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EVALUATION OF HACKNEY LEARNING TRUST'S READING PROGRAMMES

June 2020

Dr Amelia Hempel-Jorgensen (PI)
Professor Joan Swann
Linda Plowright-Pepper
Professor Teresa Cremin
Kimberly Safford
Dr Jenna Mittelmeier
Dr Natalie Canning

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The Open University tendered to evaluate two reading programmes: Daily Supported Reading (DSR) and Destination Reader (DR), as part of a package for primary schools offered by Hackney Learning Trust (HLT) in the period January 2018 – July 2019. These two reading programmes were developed by HLT and launched in 2016, although an earlier version of DSR had been available briefly prior to this. While the programmes were used by schools in Hackney and other local London boroughs prior to the present initiative, they were implemented in 15 schools in different parts of the south of England with supplementary support provided by HLT. This initiative was funded by the Department for Education. At the time of launching the package the schools, some had low-very low attainment in reading, varying levels of socio-economic poverty and some had very low levels of social mobility. HLT aimed for the package to have a whole-school impact in terms of changing school cultures and practices around the teaching of reading and to raise standards and progress in reading assessment. The data collection for the evaluation was carried out in the period of January 2018 – July 2019. It consisted of 5 case study schools visited four times over the course of 1.5 years and an analysis of reading attainment data, before and after the package was implemented in the 15 schools. See Chapter 2 for the evaluation outcome measures and a detailed account of the research methodology.

1.1 The DSR and DR programmes

Both programmes aim to improve the knowledge and skills of staff and leadership in the teaching of reading and to increase children's reading progress. A key aim for both is for children to become independent readers and to be proficient in using a range of skills to independently solve reading problems as they encounter them. The intent with DSR and DR is for children to accelerate progress in improving reading skills. Therefore, monitoring and tracking progress is essential. Further, it is central to both programmes that reading mileage is significantly increased. The two programmes are interconnected with the latter being based upon and following on from the former. Aside from these similarities, there are important differences between the programmes.

DSR aims to bridge any gaps in reading proficiency in Key Stage 1 by training teachers to provide intensive support to all children in Year 1 (ages 5-6 years). The principal aim of the programme is therefore to increase children's technical skill level in reading, although there is also focus on meaning and story comprehension and love of reading. While the programme is mainly focused on Year 1, it continues into Year 2 for pupils who have not completed it in the first year. DSR lessons, lasting about 25-35 minutes, are taught every school day, usually in the morning. The frequently significant increase in time spent reading and number of books read is an important aspect of the programme. This, in combination with instruction, means

that children are likely to progress faster through the reading levels; DSR has 12 levels and the aim is for each child in Year 1 to complete as many of these as possible by the end of the year. Children can move beyond level 12 if teachers create additional lessons.

Staff inevitably start the programme at different levels of professional knowledge and expertise in teaching reading. The programme seeks to minimise these differences, as well as enhancing teachers' overall knowledge and skills in teaching reading, by providing scripts for each lesson and training for all staff. The lesson scripts and training are provided by HLT in addition to within-school training and that provided by other schools.

DSR is particularly resource-intensive in terms of staffing: within one class, six staff members are each required to lead six children who are grouped together according to DSR reading level. These staff members should be TAs or trained teachers from other classes who have completed the staff training. Yet other types of support staff trained in DSR can be used in the initial stages of implementing the programme. HLT provide a package of training to each school to both leadership (who cascade to colleagues initially) and all teaching staff, aimed at filling gaps in knowledge and competence identified during the implementation of the programme. Bespoke training is also available from HLT and more experienced schools to meet diverse school needs throughout the programme. A similar training package is set up for the DR programme.

The DSR programme is resourced with a full set of texts for all 12 levels. Books are allocated to children both in terms of the level they are designated to and the order of difficulty to which each book is assigned.

DR focusses on equipping teachers to model comprehension strategies for more experienced readers to adopt and practice. These strategies are to help develop deep understanding of texts and reading for pleasure, in addition to raising reading attainment. One of the key methods for achieving these aims is to develop children's oracy skills in relation to reading. A deeper understanding of literature is intended to be facilitated by three learning behaviours: supporting and actively listening to others; discussing and explaining ideas; taking responsibility for their own/their group's learning. These are closely related to oracy and independence around reading. Developing a metacognitive understanding of different aspects of reading is therefore central to DR. Once the learning behaviours are embedded at the beginning of the programme children then work with seven strategies: predicting, inferring, asking questions, evaluating, clarifying, making connections and summarising. Built into DR is a dual understanding of comprehension that encompasses both word comprehension and understanding of meaning, which underpins the programme as a whole.

As in DSR, each lesson includes a period of independent reading and writing takes a back seat. The DR programme differs from DSR in that while extensive instructions and resources are

provided by HLT, the lessons are not scripted. A three-part lesson is mandated using the 7 strategies, each individually at first, though the specific activities are chosen by the teacher. Example activities are provided in the HLT manual. Also, the texts are not included and are again the choice of the teacher. This requires more knowledge of the literature than in DSR as the teacher needs to know the text well enough to judge whether and how the selected strategy will work. While specified books are not prescribed as part of the programme, HLT does provide book recommendations.

1.2 Research on comprehension and reading for pleasure

Both programmes are underpinned by research on reading comprehension. Reading comprehension can be seen as ‘deep understanding of “text”, requiring skill and will, explicitness, strategy and purpose’ (Israel & Duffy 2009¹, p.7). Rather than being regarded as a linear process of decoding to eventually access the meaning of texts, research suggests that comprehension should be intertwined with developing other aspects of reading including knowledge about (new) vocabulary and composition (Israel & Duffy 2009²). Teaching reading comprehension also requires the teacher to enable children to develop a sense of purpose in reading, which is essential for children to successfully learn to become readers. Effective pedagogy for reading comprehension involves explicit talk about comprehension processes. In pedagogy based on this approach, children actively participate in meaning making through dialogue, rather than teachers guiding children to a predetermined ‘right’ way of comprehending (Aukerman 2013³; Fisher 2008⁴). Parker & Hurry (2007)⁵ argue that teaching comprehension should involve teachers explicitly modelling strategies used by successful and skilled readers. Children can then be supported to practice these strategies and to take a lead in constructing meaning. This approach rests on the idea that an individual reader’s past experiences, together with the context in which reading takes place (including social interaction and dialogue) influence comprehension and that this results in a local construction of meaning (see Nystrand 2006⁶ for a review of extensive research in this area).

The approach to teaching reading, based on the above understandings of comprehension, requires considerable professional skill and knowledge (Israel & Duffy 2009⁷). From this

¹ Israel, S.E. and Duffy, G.E. (2009) *Handbook of research on reading comprehension*. New York:Routledge.

² Israel, S.E and Duffy, G.E. (2009) as above

³ Aukerman, M., 2013. Rereading comprehension pedagogies: Toward a dialogic teaching ethic that honors student sensemaking. *Dialogic Pedagogy: An International Online Journal*, 1.

⁴ Fisher, A., 2008. Teaching comprehension and critical literacy: Investigating guided reading in three primary classrooms. *Literacy*, 42(1), pp.19-28.

⁵ Parker, M. and Hurry, J., 2007. Teachers' use of questioning and modelling comprehension skills in primary classrooms. *Educational Review*, 59(3), pp.299-314.

⁶ Nystrand, M., 2006. Research on the role of classroom discourse as it affects reading comprehension. *Research in the Teaching of English*, pp.392-412.

⁷ Israel, S.E and Duffy, G.E. (2009) as above

perspective, it is essential that teachers are supported to develop their knowledge of and skills in the teaching of reading. Reading comprehension can be complemented by instruction in decoding and phonics. Decoding focusses on enabling the reader to make connection between the sounds when a word is spoken and the visual cues in print. Decoding and comprehension need to be in a reciprocal relationship for a child to become a successful reader (Chard, Pikulski & McDonagh 2005⁸). Learning strategies for de-coding, potentially using a form of phonics, is therefore an essential, but not the only, component of reading comprehension.

Reading for pleasure involves reading of one's own volition. It is associated with agency in choosing reading material, ideally from a wide range of diverse text types and social interaction in the form of 'text talk' about specific texts and recommending books to other readers in a reading network (Cremin et al 2014⁹; Moss 2007¹⁰). Reading for pleasure has multiple cognitive and socio-emotional benefits including raised attainment in reading and maths (Kalb & Van Ours 2013¹¹; Sullivan & Brown 2013¹²) and these effects hold despite parental socio-economic status (Sullivan & Brown 2013¹³). Children's engagement with reading for pleasure can be supported by teachers by providing social reading environments, reading aloud, informal booktalk, inside-text talk and recommendations, and the provision of time for choice-led independent reading.

As with the approach to reading comprehension outlined above, pedagogy for reading for pleasure needs to be balanced with pedagogy aimed at developing children's technical reading and writing skills. Existing research also suggests that there is a bidirectional relationship between reading skill and the will to read because children who enjoy reading are more likely to read widely (OECD, 2010¹⁴; Morgan & Fuchs, 2007¹⁵).

⁸ Chard, D.J., Pikulski, J.J. and McDonagh, S., (2006). Fluency: The link between decoding and comprehension for struggling readers. In *Fluency Instruction: Research based best practices*. (pp. 39-61). Guilford Press.

⁹ Cremin, T. Mottram, M. Powell, S, Collins R and Safford K. (2014) *Building Communities of Engaged Readers: Reading for pleasure* London and NY: Routledge

¹⁰ Moss, G. (2007) *Literacy and Gender*. London: Routledge

¹¹ Kalb, G. and van Ours, J.C. (2013) Reading to children: A head-start in life? Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research Working Paper 17/13 <http://ftp.iza.org/dp7416.pdf>

¹² Sullivan, A. and Brown, M. (2013) *Social inequalities in cognitive scores at age 16: The role of reading*. CLS Working Paper 2013/10. London: Centre for Longitudinal Studies

¹³ Sullivan, A. and Brown, M (2013) as above

¹⁴ OECD (2010) *PISA 2009 Results: Learning to Learn – Student Engagement, Strategies and Practices (Volume III)*. Paris: OECD.

