his teacher as a usually enthusiastic reader in the early stages of reading but that he ‘has become extremely enthusiastic after going to the library… he has spoken about the different books he has read and his mum has commented on his progress.’ His teacher believes ‘The SRC has given him a hunger to read books and hear stories, it has made him a more confident and independent reader.’ H reports that the best part of the Challenge was going to the library.

J did not intend to undertake the SRC before the holiday; following the holiday he reported that he had read four books and judged himself to be a good reader. He enjoys reading in the library because it is ‘quieter.’

Perhaps the hardest to reach group are those children whose family circumstances make it difficult for them to maintain reading during holidays. C is seen by his teacher as being of average ability. He did not mention reading any books over the summer and as such his teacher saw no progress when he came back to school. She comments that ‘Notes in his reading diary from mum are inconsistent. Any progress made with C comes from a push at school and lots of 1:1 reading with adult helpers.’

In the same way, B’s teacher reported that ‘Reading is not priority at home’. Although she is seen as an able child, her teacher believes that her personal circumstances can limit her progress.

Children like these present a challenge for future SRCs. In some areas (see Case Study 6.4) collaborations between schools, librarians and youth workers are making inroads into trying to reach families whose personal circumstances make it difficult for their children to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge.

2.3 **Children who have English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

It should be noted that there was only a small number of EAL children in the sample. Of those, over a fifth were selected specifically because their attitudes towards reading and their achievements were judged by their teachers to be low. The very small numbers and the sample choice mean that the results cannot be seen as generally indicative of any particular trends.

**Children’s self perceptions of reading enjoyment and competence**

Before the Challenge, proportionately fewer of the EAL Focus group compared with the rest of the Focus group rated themselves as loving reading, although none said that they didn’t like reading. Even though quite a number said they loved reading, the Focus group numbers were lower than the Control group, indicating again that the Focus group had a number of children judged by their teachers to be less committed readers.

In terms of reading ability, about the same proportion of EAL children rated themselves as very good readers although proportionately more of the EAL Focus group saw themselves as only ‘OK’ readers. Slightly more Focus group EAL children saw themselves as very good readers, in comparison with the EAL Control group children.
After the Challenge, just over half of the fifteen children with EAL who undertook the Challenge maintained their pre-SRC view that they enjoyed reading very much. This means that the seven remaining children really cannot be said to suggest any general trends. In comparison with the rest of the Focus group, proportionately far fewer of the EAL Focus group children were as keen on reading after the SRC as their non EAL counterparts. Again, the choice of sample needs to be taken into account and no reliable shift of perceptions of enjoyment can be identified.

In terms of rating themselves on reading ability, after taking away the three children who had rated themselves as very good before the Challenge and maintained this view, none of the remaining EAL children thought they had improved as readers and proportionately more thought they had deteriorated. In contrast, seven of the EAL Control group children had rated themselves in the top category and retained that view, suggesting once again the unrepresentative nature of the Focus group EAL children in this survey. In comparison with the Control group EAL children, the Focus group once again recorded lower perceptions of their achievement as readers after the SRC.

**Teachers’ judgements of reading achievement**

Of the EAL children who undertook the SRC, only a few improved on their pre-summer APP levels. The small size of this sample and the particular children involved, however, means that it is impossible to draw reliable inferences from the numerical data. The teachers judged that proportionately twice as many EAL children as non EAL children had dropped at least a sub-level over the holiday. In addition, just over half of the EAL Focus group either retained their pre-summer level or raised it compared with three quarters of the non EAL Focus group. Both the EAL Focus group and the Control group showed similar patterns of retention, improvement or decline. Again, this may be due to the particular nature of the EAL Focus sample or to changes of teachers at the start of a new school year.

**Numbers of books read during the holidays**

A relatively large proportion of the EAL Focus group did not answer the question about the number of books read in the summer, although all the other Focus group children did. One of the EAL Focus group recorded having read no books at all. Of those who did read books over the holidays, both Focus and Control groups, the EAL Control group, those who had not participated in the Challenge, read more than those who had. It has to be remembered, however, that the Control group’s numbers of books read are self-reported with no means of checking the figures, but the pattern is similar to the other data patterns of the EAL Focus and Control groups. Compared with the non EAL Control group, however, the EAL Focus group read proportionately more books overall. In some schools, there was a high level of take-up although not all the children were involved in this research:

*It engaged a high number of the EAL children in our school, most of whom completed.* Teacher, Manchester

**Teachers’ comments on individual children**

While the survey evidence seems less positive in respect of the children who have English as an Additional Language, interviews and observations suggest that this group of children can – and do - benefit from the SRC and this is a pointer towards possible
targeting for future years. Teachers commented on particular children whose home language is not English for whom the SRC had made a significant difference:

A, a Nepalese boy, enjoyed completing the SRC and receiving the poster. He reports that he read different stories during the summer holidays and enjoyed the range available in the library. Following participation in the Challenge, A’s teacher believes he is ‘more confident about trying new books and has grown in fluency.’

With support from her teachers and the local library, R, was able to borrow dual language books and books about Spain to take with her whilst visiting family during the summer. R’s mother was appreciative of the range of books available and their suitability. Previously R’s mother had been put off the Challenge as she felt it was ‘beyond her.’ R thoroughly enjoyed the Challenge and has a positive view of the library and commented that ‘My mummy and daddy really want to go sometimes to the library but I do always.’ Her enthusiasm is evident in her smile in Fig. 2.1.

Fig. 2.1 *Draw yourself doing the Summer Reading Challenge*, Rose Y3

A, an Urdu speaker, enjoyed participating in the SRC very much and feels that it has made her reading ‘get better’. She reports to reading different types of books over the summer and that her favourite was an *Extreme Science* book. A’s teacher reports that she is more confident and able to discuss her reading following the holidays.

S is a Swahili speaker and a keen reader whose enthusiasm for reading following participation in the SRC has continued. He participated in the Challenge because of his love for reading and enjoys visiting the library because ‘It’s quiet and my little brother is not there.’

Z’s attitude towards her reading improved over the course of the holidays and she read seven books. Z identifies the best thing about the Challenge: ‘I liked to read to my baby cousin a Polish book.’ During a discussion with the researcher, she explains that her mother is unaware of where the local library is situated.

Y4 girl *But my mum doesn’t know where the library is.*
Interviewer She doesn’t know where the library is?
Y4 girl I just went with school... When I used to live at Poland it was really, really, really near my house and mum used to work there and my friend I used to come round there all day and read books and making our own ones.
Interviewer What sort of books did you make?
Y4 girl Exciting books and funny books.

As a result of this conversation the class teacher ensured that the interpreter talked to Z’s mother so that she knows how to find the library. Her teacher notes that ‘Z is now keen to go back to the library, now that her mum has a map to find it!’

2.4 Children’s reading habits and preferences
Before the summer, both Focus and Control group children reported themselves as reading as much at home as at school with slightly more Focus group children reading at home in preference to reading at school. The top reason given was that there is more time at home to read. Also, those children who love reading say they like to read whenever and wherever they can but that they found better reading materials at home than at school. The children also commented on the importance of reading ‘to get better at reading’ and that they enjoyed the social aspects of reading – talking with friends, sharing books, comics, magazines or recommendations.

After the SRC, there was a shift in the preferences of places to read for both the Focus and the Control groups. More Focus group children now indicated that they would habitually read either at home or both at school and home, whereas more of the Control group considered themselves more likely to read at school, indicating a greater commitment to reading ‘wherever and whenever’ after taking part in the Challenge as Riley shows by his drawing of himself reading in bed. (Fig. 2.2)

Fig. 2.2 Draw yourself doing the Summer Reading Challenge, Riley Y2
Other children’s comments show a variety of views about what makes a satisfying reading environment:

*I’m not a big fan of libraries cause I like to settle. I’m used to having my own bedroom, sitting down and reading a book that way cause it’s really quiet in the library and I’m not used to it.* Y6 boy

*Reading at the library is much quieter than when we read at school.* Y3 girl

*At the library you can go on the computers to find books.* Y4 boy

*The Powerhouse [Library] is fun cause it’s mainly for children and like you can make noise instead of reading really quietly you can do things like that you would normally do at home and like you can spend time with your friends cause you know that you’re not going to get into trouble talking.* Y6 girl

*My sister and me keep reading everywhere cause I have a shelf at my bed, I have lots of books there. I can’t fit all my books there.* Y4 girl

The social nature of reading was a key feature of the children’s enjoyment of reading. In the sample as a whole, overwhelmingly the children said that they read with family members, indicating choosing a wider range of reading material than they could find at school. Many of the children noted talking about reading with different groups of people; most reported talking about reading with family members but a third of the responses indicated the importance of talking about reading with friends. After the SRC, many of the children who took part in the challenge noted that they had appreciated being able to talk about books and reading with the librarians:

*They (the librarians) encouraged me to pick books of different genres. I never usually read mysteries but thanks to the library staff recommending me it is now my favourite genre.* Y6 girl

*She made us try to feel good about reading.* Y6 girl

*I like the library cause there’s lots of different books and they tell you lots of different information.* Y2 girl

The whole sample were asked to name a favourite book read over the holidays and three times as many Focus group children than Control group children named a favourite. The Focus group children’s favourites indicated that they had read a variety of text types. A large proportion of the Focus group children said that the books they read over the summer were different from those they usually read. Many of them read books by authors new to them or of a different genre than their usual choices; others reported reading longer books and ‘harder’ books:

*The library helped me because I got books I would not have got before and when I read them I liked them.* Y6 girl
Y6 boy: I read Anthony Horowitz Evil Star...I don’t normally read them type of books.

Interviewer: What do you normally read?

Y6 boy: Facts and stories, Roald Dahl and Enid Blyton.

I got more chapter books with no pictures. Y3 girl

The children in the whole sample were asked to identify how many books they read over the summer holidays. (Graph 2.1) Very few of the Focus group did not answer this question. Nearly a third more Focus group than Control group children read 4-6 books and two fifths more Focus group children read 7-12 books.

Graph 2.1 Total numbers of books read over the summer – Focus and Control groups (% of whole sample)

In response to a question asking them to identify their preferred types of reading, in line with other studies (Bearne et al., 2007; Maynard et al., 2008; Clark et al., 2008) the profile of the children’s preferred reading in this sample indicates a balance between books and other paper-based reading (e.g. comics and magazines) and a balance between screen-based reading and books. Graph 2.2 indicates the children’s reading preferences, presented as percentages of the number of mentions made of each type of text. In looking forward to possible developments in the SRC, it is interesting to note the number of visual and digital texts which feature in the range. (See Sections Seven and Eight: Implications and Recommendations).
As mentioned earlier, there were no distinct differences in motivation, achievement or number of books read between the boys in the sample and the girls. It was only in the matter of different types of text that there was any noticeable difference in responses according to gender. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, as seen in graph 2.3, the boys showed more interest in visual texts (UKLA/PNS, 2004; Warrington et. al., 2006). However, in terms of opting for written texts there is little difference in interest between the boys and the girls.

Graph 2.2 Children’s reading preferences (% of number of mentions)

Graph 2.3 Boys’ and girls’ reading preferences (% of number of mentions for each category)
Section Three  Findings: The teachers

3.1 Teachers’ reflections on the Summer Reading Challenge
A little fewer than half of the teachers involved in this research project had previously been involved with the SRC, but those who had been involved before saw its main advantages as: what it offers in terms of extending the children’s range of reading experience, developing pleasure and enjoyment in reading and challenging young readers to extend their scope. They also saw the social benefits of the Challenge and the important function of the SRC in helping children learn to use the local library:

*It offers a challenge, enjoyment, developing a love of reading, fun, finding new genres and authors they like and meeting people.* Teacher, Wiltshire

*It gives children access to books which they may not have at home or opportunity to buy. It’s a chance to engage with reading and have fun with family and friends.* Teacher, Staffordshire

After the SRC the teachers involved commented on the value of the SRC in developing:

- greater motivation and focus as readers:
  *The children loved the rewards. It was very motivating for children who wouldn’t normally visit the library.* Teacher, Staffordshire
  *It gave some of our children who don’t go on holiday a focus for the long school holidays.* Teacher, Coventry
  *It’s a fun way to motivate and encourage use of the library.* Teacher, Wiltshire

- a wider reading repertoire:
  *Children have the opportunity to expand their reading matter.* Teacher, Wiltshire
  *It gave children access to a range of texts and genres.* Teacher, Staffordshire

- increased confidence in the children, a more secure view of themselves as readers and greater independence:
  *The children who took part really gained in confidence. It really fosters enjoyment of books and reading.* Teacher, Staffordshire
  *The SRC shows the importance of reading for pleasure and reading out of school and it encourages independence.* Teacher, Manchester

- increased enthusiasm:
  *By visiting the library the children developed a love of books.* Teacher, Brighton
  *The Quest Seekers format motivated the children to want to read.* Teacher, Wiltshire
  *The competitive element was very motivating – children wanted stickers etc to complete the Challenge.* Teacher, Coventry
  *It’s an incentive to keep reading during the summer holidays and to foster further enjoyment of reading.* Teacher, Staffordshire

They also noted that the children had appreciated making links with the library:

*It’s a good way to encourage the children to make use of their local library and get excited about choosing books.* Teacher, Brighton

*The SRC encouraged the children to become members of the local library and be aware of where it is.* Teacher, Coventry

and that parents were now more involved with their children’s reading:

*It’s a positive activity to engage parents and children during the summer holiday.* Teacher, Wiltshire

*It encourages parents to be involved in the children’s reading.* Teacher, Manchester
Many of the teachers were also convinced of the value of the SRC in improving children’s reading levels and commitment:

*The SRC ensures that reading skills are being developed during the holidays.*
Teacher, Staffordshire

*I felt that the reading levels of the children involved increased.*
Teacher, Manchester

*The children’s reading improved over the summer and the Challenge raised the profile of reading.*
Teacher, Brighton

There were some criticisms of the SRC, largely about lack of communication between libraries and schools, particularly in areas where there are ethnic minority communities. Other concerns expressed were more localised – inaccessibility because of lack of transport to the nearest library, problems about parents not being able to accompany children, or individual cases where it was felt that librarians tended to ‘interrogate’ the children rather than having easy conversations about books:

*I think the librarians need to be clear about what they are trying to get out of the Challenge when the children come back with their books. If it’s about encouraging them to come back to the library again they may need to change.*
Teacher, Wiltshire

Nevertheless, teachers who have taken part in this evaluative research, both those in schools which have enjoyed the Challenge in previous years and those new to the SRC, have shown great enthusiasm for participating in a more thoroughgoing way in following years. They have a very high sense of the value of the Challenge:

*It’s available to all, free of charge and promotes challenge, interest and excitement.*
Teacher, Wiltshire

### 3.2 Teachers’ reading preferences

(See Appendix 3.1 for detailed analysis)

Before the SRC, the teachers were asked to complete a survey of their own reading habits and preferences. The twenty respondents involved represented eleven schools (three each in Coventry, Manchester and Staffordshire and two in Wiltshire) ranging in size from small rural schools of just over a hundred pupils to large inner city schools. They also covered a range of classes with almost equal numbers of KS1 and KS2 classes. About half of them were subject leaders and ten were not. All were female and their years of experience ranged from a newly qualified teacher to those who had over twenty years’ experience.