¹⁵ Morgan, P.L. and Fuchs, D., (2007) Is there a bidirectional relationship between children's reading skills and reading motivation? *Exceptional children*. 73. 2, pp.165-183.

1.3 Schools taking part in the present initiative

A criterion for schools taking part in the present initiative was that their reading attainment was low in KS1 and / or KS2 (some are infants or junior schools). As mentioned previously, some of the schools are located in social mobility 'cold spots' where the rates of social mobility are very low. Some of the participating schools are also located in areas with families on low incomes and/or have higher proportions of children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). The proportion eligible for FSM is above the national average of 15% but others were below, though none had very low rates of FSM. Neither did any of the schools have very high rates; nationally, there are many schools with up to 80-90%. Nevertheless, the cohort of schools can be considered 'disadvantaged' to varying extents.

When evaluating a pedagogical, whole school programme, which is dependent on a school functioning well in terms of leadership and management, as well as in terms of teaching and learning, it is important to take the context of disadvantage into account. Research has shown that socio-economic poverty can have a significant effect on schools in terms of how they are run. Much of this research has taken place in countries such as the US and Australia, which have comparable education systems and levels of inequality to England, although some has also taken place in the UK. The research demonstrates how schools located in higher poverty areas and/or with higher proportions of children from low-income homes are more likely to experience a range of unique pressures in comparison with schools in more advantaged areas. These pressures include increased behavioural disruptions (Hempel-Jorgensen 2009¹⁶), low prior attainment on entering school including in language and literacy (Moss & Washbrook 2006¹⁷), increased mobility (children changing schools at non-standard times) and higher staff turnover.

The social, economic and material consequences of poverty in a low SES area include '...inadequate housing and poor neighbourhood conditions, labour market exclusion or exploitation, forced migration and other pressures' (Lupton & Hempel-Jorgensen 2012¹⁸, p. 660). Lupton (2006)¹⁹ argues that 'in areas of concentrated poverty, these consequences manifest in schools in lower average prior attainment, a very wide range of learning needs, children who are hungry or poorly nourished, students and parents who are disengaged and/

¹⁶ Hempel-Jorgensen, A. (2009) The construction of the 'ideal pupil' and pupils' perceptions of 'misbehaviour' and discipline: contrasting experiences from a low-socio-economic and a high-socio-economic primary school. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 30.4., pp.435-448.

¹⁷ Moss G, & Washbrook, L. (2016) *Understanding the Gender Gap in Literacy and Language Development*. Bristol Working Papers in Education, 1/2016.

¹⁸ Lupton, R. and Hempel-Jorgensen, A. (2012) The importance of teaching: Pedagogical constraints and possibilities in working-class schools. *Journal of education policy*. 27.5, pp. 601-620.

¹⁹ Lupton, Ruth (2006) *Schools in disadvantaged areas: low attainment and a contextualised policy response*. In: Lauder, Hugh, Brown, Phillip, Dillabough, Jo-Anne and Halsey, A. H., (eds.) *Education, Globalization, and Social Change*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK, pp. 654-672.

or underconfident and reluctant to participate, and a more complex mix of social and emotional needs of children whose families are under extreme stress' (p. 660). This provides a particularly pressured environment which is likely to have significant effects on how a school functions at all levels. Effects include an increased focus on organisational and administrative processes at the expense of, for example, pedagogy and curriculum and the adoption of a pedagogy focussing on basic skills at the expense of more expansive education (Lupton & Hempel-Jorgensen 2012²⁰; Hempel-Jorgensen 2009²¹). These factors can potentially make it considerably more challenging to successfully implement new pedagogical interventions and to raise attainment. It is therefore important to take these effects into account (described only briefly here) when evaluating the package of DR/DSR programmes in schools with higher rates of FSM as included in this study. While the evaluation did not specifically collect data on these issues, they need to be considered as a likely impact on the success of the DR/DSR implementation.

This report provides details of the aims and outcomes of the evaluation and the research methods in Chapter 2. It then provides the findings in the subsequent four chapters. Chapter 3 presents a brief analysis of reading attainment before and after the implementation of DSR and DR in the 15 participating schools. Chapter 4 discusses the perspectives of the DSR and DR coordinators and the headteachers in the five case study schools, focussing on how the programmes were implemented and managed in the different schools and the effects on children's reading behaviours and skill. KS1 and KS2 teachers' perspectives on how the programmes worked in the classroom and children's responses to them are discussed in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 focusses on KS1 and KS2 children's perspectives on respectively DSR and DR and the perceived effects on them as readers. Finally, Chapter 7 presents overall conclusions in response to the evaluation outcome measures and provides recommendations for HLT and the sector more widely.

²⁰ Lupton, R & Hempel-Jorgensen, A (2012) as above

²¹ Hempel-Jorgensen, A. (2009) as above

Chapter 2: Methodology

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology adopted to evaluate the implementation of Daily Supported Reading (DSR) and Destination Reader (DR) in 15 schools in the south of England. The original intention was to have a two-tier study, including mainly quantitative data from all 15 schools and more detailed qualitative data from a subset of five case study schools. In the event it proved difficult to assemble enough data from the larger set of schools to make the study reliable at this level²². Our quantitative analysis is therefore restricted to children's attainment and progress in reading at KS2 (see further below). The five case study schools, however, provided rich sources of qualitative data on the implementation of each programme, and our analyses of these data form the bulk of this report.

In this chapter we set out the programme outcomes evaluated, the rationale for the study methodology, the plan for data collection and analysis, and the methods we adopted. The evaluation was designed to:

- Measure the intended outcomes of each programme
- Assess programme implementation, and the embeddedness of programmes in the teaching and learning of reading
- Review differences in how programmes were implemented and how they impacted schools.

2.2 Outcomes evaluated

Outcomes for DSR and DR were negotiated with Hackney Learning Trust (HLT) before the start of the evaluation. They have been adapted to some extent to reflect the shift in our data set, in particular towards a greater focus on qualitative case-study data. The outcomes evaluated are listed below. They relate to both programmes unless otherwise stated. We have grouped outcomes according to the main data sets they relate to, which in turn correspond to chapters in the report: attainment and progress, school leadership, teachers' implementation of each programme in the classroom, and children's responses to the programmes.

DSR and DR programme evaluation outcomes are:

Chapter 3 Attainment and progress in reading

1. Standards at the end of KS1 and at the end of KS2 to be in line with national figures

²² Hackney Learning Trust (HLT were unable to supply the full datasets from schools necessary

2. The progress score for reading from KS1 to KS2 to be in line with the national figure

Chapter 4 Coordinating and leading DSR and DR

3. Leaders can evaluate the quality of teaching and of assessment of reading with confidence, can identify next steps and can support teachers to improve

4. Change in culture and practice in the teaching of reading across the whole school

5. Tracking of children to ensure progress is being made

6. Differences in how programmes are implemented and differences in impacts between schools in different contexts

Chapter 5 Teachers and teaching

7. Teacher knowledge of reading and skill in teaching it; staff are more confident in the teaching of reading and have a clear and consistent approach

8. The quality of the teaching of reading is improving; subject leaders and teachers have the skills and expertise to ensure that pupils make rapid progress in reading; tracking of children to ensure progress is being made

9. Change in culture and practice in the teaching of reading across the school (here with a focus on particular classrooms)

Chapter 6 Children's responses to DSR and DR

10. Children's learning behaviour, e.g. using strategies and language stems (DR only)

11. Children's increased deep understanding of texts

12. Children's reading for pleasure at school and home

13. Children's attitudes to reading and engagement with reading

2.3 Methodology rationale

The mixed methods methodology we adopted integrated quantitative analysis of statistical attainment data with qualitative data from in-depth case studies. As suggested above, the case studies were of particular importance, providing a rich body of data on the experiences of participants involved in the implementation of DSR and DR.

Guba and Lincoln's (1994)²³ application of measures of trustworthiness and authenticity were applied to data collection and analysis to ensure the quality of research. These included measures to triangulate different data sources (here, interviews with participants and

²³ Guba, E.G. and Lincoln, Y.S., (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2(163-194), p.105.

observation of DSR and DR lessons) and different participant data (i.e. leaders, teachers and children) to ensure the trustworthiness of the data collected. Measures were taken to reduce researcher bias, with researchers carrying out one visit to another colleague’s case study school. Authenticity of data was supported by the use of observation and in-depth qualitative interviews which are widely reported in participants’ own words.

In any study that seeks to evaluate the impact of a particular initiative, it is difficult to absolutely establish causal relationships within data and findings. The presence of other potential causes of change beyond the scope of the evaluation could also impact outcomes. In this study factors such as children’s participation and support in reading outside of school, for example, could impact the outcomes being evaluated. In our evaluation, case study data provide evidence on the implementation of the DSR and DR programmes. Through classroom observation we can assess, for instance, children’s reading practices in DSR and DR lessons. But interview data are also crucially important in providing insights into participants’ views on the impact of the programmes. Interview data also provide information on other factors that may affect children’s reading. For instance, children were asked about reading for pleasure at home to measure any change over the study period and head teachers were asked whether schools had used other methods for improving reading. Notwithstanding, conclusions about the impact of programmes must be mindful of other potential causes of change.

2.4 Data drawn on in the study

Table 2.1 shows how the data we drew on relate to the evaluation outcomes

Table 2.1 Evaluation outcomes and sources of data

Sources of data/Outcomes for evaluation	SATS attainment data	Head teacher interviews	Coordinator interviews	Teacher interviews	Children focus groups	Class observation
Attainment and progress in reading						
1. Standards at the end of KS1 and at the end of KS2 to be in line with national figures						
2. The progress scores for reading from KS1 to KS2 to be in line with the national figure						
Coordinating and leading DSR and DR						

3. Leaders can evaluate the quality of teaching and of assessment of reading with confidence, can identify next steps and can support teachers to improve						
4. Change in culture and practice in the teaching of reading across the whole school						
5. Tracking of children to ensure progress is being made						
6. Differences in how programmes are implemented and differences in impacts between schools in different contexts						
Tracking of children to ensure progress is being made						
Teachers and teaching						
7. Teacher knowledge of reading and skill in teaching it; staff are more confident in the teaching of reading and have a clear and consistent approach						
8. The quality of the teaching of reading is improving; subject leaders and teachers have the skills and expertise to ensure that pupils make rapid progress in reading; tracking of children to ensure progress is being made						
9. Change in culture and practice in the teaching of reading across the school (with a focus on particular classrooms)						
Children's responses to DSR and DR						
10. Children's learning behaviour, e.g. using strategies and language stems (DR only)						
11. Children's increased deep understanding of texts						
12. Children's reading for pleasure at school and home						
13. Children's attitudes to reading and engagement with reading						

2.4.1 Attainment and progress data from schools taking part in DSR/DR

HLT provided attainment and progress data for all 15 schools taking part in DSR and DR.

The data covered attainment across all schools at the end of Key Stage 1, and attainment and progress and the end of Key Stage 2. In each case data were collected for successive years before schools had taken part in DSR (KS1) and DR (KS2); and in 2019, when the cohorts assessed had taken part in DSR/DR. The aim of collecting these 'before' and 'after' data was to provide evidence of the effectiveness of the programmes in increasing levels of attainment/progress.

The analysis of Key Stage 1 (DSR) data proved problematic in this respect. The timing of the DSR programme meant that we could not reliably analyse its impact on Key Stage 1

assessment. We therefore focused on Key Stage 2 (DR) for this aspect of the evaluation. This is explained further in Chapter 3.

2.4.2 Case study data

The case study schools

Five case study schools were selected in agreement with HLT to provide a range of circumstances over which programmes were delivered. These included contrasting school size (by numbers of children on roll), phase of schooling catered for (Primary, Infant and Junior) and geographical location (urban, coastal town and rural). All five schools were located in areas with some degree of poverty (measured by the percentage receiving free school meals (FSM)) and some with very low rates of social mobility. One of the geographical areas was a Department for Education (DfE) Opportunity Area (OA), i.e. an area in which DfE and other departments are investing additional resources to improve social mobility.

Table 2.2 provides an overview of the five case study schools. This shows a range of characteristics across the schools including size, location, school type and socio-economic catchment.

Table 2.2: characteristics of the case study schools (2018-2019)

School (pseudonym)	Phase	Number on roll	Location type	Proportion in receipt of Free School Meals in last 6 years
Amgrove	Primary	102 ²	Village	11.8%
Debenhurst	Primary	253	Coastal town	25.3%
Greenwell ³	Infant & Junior	Infant: 315 Junior: 335 Total: 650	Urban	17.1%
Mornington	Infant	272	Coastal town	10.3%
Freebridge	Junior	384	Coastal town	15.4%

Table note:

¹ The national average figure for free school meals in 2018-19 was 15.8%

² This small village school had more than one year group in each class.

³ While this school consisted of an infant and junior school they were treated as one school by HLT and therefore in the evaluation. This was in contrast with Mornington and Freebridge which were treated as two separate schools, although they shared an executive head teacher.

Selection of case study children

The class teacher was asked to select three children for group interviews and focused observation during independent reading and any other individual/group work as part of classes. The criteria for selecting the children was their DSR/DR reading level. DSR reading attainment levels were defined by the level of script the child was reading. DR levels were defined by the old National Curriculum levels at the end of KS1 as this was most consistent attainment data across schools that is available for KS2 children. The teacher was asked to select a low, mid and high attaining child in each class. This was to ensure that children's perspectives were not biased according to reading level. Wherever possible the same three children chosen for focused observation were interviewed together.

Criteria for selecting focus children in DSR/DR case study schools

DSR low attaining	Red script Level 4
DSR mid attaining	Blue/Grey script level 10
DSR high attaining	Green script level 14
DR low attaining	KS1 Level 2c or below
DR Mid attaining	KS1 Level 2b
DR High attaining	KS1 Level 2a +

Case study data collection

The plan for data collection was for four visits to each school during the period March 2018 to July 2019. This was a sub-section of the SSIF-supported project period starting shortly after the beginning of the project. The four visits were planned as evenly as possible across the case study period of 18 months at the convenience of the host schools. Spacing of visits was designed to help identify any changes in outcomes over time and to avoid potential bias if visits were concentrated at a particular point in time. In the event, timing had to be adjusted to take account of competing priorities in schools – see below.

Each case study school was assigned a lead researcher who took overall responsibility for data collection and completed 3 of the 4 visits to that school. A second researcher for each school was briefed and carried out another of the 4 visits (the second, third or fourth visit). This was designed to reduce potential for researcher bias by providing another researcher's interpretation of data for each school. One of the researchers who was originally led for three

of the schools was unable to continue working on the case studies and a new researcher was recruiting to take over these three schools. This means that one of these schools was visited by three researchers over the four visits.

In each case study school, two classes were selected for data collection. A Year 1 class was selected for DSR (which is when whole class groups studied DSR). In the second school year, another Year 1 class was selected. A Year 5 class was used for DR and the same cohort of children followed through into their 6th Year as the study of DR spanned two academic years. The head teacher was asked to select a class in these two year groups in schools where there were more than one parallel class based on teachers' willingness to participate.

Each school visit comprised:

- Observation of a DSR class
- Interview with the DSR teacher
- Focus group interview with up to 3 DSR focus children
- Observation of a DR class
- Interview with the DR teacher
- Interview with 3 DR focus children
- Interview with DSR and DR coordinators
- Head teacher interview (Visit 1 and 4 only)

Semi-structured lesson observations were designed to obtain authentic, rich data about how teachers implemented and children experienced DSR and DR in practice. The study aimed to achieve nuanced and in-depth understanding of the impacts of the programmes upon teachers' practices and knowledge, and children's learning behaviours in reading through direct observation. Observation recording sheets were used to direct observers' attention towards programme outcomes as experienced by one of the three focus group children for that class. Children were designated as high, medium or low-level readers by their class teacher (see above) and observations were spread across ability ranges over the four visits to each school.

Semi-structured interviews with groups of up to 3 focus children enabled the collection of data from children based upon the lesson observed and wherever possible these were scheduled to take place immediately following the DSR/DR class observed by the researcher. This meant that the experience was fresh and easier to recall. The researcher was assisted in building a rapport with children who would have met them initially in their classroom, and a trusted space with the class teacher. The researcher was able to test their understanding about what they had observed by relating the semi-structured interview schedule to things that had just happened in the lesson. This combination of data collection enabled the researchers to

develop a deep understanding of programme impact on children's attitudes to reading and reading practices. It also provided insights into children's knowledge and understanding which could be triangulated with observation data. The authenticity and trustworthiness of findings were strengthened by the widespread use of children's own ways of expressing their experiences.

Semi-structured interviews with class teachers and programme coordinators were also designed to triangulate with observation data to support the trustworthiness of the data collected. Similarly, the study set out to maximise the authenticity of research findings by also reporting in teachers' own voices. The way in which teachers express their views provides strong insights into their experience, knowledge and understanding of the programmes and their impact. Semi-structured interview checklists were used to support consistency of data collected across all schools and to enable free-flowing discussion during which interviewees could also foreground issues important to them. The interviews set out to understand better the process of implementation of the programmes within each school and teacher/coordinator views of the programmes and implementation strategies.

Semi-structured interviews with head teachers provided information about the strategic school context. This included social and institutional factors (e.g. contemporary pedagogical or leadership initiatives) that may impact the school's reading pedagogy, the teaching of reading and reading attainment.

Table 2.3 below summarises the timing and number of observations and interviews achieved across all 5 schools. Note that whilst there are 5 schools participating only 4 schools were using DSR and 4 using DR because the sample of schools contained an infant school (only using DSR, Mornington) and a junior school (only using DR, Freebridge

Table 2.3 Interviews and observations across all schools

School	Visit No. / Date	Head teacher	DSR				DR			
			Coordinator	Teacher / Group Leader	Children focus group	Observation	Coordinator	Teacher	Children focus group	Observation
Amgrove	(V1) March 2018									
	V(2) Nov 2018									
	(V3) June 2018									
	(V4) July 2018									
Debenhurst	(V1) March 2018									
	(V2) Jan 2019									
	(V3) Feb 2019									
	(V4) July 2019									
Freebridge	(V1) March 2018									
	(V2) Oct 2018									
	(V3) 26/02/19									
	(V4) 01/07/19									
Mornington	(V1) March 2018									
	(V2) Feb 2019									
	(V3) March 2019									
	(V4) July 2019									
Greenwell	(V1) March 2018									
	(V2) Oct 2018									
	(V3) March 2019									
	(V4) June 2019									

Table 2.4 totals the different types of data collected across the case study schools.