In line with other research into teachers’ reading, the sample were all keen readers of fiction, autobiographies/biographies and magazines (Cremin *et al.*, 2008) although very few read children’s fiction in their own leisure time. In comparison with their classes, the teachers’ reading was more restricted with far fewer mentions of visual/pictorial texts and very little use of computer texts although over half were keen internet users (Graph 3.1). Almost all had read for their own pleasure in the month before the survey (early June).
3.3 Teachers’ use of books in the classroom

All of the teachers in the sample frequently read aloud to their classes. The types of books and authors were predominantly modern novels for children from a relatively narrow range of authors. There was very little mention of reading information books or poetry but this may have been because of the focus of the survey and the teachers’ perceived views of what was being asked. It is interesting that these responses, although from a small sample, echo the trends in the findings of Cremin et al. (2008) in the Teachers as Readers research which noted a tendency for teachers to choose from a relatively small number of popular authors and also a tendency for poetry to be underrepresented in the reading aloud repertoire in primary schools in England.

In response to the question about influences on choice of books for the classroom, personal interest or knowledge was the highest category but children’s recommendations were almost as influential. Only one teacher mentioned the library service helping teachers choose books for the classroom. The successful connections made between the libraries and schools in this research project (and, indeed the hundreds of other schools involved in the SRC) is a strong and encouraging pointer to future successful projects, if strategically targeted.

The teachers saw the most important ingredient for successful teaching of reading as ‘sharing enthusiasm and a love of reading’, followed closely by the need to expand children’s experience of books and to teach the skills of reading. As one teacher put it, ‘Seeing adults enjoying reading’ is invaluable in encouraging children’s reading pleasure. Another explained, ‘I often select books that I enjoyed reading myself’ as well as choosing authors that the children like: ‘finding out what the children like’, ‘developing children’s openness to ideas’, ‘promoting the idea that all opinions are valuable’ and ‘not over-dissecting the books so that the children become bored’. The importance of talking
about books, also highlighted by the children in their survey responses, was evident in some of the teachers’ views, ‘it’s important to enjoy reading as a teacher, being able to discuss likes and dislikes with children’ and ‘encouraging their ideas and thoughts’.

Others saw the importance of, ‘making a dedicated time for reading together – show its importance’ and of ‘lots of high quality texts’, ‘creating a supportive reading environment’, ‘taking an inclusive teaching approach’, ‘using drama and other activities to enliven reading’ and ‘making links with other curriculum areas or topics’. Of course, teaching the skills of reading was seen as important, offering children ‘a range of strategies to increase their ability to decode/understand texts’ and ‘reading for meaning and teachers packaging this with enthusiasm, variety and fun’. However, there was also a sense that teachers’ enthusiasm can be constrained by an emphasis on standards:

_I would love to say that reading for fun is key but I am not sure that schools are able to step back and promote that. We tend to be so focused that we have perhaps lost this element in schools, particularly low achieving ones. If it doesn’t have an objective, we don’t feel we can do it._ Teacher, Wiltshire

### 3.7 The important role of the Headteacher

Case study visits to individual schools and discussions in meetings demonstrated that the Headteacher was key to facilitating the SRC within a school.

_When we came in the Headteacher knew what the Summer Reading Challenge was about; he was very much on board and very encouraging. He was great at emphasising to the young people that this was something that they should get involved in._ Library Information Assistant, Manchester

In the schools visited, the Headteacher understood how children’s participation in the Challenge benefited them and how this was linked to literacy development within school. Headteachers from case study schools have shown great interest for future engagement with the SRC and are involved in planning for next year’s SRC with their school staff (See Case Studies 6.2 and 6.4). In particular, they have seen the importance of involving parents:

_It is something to get parents involved with because... they do amaze us. They love the family learning and we’ve run quite a few courses where we involve the children and parents._ Headteacher, Staffordshire

### 3.8 Good practice in schools which engage fully with the Challenge

As has been detailed in previous evaluation reports of the SRC (Product Perceptions, 2006) teachers report a range of ways in which they have supported the Summer Reading Challenge, including in this research:

- Holding assemblies to promote the Challenge and to celebrate the children’s achievements after the Challenge. Sometimes the librarian comes to talk to the children, letting them know about the incentives and rewards, or a teacher puts the SRC website on an interactive whiteboard to show the children the exciting opportunities. In many schools the children themselves have shared their enthusiasm and sense of achievement, showing their medals, rewards and stickers.
- Inviting the librarian to work with individual classes:
We arranged for the children's librarian to come into school and spend time with the two classes taking part in the project. This meant that those classes were personally related to the SRC before it began. Teacher, Staffordshire

- Giving the SRC a high profile within the classroom and school, displaying materials and giving classes an opportunity to go into the ICT suite to look at the website:

  *Having seen that last year the real hook for the children was that website to also try to get opportunities for all of the children to get into the ICT suite or get the lap tops out to have a look at the website and do those bits... I would really like to get library visits in as well.* Literacy Subject Leader, Coventry

  *I would like to have a display where children are almost committing to do it, and can check their progress at the end of the summer... I think that's a big motivator, especially down in KS1...* Teacher, Coventry

- Building the SRC into the school’s ‘reading buddies’ system to encourage a wider range of children to participate.
- Sending home flyers and promotional material about the Challenge and deliberately engaging parents with the Challenge, not only through letters but by personal contacts:

  *I did a lot of promotion in class and spoke to a lot of parents.* Teacher, Coventry

- Taking groups to visit the library specifically to promote the Challenge. These might be previously less motivated readers or very keen readers who would benefit from a wider reading repertoire.
- In areas where schools do not have easy access to a local library, schools have taken the children to the library in a minibus and to the mobile library, encouraging children to join:

  *We go as a small group and we look at the different areas, so there’s fiction and what we might find there ... We talk about the authors that we know already, who we’ve read and what we like so the children have a catalogue of authors they can draw on and we look at how it’s organised and we help the children to ask questions to the librarian.* Teacher, Manchester

- Walsgrave C of E primary school in Coventry linked the challenge to a local business initiative with the Showcase Cinema’s ‘Bookworm Wednesdays’ where children, with an adult, were entitled to free entry to the cinema to watch a children’s film if they brought a book review of a book they had read. The school encouraged the children to write reviews of their SRC books.

### 3.9 Teachers’ links with libraries

From the original teachers’ survey it became clear that although just over half had previously been involved with the local library, with three having links with the library as part of their professional role, almost half had not. Predominantly the teachers in this sample used the library to borrow books which they had selected, either for their own professional purposes, for example, to keep up to date with children’s books, or for classroom topic use. A few had taken their classes on visits to the local library, but as some pointed out, some schools do not have a local library. Of the teachers who had visited their local library with the class, most had visited within the last six months. The overwhelmingly positive views of the teachers after the SRC indicate just how vital it is to consolidate and extend these fruitful links:
We still visit the library regularly and it’s an ongoing skill... developing those skills is something we continue to do. Teacher, Manchester

A personal relationship between the librarian and the teachers and children is key to developing strong reading habits. Teachers involved in the research identified that having a named contact at the local library linked to the SRC is important, enabling communication and supporting effective promotion of the Challenge in school. Teachers commented that they are more likely to engage with the SRC, invite library staff into school, and visit the local library with classes if they know and have working relationships with library staff:

One of the main advantages is in the links between the school and the library service. Teacher, Manchester

[The librarian] is really accommodating and that is key to it. We know who he is; we can call him and arrange a library visit. He is a named person. Deputy Headteacher, Wiltshire

(See also Case Studies 6.3 and 6.4).
Section Four   Findings: The libraries

4.1 Librarians’ reflections on the Summer Reading Challenge
The librarians involved in the research project areas were asked to reflect on the Summer Reading Challenge. Although there was only a small number of library responses to this reflective survey there was evidence from discussions and case study visits of librarians’ views on this year’s Challenge. The main advantages of the SRC as identified by library staff in response to the survey were:

- promotion of reading as a fun activity:
  *I ran six events; all of them book writing and illustration based. The children and parents loved them, they said that they weren’t ‘too schooly’ but allowed their children to be creative over the holidays.* Librarian, Wiltshire

- encouraging reading over the holidays and use of the local library:
  *The SRC encourages children to continue reading over the summer months and also to make regular visits to the library.* Librarian, Coventry
  *
  *There were more children than ever and some children really found the library for the first time.* Librarian, Staffordshire

- encouraging engagement between schools and libraries:
  *It’s an opportunity to link up with local schools.* Librarian, Staffordshire
  *
  *The teaching staff were very supportive.* Community librarian, Wiltshire
  *
  *We made some good contacts with schools and went into more schools than in previous years.* Librarian, Staffordshire
  *
  *One of the schools we targeted had a very surprising uptake of the Challenge. It is a school in a deprived area of Manchester... The library on the estate increased the number it joined this year... staff there believe this is due to support from the local school and staff promoting the SRC with them.* Children’s Services Manager, Manchester
  *
  *The SRC prompts class visits to schools which may not have had any contact with the library over the rest of the academic year.* Community librarian, Wiltshire

- providing library staff with opportunities to engage with the children taking part in the Challenge.
  *It’s a huge opportunity to get children reading and get staff engaged with children.* Librarian, Staffordshire
  *
  *The SRC encourages library staff to interact with children.* Children’s Services Manager, Manchester

Two thirds of the libraries who responded identified that they made contact with schools to promote the SRC. Nearly half felt that schools seemed to be more enthusiastic this year and this had an impact on the numbers of children undertaking and completing the Challenge. Library staff commented that ‘success stories’ of the SRC 2009 had been
about a higher number of participants and greater participation from schools, successful celebration events and the appealing theme of the Challenge this year.

Evidence from discussions, surveys and interviews, indicates that librarians see the SRC as an ideal opportunity for them to interact with children and engage in ‘book-talk’. Although there were very few reluctant readers identified in the sample for this Impact research project, about a third of the librarian respondents saw the Challenge as an opportunity to engage reluctant readers:

_The SRC is an opportunity to offer incentives to read to the reluctant reader._

Librarian, Staffordshire

4.2 Librarians as a rich resource for children, teachers and parents.

The children felt that libraries and librarians helped them most in recommending and helping to choose books, by encouragement and in practical ways. Teachers interviewed during case study visits to individual schools identified that a named and amenable contact at the local library is fundamental to supporting schools to undertake and engage with the Summer Reading Challenge (see p 37). One librarian commented on the potential value of the library in promoting community cohesion:

_I recognise that when the kids feel that they have a personal relationship with you as their librarian they are more likely to bring books back, to visit again... all that is going to help with their self-esteem... this is somebody that is helping me who is outside of school, there is a chance to connect more with the parents... so it just connects things... community cohesion._

Manager of a Children’s Mobile Library, Manchester

There was evidence from surveys, interviews and meetings that flexibility in borrowing arrangements and in visiting, both from school to library and when librarians visit schools, makes for a more successful take-up of the Challenge (see Case Study 6.3).

4.3 Librarians’ strategies to promote and maintain interest

Librarians are innovative and flexible in encouraging children to read when they visit the library and in getting schools involved:

_We kept the SRC materials at the general counter so that all staff were involved, instead of isolating the children’s team it encouraged cross-team working._

Librarian, Staffordshire

_I made deals with kids; I counted extremely long or thick books as two reads._

Librarian, Wiltshire

_We are going to put an emphasis on visiting the schools where we most want to see an increase last so that the challenge is fresh in the children’s mind and they don’t forget to come down and join up._

Community librarian, Wiltshire
Fig. 4.1 Draw yourself doing the Summer Reading Challenge, Jessica Y4
Section Five  The local authorities

5.1 Coventry

Spread it more throughout the school. Teacher, Coventry

Originally three schools were to be included from Coventry but because of staff illnesses, one school had to withdraw. Seven teachers were involved: Nora Burke, A Ward, J McShane and Clare Coyle from Holy Family Catholic primary school and Bryony Harrison, Cara Page and Linda Clinch from Walsgrave C of E primary school. Final data was received from twenty four children in all, from years 1, 2 and 5. The two schools represent quite similar catchment areas. Holy Family Catholic primary school is a very large primary school with children from predominantly White British backgrounds. Only 9% of the children are eligible for free school meals although levels of social and economic disadvantage are above national norms, for example, there are fewer adults with higher education and fewer children living in higher social class backgrounds. Walsgrave C of E primary school is smaller and serves a socially, religiously and culturally mixed community. Children travel from outside the area because of the school’s reputation and church status. Again the majority of the children are of White British backgrounds with the remainder from diverse ethnic origins with Asian or Asian British making the largest group. 16% of the children have English as an Additional Language. The catchment area includes relatively disadvantaged areas as well as areas of advantage and only 12.5% of children are eligible for FSM, below the city average of 22%.