Table 2.4 Data collected across schools

Programme	Data type	Amgrove	Debenhurst	Freebridge	Mornington	Greenwell	Total
DSR	Observation	3	4	N/A	4	4	15
	Teacher Interview	3	3	N/A	3	4	13
	Focus group	2	3	N/A	3	3	11
	Coordinator interview	2	3	N/A	3	4	12
DR	Observation	3	4	4	N/A	2	11
	Teacher interview	1	3	3	N/A	2	9
	Focus group	3	3	3	N/A	4	13
	Coordinator interview	2	3	3	N/A	3	11
	Head teacher interview	2	3	1	2	3	11
Total		21	29	14	15	29	

2.4.3 Limitations of data collection methods

All studies, experience limitations by the nature of the challenges of data collection in the lived realities of the research situation. Key challenges and the actions taken to mitigate their impact are highlighted here. Whilst colleagues in the host schools were generous with their time and support for the study, data collection placed an additional burden upon teachers and school leaders. Nearly all challenges of data collection relate to day-to-day time constraints and competing priorities upon teachers' and other school staffs' time comprising:

- Relatively limited time within school which resulted in finely scheduled, one-day visits to collect a broad range of data. This was primarily due to budget constraints.
- Scheduling of school visits evenly across the study period was sometimes difficult due to school events and competing priorities
- Unforeseen events which disrupted planned observation and interviews on the day of visits such as focus children being absent that day; cancellation of DR/DSR lessons, e.g. for SATs practice classes; impromptu school play rehearsals; headteachers being called away to deal with more pressing matters
- Where the DSR/DR teacher was also the programme coordinator, strictly they would have had two sets of interview questions to respond to. In practice the number of questions was reduced to ensure staff were not detained for too long.

Researchers worked with school hosts to achieve the best possible data collection. For instance, conducting interviews by telephone as a follow up to the visit; hosts emailing informative key planning documents as follow ups to curtailed interviews and such like. Where teachers were not available for interview, group leaders observed in conjunction with focus children were interviewed and provided highly relevant data reducing gaps in data collection. This also provided a broader range of teaching/leading reading insights to the study. In addition, interview schedules were adapted in subsequent visits after teachers had been unavailable, ensuring that key data were collected and gaps filled.

The start date of the DfE-funded initiative was delayed, resulting in a shorter initiative and therefore shorter evaluation period of 1.5 years as opposed to the originally planned 2 years. While two years is in itself a relatively short period of time to expect to see any improvement in outcomes, 1.5 years is even shorter. However, it still provided an opportunity to investigate the process of implementation and various stakeholders' perspectives.

Due to staff changes in the project research team two of the schools were visited by three rather than two researchers. Whilst this did not offer the consistency of researchers working

with host schools we had hoped for, school leaders and teachers were understanding, a strong rapport was maintained with the case study schools and data collection did not seem to be affected by the change in researchers.

2.5 Data analysis

All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed by an external agency. Observation records and interview transcripts were then manually deductively analysed using a pre-prepared coding framework which mirrored programme outcomes. Any relevant but unanticipated points were also noted. Wherever possible, direct quotes and observations were captured to provide a rich narrative within the report. Once coded researchers identified themes within data for each programme outcome. Data were combined from different sources to provide a rounded evaluation of the impact of the programmes on teaching and learning to read and the implementation of the programmes in schools. The writing up of findings was a creative and collaborative process in which two or more researchers worked together to review and revisit themes in data until a clear narrative emerged.

2.6 Ethical issues and confidentiality of data

The study was carried out in accordance with a successful application to the Open University Human Research Ethics Committee (Reference: HREC/2018/2679/Hempel-Jorgensen). All data collection tools and the procedure for collecting, storing and analysing data is in compliance with the Open University Research Ethics Guidelines and the General Data Protection Guidelines (GDPR). For the purposes of preserving participants' anonymity pseudonyms have been used for schools, children and teachers. Appropriately gendered and cultured names have been used to provide authentic quotes from participants in the research.

Ethical considerations are particularly important in research with young children whose understanding of the research they are involved in is likely to be partial at best. This research followed the best practice guidelines set by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2018) including informed consent, the right to withdraw, the children's understanding of the research process, data protection, confidentiality and anonymity.

The ages of the children meant that before participating a parent/ guardian signed a consent form agreeing that their daughter or son could take part. The parents were provided with information letters that outlined the purposes of the research and the nature of the children's participation. This information letter was distributed by the class teachers. The children's class teachers facilitated the first of the children's questionnaires. The children were not asked to sign consent forms, but the teachers understood that the children were not required to take part. If a child did not want to complete the questionnaire, it was clear that they should be allowed at any point to withdraw and carry on with normal school activities. The second questionnaire was facilitated by a member of the research team. At the beginning of

each engagement, the researcher introduced herself to the child, reminded them of the purposes of the research and checked that they were happy to complete the questionnaire and to be audio-recorded.

In discussing the limitations of the data collection methodology above we have referred to the impact of the study upon teachers and school leaders. Researchers remained reflexive in their work and endeavoured to minimise that impact as much as possible. They respected the pressures teachers were under, and the potential impact of the research upon children when observing classes and were quick to adjust plans accordingly. Researchers experienced support and enthusiasm for the study from all participants. They were unaware of any children or adults experiencing discomfort as a result of the research. This report seeks to present findings in the best interests of the children and adults involved in the study as well as of those commissioning the work.

Chapter 3: Attainment and progress in reading

3.1 Introduction

One of the aims of the Daily Supported Reading (DSR) and Destination Reader (DR) programmes was to help raise reading attainment. Intended outcomes for participating schools included:

1. Standards at the end of KS1 and at the end of KS2 to be in line with national figures;
2. The progress score for reading from KS1 to KS2 to be in line with the national figure.

Outcome 2 relates only to KS2 (DR). However, we were to have examined Outcome 1 for all participating schools, at both KS1 (DSR) and KS2 (DR). In the event, we were unable to do so for DSR because of the timing of the programme. As discussed in Chapter 2, DSR was a Y1 initiative, starting in the Spring term 2018. Study continued into Y2 only for children who had not finished the programme in Y1 or who still required support. Our evaluation therefore followed two successive Y1 cohorts through to the end of the Summer term 2019: see Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 DSR implementation

	Pre-programme	Spring term 2018	Summer term 2018	Autumn term 2018	Spring term 2019	Summer term 2019
Classes following DSR		Y1	Y1	Y1	Y1	Y1
National Assessment						May 2019 KS1 (Y2)

Table note:

Blue and yellow refer to the two successive cohorts who formed part of the evaluation.

The blue cohort was assessed towards the end of Y2 in May 2019, following two terms of the programme, the summer holiday and a two and a half term gap.

The yellow cohort was not assessed until May 2020, after the evaluation.

We have KS1 attainment data for the blue cohort in Table 3.1. However, the scheduling of DSR, its short duration, and the long gap between its completion and national assessment in May 2019 meant we could not reliably say anything about the potential effects of the programme on assessment results.

Our evaluation of children's attainment and progress in reading, therefore, focuses on DR.

Like DSR, DR ran for five terms, from the Spring term 2018 to the end of the Summer term 2019. (Both programmes were to have run for two years but began late – see Chapter 2.) Table 3.2 below shows the timing of the programme.

Table 3.2 DR implementation

	Pre-programme	Spring term 2018	Summer term 2018	Autumn term 2018	Spring term 2019	Summer term 2019
Classes following DR		Y5	Y5	Y6	Y6	Y6
National Assessment	May 2017 KS2 (Y6)*		May 2018 KS2 (Y6)*			May 2019 KS2 (Y6)

Table note:

* Assessment of previous cohorts, used for comparison with the cohort following the DR programme

The cohort that formed part of our evaluation followed DR in Y5, beginning in January 2018, and continued into Y6 from September 2018. Children were assessed in May 2019, towards the end of the programme.

Our evaluation of children’s attainment and progress in reading covers all 14 schools who participated in the DR programme, as in Table 3.2. We refer to the schools by letter (A-N) to maintain anonymity. Letters correspond to case study schools (identified in later chapters by pseudonyms) as follows:

- C Debenhurst
- F Amgrove
- J Greenwell
- N Freebridge

Our evaluation in this chapter is complemented by more detailed analysis of the implementation of the programme in these case study schools, discussed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 (see further Chapter 2 on the participating schools and the design of the evaluation).

The evaluation is based on publicly available national assessment data for each school. We discuss, in turn:

- Standards in reading
- Progress in reading

3.2 Standards in reading

We looked at standards in terms of the percentage of pupils in each school who met or exceeded the expected standard in reading at KS2 (i.e. who achieved a scaled score of 100 or more): see Table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3 Percentage of pupils meeting expected standards in reading, 2018 and 2019

Schools	KS2 Reading 2018		KS2 Reading 2019	
	EXS score	(Diff from national)	EXS score	(Diff from national)
A	68%	(-7)	53%	(-20)
B	78%	(+3)	82%	(+9)
C	52%	(-23)	65%	(-8)
D	76%	(+1)	75%	(+2)
E	76%	(+1)	74%	(+1)
F	94%	(+19)	87%	(+14)
G	66%	(-9)	52%	(-21)
H	84%	(+9)	67%	(-6)
I	79%	(+4)	78%	(+5)
J	72%	(-3)	79%	(+6)
K	74%	(-1)	64%	(-9)
L	88%	(+13)	66%	(-7)
M	73%	(-2)	66%	(-7)
N	74%	(-1)	61%	(-12)
National figure	75%		73%	

Table note:

EXS score = percentage of pupils at KS2 meeting or exceeding expected standards in reading.

Green = schools scoring at or above the national figure

Red = schools scoring below the national figure

Figures in brackets give the number of percentage points above or below the national figure.

Bold italics = case study schools

Table 3.3 shows, for each school following the DR programme, the percentage of pupils meeting or exceeding the expected standards in reading when tested in May 2019. For comparison, the figures for the previous cohort of children tested in May 2018 are also shown. These children had not taken part in DR. In each case, the table also shows how each school's figure differs from the national figure.

In each year, there are substantial differences between the scores obtained by different schools. However, important points for the DR programme are:

- In 2019, towards the end of the DR programme, nationally 73% of pupils met or exceeded the expected standard.²⁴
- Of the 14 schools taking part in DR, six were at or above the national figure; eight were below that figure.
- In 2018, the national figure was 75%.²⁵
- Of the same 14 schools, before taking part in DR seven were at or above the national figure; seven were below the figure.

The figures for 2019 do not allow us to say that, following schools' participation in DR, standards at the end of KS2 are in line with the national figure (Outcome 1). More schools fall below the national figure than are at or above it²⁶. The position in 2019 is slightly worse than in 2018, before schools embarked on the DR programme.

Fig 3.1 below compares the figures obtained by individual schools in 2019 and 2018.

²⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-assessments-key-stage-2-2019-interim/national-curriculum-assessments-at-key-stage-2-in-england-2019-interim>

²⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-assessments-key-stage-2-2018-interim/key-stage-2-2018-interim-results-text>

²⁶ In Table 3.3, some differences between school figures and the national figure are small. We do not have access to Inspection Data Summary Reports (IDSRs) for each school, which specify whether schools' EXS scores are *significantly* above or below the national figure. (IDSRs are accessible only to schools and bodies such as LEAs and MATs.) These would give a fairer indication of which schools were in line with the national figure. However the data themselves do not suggest that reliance on the raw figures disfavors the programme.

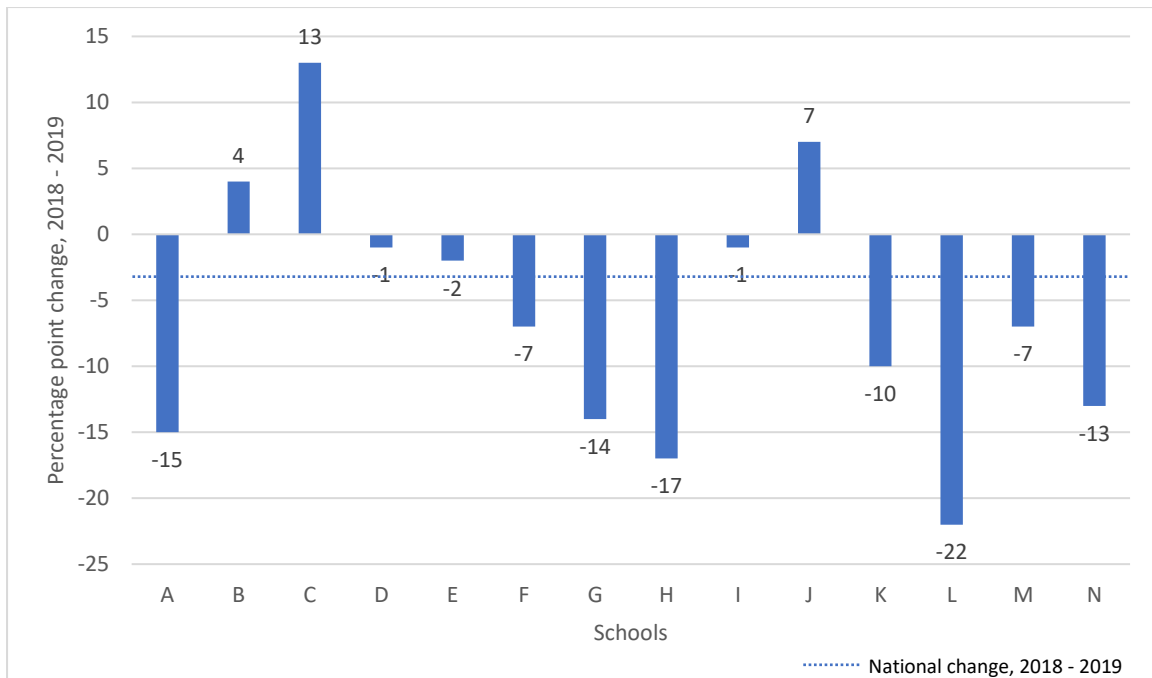


Figure 3.1 Percentage point change for all schools between 2018 – 2019

Figure 3.1 shows the percentage point change for each school between 2018 and 2019. In 2019 the national figure fell by 2%, from 75% to 73% (see Table 3.3). This is shown as a dotted line in Figure 3.1. Only 3 schools increased their performance between 2018 and 2019 in absolute terms. If we allow for the decrease in the national average score, the adjusted figure rises to five schools. One school remains at the same level relative to the national figure. Most schools performed worse in 2019 than in 2018.

We checked to see whether there was a difference, in direction of change, between schools who obtained an EXS score in 2018 that was below the national figure, and those who obtained an EXS score in 2018 that was above the national figure:

- Of those seven schools whose scores were below the national figure in 2018, five decreased and two increased their scores in relation to the national figure in 2019.
- Of those seven schools whose scores were above the national figure in 2018, three decreased and three increased their scores; one remained the same.

With a data set of this size, it is difficult to see any clear pattern here.

On the basis of these data, HLT cannot claim that the DR programme has produced a positive change in attainment in reading.

3.3 Progress scores for reading

3.3.1 Change in average progress scores between 2018-2019

A school's progress score in reading (and other subjects) shows how much progress pupils in the school have made between the end of Key Stage 1 and the end of Key Stage 2, compared to pupils across England who obtained similar results at the end of Key Stage 1. The national average progress score is 0. Positive scores indicate a school whose children have made more progress than similar children nationally. Negative scores indicate a school whose children have made less progress than similar children nationally.

In 2019, towards the end of the DR programme, the (unweighted) average progress score for reading across all 14 schools is -0.3.

In 2018, before the DR initiative, the (unweighted) average progress score across all 14 schools was -0.1.

While the average progress score for schools in 2019 is more or less in line with the national figure (Outcome 2), we cannot attribute this to the DR programme because of the absence of positive change since 2018.

3.3.2 Change in progress score bands between 2018-2019

A more robust way of evaluating change in progress scores between 2018 and 2019 is to use broad progress bands identified by the DfE. These bands run from 'well above average' to 'well below average'. The DfE use these bands because, they argue:

Progress scores are not directly comparable between years because of changes in the distribution of scores. However, a change in progress banding, for example from 'average' to 'above average', does indicate a change in performance.

Change in progress bands for each school, using this measure, is shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Change in progress bands between 2018 and 2019: all schools

School	Progress 2018	Progress 2019
A	0.1	-3.8
B	1.5	3.8
C	-3.1	-1.8
D	-0.4	2.3
E	1.9	3.7
F	2.3	2.1
G	0	-3.5
H	0.1	-3.5
I	-0.1	1.7
J	-0.4	1.5
K	-2.2	-2.2
L	0.9	-1.3
M	0.3	-0.6
N	-2.6	-2.2

Colour bands in Table 3.4 indicate:

Well above average
Above average
Average
Below average
Well below average

Change for all schools between 2018 and 2019 is summarised in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5 Change in progress bands between 2018 and 2019: summary data

Progress score bands	Schools in 2019	No change	Improve from	Decline from
----------------------	-----------------	-----------	--------------	--------------

		from 2018	lower band	higher band
Well above average	2		2	
Above average	2		2	
Average	5	4	1	
Below average	2	2		
Well below average	3			3
Total		6	5	3

Table note:

The table shows the number of schools in each band in 2019; the blue columns show any changes since 2018.

Table 3.4 shows that, in 2018, most schools were in the ‘average’ band; three were below average or well below average. There is a greater spread of bands in 2019, including four schools who are above average or well above average. Table 3.5 shows that, of our 14 schools, six remained in the same band between 2018 and 2019; five moved up into a higher band; and three moved down into a lower band.

We looked back to 2017 progress data to see if we could identify any trends over the three-year period. A comparison with these earlier data shows that:

- Of those five schools moving up into a higher band, four were on an upward trajectory (i.e. also moving up between 2017 – 2018).
- Of those three schools moving down into a lower band, one was on a downward trajectory (i.e. also moving down between 2017 – 2018).

There is no evidence from these data that the DR programme has had a consistent positive impact on schools’ progress scores. Furthermore, while we need to be cautious interpreting trends over a relatively short period of time, changes in progress in some schools pre-date the programme: they will be associated with a range of factors that we are unable to identify from these data.

3.4 Summary and conclusion

3.4.1 Summary of key findings

Our analyses in this chapter focus just on DR. The timing of DSR, in relation to national assessment, meant that we could not reliably identify potential effects of the programme on assessment results.

Key Findings: Destination Reader

- It is not the case that, following schools’ participation in DR, standards at the end of KS2 in 2019 are in line with the national figure (Outcome 1). More schools fall below the national figure than are at or above it.

- Most schools perform worse in 2019 than in 2018, when the cohort assessed had not taken part in DR.
- While the average progress score for schools in 2019 is more or less in line with the national figure (Outcome 2), we cannot attribute this to the DR programme because of the absence of positive change since 2018.
- A comparison between progress bands in 2018 and 2019 shows no consistent improvement.

3.4.2 Conclusion

On the basis of these data, HLT cannot claim that the DR programme has produced a positive effect on attainment in reading or progress in reading across the 14 schools whose results we studied.

Several factors suggest this may have been an unrealistic expectation. For instance, progress scores measure children's progress between the end of KS1 and the end of KS2, a period of four years, but children followed DR for less than five terms. (We mentioned above that the programme was meant to run for two years but began late.) It may be that a period of five terms was simply too short to have had a substantial positive effect on children's progress. We cannot know whether the programme would have had a positive effect on attainment if it had run for a full two years as planned.

While children were following DR they would be undertaking other reading activities, and would have had a wide range of other learning experiences that no doubt varied between schools. In this context it is hard to pinpoint the specific effects of DR. Other factors at school, at home and in the community would also affect children's learning, positively or negatively.