Neither school had any previous involvement with SRC but both have good records of partnerships with parents over school reading. In Holy Family, links with the library are largely through the Schools’ Library Service annual issue of books for KS1. In KS2 the children are part of a rolling programme of library book borrowing and take part in competitions run by the library service. The school library is mainly used by older pupils with a separate smaller library for KS1 classes. There are other smaller book collections in corridors for ‘graded’ library books to support less fluent or experienced readers. Each child has a home/school reading diary and children can change their books as often as they like (up to Band 10 – beginning of fluency) and thereafter they can use the library freely. Parents are encouraged to speak to teachers if they are worried about a child’s progress. Teachers automatically talk with the parents informally, not waiting until formal parents’ evenings.

In Walsgrave, the school buys into service level agreements at the highest level with the Schools’ Library Service and has been using project packs and loans since 2005. There used to be a Mobile Library visiting the school but this has been discontinued. There are two school libraries: in KS1 and Foundation Stage the children regularly visit the library and take out books. The KS2 library is in a corridor area used by teaching groups. Both libraries have been recently refurbished. Parents come into school to help with reading in all classes and governors support changing home reading books. Each child has a home/school reading record book and the open evenings held at the beginning of the year are used to talk to parents about home reading and expectations.

After the Challenge the schools were very pleased with the way that the children had been energised and inspired by their experiences. They felt that the SRC had effectively encouraged children to visit the library, to join or at least know what it had to offer. The
competition built in to the Challenge had proved very successful; the children were very keen to collect the stickers and complete their reading. In addition the teachers felt that it gave a focus for those children who do not have the chance to go on holidays or who have not engaged with other activities organised for the summer. The survey results were very much in line with the overall results of the Impact Research project, with a good proportion of the Focus group children rating themselves as either retaining or increasing their enthusiasm for reading as represented in Georgina’s self portrait with a wide smile and a book (Fig. 5.1).

Fig. 5.1 *Draw yourself doing the Summer Reading Challenge, Georgina Y2*

However, there are still some barriers to success since many of the children whose families originate from overseas often spend the whole of the summer holidays abroad. There is also the familiar concern about children whose parents are simply not available to take them to the library. Some of these issues have been addressed in other areas and it would be good to seek advice about how such barriers might be overcome. One strong suggestion from Coventry is that since many children are occupied during the holidays with other summer holiday schemes there would be mileage in linking the SRC with them. This may well be a matter for local negotiation but may also be fruitful for a more generalised approach by the SRC.

Looking forward to next year’s Challenge, the teachers are keen to organise more visits to the library. Walsgrave school’s nearest library is based at the local secondary school where the children go swimming so it may be possible to combine both in one visit. Visits from the Schools’ Library Service have been much appreciated and these will form a strong platform in preparing for the SRC in 2010. The Case Study on Walsgrave C of E primary school (see p 53) gives a fuller picture of how a school which previously had no contact with the SRC plans to consolidate and build on the children’s enthusiastic take-up of the Challenge. After the success with two classes, the whole school will be involved next year.

Holy Family launched the SRC by a visit from the Schools’ Library Services to the classes involved in the research. These classes then in turn visited the local library. Posters and information about the Challenge were displayed in prominent places across the school
and the Challenge was advertised within the school newsletter. The teachers feel that
the Challenge was promoted effectively within school and they valued the quality of the
SRC resources which inspired and enthused the children. Promotion of the SRC within
school encouraged children to search the school library for specific quest books,
including information books.

Subsequently, there are plans to incorporate the SRC into the school’s end of year
programmes and the children from the classes engaged in the research have offered
their own suggestions for further development of the Challenge within school which
includes:
- displaying new books
- creating displays of ‘favourite’ books from each year group
- completing short review sheets which could be kept in both the school and public
  library to help other children choose good reads.

5.2 Manchester

_A chance to become part of a reading community where reading is celebrated._

Three schools from the Manchester area took part in the project: Barlow Hall primary
school, St Willibrord’s RC primary school and Webster primary school. Ten teachers and
forty two children were involved: Leonnie Gray, Joanna Higginbotham, Sonia Peacock,
Gareth Williams, Pat Pelling, K Williams and Beccie Lonsdale and their year 1 and 5
classes from Barlow Hall; Jane Jones and a year 3 class from St Willibrord’s and Sarah
Jones and Rebecca Hughes and their year 3 and year 5 classes from Webster primary.

Barlow Hall is situated in an area of high social deprivation and has high mobility. Two
thirds of the children come from ethnically diverse backgrounds (three quarters in
Foundation Stage). About half of the children in the school speak English as an
Additional Language. Most families live in rented accommodation and almost half of the
children qualify for free school meals. However, although many of the parents have
difficulties with literacy or do not speak fluent English, there is a desire to support their
children’s education.

Although St Willibrord’s is situated in an area of extreme deprivation, it is a high
attaining school. Almost half of the children have free school meals and there is an
increasing number of children with English as an Additional Language (currently 72% in
the Nursery) and the number of languages spoken exceeds 20. Very few of the parents
have had experience of further education.
Webster primary is very similar in catchment to the other two schools: over three quarters of the pupils have free schools meals, almost all are from ethnic minority groups and there is a high proportion of refugee/asylum seeking families. Over three quarters speak English as an Additional Language and there are seventeen languages spoken in the school although approximately two thirds of the children are of Somali heritage.

None of the schools had been involved in the Summer Reading Challenge previously.

Barlow Hall has no links with the library services and is situated some distance away from a local library of sufficient size to accommodate a class of children. There is a small school library but classes are not timetabled to use it. The teachers use the books as do some children but currently the library has had to be moved into the school hall to make space for an extra classroom. A group of parents works regularly with six year 1 and 2 children, hearing them read twice a week.

Each class at St Willibrord's visits the local library on a rotational basis approximately once a term and there is school library as well as each class having its own library. Links with parents are initially made through workshops for parents of Foundation Stage and KS1 children. Homework diaries are used to communicate daily and staff have frequent informal contacts with parents.

Webster primary has not been involved as a school in the SRC before although the Mobile Library visits the school every fortnight and has done for the last three years. There is a small school library which at the moment is only used as a reference library although there are plans to develop it. Links with parents are currently made through a programme called *Success for All* which involves children reading nightly with their parents and returning a slip called 'Read and Respond' which is monitored by the teachers.

After the Challenge, the teachers overall felt that the SRC had been successful for the children involved. Some were pleasantly surprised that the children had maintained their interest and followed the Challenge through. They commented that the Challenge had encouraged the children to read more out of school and that they had gained pleasure and satisfaction from their reading experiences and that parents had become involved. There were some reservations, particularly about communications and in this area of Manchester it was felt that more could have been done to communicate with ethnic minority communities. One school in particular was disappointed that there was
no post-Challenge follow-up. Given the nature of the catchment, the survey results for Manchester schools showed a high base starting point in terms of children’s enthusiasm for reading and positive views of themselves as readers. This was retained and increased, as for the sample as a whole. In the Manchester schools there was a high proportion of children who did not take the Challenge who were keen readers and this was possibly reflected in the number of Control group children who noted that they read a good many books over the holidays and whose reading levels were seen to have improved during the summer. The teachers’ judgements of ability in reading showed that, with the exception of a number of the children who had English as an Additional Language and whose teachers had encouraged them to participate in the Challenge because they were not known as enthusiastic readers, the Focus group children’s reading levels were largely retained over the summer. However, many of the children whose levels were judged to have dropped said that they had enjoyed the Challenge.

The successes of the Challenge in this area of Manchester, and the plans for the future, indicate the importance for the SRC of paying close attention to areas with similar socio-economic make-up. The schools are keen to involve more classes in 2010, to promote the Challenge more strenuously and for longer and to ‘talk to some target families’, to encourage children whose circumstances are challenging to take part and generally give it a higher profile. As shown in the Case Study of Webster school (page 62), one of the key messages from the SRC experience in these Manchester schools is that a strong link between the library services and the school, promoted and sustained by the Headteacher, can begin to reach into the communities that feed the schools and reap real benefits in terms of children’s enhanced commitment to reading.

5.3 Staffordshire

*We want to establish a culture where reading is undertaken with pleasure and enthusiasm.*

Three schools from two areas of Staffordshire took part in the evaluation project: Coton Green primary, Glascote Heath primary and Hempstalls primary. Fourteen teachers and forty five children were involved: Liz Pursehouse, Jayne Tanner, Mrs Bancroft, Mr Birch, G Thomas and Mrs Evans from Coton Green with their year 1, 2 and year 5 classes; Janet Howarth, Penny Andrews, Michael Clarke and Denise Tarry from Glascote Heath with years 2 and 5 and Kerry Howle, Sophie Dodd, Mr Compton and Mrs Taylor also with years 2 and 5 from Hempstalls.

Coton Green is a larger than average primary school with 290 children on roll. Most pupils are from a White British background and there are very few pupils who speak English as an Additional Language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school is popular and attracts a significant number of pupils from outside its normal catchment area.

Glascote Heath primary has about 180 pupils and is situated in one of the most deprived areas of Tamworth. There are only five children who have English as an Additional Language. Almost a quarter of the children have Special Educational Needs and just below half have free school meals. The school finds it difficult to involve parents in school life and there is limited support at home with reading and homework.
Hempstalls is a one form entry primary school with approximately 230 on roll in an area of social deprivation where most of the families are of White British background. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is above, and in some years well above, average.

None of the schools had previously been involved formally in the Challenge, although in Hempstalls some children have taken part with their parents.

The Schools’ Library Service van visits Coton Green school once a year and KS1 and Foundation Stage children visit the van to exchange books and listen to the storyteller. The school has used the Schools’ Library Service for eight years and books are borrowed termly and annually but there are no links with the town library. The school library has a range of information books and a few novels, but many of the resources need updating. This is currently on the School Improvement Plan for 2009-2010. Only KS1 and Foundation Stage children borrow the books. Links with parents are usually made through home-school reading diaries and parents’ evenings two to three times yearly although some parents come in to hear readers in school.

Glascote Heath has organised visits to the local library where children have listened to and had the opportunity to talk with authors. For some years the school has subscribed to the Schools’ Library Service and has yearly project exchanges. There is a school library and classes are timetabled to use it each week. There is also a weekly lending service for the children. Children take books home with them on a daily basis. Parents are encouraged to hear the children read and to write comments in the diaries. The school finds it difficult to involve parents in reading and there seems to be limited support at home with reading and homework.

The Mobile library van visited Hempstalls school regularly until the funding ceased. The school borrows termly topic boxes from the Schools’ Library Service and a library support worker visited the school when the current library coordinator took over. The school library is a vibrant and much-loved area of the school. (See Figs. 5.3 and 5.4) It is fairly well stocked with fiction and non-fiction books. Four of the year 6 children act as librarians and open the library at lunchtimes for other children, keeping the library tidy and organised. A parent volunteer works in the library two afternoons a week and during these sessions each class in the school is allocated 30 minutes when they can browse and choose books to borrow. Each child has a borrower card which is tracked in a computer system. Teachers also sometimes use the library to take groups for short research sessions. The library has also been used as a venue for an after school reading club. All children in the school have a home/school link book with tips to help parents when reading with their child at home and they are asked to write a note of what their child has read and sign it. Parents are always welcome to come in to school and hear individual readers.
After the SRC the teachers in these Staffordshire schools were very positive about the ways in which the children had enthusiastically taken up the Challenge. They felt that it had given the children a focus for the summer holidays, continued to develop reading skills, offered a wide range of types of text and genres and fostered a love of reading. Some teachers were particularly pleased that the SRC had motivated children whom they felt would not normally visit the library. Constraints were seen to be the distance for children to get to the library and the difficulties some parents have in accompanying their children. The children in Staffordshire showed a very clear profile of maintaining or improving standards of reading as judged by their teachers after the SRC. This region had started with a high base of committed readers and most of them either maintained their self-rating as loving reading or became more enthusiastic readers after the Challenge.

One of the hallmarks of this region is the commitment to planning for pleasurable reading experiences by the teachers involved. Following the SRC, there are a number of plans to extend the Challenge within the schools and to take a more strategic approach for 2010. The Case Study of Hempstalls school (page 56) describes a series of thoughtful interventions by teachers to promote and foster a love of reading and the ways in which these will be consolidated and extended in 2010.

5.4 Wiltshire

_We have a good relationship with the library and the librarian._

Originally, three schools from this region had planned to participate in this Impact Research project but one school had to withdraw, leaving Bellefield C of E primary and nursery school and Stanton St Quintin primary school, with rather different catchments, as the two involved. Four teachers, one Teaching Assistant and twenty five children were involved: Carolyn Spruce and Kay Bennett with their years 1 and 3 classes from Bellefield and Sue Dallyn, Trish Totman and Andrea Schofield from Stanton St Quintin with year 2.
Bellefield is a recently amalgamated primary school serving a mixed socio-economic catchment with a quarter of the children eligible for free school meals and 20% of pupils who have English as an Additional Language. Some of the children have complex family situations and the school works hard with other agencies to provide support. Although the school (and one of its amalgamated schools) has been involved in the SRC before, this is the first year that Kay Bennett (Deputy Headteacher) and Carolyn Spruce (Literacy Subject Leader) have been actively involved in the Challenge. The school has links with Trowbridge library and the librarian, Pete Waterman, comes in the summer term to do an assembly with the children to encourage uptake of library use. Library visits are mainly made with the infants to encourage membership and the school is also a member of the Schools’ Library Service. The new school has a developing library. Leslie Dunlop of Trowbridge Library has identified a plan for future purchases and £12,000 is allocated to spend during 2009/2010. The school is also well resourced in ICT in the library with six computers with internet access in addition to the ICT suite. The staff work hard to support parents in helping their children although support at home varies. Past initiatives have included workshops, parent partnership homework, family learning and home-school link books. In preparation for the SRC the school increased discussion time about the Challenge in class and hired a minibus to take the children who were going to participate to the library as well as publicising it to parents in the newsletter.