We know from research on the case study schools that, while teachers' and children's responses to DR were positive, the programme was not consistently adhered to in the classroom, and aspects of lessons were often missing (see Chapters 5 and 6). If this was a feature of the implementation in other schools this may limit the effectiveness, and potential effects, of the programme.

DR does not restrict itself to the requirements of national assessment: it has wider aims. A programme specifically targeted at KS2 assessment may have led to children achieving higher scores. There are important questions of values here: on what aspects of reading are deemed to be important, on the role of reading for pleasure, and the longer-term goals of encouraging and enabling children to engage in a wide range of reading for diverse purposes.

Chapter: 4 Coordinating and Leading DSR and DR

4.1 Introduction

This focusses on school staff in leadership positions both within their school structure and the two reading programmes and draws on the perspectives of staff who act as coordinators for Daily Supported Reading and Destination Reader and the views of headteachers. The chapter addresses the following outcome indicators:

1. Leaders can evaluate the quality of teaching and of assessment of reading with confidence, can identify next steps and can support teachers to improve;
2. Change in culture and practice in the teaching of reading across the whole school;
3. Tracking of children to ensure progress is being made.
4. Differences in how programmes are implemented and differences in impacts between schools in different contexts.

As detailed in Chapter 2, Methodology, data come from programme coordinators and head teachers' interviews carried out in the five case study schools: Debenhurst, Mornington (DSR only), Freebridge (DR only), Amgrove and Freebridge) (see table 4.1 below). The intention was for DR and DSR coordinators to be interviewed four times in each school, once at each school visit and this was mainly achieved with a small number of exceptions: in Amgrove Visits 1 and 4, Mornington Visit 1 (DSR only) and Freebridge Visit 3 (DR only) (see more detailed notes in Chapter 2 for further explanation). This resulted in 26 interviews in total. This means that the comparison between the schools was possible throughout the interviews, but that there is limited potential to observe change in the interviews over time. The headteachers were interviewed twice, one at the first visit and again at the fourth. All interviews were achieved except for two; A Visit 1 at Mornington/Freebridge and Visit 4 at Debenhurst, resulting in 6 interviews. The Deputy headteacher at Greenwell was also interviewed as the headteacher was not available on the day of the visit. See Chapter 2, Methodology for a full description of the interviewing process, the topics examined, the interview schedule) and the processing and analysis of data.

The chapter presents our findings separately for DSR and DR. We summarise the main findings at the end of the chapter.

Table 4.1: Interviews with programme coordinators and head teachers

Schools	Interviews with head teachers and DSR/DR coordinators			
	Visit 1 (V1) (March 2018)	Visit 2 (V2) (Oct 2018)	Visit 3 (V3) (Feb 2019)	Visit 4 (V4) (June 2019)
Debenhurst	HT, C (DSR)	C (DR)	C (DSR)	HT, C (DSR/DR)
Mornington (DSR only)	HT, C (DSR)		C (DSR)	HT, C (DSR)
Freebridge (DR only)	C (DR)	C (DR)		HT, C (DR)
Amgrove	HT	C (DSR/DR)	C (DSR/DR)	HT
Greenwell	HT, C (DSR/DR)	C (DSR/DR)	C (DSR/DR)	C (DSR/DR)

Table notes

C = Coordinator (DSR or DR)

HT = Headteacher

Note that head teachers were not intended to be interviewed at visits 2 and 3

The total dataset included:

- 8 headteacher interviews
- 12 DSR coordinator interviews
- 11 DR coordinator interviews

4.2 Daily Supported Reading

This section addresses the leaders' perceptions of how DSR was implemented and its impact on both teachers and children. It is structured according to the three evaluation outcomes, the aims of the programme and finally, the key areas of work the DSR coordinators engage with. The section begins with a discussion of findings under the outcome of leaders evaluating the quality of teaching and identifying next steps, followed by tracking of reading progress and finally changes in the culture and practice of the teaching of reading.

4.2.1 Leaders can evaluate the quality of teaching, identify next steps and support teachers to improve

Ensuring consistency in teacher skills, knowledge and practice

The consistency in teacher skills, knowledge and practice was aimed for through four key practices which included:

- Monitoring teachers' practice
- Weekly meetings
- Use of DSR scripts
- Training & CPD

Monitoring of teachers' practice

The DSR coordinators at all four schools monitored teachers' practice mainly through lesson observation. While the overall purpose of the monitoring was to ensure the quality of practice, the coordinators emphasised slightly different aspects of this in the interviews.

At Amgrove, the DSR coordinator was also the class teacher and she monitored the two TAs practice during lessons. This was particularly to ensure children were given the space to be independent, and the programme was being implemented correctly (Amgrove v2). At Debenhurst, monitoring was considered important for ensuring consistency of practice across the different classes. Specific concerns included that children were in the right group, adults were 'using the right language' and following the DSR 'model' (Debenhurst coordinator v1). At Greenwell, observation was also used to ensure consistency in practice between different teachers and that the 'structure of the programme' was followed (Greenwell coordinator v1). At both Debenhurst and Greenwell, the coordinators also felt that monitoring enabled the school to make levels of knowledge, skill and practice more consistent through the provision of feedback to staff. At Greenwell, monitoring staff by a coordinator enabled them to identify skill gaps or practice inconsistencies, which was an important way of ensuring that leaders could support teachers to improve.

Weekly meetings

Consistency was also ensured through weekly meetings where teacher skills and practice were discussed in terms of identifying gaps and addressed through training which aimed at filling these and sometimes occurred at meetings or at other times.

At Mornington, the weekly meetings were identified as particularly significant for not only ensuring consistency in teacher expertise, but also for organising and managing the whole programme. The coordinator (V4) stated that weekly meetings were a central feature of DSR at their school and an important reason for DSR's perceived success. She perceived this was partly due to the presence of skilled teachers who could provide significant support to less skilled and experienced staff members, particularly TAs who were provided with guidance and training. The Mornington coordinator also felt the weekly meetings were especially important in a dual entry school, primarily because it enabled her to ensure that staff across the different classes were sufficiently supported. There was little discussion about the value of meetings in the other three schools.

Use of DSR scripts

A further method for achieving consistency was the use of the lesson scripts provided by HLT for each lesson at each reading level. These seek to support consistency in practice and even out inconsistencies in individual staff skills, knowledge, understanding and confidence in the teaching of reading. The idea is for less skilled and confident staff to follow the scripts closely and then when the aims, methods and skills are embedded in their practice, there can be less reliance on the scripts. Once children have reached the end of the lesson scripts, beyond level 12, staff can create their own scripts.

Across the four schools, coordinators reported that teachers generally followed the scripts quite closely and that this contributed to being able to ensure consistency across different teachers in how DSR was delivered. According to coordinators at both Greenwell and Debenhurst, using the scripts was key. The Debenhurst coordinator added that this was particularly the case during the early stages when the 'strategies and language became embedded' (v1).

However, at other schools, while scripts were followed closely, coordinators reported that more experienced teachers did digress slightly by either adding to the script or using their own words but still delivering the intended aims of the lesson. While the coordinators at Greenwell and Debenhurst considered this to be good practice, they also stressed that following the script was important for less experienced staff. At Mornington, the coordinator actively encouraged group leaders to digress more from the scripts to enable them to feel more ownership over their practice, which she believed led to the programme being more embedded. For example, she described advising group leaders not to tell the ending of the story in the first section of the lesson, which they would normally do. The coordinator claimed that she was supporting the professionalism of the group leaders, enabling them to make a decision rather than simply 'sticking to the script'.

At Mornington, the coordinator had experience of writing a script herself and added that it was a useful CPD experience in that it deepened her understanding of the methods for teaching reading which DSR is based upon: *'...what I found really helpful is what questions, thinking of those questions, and then knowing the book so well. And then being able to then build on that'* (Mornington coordinator, v3)

DSR Training and CPD

An initial package of training was provided to schools by HLT consisting of a two-day conference (attended by the coordinators and a member of SLT); a termly forum of local schools using DSR; 2 HLT visits in the first term and one each subsequent term. In some schools, training was attended by coordinators and then cascaded to remaining staff back at their school. Schools were also partnered with one another for support and further training,

for example, schools newer to DSR and those more experienced. Within individual schools, DSR coordinators also identified training needs on an ongoing basis.

All the coordinators were, on the whole, very positive about the training they received from HLT as it was perceived as very thorough and high quality. For example, the coordinator at Churchwood felt that all the school's needs were in terms of skill development in DSR was met by HLT training and they commented particularly on the amount of support that was available and its continuation since the programme was first introduced at the school. The same positive perception applied to the ongoing support both from HLT and from partner schools. Coordinators particularly valued the latter as it was seen as beneficial to be able to observe actual practice by more experienced teachers in the programme. The training available, was therefore a significant basis on which schools implemented the programmes and an important source of support during the programme.

Observation was used as a form of training in at least two of the schools and was also used as a form of monitoring in the other two (see section below on observation as monitoring of consistency). Coordinators particularly valued observation as it was a good way of modelling the DSR techniques and enabling more experienced and skilled teachers to influence the less skilled and experienced. Conversely, monitoring staff by a coordinator enabled the identification of skill gaps or practice inconsistencies which is an important way of ensuring that leaders can support teachers to improve.

4.2.2 Tracking and assessment of children to ensure progress

Tracking and monitoring of children's progress is designed into the programme to support consistency in practice across staff members and to ensure pupils make sufficient progress. It was intended to ensure that pupils requiring additional support are identified and then supported to progress. Proformas are supplied by HLT for schools to use in tracking children's progress.

Tracking and monitoring practices

All four schools using DSR confirmed that they tracked children's progress regularly against the DSR levels and used the log template provided, although at least one school (Debenhurst) also used Target Tracker (a commercial tracking tool from a different provider). At Mornington, tracking did not commence until between the first and second visit. Tracking was meant to be carried out on termly basis, although some schools did this more frequently; e.g. Mornington at six times per year.