Fig. 5.5 Draw yourself doing the Summer Reading Challenge, Erin Y2

Stanton St Quintin is a small primary school of 107 pupil in a rural village of mostly owner occupied housing. It is surrounded by agricultural land but is also close to the M5 motorway. The majority of the pupils either come from Stanton St Quintin or other local villages but some are from service families in the nearby Buckley Barracks, including some children with English as an Additional Language. The nearest public library facilities are about five miles away in the towns of Malmesbury and Chippenham but the
school has access to a mobile library once a fortnight. The percentage of children receiving free school meals is very low.

Over the past few years a librarian from Chippenham Library has visited the school to introduce and explain the SRC and approximately 10-15% of the children have participated. Also, since reading was identified as an area for improvement six months ago, especially the motivation of boys, the school has made contact with the children’s librarian from Chippenham who has helped to set up a plan of action starting with access to the library for years 5 and 6 children. It is hoped to extend this to the whole of KS2. The school has a central library of non-fiction books and each class has its own selection of fiction and non-fiction books. Currently the school is in the process of setting up a whole school library system Junior Librarian which should encourage the children to be confident and independent users of the system. Each child has a Reading Record and is actively encouraged to read at home. Parents are also given information about how to support their children’s reading at home. Parents are invited into school to listen to individual children read and years 3 and 4 take part in Reading Challenges at home to help motivate reluctant readers, particularly boys.

The teachers are familiar with the enthusiasm generated by the Challenge and saw this year’s focus Quest Seekers as a particularly strong inducement and motivator for the children to participate. As the two schools have strong links with the library the teachers feel that one of the strengths of the Challenge is in the way it develops library habits and strong links between the library and the children. Despite the overall and customary positive views of the SRC there were a few reservations. One school felt that there was a lack of book-related activities when the children went to the library, for example, book character themed wordsearches, cartoon drawings or cross words etc. Another regretted that parents and school staff cannot take part in the Challenge alongside their children demonstrating their own interest in and love of reading. There was a concern that in one library the children were not treated consistently when they went to talk about their books: ‘Some were “interrogated” and one was sent away without her sticker, even though she had read the book’. This kind of local difficulty is a matter of concern, particularly in an area where there is an established SRC pattern and previously good links with library staff. From the survey evidence the teachers have a positive sense of the children’s reading attainment being generally maintained or improved after the summer holidays. Overall, the key feature of this region is the strong link between school and library staff and the Case Study of Bellefield C of E primary and nursery school (p 52) describes how these links will be developed in 2010 and beyond.

5.5 Brighton

It would be good to involve all of the children in the school.

St Mary Magdalen RC primary school was recruited after the loss of the Wiltshire school as it was known to have staff committed to developing reading for pleasure and keen to make stronger links with the library. Marie Harris and Ann-Marie Palmer, with twelve year 1 children took part in the Impact Research project. St Mary Magdalen is a primary school of 192 pupils in an area of this seaside town with a mixed population. A third of the children are of White British origin and a little over a third of White European (mainly Eastern European) origin. Smaller percentages of children from Sudanese
parentage, Asian origin or mixed parentage make up the rest of the school population. Just over a fifth of the children are eligible for free school meals.

The school has had no earlier contact with the Summer Reading Challenge but has subscribed to the Schools’ Library Service for ten years. Although there is no school library, links with the local library have just been established and classes are visiting the library. Each child has a reading record which is taken home and brought to school daily. Parents and teachers record what they have read with the children. The school has sent home a literacy newsletter with suggested reading for the children. The school has also raised the profile of reading by running a book week, book fairs, books swaps, having an author visit and suggested ‘good reads’ via the newsletter.

The teachers were very enthusiastic about the effects of the SRC on the children’s motivation and enthusiasm for reading. They felt that the children had developed a love of books and had been ‘excited about choosing new books to read’. They also saw that visiting the library ‘became a part of home life as well as school’. Not only did the SRC raise the profile of reading, but the teachers judged that the children’s reading attainment had improved, too. They noted that the children now chose to read a wider range of texts, for example, poetry and information, and that one child’s mother had commented on how valuable the SRC was, as her son ‘had literally learned to read over the summer’. The teachers’ responses indicate just how potent enthusiasm can be in spreading the message about the SRC throughout the school. Plans include not only advertising and promoting it but ‘showing the evidence and benefits of the Challenge’ to other teachers and parents who were unaware of what it has to offer.
Section Six  Case study examples of good practice

6.1 I think we’ll go bigger and better... Engaging with the Challenge. Walsgrave C of E primary school, Coventry

The enthusiasm came when we looked at the Quest Seekers’ website - the games - that’s when they became really enthusiastic about it... That was the real hook for them.

Bryony Harrison, Literacy Subject Leader, Y5 teacher

Fig. 6.1 Draw yourself doing the Summer Reading Challenge, Charlie Y2

Bryony Harrison, appointed as Literacy Subject Leader at Walsgrave C of E primary school in January, 2009 was keen to introduce the Summer Reading Challenge to school as she was aware of it from her previous school. Walsgrave is a 1.5 form entry school with approximately 340 pupils on roll. Reading and in particular the implementation of Guided Reading is central to the current School Development plan. The school has recently refurbished the KS1 and KS2 libraries and children from all classes regularly borrow books. Year 2 and year 6 children are buddied across the two year groups and read regularly with their reading buddy during Guided Reading time.

To introduce the Challenge, Bryony led a series of school assemblies, accessing the Quest Seekers’ website on an Interactive Whiteboard in order to engage the children. She then linked the Challenge to a business initiative at the local cinema: ‘Bookworm Wednesday’. This cinema promotion ran throughout the summer holiday; an adult and child were entitled free entry once a week to watch a children’s film with a book review of a book they had read. Bryony encouraged children in the school to review books they had read as part of the Challenge. In order to add another voice, Suzie Murphy, a youth worker placed at the local library, also led a whole school assembly. The final assembly was held very near to the end of term so that the Summer Reading Challenge was fresh in the children’s minds ready for the summer break.

Cara Page, the year 1 teacher engaged in the research, focused on the Challenge with both her class and their parents as she had identified that they would be the driving force in supporting their child’s participation. The school sent a letter to all parents
advertising the Challenge and aligning it with the local cinema promotion and teachers were encouraged to access the Quest Seekers’ website in the ICT suite with their classes.

Bryony, Cara and Headteacher Kim Docking are enthusiastic about the children’s responses to the Challenge. Talking about one boy, a previously limited reader, Bryony said:

*His reading was very limited, he was enthusiastic about books to do with Transformers... film based... he’d read books that accompany the film. He was enthusiastic about those... but very limited what he read. I was walking through school and he was in after-school club and he crashed into me because he was walking around with Harry Potter...absolutely engrossed in it, nose in it, and talking to him, he has started to read from this a whole different type, a whole different genre, he’s reading much more extended texts and he’s moving away from the safe, film based ones.*

![Fig. 6.2](image)

*Fig. 6.2 Draw yourself doing the Summer Reading Challenge, Finn Y6*

The books read by the children during the Challenge varied widely; they were linked to their personal interests, school topics and represented a range of genres and texts. One year 3 girl identified that the best thing about the Summer Reading Challenge was being able to borrow talking books for her CD player. The children in the Focus group were keen to discuss the new books they had read, demonstrating confidence and a secure view of themselves as readers.

*I think I’ll read when I’m older because I’m like my mum. She reads all the time.*

Y5 girl

The Summer Reading Challenge has had a strong impact on the children who were overwhelmingly positive about the Challenge. Their reasons for engaging with it included a love of reading and a curiosity in what the Summer Reading Challenge had to offer. Following the holidays they identified that the incentives, rewards and medal ceremony held by the local library and the quality and range of books available to them as the best things about the Challenge.
The teachers believe that the Summer Reading Challenge has impacted on the children’s optimistic views of their own reading abilities and challenged young readers to extend their reading repertoires. This has given Kim, Bryony and Cara the impetus to take it further next year:

CP  I think we’ll go bigger and better.

BH  I’ll definitely do the same input assemblies.

CP  I would take more of a lead in lower school.

Reflecting on this year’s experience of the Challenge, Bryony is keen to extend the opportunity to the whole school. Having seen that this year the real hook for the children was the website she aims:

to try to get opportunities for all of the children to get into the ICT suite or get the laptops out to have a look at the website and do those bits... I would really like to get library visits in as well.

Cara also has plans for next year:

I would like to have a display where children are almost committing to do it, and can check their progress at the end of the summer... I think that’s a big motivator, especially in KS1...

They acknowledge that there are long-lasting connections that can be made with the local library and that more can be done following the summer holidays to celebrate children’s achievement and engagement with the Challenge. This will align closely with the School Development Plan and a whole school focus on the promotion of reading for pleasure.

6.2 She sees it as a safe place… Opening doors to the library. Hempstalls primary school, Newcastle under Lyne, Staffordshire

It’s helpful because I wasn’t a massive fan before and the lady came in to tell us about the Reading Challenge and I thought it was good opportunity and now I’ve started, like reading, I love it. Year 6 boy

There were some lovely stories about children who’ve gone to the library. ***, who was in my class came to me and said, ‘I didn’t realise there were so many books in the library.’ One of the other children told me they’d found a really good book about sharks... It really seems to have aroused a lot of enthusiasm and interest in going to the library and clearly some children had never been.

Kerry Howle, Library Coordinator and Y2 teacher
2009 is the first year that Hempstalls primary school has engaged with the Summer Reading Challenge. This is a one form entry school with approximately 230 on roll. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is above, and in some years well above, average. Kerry Howle (Library Coordinator, year 2 teacher) and Sophie Dodd (Literacy Subject Leader, year 5 teacher) are keen readers and a ‘Twilight’ reading group has been set up among staff, prompted by Sophie’s love of the series.

The teachers believed that although the local library is situated in the nearby town and is within walking distance, few children were regular visitors. They introduced the Summer Reading Challenge to their classes and Sophie accessed the Quest Seekers’ site online with year 5. A local librarian then made class visits to the year 2 and year 5 classes. The teachers describe these sessions as well pitched and engaging. The sessions aroused the children’s curiosity in the Challenge and in visiting the local library. For the teachers, having a named person from the library visit the school and introduce the Challenge to the children in a focused and engaging manner was significant. The librarian was now familiar to the children and the library was an inviting and welcoming place to visit.

*I know that the majority of them [year 5 class] visited the library over the summer and when I asked them why it was because they knew somebody there... They were really excited about going to see it themselves. Not all of them started it [the SRC]... but a load of them went and lots of children joined the library.*  Sophie Dodd,
Literacy Subject Leader

Children were reminded about the Challenge before the holidays in assemblies and it was regularly talked about in class. During the school’s golden assembly following the summer holidays the children who had participated in and completed the Challenge were rewarded and their achievements celebrated.

Discussions with Focus group children demonstrate that they made regular visits to the library during the holidays and some have visited since. The children enjoyed
participating in the Challenge and responded well to the Quest Seeker incentives and rewards. They are also making choices about the environment which best suits them for reading and understand how the library differs from home:

Y6 boy  
[Libraries] are interesting because it’s quiet.

Interviewer  
Why do you like it being quiet?

Y6 boy  
Yeah, cause I live with noisy people.

Second Y6 boy  
I’m not a big fan of libraries cause I like to settle. I’m used to having my own bedroom, sitting down and reading a book that way cause it’s really quiet in the library and I’m not used to it.

Their teacher also commented:

One girl who was in my Control Group, she actually goes to the library with an older friend; she sees it as a safe place.

Sophie Dodd, Literacy Subject Leader

The children who participated in the Challenge have gained in self-esteem and are willing to try books that are different from those they usually read and they are broadening their reading repertoire. One girl in year 6 enjoys factual books about history but identified that she had been looking for the novel Children of Winter by Berlie Doherty because she is interested in the plague; her reading repertoire is widening from non-fiction to fiction. The children value the freedom of selecting from a wide range of texts (including DVDs) and the quality of the library materials, described by one year 3 child as ‘better books’.

Y6 boy  
I read Anthony Horowitz Evil Star...I don’t normally read them type of books.

Interviewer  
What do you normally read?

Y6 boy  
Facts and stories, Roald Dahl and Enid Blyton.

With the support of the Headteacher, Lynne Bennett, the teachers are now reflecting on the positive impact of the Summer Reading Challenge and considering how to build on its success in the coming year. They see links with Newcastle library as a rich resource and central to children’s development of reading for pleasure. The children are learning
to use the local library with increased confidence. The school now has a relationship
with a library member of staff and the school feel equipped to promote and personalise
the SRC for their pupils. In response to the Headteacher’s question ‘Do you think it would
have helped to visit the library?’ the teachers replied:

KH   We’ve talked about this.
SD   We’d like to visit the library then if perhaps we could, if we could sign them
     all up in the library, if they all got their cards. I think they’d be really willing.
KH   We spoke about promoting it throughout the year.
SD   I spoke about a possible trip just after Christmas, perhaps to look for books
     about our new topic… it’s a good way of getting them to know what they can
     find in their local library.

The Headteacher was keen to extend future possibilities to include parents:

*It is something to get parents involved with because… they do amaze us. They love
the family learning and we’ve run quite a few courses where we involve the children
and parents.*

In terms of planning for the future, the school see the Challenge as something that can
include the school, children and parents and will build on these social benefits. They are
not only considering how they might continue to encourage the children to become
regular independent library users but how the school can use the library to support the
curriculum.

6.3 *He is a named person…* Forming links with local libraries. Bellefield C of E
primary and nursery school, Trowbridge, Wiltshire

![Image of a child drawing themselves doing the Summer Reading Challenge]

*Fig. 6.5 Draw yourself doing the Summer Reading Challenge, Zofia Y4*
He is really accommodating and that is key to it. We know who he is; we can call him and arrange a library visit. He is a named person. Kay Bennett, Deputy Headteacher

Bellefield is a recently amalgamated primary and nursery school. It serves a mixed socio-economic catchment with a quarter of pupils eligible for FSM and a fifth who have English as an Additional Language. Although a community librarian from the library services has led a school assembly based on the SRC before, this is the first year that Kay Bennett (Deputy Headteacher) and Carolyn Spruce (Literacy Subject Leader) have been actively involved in the Challenge.

Before the summer holidays Kay took the Focus groups to the library and helped them to select books which they would read as part of the Challenge:

The library is only too happy to open at any time for us to take children for a visit.
Kay Bennett, Deputy Headteacher

The local library’s flexibility supported the school and this was very much appreciated by the teachers. The library opened specifically in order to allow the groups to visit and select books, procedures for joining are straightforward and children are allowed to take out six books (which all count towards the Challenge) in one visit. The library’s responsiveness to the children’s needs enabled one child who was returning to visit family in Spain for the duration of the holidays to participate in the Challenge. The teachers selected dual language books and books about Spain which the child shared on holiday with her grandparents.

Fig. 6.6 Draw yourself doing the Summer Reading Challenge, Bethany Y3

The library’s willingness to be accommodating also meant that children were able to return following the summer holidays with their books to complete the Challenge and the teachers returned to the library with the Focus groups to facilitate this. In the school’s view it was the close link with the library and the community librarian, Pete Waterman, which enabled children to participate and succeed in the Summer Reading Challenge.
In turn Pete valued the high level of engagement and support from the teachers and the working relationship with the school. The school supported the SRC by:

- Pete holding an assembly in which he introduced the Challenge, shared the incentives and rewards and encouraged the children to take part
- group visits to the library before and after the SRC
- sending home a flyer advertising the SRC and flagging up the Challenge on the end of term school newsletter
- displaying posters and other SRC materials around the school and in classrooms to promote the Challenge and maintain its profile
- holding a follow-up assembly in the new term to celebrate those children who completed the Challenge.

These actions had an impact on the numbers of children who participated in and completed the Challenge in 2009 and Bellefield had the biggest percentage increase in Trowbridge.

The children who were part of the research thoroughly enjoyed participating in the Challenge and are engaged and committed readers:

*The children talked with enthusiasm after the holidays about the challenge.*

Carolyn Spruce, Literacy Subject Leader

The children enjoy talking to other people about their reading (mainly family members) and clearly view themselves as readers:

*I've got a shelf with lots of books there. I'll probably still have this when I'm an adult.*

Year 4 boy

One year 4 girl, whose family is Polish explained to the interviewer how she felt about her reading:

Y4 girl  
I enjoyed getting better at reading. Because, hmm I read fluently to my mum...

Interviewer  Did your mum tell you were getting better?

Y4 girl  Yeah.

Interviewer  How did that make you feel?

Y4 girl  Very happy.

The Focus group children are regular library users and their responses also demonstrate positive views about libraries. Year 2 children explained that the library helps them as readers through its organisation, for example, that computers 'tell you where all the books are and if anyone’s borrowed them' and that libraries are places which store 'books I haven’t read yet.’ These children are becoming confident and competent library users.

Kay and Carolyn have begun to consider how the Challenge can be developed next year. They intend to work with the local library to ensure all classes have an opportunity to visit with their teacher, building on the links made this year. They are also considering ways of targeting certain classes and parents to develop stronger reading habits within the school community:
We’ll arrange with Pete about coming in to do an assembly again… I will arrange for all the classes to go again to the library across the year. Kay Bennett, Deputy Headteacher

6.4 It just connects things… community cohesion… Seeing the potential. Webster primary school, Manchester

When we came in the Headteacher knew what the Summer Reading Challenge was about; he was very much on board and very encouraging. He was great at emphasising to the young people that this was something that they should get involved in. Mark Hewerdine, Library Information Assistant

Webster primary school is a one form entry school with approximately 240 pupils on roll situated in Moss Side, Manchester. Over three quarters of the children have free school meals and almost all pupils are from ethnic minority groups with a high proportion of asylum seeking families. Over three quarters of the children speak English as an Additional Language and there are seventeen languages spoken in school. The school is visited regularly by the mobile library from which groups of children borrow books and the community is well served by a newly refurbished young people’s library which several of the children visit with their families. The school has previously not been involved in the Summer Reading Challenge.

Fig. 6.7 Draw yourself doing the Summer Reading Challenge, Abdalbaqi Y6

Jeremy Jackson, the Headteacher saw the potential of the Summer Reading Challenge. The school has had a longstanding involvement with the Powerhouse Library and library staff led a school assembly. The Challenge was further promoted within school by the Headteacher and teachers involved in the research. They made the Challenge
highly visible through a hall display and promoted it through the school newsletter and a separate letter to parents and carers.

Rebecca Hughes, the year 6 teacher, explained some of the difficulties and the importance of supporting the children to become readers for pleasure:

*I find that the children who were not very motivated to read were often not as able. They tend not to be very good at choosing texts that are suitable for them which is a big disadvantage because they will often choose books that they don’t understand and that has a big impact on motivation. They tend not to have many books at home to choose from and they don’t tend to read an awful lot. There seems to be a big correlation between confidence and ability... A lot of the time those children find it difficult to choose a genre that would appeal to them or they don’t have a good knowledge of authors or genres... Going to the library, selecting and being exposed to loads of different types of texts, that’s not part of their experience... We visit the library regularly and it’s an ongoing skill...*

She expanded on this:

*We go as a small group and we look at the different areas, so there’s fiction and what we might find there ... We talk about the authors that we know already, who we’ve read and what we like so the children have a catalogue of authors they can draw on and we look at how it’s organised and we help the children to ask questions to the librarian.*

Rebecca recognises the importance of explicitly teaching children library skills and links these skills to the children’s self-esteem and motivation. Claire Trivino and Mark Hewerdine from Manchester Library Services also highlighted the importance of building children’s self-esteem and the importance of a library environment which is community driven and responsive:

*I think the impact of the Powerhouse itself, because it is a library within a young people’s centre, has a lot of appeal. I recognise that when the kids feel that they have a personal relationship with you as their librarian they are more likely to bring books back, to visit again... all that is going to help with their self-esteem... this is somebody that is helping me who is outside of school, there is a chance to connect more with the parents... so it just connects things... community cohesion.*

Claire Trivino, Manager of the Children’s Mobile Library

*It’s my hope that when they come through the doors that they feel... that it is part of the community... living and working in the community has a massive impact; it takes a long time for professionals to develop a rapport with the young people... Young people do feel at home there [The Powerhouse Library]. The relationship between Webster and the Powerhouse is particularly strong because it’s the nearest to them and we see a lot of children from here coming through the doors to engage with library activities.*

Mark Hewerdine, Library Information Assistant

Jeremy, his team and the library staff involved understand the importance that environmental factors, social interactions and teaching of library skills play in the development of lifelong readers and library users. This is demonstrated in the working relationships between the school and the libraries that serve the local community.
The children are clear about why they enjoy visiting the local library and they respond to the social and environmental benefits offered:

- In the library I can read any books I want.
- It’s fun because the Powerhouse has a plasma TV.
- In other libraries you are supposed to be quiet... in the Powerhouse you can make noise.
- It’s a place you can go and spend time; you don’t have to rush to pick books.

Fig. 6.8 Draw yourself doing the Summer Reading Challenge, Noordin Y6

The children who undertook the Challenge were extremely positive; they responded well to the incentives and rewards. Those who undertook the Challenge read far more books over the summer than those who did not.

Jeremy, Rebecca and Sarah Jones, the year 4 teacher, value the local library services and the working relationships that have been made between Webster primary school, the mobile library services and the Powerhouse Library. They feel that the Summer Reading Challenge has raised pupils’ awareness of what libraries have to offer. They recognise that they can now build on the successes of this year’s Challenge by being innovative and finding further ways to engage parents and children.

Next year we will hold a parents’ meeting to promote the Challenge. Jeremy Jackson, Headteacher

We would like to have a special meeting next year, some kind of high profile event with the school, like you do with world book day. Sarah Jones, Y4 teacher
Section Seven  Implications

7.1 Building on success in school-library links
Schools, libraries and the children themselves identify the benefits of personal contacts between teachers and librarians. The importance of successful school-library links is exemplified by the number of schools which had not previously taken part and are now keen to participate next year. In addition, there is evidence of continued and expanding take-up from schools who have been involved before. Teachers at a school in Wiltshire, for example, were pleased with the increased numbers of children taking up the SRC this year. They are aiming for more children to undertake the Challenge in 2010 and described how they would promote the Challenge by aiming for every class to visit the local library, promoting the Challenge across the whole school whilst targeting particular groups of children and parents.

One of the significant contributory factors to this enhanced sense of relationship was the joint meeting held for this research project in September between teachers and librarians in each of the local areas. However, the children's, teachers’ and librarians’ views on the value of personal contacts suggests that it is not just the fact that links are made but the quality of the relationships between all those involved makes all the difference. As one teacher in Manchester explained:

The children accessed the material in the library, we encourage them to become library members, we had people from a local library who came in and tried to bridge those links with the community, in the classroom we have tried to encourage the children to access libraries out of school and to do as much reading as possible, we have a big focus on reading across the school and this is part of the literacy programme. Reading is really up there... Teacher, Manchester

In addition, an important insight from this year’s Impact Research project is the key role played by Headteachers in strengthening links and ensuring that whole school participation is more likely. Focused targeting of Headteachers would stimulate greater engagement amongst all groups of children for the SRC.

Timing of visits and promotions are equally critical in encouraging schools to take part. If schools are approached early in the cycle of planning for the SRC they can plan work which will align with the year’s theme for the Challenge. Typically, schools plan a whole year ahead but can adapt programmes of work if they have a term’s notice.

Libraries could also make stronger links with local authority literacy colleagues with a view to holding conferences specifically for headteachers and school literacy subject leaders, or profiling SRC at local literacy meetings.
7.2 Flexibility of library arrangements
Schools, children and families appreciated flexibility in borrowing arrangements, in the activities on offer and in what librarians offer the schools in the run-up to the Challenge (See Case Study 6.3). It may be that there is already scope for flexibility but it is certainly a point worth considering when evaluating this year’s Challenge with the libraries as a whole. In Wiltshire, teachers appreciated the readiness of librarians to let children who were not going to be at home during the summer take their full quota of books at once and to be flexible in access:

*The library is only too happy to open the library at any time for us to take children for a visit.* Deputy Headteacher, Wiltshire

Lack of flexibility can lead to children not wanting to complete the Challenge, as this one instance indicates:

*One child went to the library with her mother and was sent away and told that she hadn’t read the book well enough. This could have affected the parent taking the child to the library again. The son did complete the challenge but daughter didn’t so their mother talked to the school about this.* Deputy Headteacher, Wiltshire

In Manchester, the librarians’ readiness to provide a range of visual material to tempt particular groups of boy readers is bearing fruit. Generally, the approachability of the librarian is key:

*A is quite informal; he has a good rapport with the children they know his face and they came in to talk to us at the library. As well as the assembly, the fact that A has been here over the previous year it really helped because young people knew our faces, they knew where the library was.* Library Information Assistant, Manchester

7.3 Targeting key groups of young readers and schools
It is clear that the SRC enjoys great success with already motivated readers. From the evidence in this Impact Research project, the small numbers of children undertaking the Challenge who identified themselves as less motivated readers strongly suggests that
there are many reluctant readers who would benefit from specific and targeted encouragement to join in the Challenge.

Similarly, the lack of take-up and the relatively low sense of achievement amongst children who have English as an Additional Language (even if they read a number of books, as most of them did), indicates a strong imperative to engage with bilingual children both through personal contacts and through provision of materials. As one Headteacher explained:

[Next year] we would offer more support for parents, particularly where English is not their first language. Headteacher, Manchester.

When working with particular schools, librarians have found that strategic targeting can bear fruit:

We are going to put an emphasis on visiting the schools where we most want to see an increase last so that the Challenge is fresh in the children’s mind and they don’t forget to come and join up. Community librarian, Wiltshire

This year we targeted smaller groups in schools. Librarian, Staffordshire

The Impact Research project showed that children eligible for free school meals were more likely to be seen by their teachers as low achieving. The lower take up of the Challenge by children who have FSM and the lower proportion of this group of children who, even after the Challenge, perceived themselves as better or more motivated readers than the non-FSM children, indicates that it would be well worth targeting this group in the future. However, it is important not to generalise. Whilst level of parental income is seen as an indicator of how effectively a child in the UK will learn to read (Twist et al., 2007) other research suggests a more nuanced view (Comber and Kamler, 2004; van Steensel, 2006). There is a danger of adopting a deficit view of homes and children’s potential if a simple correlation is made between low socio-economic status and achievement or even commitment. A productive way forward when considering children who are eligible for (and take up) FSM would be to find out if such children need practical support in getting to libraries in out of school hours and if so, what might be done to help.

Schools can identify these children and could, if asked to do so, give particular attention to getting these different groups of children involved, perhaps in a few areas only, so as to harness local initiatives most effectively. Equally, libraries may consider evidence from initiatives such as the Powerhouse Library in Manchester to provide greater access and inclusion for groups who find accessing libraries difficult. In supporting children whose circumstances make it difficult for them to take part in the Challenge, schools and libraries have emphasised the importance of encouraging friends and siblings to accompany younger children, personal conversations with parents to discuss practicalities of children being able to take part in the SRC, flexibility in lending arrangements, establishing personal and open relationships between library staff and borrowers and providing appropriate texts.