Monitoring of children's progress was done regularly but at slightly different time intervals across the schools. For example, at Amgrove, this was done on a weekly basis and reviewed by the DSR coordinator and the class TA to determine which children could move ability groups. At Debenhurst, children's progress was monitored through hearing each child read

every two weeks to ensure they were moved between groups when appropriate. The coordinators found the system for tracking provided as part of the DSR package fit for purpose and made tracking efficient and effective. For example, At Greenwell, the coordinator commented on how easy the DSR programme made the tracking process as it enabled her to have a *'good overview'*.

An example of how monitoring and tracking of children's progress helped to ensure that children were indeed progressing sufficiently was observed at Debenhurst. Here, the coordinator visited another school using DSR and drew on this visit as a device to check children's progress in her own school. She reported at Visit 3, that she had observed more children being taught on the Purple Scripts at the other school, whereas no children had reached this level at Debenhurst. This prompted her to review children on the Turquoise scripts, just below Purple, by reassessing them and making sure they were *'...pushing them as much as [they] should be...'*

Weekly meetings

The DSR programme requires staff involved to meet once a week. In addition to supporting staff consistency, the coordinators reported that the meetings included discussion of the movement of children between groups to ensure progress through the levels as quickly as possible, thus avoiding stagnation. The meetings took place in three of the four schools, whereas formal meetings did not occur at Amgrove where only three members of staff worked with DSR. There were some difficulties in holding meetings in two of the schools; at Debenhurst meetings ceased to be held after Visit 3 due to logistical problems and in Mornington the coordinator who had just started at Visit 1 was unsure whether they were in place at this time, though it became clear at later visits that they were indeed taking place. Nevertheless, children's progress was tracked and discussed outside of the structure of these meetings. At Greenwell, the meetings were held, and although several staff members were often unable to attend, they still sent notes on children's progress to ensure this was assessed and movement between groups occurred.

Leaders' understanding of children's progress

Both DSR coordinators and headteachers were able to demonstrate their knowledge of children's progress during interviews in all four schools. It was clear that they were engaged with monitoring progress and were able to identify and evaluate the extent of progress. Some had sheets with this data and discuss children's progress across year groups in relation to expected levels. Some believed greater progress had been made since the introduction of DSR compared to previous years. Yet there was also recognition that in some year groups there were only low numbers of children who made greater than expected progress.

4.2.3 Change in culture and practice in the teaching of reading across the whole school

The impact of DSR on teaching of reading and children's reading progress

A core aim of the DSR programme is to create a change in the culture of reading by implementing a consistent, whole school approach to reading. This section addresses this issue by assessing the change in how reading was taught as well as the perceived impact of this change on children reading practices and progress. It covers:

- Previous practice and perceptions of impact on practice
- Perceptions of impact on children's reading behaviour
- Perceptions of impact on reading progress

Previous practice and perceptions of impact on practice

Prior to using DSR three of the four schools used guided reading and/or independent reading sessions as their method for teaching reading. At Mornington, data on reading practices prior to DSR was not collected due to staff absence at Visit 1.

The DSR coordinators at the three schools identified a number of perceived changes. While not all the changes listed below were identified in all three schools this does not necessarily mean that the change did not take place. They reported that:

- Previously there was significantly less time for reading in the timetable which was increased when DSR was implemented to at least 30 minutes. (Greenwell, Debenhurst, Amgrove). At Debenhurst, children previously read half the time they did since the implementation of DSR and at Amgrove a third of the time.
- Prior to DSR, children did not read to an adult daily which changed after implementing DSR (Mornington, Amgrove)
- Before DSR, children made slower progress in reading proficiency. This became significantly faster after DSR was implemented, according to coordinators and headteachers (Debenhurst, Greenwell, Amgrove)
- Prior to DSR there was less monitoring of children's progress, which under the DSR programme became more regular and frequent (Debenhurst, Greenwell)
- Previous reading pedagogy was described as less 'purposeful' and simply 'silent reading' with minimal pedagogical intervention (Debenhurst, Amgrove).
- The frequency of reading sessions changed from less frequent, to daily practice (Greenwell)
- Where there were previously less books available, under DSR the number increased (Debenhurst)

- With the DSR programme there was more focus on comprehension and less on phonics where the reverse was the case before DSR (Debenhurst)

An additional change which relates to teacher skill was identified by the Mornington coordinator. She felt that DSR had a particularly positive benefit on the TAs at the school, which the programme relies upon for staffing. She saw this group as generally having less opportunity than teachers to receive CPD and felt that DSR provided a framework for developing all staff members' knowledge, understanding and skill in the teaching of reading. The TAs at Mornington had, she perceived, become more competent due to the programme: *'I would be confident that they could run a wider intervention around English because of the skills that they've gained from the scheme and from the approach'*. (Coordinator, Mornington v3)

Perceptions of impact on children's reading behaviours

The coordinators at all schools reported positive benefits of DSR on children's reading behaviours. At Mornington and Amgrove, they felt that children had developed a greater love of reading. This was because children liked the books and the characters which they were able to follow in the series as they moved up reading levels. Another benefit pointed out by these coordinators was the fact that children read every day for half an hour as part of the programme. Equally, at both schools, children's motivation to read and independence as readers was seen as a significant impact of the programme. At Amgrove this was expressed through children expressing independent views on books:

It gives them an outlet to talk about what they think and gives us a chance to congratulate them and make their views feel important. (Amgrove coordinator v2)

At Mornington independence was described by the coordinator as a significant achievement given that she had not seen this previously with other children at the school:

To go into a year 1 class and to see every child independently reading a story, I've never seen that before. And it blows me away every time. (Mornington coordinator, v4).

This coordinator stated that Year 1 pedagogy often did not support children's growing independence and that that the fact that DSR does is a key strength: *'DSR celebrates and builds on the characteristics of effective learning that early years is all about. And it's what year 1 need'*. (Mornington coordinator v4). The headteacher here (v4) also noted that children had become both more confident and independent as readers since the implementation of DSR.

The coordinator at Greenwell perceived the key benefits for children's reading were the building of vocabulary as a result of the inclusion of both fiction and non-fiction of texts. She also perceived that children had become better at comprehension as a result of DSR, both in terms of meaning and decoding and that boys were doing particularly well on the programme,

including in terms of confidence in expressing their views about texts (Greenwell coordinator, v2).

At Amgrove, the coordinator pointed out that in her view DSR was successfully preparing children for DR. They had begun to phase in DR practices as children reached Level 8. At this stage children were then moved on to DR, usually in Year 2. Debenhurst and Greenwell had also created a 'hybrid' programme of DSR mixed with DR for Year 2 children. The Debenhurst coordinator said this was *'because there isn't really anything for that particular year group'* (Debenhurst coordinator interview, v4). The Deputy headteacher at Greenwell explained that the DR hybrid programme for Year 2 was a simplified version and only covered predicting, inference, questioning learning behaviours. These were introduced through *'a lot of time talking about them'* (Deputy headteacher v4) before going ahead to use them in reading and they were accompanied by a reduced number of stems. The children also worked on a small amount of text when the teacher modelled the behaviours to reduce the 'cognitive load' (Deputy headteacher v4). While the practice of using DSR in Year 1 or 2 was not endorsed by HLT, it does suggest that children were progressing well through the DSR programme according to the judgement of the coordinators.

Perceptions of impact on children's reading progress

The reading coordinators at all four schools, saw a marked improvement of children's reading progress in terms of reading levels and book bands. In particular they thought there was an impact on lower attaining children in reading, as well as generally.

At Mornington, lower attaining children (in reading) were reported to have made good progress with DSR. Those children on a reading level below where they should be, were taken out of the class for two sessions a week with additional adult support with DSR books. While this group were still behind their peers, who were at White reading band (Level 10 for 6-7year olds in Year 2 on the Oxford Reading Tree) at Visit 4, they had moved on significantly and moved back into the classroom with transitional support. The DR coordinator at the feeder school for Mornington said that while DSR was clearly 'moving on' children at Mornington, this had not yet impacted on scores 'across the school' and that this was likely to take longer. She anticipated that as children from Mornington came to Freebridge, they would demonstrate their higher level of reading skill, which would then impact on results.

The Debenhurst coordinator also reported that in her view DSR had had a significantly positive effect on the progress of low attaining children in reading. She recounted how children who she described as 'unable to read' at the beginning of Year 1, had improved substantially as evidenced by the rise of scores across the year. She reported that most children (around 85%) were *'...roughly where they should be'* compared with 75% when they first started using DSR. She also added *'... most of year 1 have surpassed the year 2s at the moment, which I think is really powerful'* (Debenhurst coordinator, v4). Likewise, the DSR coordinator at Greenwell

identified the progress of lower attaining readers as better since DSR had been implemented (Greenwell coordinator, V4).

Furthermore, the Debenhurst coordinator stated that children in general were benefiting from DSR in terms of their reading progress. At Visit 2, the coordinator said that whilst a 'high percentage of children' were making expected progress for that time of the year there were also children who had made 'accelerated progress' and that '*...at this stage this year compared to this stage last year, we are stronger in reading than we were*' (Debenhurst coordinator v2). Similarly, the Greenwell coordinator made the point that the children she worked with using DSR (not only lower attaining), had made good and speedy progress in comparison with children she had taught previously – without DSR – at another school (Greenwell, Visit 3).

The DSR coordinator and head teacher at Amgrove saw significant progress with all children in Year 1 completing the 12 levels by end of Year 1.