7.4 Involving parents

Many of the teachers mentioned that some parents find it hard to support their children in undertaking the Challenge. Schools often mention that getting parents genuinely involved in supporting reading (beyond completing the home/school reading record) can be difficult. The picture varies from school to school and there is evidence (Warrington et al., 2007) that some schools in quite deprived areas can make extremely
strong and fruitful connections with parents over reading. What seems clear is that schools – and libraries- may need to make different efforts to encourage more parents overall, but particularly perhaps those for whom time is a luxury.

7.5 The importance of talking about reading
From the children’s surveys and the case study visits there is ample evidence that young readers, just like their older counterparts, relish having conversations about what they have read, or are currently reading. However, in some cases their teachers were unaware of their reading commitment at home. In the light of the emphasis on talk in the Rose recommendations for the new curriculum (http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/primarycurriculumreview/ accessed 9th December 2009) , SRC may wish to consider ways in which book-talk can be more centrally built in to the Challenge, perhaps through schools and libraries setting up reading groups as an addition to the individual reading conversations which the children have with the adults in the library. Similarly, after the SRC, schools may wish to capitalise on the amount of reading that has taken place during the summer holidays, and embed helpful reading habits by setting up book-talk groups.

Fig. 7.2 Sharing practice: schools and libraries, Coventry

7.6 A wider reading repertoire
Evidence from the children’s surveys and the case study interviews (as well as from an array of other research sources) strongly indicates shifts in they types of text which young people now like to read, including digital texts, talking books and DVDs. The link between television, films and books is clearly a great motivator (as it can be with young and older readers alike) indicating that the SRC may wish to broaden the scope of the texts included in the Challenge (See Case Studies 6.1 and 6.4). This may be a way of encouraging more reluctant readers to become involved and get hooked into book reading. Sophie, whose drawing is shown in Fig. 6.3 enjoyed being able to borrow talking books. The SRC website has been identified as a strong motivating factor in promoting engagement and this may be a way of extending the reading range further by offering on-screen reading.
7.7 Sustaining gains
It is clear that most of the children who take part in the SRC make gains in motivation, in achievement as readers and in the scope of their reading experience. They have also had a taste of the satisfactions to be gained by becoming library users. It would be instructive if the schools which have participated in this year's Impact Research could supply information about the extent to which the children who have begun to be library users have sustained those behaviours six months after the SRC. Similarly, it would be interesting to track the children’s attitudes to their own reading after a period of time has elapsed and to discover whether the teachers judge that there have been any gains in attainment as readers made by the children who took part in the Challenge.

In terms of links between libraries and schools it would be useful to find out how far the good relationships established this summer by the SRC have been sustained and built on.

7.8 Strengthening community cohesion
As the case study visits and the meetings between teachers and librarians indicate, there are great potential gains in making a committed effort at working with the community. Where librarians and youth workers collaborate and where teachers make efforts to include parents, there is greater take-up of the Challenge and more likelihood of sustained borrowing habits (See Case Studies 6.3 and 6.4). The potential readership amongst bilingual families and those who are financially less well off, strongly suggests not only the importance of reaching those parts of the community who are not habitual library users, but that there is some existing good practice which could be drawn on.
Section Eight  Key Recommendations

Schools and libraries may wish to use these and the chart in 8.2 as aids to planning future actions in developing pleasure and satisfaction in reading.

8.1 Recommendations for schools
Identify particular groups of children and their families and offer practical support to help them to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge. Make personal contacts with parents and encourage siblings, older friends and reading buddies to arrange to accompany younger readers to the library.

Follow up and attempt to sustain the gains in commitment and achievement made by children who have participated in the Summer Reading Challenge by continuing to take classes to visit the local library and inviting librarians to school during the year to discuss reading enthusiasms more generally.

Use the expertise of local library staff to visit the school to advise on book availability, how to expand the range of books used in the classroom, and help develop in-school library facilities. In collaboration with local librarians, plan to include the Summer Reading Challenge in the reading curriculum of the school, directly linking summer and autumn texts and discussions about reading and organising events across the school or between schools.

Discover more about the interests and preferences of young readers’ home practices in reading all kinds of texts – paper-based and on screen – and use this knowledge to support their in-school reading.

Share teachers’ own reading enthusiasms and preferences with young readers, discussing reading as an everyday, pleasurable and satisfying activity. Establishing book-talk groups, perhaps in collaboration with the local library, with parents and with children of mixed ages, would enhance opportunities to talk about reading, and expand the reading repertoire of adults and children alike.

8.2 Recommendations for libraries
Establish a policy of greater flexibility of lending arrangements, perhaps allowing for longer periods of loan and numbers of books borrowed at a time.

Identify a small number of local schools which have not previously been involved in the Summer Reading Challenge, or have only had a few children who participated. Target Headteachers specifically and make efforts to visit schools to promote the Challenge and to plan it into their reading programmes throughout the year. Organise conferences or network meetings with headteachers and local authority literacy consultants.

Establish an annual programme of links with schools so that visits to promote the Challenge can start early in the school year. Sustain gains made by children who participated in the SRC through post-Challenge contacts. Publicise the facilities offered by the library to support schools in developing the range of reading in school and in setting up more vibrant school libraries. Network with local authority staff with a responsibility for literacy in order to profile the Summer Reading Challenge at LA literacy events.
Expand the provision of media and types of text offered as part of the Summer Reading Challenge. Plan specifically for particular groups, for example, bilingual families.

Develop closer links with other agencies, for example, the youth service, to strengthen efforts to work with the community and develop greater community cohesion. Discover what other summer holiday activities are offered by the local authority and voluntary groups and seek to connect with them.

8.3 Menu for success
The continuum on page 74 is drawn from all the different aspects of the research: surveys, Reflective reviews, meetings, Case Study visits and interviews. It summarises those factors which might be selected from the ‘menu’ to develop successful school-library links for the Challenge and also those factors which are barriers to success. School and library staff might use this as a focus for evaluating this year’s Summer Reading Challenge or for planning for following years.

8.4 Looking to the future
This Impact Research project has identified not only the continuing success of the Summer Reading Challenge but a wealth of good practice in libraries and in schools which might be built on and expanded to spread the SRC further. It is clear from the evidence of this project that the SRC offers a wealth of opportunities for young readers. The Challenge gives them added momentum, maintaining their enthusiasm, expanding their reading repertoire and contributing towards retention of reading standards. It also indicates that added support for that group of readers who do not have the chance to use the library regularly in the summer would reap benefits and signals the potential for involving an increasing bilingual readership. Local meetings between library staff and teachers involved in the project showed a great deal of goodwill to forge stronger links to embed and sustain this year’s successes. In the future, collaborative projects with local authority literacy colleagues and other agencies could significantly influence take-up. There may be some practical barriers for schools and libraries to overcome, but strategic, targeted, perhaps small-scale local initiatives would help develop models of successful practice which could then be more widely disseminated.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers to Success</th>
<th>Success Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCHOOLS</strong></td>
<td><strong>Getting to know library staff by</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intense questioning by library</td>
<td>name and establishing relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staff on SRC books when returned</td>
<td><strong>Wider range of books than at</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by children</td>
<td>school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Library queues</td>
<td><strong>Arranging visits by library staff</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of dual language texts in</td>
<td>to school/classes to explain and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>libraries</td>
<td>encourage participation in SRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Limited communication between</td>
<td><strong>Organising post SRC follow up</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>libraries and schools/ libraries and</td>
<td>and information about individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parents</td>
<td>from libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of awareness of the SRC</td>
<td><strong>Using the high quality SRC</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of time for class visits to</td>
<td>website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>local libraries</td>
<td><strong>Geographically accessible library</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No local library/mobile library</td>
<td><strong>Library flexibility over times and</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Restricted and inflexible</td>
<td>books borrowed during the SRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>borrowing from libraries</td>
<td><strong>Knowledgeable library staff who</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parents feeling unwelcome in the</td>
<td>are responsive to the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>library</td>
<td><strong>SRC rewards and incentives</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Getting to know library staff by</td>
<td><strong>Highly motivated children</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>name and establishing relationships</td>
<td><strong>Supportive, enthusiastic parents</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wider range of books than at school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LIBRARIES</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strong relationships between</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Poor response by schools to the SRC</td>
<td>schools and libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Target driven</td>
<td><strong>Awareness of schools to what the</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inertia/lack of interest by schools,</td>
<td>local library offers its users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parents, children</td>
<td><strong>Appreciation of what the SRC</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Limited capacity of library staff</td>
<td>offers to young readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and lack of SRC materials</td>
<td><strong>Class visits to the local library</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strong relationships between</td>
<td><strong>Enthusiastic teachers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>schools and libraries</td>
<td><strong>Parental support</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Awareness of schools to what the</td>
<td><strong>Valuing of library staff’s expertise</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>local library offers its users</td>
<td><strong>Interactions between library staff</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Class visits to the local library</td>
<td>and children</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Enthusiastic teachers</td>
<td><strong>Local flexibility with SRC</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parental support</td>
<td><strong>Collaboration with schools</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interactions between library staff</td>
<td><strong>around the promotion and follow</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and children</td>
<td><strong>up of SRC</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Local flexibility with SRC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaboration with schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>around the promotion and follow up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHILDREN</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of comfortable reading places</td>
<td><strong>Comfortable, welcoming library</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the library</td>
<td>environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Quiet environment considered to be</td>
<td><strong>Enjoying a quiet place to read a</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overbearing</td>
<td>wide range of books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Being disciplined for talking, ‘having’</td>
<td><strong>High quality and good condition</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be quiet</td>
<td>of library books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Distance of library from home</td>
<td><strong>Freedom and independence to</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unwillingness of parents or parents</td>
<td>select reading materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being unable to visit the library</td>
<td><strong>Visiting the library with family</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with their children</td>
<td>and friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intense questioning by librarians</td>
<td><strong>Friendly and encouraging library</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when returning SRC books</td>
<td>staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Busy libraries</td>
<td><strong>Interactions with library staff</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of anyone to share books with</td>
<td><strong>The SRC, incentives, rewards,</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the library</td>
<td>ceremonies and celebrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Comfortable, welcoming library</td>
<td><strong>High quality SRC website</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enjoying a quiet place to read a</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>wide range of books</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• High quality and good condition of</td>
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<tr>
<td>library books</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Freedom and independence to select</td>
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<td>reading materials</td>
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<td>• Visiting the library with family</td>
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<tr>
<td>and friends</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Friendly and encouraging library</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interactions with library staff</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• The SRC, incentives, rewards,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceremonies and celebrations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• High quality SRC website</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
References


van Steensel, R. (2006) 'Relations between socio-cultural factors, the home literacy environment and children's literacy development in the first years of primary education'. Journal of Research in Reading 29 (4) 367-382


Appendixes
Teachers’ Reading Survey

Name: ____________________________ Class age group: ____________________________ Gender: male / female

Are you the literacy subject leader? Yes/ no delete as appropriate

1. Number of years in teaching:

2. What have you read recently for your own pleasure?

When did you read this?
Within the last month  Within the last 3 months  Within the last 6 months  Over 6 months ago

3. Which of these do you enjoy reading most? Please tick all that apply

Comics  Magazines  Newspapers  Television  Computer games  Texting

Poetry  Information on the internet  Books with words and no pictures

Anything else

4. Do you use your local library for school? Yes/No delete as appropriate
If yes, in what ways?
5. When did you last visit the local library with your class?
Within the last month   Within the last 3 months   Within the last 6 months
Over 6 months ago     Never

6. Have you been involved with the Summer Reading Challenge before?  Yes/No
delete as appropriate
How?
What do you think it offers children?

7. Which of the following is the most influential in helping you to decide which children’s books to use in class?
Personal interest/knowledge   Children’s recommendations   Library Service   School librarian
Other - please specify

8. How often do you read aloud to your class?
Once a day   Once or twice a week   Once a fortnight   Less often than that

9. List 2 or 3 books that you have enjoyed reading recently with your class:


10. What are the ingredients of successful teaching of reading?

Thank you
Children’s Reading Survey

Name: __________________________ Gender: boy/ girl Year group: __________________________

School: __________________________

1. **Tick one box:**

I love reading  It’s okay  I am not bothered  I don’t like reading

2. **Tick one box:**

I’m a very good reader  I’m a good reader  I’m okay  I’m not very good

3. **Do you read more? Please tick one box**

At home  At school  Both the same

Why do you think this is?

___________________________________________________________________________________________

4. **Do you read with anyone at home?**

Yes  No

Who do you read with? ______________________________________________________________

What sorts of things? ________________________________________________________________

5. **Do you ever talk about what you’re reading? Please tick all that apply**

With friends  With members of the family  With any other people

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________
6. **Which of these do you enjoy reading most? Please tick all that apply**

- Comics
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Television
- Computer games
- Texting
- Poetry
- Information on the internet
- Books with words and no pictures
- Books with pictures
- Anything else

7. **Are you taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge? Yes/No**

Why/ why not?

Thank you for filling this in.
# Children’s Reading profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child’s name:</th>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Year Group:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s name:</td>
<td>School:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Please comment on the child’s attitudes and behaviours.**
   - Well motivated
   - Usually enthusiastic
   - Sometimes unmotivated
   - Reluctant

2. **Please comment on the child’s knowledge and skill.**
   - Experienced and independent
   - Fluent and growing in independence
   - Moderately fluent
   - Early stages of reading

3. **Does the child speak more than one language? If so, which?**
   Please indicate level of fluency:
   - Fluent
   - Some fluency
   - Phrases
   - A few words

4. **Does the child read or write in more than one language? If so which?**
   Please indicate level of fluency:
   - Fluent
   - Some fluency
   - Phrases
   - A few words

5. **Please comment on your knowledge of the child as a reader in a range of classroom contexts** (e.g. use of the book corner or school library, engagement in class novels, use of ICT texts, engagement during guided reading, participation in shared reading, discussions about reading, stamina, writing in role, completion of reading homework, reading preferences, etc).

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6. Please provide any information you may have about the child’s reading habits outside school.

7. Please provide assessment details of the child’s reading attainment including their National Curriculum level and attach any relevant information (e.g. APP guideline sheets)

Thank you
Children’s Reading Survey

Name: 
School: 
Gender: boy/girl 
Year group: 

1. Tick one box:
   - I love reading
   - It’s okay
   - I am not bothered
   - I don’t like reading

2. Tick one box:
   - I’m a very good reader
   - I’m a good reader
   - I’m okay
   - I’m not very good

3. Do you read more? Please tick one box
   - At home
   - At school
   - Both the same

Why do you think this is?

4. Did you take part in the Summer Reading Challenge? Please tick one box
   - Yes
   - No

5. Did you enjoy it? Please tick one box
   - I liked it very much
   - It was ok
   - I didn’t enjoy it much
   - I didn’t like it at all
6. What was the best thing about the Summer Reading Challenge?

8a. How many books did you read in the summer holidays?

8b. Which did you enjoy the most?

8c. How many of these were part of the Summer Reading Challenge?

8d. Were any of these different from the books you usually read? How?

9. What is different about reading in the library and reading at school?

Thank you for filling this in.
Child’s Reading Profile

Child’s name: Age: Year Group: Eligible for FSM: Yes/No

Teacher’s name: School:

1. Please comment on the child’s attitude to reading at school after the summer holidays:
   Well motivated Usually enthusiastic Sometimes unmotivated Reluctant

2. Please comment on the child’s knowledge and skill when reading at school after the summer holidays:
   Experienced and independent Fluent and growing in independence Moderately fluent Early stages of reading

3. Please comment on any changes you have noticed in the child’s approach to reading after the summer holidays:

4. Please provide assessment details of the child’s reading attainment including their National Curriculum level:

5. If the child has undertaken the Summer Reading Challenge, what do you think it has done for the child as a reader?

Thank you
Reflections on the Summer Reading Challenge

Teacher's name:  
School:  

1. What, if anything did you do differently this year before the Summer Reading Challenge?

2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the Summer Reading Challenge?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


4. Will you do anything differently to promote or engage with the Summer Reading Challenge in the future? If so, please describe what you will do and why.

Thank you  
Rebecca Kennedy, Eve Bearne
Reflections on the Summer Reading Challenge

Librarian’s name: Library: LA:

1. What, if anything did you do differently this year to engage children in the Summer Reading Challenge?

2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the Summer Reading Challenge?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3. Consider this year’s Summer Reading Challenge. Were there any surprises or particular success stories? Please describe them.
4. Do you have any recommendations to take forward when planning for the next Summer Reading Challenge? Please describe.

Thank you
Rebecca Kennedy, Eve Bearne
Appendix 2 The findings in detail

In presenting the findings, it should be remembered that although there is some quantitative data, the nature and size of the sample means that these cannot be claimed to have statistical significance. Numbers and percentages should only be seen as a tool for exploring the qualitative evidence from the project, suggesting trends and helping to raise issues.

2.1 The children – the whole sample
After loss of data from fifteen children, 146 children in all (Focus group n= 75; Control group n=71) made up the final sample.

Before the Summer Reading Challenge
Before the summer, in every year group and across the sample, the children’s perceptions of their own reading were positive. Few indicated that they did not like reading or that they saw themselves as not very good at reading. Overall, however, the Focus group (those children who had opted to undertake the SRC) had more positive attitudes to reading and more optimistic views of their own reading ability than the Control group (those children who had not opted for the Challenge). Two thirds of the Focus group said that they loved reading and none said they didn’t like reading. Although there was a smaller percentage of the Control group who put themselves in this top category, nevertheless, over half of them said they loved reading and only a few (n=5) said that they didn’t like reading. (Table 2.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>I love reading</th>
<th>it's OK</th>
<th>I am not bothered</th>
<th>I don't like reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Group</strong></td>
<td>71</td>
<td>56.4%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1 Self Perception of Enjoyment of Reading before the Summer Reading Challenge - Focus and Control groups  (％of each group)

Over half of the Focus group saw themselves as very good readers and just less than half of the Control group also put themselves in the highest category. Very few (Focus group n=1; Control group n=5) thought they were not very good readers. (Table 2.2)
The teachers reported that most of the whole sample (Focus and Control groups combined) enjoyed reading. In terms of motivation, they were slightly less optimistic than the children themselves, identifying 45.3% of the Focus group and 31% of the Control group as well motivated readers. However, the teachers’ views of those who were reluctant readers coincided completely with the children's self perceptions. (Table 2.3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Well motivated</th>
<th>Usually enthusiastic</th>
<th>Sometimes unmotivated</th>
<th>Reluctant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Group</strong></td>
<td>71</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.3 Teachers’ perceptions of children’s reading motivation before the Summer Reading Challenge – Focus and Control groups (% of each group)

The teachers rated the Focus and Control group children's ability as readers as almost equal (as had been requested to balance the Focus group sample) although they put fewer children in the top category than the children themselves had done. (Table 2.4)
After the Summer Reading Challenge

Children’s self perceptions of reading enjoyment and competence

After the SRC, almost all the Focus group children who had recorded themselves as loving reading retained the highest level of enjoyment (n= 40/42) whereas far fewer of the Control group children were still rated themselves as loving reading (n=24/35). Of the rest, after the SRC twice as many Focus group than Control group children recorded higher levels of enjoyment, indicating the success of the SRC in promoting enthusiasm for reading. Equally, far fewer Focus group children (n=7; Control group n=15) rated themselves as enjoying reading less. (Table 2.5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>n</th>
<th>Focus Group</th>
<th>Control Group</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less enjoyment</td>
<td>The same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.5 Self Perception of Enjoyment of Reading after the Summer Reading Challenge - Focus group compared with Control group excluding those children who rated themselves in the highest category so could not show an increase in motivation (% of each group)

Before the Challenge, over half of the Control group (n=41) and almost half of the Focus group (n=35) had identified themselves as very good readers. After the summer, this figure had dropped a good deal with far fewer maintaining their view of themselves as very good readers: (Focus group n=29/41; Control group n=10/35) in contrast with the numbers who maintained enthusiasm for reading (see above). Of the rest, about a third of both the Focus and Control groups thought that they had improved as readers or maintained their levels of ability and rather more Control group children thought that their standard had declined. (Table 2.6)
Table 2.6  Self Perception of Reading Ability after the Summer Reading Challenge - Focus group compared with Control group excluding those children who rated themselves in the highest category so could not show an increase in perceived achievement (% of each group)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Lower achievement</th>
<th>The same</th>
<th>Higher achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>48</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Group</strong></td>
<td>59</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.6  Self Perception of Reading Ability after the Summer Reading Challenge - Focus group compared with Control group excluding those children who rated themselves in the highest category so could not show an increase in perceived achievement (% of each group)

**Teachers’ judgements of reading motivation and achievement**

Before the Challenge, the teachers had identified 34 Focus group children and 22 Control group children as well motivated readers. After the Challenge they were asked once again to rate the children’s motivation as readers. The teachers’ judgements identified almost all the ‘well motivated’ Focus group children as still highly motivated (n=29/34) in comparison with 10/22 of the Control group children who had been seen as highly motivated before the summer. Of the rest, based on the teachers’ judgements, almost twice as many Focus group as Control group children had improved in motivation, although about the same percentage of each group were showing less motivation. (Table 2.7)

Table 2.7 Teachers’ perceptions of children’s reading motivation after the Summer Reading Challenge Focus group compared with Control group excluding those children who rated themselves in the highest category so could not show an increase in motivation (% of each group)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Less motivation</th>
<th>The same</th>
<th>Greater motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Group</strong></td>
<td>61</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.7 Teachers’ perceptions of children’s reading motivation after the Summer Reading Challenge Focus group compared with Control group excluding those children who rated themselves in the highest category so could not show an increase in motivation (% of each group)

In terms of judgements of reading ability, based on pre-summer and post-summer APP assessments, more Focus group children had maintained their levels of reading achievement or improved on their previous levels, some quite strikingly (Focus group:84%; Control group 69%). Far fewer Focus group children had gone down in ability as judged on APP levels (16% as contrasted with 31%). (Table 2.9)
Table 2.8 Teachers’ APP judgements of reading ability after the SRC showing increase/decrease in sub-levels: Focus group compared with Control group. (% of each group)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Minus 3 sub-levels</th>
<th>Minus 2 sub-levels</th>
<th>Minus 1 sub-level</th>
<th>The same</th>
<th>Plus 1 sub-level</th>
<th>Plus 2 sub-level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Group</strong></td>
<td>71</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 Children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)

Less than a third of the whole sample were children eligible for FSM (n=48). Of these, twenty children undertook the Challenge and twenty eight did not. This means that the results need to be considered in the light of relatively small numbers.

Children’s self perceptions of reading enjoyment and competence

Before the summer, the Focus group FSM children had slightly less positive views of reading overall in relation to the rest of the Focus group, although none said that they did not like reading at all. (Table 2.9)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>I love reading</th>
<th>it’s OK</th>
<th>I am not bothered</th>
<th>I don't like reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non FSM Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>55</td>
<td>69.1%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FSM Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.9 Self Perception of Enjoyment of Reading before the Summer Reading Challenge - Children eligible for free school meals. Non-FSM Focus group compared with FSM Focus group (% of each group)

In line with the general picture of keen readers engaging with the Challenge, the FSM Focus group children described themselves as enjoying reading more than those who did not take the Challenge and none of them said they did not like reading at all, in
contrast with the FSM Control group (those who did not take the Challenge) 7.1% of whom noted that they did not like reading. (Table 2.10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>I love reading</th>
<th>it's OK</th>
<th>I am not bothered</th>
<th>I don't like reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FSM Focus Group</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSM Control Group</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.10 Self Perception of Enjoyment of Reading before the Summer Reading Challenge - Children eligible for free school meals. FSM Focus group compared with FSM Control group (% of each group)

In terms of self perceptions of their reading ability, before the SRC relatively more FSM children in the Focus group in comparison with the non FSM children rated themselves as very good readers (the top category) although a greater proportion of FSM children saw themselves as just ‘OK’ at reading. (Table 2.11)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>I'm a very good reader</th>
<th>I'm a good reader</th>
<th>I'm okay</th>
<th>I'm not very good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non FSM Focus Group</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>52.7%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSM Focus Group</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.11 Self Perception of Reading Ability before the Summer Reading Challenge - Children eligible for free school meals. Non-FSM Focus group compared with FSM Focus group (% of each group)

Comparing all the children eligible for FSM (Focus and Control groups), before the Challenge there was an equal percentage of each group who rated themselves as very good readers but rather more FSM children who were not going to take the Challenge saw themselves as ‘OK’ or ‘not very good’. (Table 2.12)
I'm a very good reader
I'm a good reader
I'm okay
I'm not very good

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>I'm a very good reader</th>
<th>I'm a good reader</th>
<th>I'm okay</th>
<th>I'm not very good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FSM Focus Group</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSM Control Group</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.12 Self Perception of Reading Ability before the Summer Reading Challenge – Children eligible for free school meals – FSM Focus and FSM Control groups (% of each group)

After the SRC, almost all of the FSM Focus group children who had said they loved reading maintained that high level of perception. These cannot be included in the analysis of shifts of perception and so have been excluded. This makes the numbers remaining quite small but trends can be indicated. Of the FSM Focus group children who did not rate themselves at the top level of enjoyment before the SRC, 40% noted that they enjoyed reading more after the Challenge as compared with 44% of the non FSM children who had undertaken the SRC. (Table 2.13)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Less enjoyment</th>
<th>The same</th>
<th>More enjoyment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non FSM Focus Group</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSM Focus Group</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.13 Self Perception of Enjoyment of Reading after the Summer Reading Challenge - Children eligible for free school meals. Non FSM Focus group compared with FSM Focus group excluding those children who rated themselves in the highest category so could not show an increase in motivation (% of each group)

Rather more of the non FSM Focus group rated themselves as less keen on reading after the Challenge in relation to the FSM Focus group (24%:10%). In comparison with children eligible for FSM who did not take the Challenge, however, almost four times as many of the FSM Focus group said that they enjoyed reading more than their FSM counterparts who had not taken the Challenge. Similarly, roughly four times as many
FSM Control group children (who had not undertaken the Challenge) said they enjoyed reading less after the summer holidays. (Table 2.14)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Less enjoyment</th>
<th>The same</th>
<th>More enjoyment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FSM Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FSM Control Group</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>43.7%</td>
<td>43.7%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.14 Self Perception of Enjoyment of Reading after the Summer Reading Challenge - Children eligible for free school meals. FSM Focus group compared with FSM Control group excluding those children who rated themselves in the highest category so could not show an increase in motivation (% of each group)

In terms of self perceptions of reading ability, after the SRC the children eligible for FSM as well as those who were not showed a drop in their views of themselves as very good readers. Only 35% of the FSM Focus group and 49% of the non FSM Focus group still saw themselves as very good readers. Of the rest, only 23% of the FSM children rated themselves as better readers after the Challenge compared with 37.1% of the non FSM group. (Table 2.15)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Lower achievement</th>
<th>The same</th>
<th>Higher achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non FSM Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FSM Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.15 Self Perception of Reading Ability after the Summer Reading Challenge - Children eligible for free school meals. Non FSM Focus group compared with FSM Focus group excluding those children who rated themselves in the highest category so could not show an increase in perceived achievement (% of each group)

About the same percentage of Focus group and Control group children rated themselves as better readers, but rather more of the children who had participated in the Challenge saw themselves as less good readers than before, compared with the children who did not take the Challenge. (Table 2.16)
Table 2.16  *Self Perception of Reading Ability after the Summer Reading Challenge* - Children eligible for free school meals - FSM Focus group compared with FSM Control group excluding those children who rated themselves in the highest category so could not show an increase in perceived achievement (% of each group)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Lower achievement</th>
<th>The same</th>
<th>Higher achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FSM Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FSM Control Group</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Teachers’ judgements of reading achievement*
Using APP judgements, the teachers noted that similar proportions of children eligible for FSM maintained or increased their reading scores in comparison with the non FSM Focus group, although the numbers of FSM Focus group children are small compared with the whole group. (Table 2.17)

Table 2.17  *Teachers’ APP judgements of reading ability after the SRC showing increase/decrease in sub-levels: Non FSM Focus group compared with FSM Focus group.* (% of each group)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Plus 2 sub-levels</th>
<th>Plus 1 sub-level</th>
<th>The same</th>
<th>Minus 1 sub-level</th>
<th>Minus 2 sub-level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non FSM Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>55</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>56.4%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FSM Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compared with the children who are eligible for FSM but who did not undertake the Challenge, more FSM Focus group children were judged as having dropped a sub-level or two. (Table 2.18)
### Table 2.18 Teachers’ APP judgements of reading ability after the SRC showing increase/decrease in sub-levels: FSM Focus group compared with FSM Control group. (% of each group)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Plus 2 sub-levels</th>
<th>Plus 1 sub-level</th>
<th>The same sub-level</th>
<th>Minus 1 sub-level</th>
<th>Minus 2 sub-level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FSM Focus Group</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSM Control Group</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numbers of books read during the holidays
The majority of the children eligible for FSM who undertook the Challenge read between one and six books whereas the majority of children who did not qualify for FSM and who undertook the Challenge read between three and twelve books. The children who did not undertake the Challenge also recorded the number of books read during the holidays. (NB the two Control groups are self reported and cannot be verified by the records of the SRC). Some children in the sample did not respond to this question on the survey. Only children who did not undertake the Challenge (the Control groups) noted that they did not read any books at all during the summer holidays. Also, these two groups had the highest proportion of non-answers to this question. The majority of the non FSM Control group read between one and six books, whereas an anomalously high proportion of the FSM Control group read more than 7 books, and this group recorded the highest number of children reading more than 12 books. (Table 2.19)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>1-3 books</th>
<th>4-6 books</th>
<th>7-12 books</th>
<th>12+ books</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>100.0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non FSM Focus Group</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>41.8%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSM Focus Group</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non FSM Control</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSM Control Group</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.19 Numbers of books read during the summer holidays – Focus and Control groups (% of each group)

2.3 Children with English as an Additional Language

It should be noted that there was only a small number of EAL children in the sample (n = 31 including Focus children n=15 and Control children n=16). Of those, over a fifth were selected specifically because their attitudes towards reading and their achievements were judged by their teachers to be low. The very small numbers and the sample choice mean that the results cannot be seen as generally indicative of any particular trends.

Children’s self perceptions of reading enjoyment and competence

Before the Challenge, proportionately fewer of the EAL Focus group compared with the rest of the Focus group rated themselves as loving reading, although none said that they didn’t like reading. (Table 2. 20)
I love reading
It's OK
I am not bothered
I don't like reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non EAL Focus Group</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>58.3%</th>
<th>38.3%</th>
<th>3.4%</th>
<th>0.0%</th>
<th>100.0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAL Focus Group</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>53.4%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.20 Self Perception of Enjoyment of Reading before the Summer Reading Challenge - Children with English as an Additional Language. Non EAL Focus group compared with EAL Focus group (% of each group)

The choice of less committed readers for the SRC is indicated by the lower proportion of Focus group EAL children who said they loved reading compared with the Control group. (Table 2.21)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EAL Focus Group</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>53.4%</th>
<th>33.3%</th>
<th>13.3%</th>
<th>0.0%</th>
<th>100.0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAL Control Group</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.21 Self Perception of Enjoyment of Reading before the Summer Reading Challenge - Children with English as an Additional Language. EAL Focus group compared with EAL Control group (% of each group)

In terms of reading ability, about the same proportion of EAL children rated themselves as very good readers although proportionately more of the EAL Focus group saw themselves as only ‘OK’ readers. (Table 2.22)
I'm a very good reader
I'm a good reader
I'm okay
I'm not very good

Table 2.22 Self Perception of Reading Ability before the Summer Reading Challenge - Children with English as an Additional Language. Non-EAL Focus group compared with EAL Focus group (% of each group)

The numbers of Focus and Control group children was about equal yet although more Focus group EAL children saw themselves as very good readers in comparison with the EAL Control group children, fewer thought they were ‘good’ or ‘OK’ readers. (Table 2.23)

Table 2.23 Self Perception of Reading Ability before the Summer Reading Challenge – Children with English as an Additional Language – EAL Focus group compared with EAL Control Group (% of all)

After the Challenge, just over half of the fifteen children with EAL who undertook the Challenge maintained their pre-SRC view that they enjoyed reading very much. This means that the number (n=7) remaining really cannot be said to have value as indicative of general trends. In comparison with the rest of the Focus group, proportionately far fewer of the EAL Focus group children were as keen on reading after the SRC as their non EAL counterparts. Again, the choice of sample needs to be taken into account and no reliable shift of perceptions of enjoyment can be identified. (Table 2.24)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Less enjoyment</th>
<th>The same</th>
<th>More enjoyment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non EAL Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EAL Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.24 Self Perception of Enjoyment of Reading after the Summer Reading Challenge - Children with English as an Additional Language. Non EAL Focus group compared with EAL Focus group excluding those children who rated themselves in the highest category so could not show an increase in motivation (% of each group)

After the SRC, eight Focus group EAL children and five Control group children still rated themselves as loving reading. In comparison with the Control group, proportionately more of the EAL Focus group said they enjoyed reading more than before the holidays although a very large proportion said they enjoyed it less. (Table 2.25)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Less enjoyment</th>
<th>The same</th>
<th>More enjoyment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EAL Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EAL Control Group</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>63.6%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.25 Self Perception of Enjoyment of Reading after the Summer Reading Challenge - Children with English as an Additional Language. EAL Focus group compared with EAL Control Group excluding those children who rated themselves in the highest category so could not show an increase in motivation (% of each group)

In terms of rating themselves on reading ability, after taking away the children who had rated themselves as very good before the Challenge and maintained this view (n=3) none of the remaining EAL children thought they had improved as readers and proportionately many more thought they had deteriorated. (7 of the EAL Control group children had rated themselves in the top category and retained that view, suggesting once again the unrepresentative nature of the Focus group EAL children in this survey.) (Table 2.26)
Table 2.26 Self Perception of Reading Ability after the Summer Reading Challenge - Children with English as an Additional Language. Non EAL Focus group compared with EAL Focus Group excluding those children who rated themselves in the highest category so could not show an increase in perceived achievement (% of each group)

Comparing the EAL Focus and Control groups’ views of their reading ability after the Challenge, about the same proportion saw themselves as less good readers and a small number of the Control group – who had not undertaken the Challenge – rated themselves as better readers. (Table 2.27)

Table 2.27 Self Perception of Reading Ability after the Summer Reading Challenge - Children with English as an Additional Language. EAL Focus group compared with EAL Control group excluding those children who rated themselves in the highest category so could not show an increase in perceived achievement (% of each group)

_Teachers’ judgements of reading achievement_

Of the EAL children who undertook the SRC, only a few improved on their pre-summer APP levels. The small size of this sample and the particular children involved, however, means that it is impossible to draw reliable inferences from the numerical data. The teachers judged that proportionately twice as many EAL children as non EAL children had dropped at least a sub-level over the holiday. In addition, just over half of the EAL
Focus group either retained their pre-summer level or raised it compared with three quarters of the non EAL Focus group. (Table 2.28)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Plus 2 sub-levels</th>
<th>Plus 1 sub-level</th>
<th>The same</th>
<th>Minus 1 sub-level</th>
<th>Minus 2 sub-level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non EAL Focus Group</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAL Focus Group</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.28 Teachers’ APP judgements of reading ability after the SRC – increase/decrease in sub-levels: Non EAL Focus group compared with EAL Focus group. (% of each group)

Both the EAL Focus group and the Control group showed similar patterns of retention, improvement or decline. Again, this is likely to be due to the particular nature of the EAL Focus sample. (Table 2.29)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Plus 2 sub-levels</th>
<th>Plus 1 sub-level</th>
<th>The same</th>
<th>Minus 1 sub-level</th>
<th>Minus 2 sub-level</th>
<th>Minus 3 sub-level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAL Focus Group</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAL Control Group</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.29 Teachers’ APP judgements of reading ability before and after the SRC – increase/decrease in sub-levels: EAL Focus group compared with EAL Control group. (% of each group)

**Numbers of books read during the holidays**

A relatively large proportion of the EAL Focus group did not answer the question about the number of books read in the summer, even higher than the EAL Control group. No children in the non EAL Focus group returned a non-answer. One of the EAL Focus group recorded having read no books at all. Of those who did read books over the holidays, both Focus and Control groups, again the EAL Control group read more than the EAL Focus group. It has to be remembered that the Control group’s numbers are self-reported with no means of checking the figures, but the pattern is similar to the other
data patterns of the EAL Focus and Control groups. Compared with the non EAL Control group, however, the EAL Focus group read proportionately more books overall. (Table 2.30)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>1-3 books</th>
<th>4-6 books</th>
<th>7-12 books</th>
<th>12+ books</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non EAL Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>54.0%</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EAL Focus Group</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non EAL Control Group</strong></td>
<td>55</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EAL Control Group</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.30 *Numbers of books read during the summer – EAL and Non EAL Focus and Control groups. (% of each group)*
Appendix 3  The teachers’ reading preferences

Before the SRC the teachers were asked to complete a survey of their own reading habits and preferences. The twenty respondents involved represented eleven schools (three each in Coventry, Manchester and Staffordshire and two in Wiltshire) ranging in size from small rural schools of just over a hundred pupils to large inner city schools. They also covered a range of classes with almost equal numbers of KS1 and KS2 classes.

Nine of the teachers were subject leaders and ten were not and one respondent was a Teaching Assistant. All were female and their years of experience ranged from one NQT to two who had over twenty years’ experience although most had between one and 5 years’ experience (10); three had between 6 and 10 years’ experience and six between 11 and 20 years’ experience (the TA did not answer this question). In line with other research into teachers’ reading, the sample were all keen readers of fiction, autobiographies/biographies and magazines (Cremin et al., 2008) and over half were keen internet users. Only three mentioned reading children’s novels in their own leisure time.

Over three quarters of the sample (17) had read for their own pleasure in the month before the survey (early June) with three who had read for pleasure during the previous three months. Over half (11) had been involved with the local library (9 not) and three had links with the library as part of their professional role. Predominantly teachers used the library to borrow books which they had selected, either for their own professional purposes, for example, to keep up to date with children’s books, or for classroom topic use. Five had taken their classes on visits to the local library, but as some pointed out, some schools do not have a local library. In response to the question when they had last visited the local library with their class, five had visited within the previous month and three within the last six months.

Eight had previously been involved with the SRC mainly through previous contacts in the school (5), through visits from the local librarian (3), from parents encouraging children to participate (2) and one responded to an advertisement. In response to the question about what they thought it offered children, the main advantages were seen as: what it offers in terms of extending the children’s range of reading experience (10 mentions); pleasure and enjoyment in reading (5 mentions); the challenge (5 mentions); meeting others in a social community space (4 mentions); learning to use the library (3 mentions) and a focus for the summer holidays (1 mention).

In response to the question about influences on choice of books for the classroom, personal interest or knowledge was the highest category (18 mentions); children’s recommendations were almost as influential (12 mentions); there were two mentions of the National Strategy website being a source of recommendations for books for specific teaching units and one mention each of: the library service helping teachers choose books for the classroom; selecting according to authors known to be children’s favourites; the internet; a teacher’s own children.

All of the respondents read aloud to their classes frequently: 14 read daily and 6 once or twice a week. The types of books and authors were predominantly modern novels for children (35 mentions) from a relatively narrow range of authors with Roald Dahl topping the list (9 mentions) followed closely by Michael Morpurgo (6), Jacqueline Wilson (3) and Francesca Simpson’s Horrid Henry series (3). C.S, Lewis had two
mentions and there were single mentions of Gillian Cross, Ann Fine, Jamila Gavin, Norton Juster, Dick King Smith, Penelope Lively, Jill Murphy, Lynne Reid Banks, Tom Palmer, Louis Sachar, Stanton and Tazzyman and E.B. White and there were three mentions of early classic novels: *Robinson Crusoe*, *Treasure Island* and *The Wind in the Willows*.

Picturebooks were the next largest category (16 mentions) noted by KS1 and years 3 and 4 teachers. Jeannie Baker, Anthony Browne and Martin Waddell were mentioned twice with Jez Alborough, Rhona Armitage, John Burningham, Julia Donaldson, Meredith Hooper and Alison Bartlett, Tony Ross, Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith, Jill Tomlinson and Paul Howard getting one mention each.

There were two mentions of information books being read aloud and one internet factual story, two collections of Crossley Holland’s short stories and one of Greek myths, and two mentions of poetry. It is interesting that these responses, although from a small sample, echo the trends in the findings of Cremin et al. (2008) in the *Teachers as Readers* research which noted a tendency for teachers to choose from a relatively small number of popular authors and also a tendency for poetry to be underrepresented in the reading aloud repertoire in primary schools in England.

The final question in the survey asked teachers to indicate what they perceived as the ingredients of successful teaching of reading. Most listed three or four qualities, the largest two categories were *sharing enthusiasm and a love of reading* and *expanding children’s experience of books*. *Teaching the skills of reading* were also seen as important (13 mentions) then there were three mentions each of: *creating a supportive reading environment*; *taking an inclusive teaching approach*; *using drama and other activities to enliven reading*; *developing children’s independence as readers*; *making links with other curriculum areas or topics*. *Having knowledge of children’s books and involving parents* were each mentioned twice and *developing children’s openness to ideas* was mentioned once.