Differences in programme implementation and impact

Notable differences in how DSR was implemented and its impact in the four schools appeared to be related to school size and intake. The schools which stood out in these respects were Amgrove and Debenhurst. Amgrove was a small rural school with only 102 pupils on roll, significantly less than any other school; the closest in size was Debenhurst which had 253 pupils. Amgrove's low numbers meant that classes were split year groups so that DSR was taught in a class which had both year 1 and year 2 children. Year 1 had ca. 10 pupils which meant that only two DSR groups were formed in the class. This had an impact on pupil progress in that children were generally moved as a group or were not moved if there was no 'next' group. The result was possibly more variation of reading capability within a group than if there were 6 groups as intended. Nevertheless, children were seen to progress fast and most had progressed to Level 12 by end of year 1. The Amgrove coordinator and year 1 teacher felt that they were able to provide children with more individual attention because of the small class size. However, he teacher also had to teach year 2 children in the same classroom who were being taught using DR though there was a TA who worked with the year 1 children.

Another effect of Amgrove's small size was the perceived lack of a need for some of the formal structures such as weekly meetings. The coordinator and TAs did not hold these meetings in a formal sense but rather liaised about children's progress on an ad hoc basis. There was arguably also less challenge to ensuring consistency in implementing the programme with only one class with one teacher and at most two TAs. The teacher was easily able to observe the TA during lessons and pick up inconsistencies. This contrasted with the other, larger, schools where the weekly meetings were instrumental to ensuring consistency and progress across sometimes multiple classes. The coordinator at Mornington attributed DSR's success

at the school to the weekly meetings. At two of the larger schools (Debenhurst and Greenwell) weekly meetings either ceased to be held for a period or some staff were unable to attend, it is unclear which contextual factors caused this.

Debenhurst and Greenwell had particularly high proportions of pupils eligible for FSM: over 25% for Debenhurst and Greenwell, 17%. At both schools, this was reflected in what the coordinators described as very low levels of speech and language skills among some children arriving at school (see Chapter 1: Introduction section on socioeconomic context). At Debenhurst, the school's way of responding to this was to provide 'pre-teaching' for these children before they accessed the DSR programme to better prepare them for learning to read (see also Chapter 5 for further detail). According to the coordinator, the intervention involved teaching children language about colours in order to 'compare bears' so that children could access a particular DSR book. There was no evidence of such intervention prior to DSR in the other schools. The Debenhurst headteacher added that DSR fitted well with their intake needs which contributed to their investment in the programme. The Deputy head at Greenwell explained that this group of children needed particular 'building up', much of which took place through reading every day at school, so they did not appear to receive additional intervention.

4.3 Destination Reader

This section again addresses the leaders' perceptions of how, in this case DR, was implemented and its perceived impact on both teachers and children. It is structured according to the three evaluation outcomes:

- Leaders can evaluate the quality of teaching with confidence, can identify next steps and can support teachers to improve
- Tracking and assessment of children to ensure progress is being made.
- Change in culture and practice in the teaching of reading across the whole school

4.3.1 Leaders can evaluate the quality of teaching with confidence, identify next steps and support teachers to improve

This section is sub-divided into two of the practices which leaders used to evaluate teaching and support teachers to improve:

- Initial training from HLT
- Monitoring of practice
- Ongoing support from HLT and other schools

Initial training from HLT

As with DSR training, DR coordinators' perceptions of Initial training provided by HLT was very positive in terms of the high quality and thoroughness of the sessions. Some gaps were identified, particularly in relation to coordinators wanting more in-school support which was tailored to the specific needs of their school and being able to observe actual DR lessons as part of the training. Two coordinators also would have preferred the rest of their school's staff members to have been trained direct by HLT. One of these coordinators felt the training became diluted through being delivered by their partner school. A further gap noted by another coordinator was related to the Big Picture lessons where she felt they did not quite have the skills to deliver these, particularly in relation to comprehension and addressing any related weaknesses among children.

Monitoring of practice

Monitoring practice was an important way of both identifying training needs and checking the consistency of practice. The leaders used a variety of ways to monitor teaching including observation, teaching planning documents and learning walks.

In Debenhurst, the DR coordinator said that where the programme left spaces for making local decisions about how it was to be implemented, the school decided on how this was going to be done and then ensured that this was implemented in a similar way in each classroom. This involved mapping out a 'termly overview' to which the teachers were expected to adhere. At Visit 4 the coordinator added that the school had begun to spend an hour at INSET days to provide feedback to staff based on the coordinator's monitoring of individual staff plans. Here, for example, it was picked up that some staff had not been teaching all of the seven strategies. This was then rectified by providing feedback to the individuals. The Debenhurst coordinator also stated that they monitored practice through observation for DR.

As a form of monitoring, the DR coordinator at Freebridge did a learning walk around the school once a fortnight to observe practice, after which she provided feedback to staff and identified training needs. The foci of these walks were identified as differentiation between pairs for 'talk buddy' work, rewarding children's use of stems and putting into practice what they had learned in training (Freebridge coordinator, v2). This coordinator reported at Visit 4 that there was less need to monitor at that point as she had been satisfied that things were going as they should in DR teaching for some time. The monitoring, in the form of learning walks, was then reduced to once or twice a term.

In Amgrove, no monitoring was taking place for the purpose of maintaining consistency as only one teacher was using DR (she was also the coordinator) with the split year 5 and 6 class.

However, the coordinator did observe in the year 3 and 4 class to check issues such as pacing which was addressed; see following section on ongoing support for details.

At Greenwell, the coordinator noted that the school had engaged in a '*a lot of monitoring*' especially in the beginning of implementing the programme as it was less clear what a good lesson might look like, in comparison with DSR which is scripted. As in Amgrove school, monitoring at Greenwell was closely connected with observation as part of training to develop teachers' skills; see the following section for further details.

Ongoing support from HLT and within schools

Following on from initial training provided by HLT and monitoring of teachers' practices, ongoing support, as mentioned briefly above, was provided within the schools by the coordinators, HLT and partner schools.

Within schools, this was primarily provided through collective planning and observation. The coordinator at Debenhurst described how she and HLT provided this support to colleagues collaboratively: *...the year 5 teacher's very good at seeking me out...we planned together, resourced together, so she knew exactly what she was doing.* (Debenhurst coordinator V4). She added that this was complemented from significant support from HLT, mainly in year 3.

At Greenwell, the coordinator also did group planning with staff working with DR to overcome the difficulties experienced in the initial phase due to having to develop plans themselves. The focus here was on supporting staff to select books and how to use the text to teach the strategies. The method of planning included teachers' sharing feedback after a lesson on an informal basis in order to rectify plans which did not work as intended.

The coordinator at Amgrove noted that the collaborative support approach was more informal and based on conversations: *... talking to each other to see that it's working.* (Amgrove coordinator v2). Staff here also wrote book reviews covering how each DR text worked for teaching the strategies which other staff could draw on when selecting a text (Amgrove coordinator v3).

Ongoing support was also provided at Amgrove through observation. One of the key issues addressed here was variation in how teachers paced lessons. The coordinator enabled other staff to observe him teaching as he felt he had got the pacing right as a result of experience. Observation was also identified as a form of support to staff at Greenwell, much in the same way as Amgrove. The aim was for staff to learn from observing more experienced and skilled colleagues.

Local support from other schools

The schools received support from other schools in local fora. The coordinator at Debenhurst found this to be positive and described this form of support as: *'...really helpful, just sharing our reading algorithms, and sharing ideas and tips'* (v3). They also shared resources they had created and had plans to develop an electronic hub for this purpose.

The coordinator at Amgrove also found this local form of support very helpful, having observed lessons in another school. He felt this was especially useful being a small school: *There is not much opportunity for CPD as we are busy, and it involves travelling and taking time out from the classroom* (Amgrove coordinator v2).

Ensuring consistency in teachers' practice, knowledge and understanding in the teaching of reading was an issue most of the DR coordinators raised in interviews. This may have been related to the less prescribed nature of the DR programme, which unlike DSR did not have lesson scripts. The DR coordinator at Greenwell noted that there was inevitably going to be differences in delivery among staff despite adherence to the core aims and methods of the programme. She argued that while staff knew how to present stems to children, it was acceptable for them to change this slightly according to individual needs to children in their classes.

The Greenwell coordinator continued to explain that some teachers were spending more time than they should on some aspects, particularly vocabulary, which they had been pulled up on by external observers. However, she did note that children at the school did have difficulties in this respect, so it is possible that teachers may have felt this was justified. The coordinator also noted that some staff *'make it a lot more obvious as to the Think Alouds...and they're really modelling that thought process, whereas other teachers aren't as clear'*.

Nevertheless, in three of the schools, they addressed this issue of differences between staff early on (by Visit 1) by setting up observation opportunities for staff. At Debenhurst, Amgrove and Greenwell, the DR coordinators/ champion modelled DR lessons for other staff to observe. The Amgrove coordinator noted that this was a chance for other staff to see the programme *'in action'*, not having been present at HLT training. At Greenwell, when inconsistencies between staff were identified, these were gathered and as a group they were given additional training and opportunities to observe the DR coordinator teaching lessons. This was followed by discussion of what the coordinator thought teachers might need to change and *'do better'*. The Greenwell coordinator also added that the DR plans and flipcharts made by staff were available to colleagues.

At Amgrove, because of the school's small size and hence the presence of only two classes in KS2 (Years 3 & 4 and Years 5 & 6), the issue of consistency was less of a consideration for the DR coordinator who was also the teacher for the Year 5 & 6 class. The general approach at this school was to use the PowerPoint templates created by HLT and to adapt these for each book they taught. According to the coordinator, there was an element of tailoring the

programme for the school due to split classes and in each of these classes the two year groups worked with the same books. Around the time of year six SATS a more marked tailoring of the programme was observed.

Knowledge of texts was also considered important at Freebridge. Here, the coordinator explained how this related to teachers being readers themselves and, for example, being able to make recommendations to children based on their knowledge of each authors' range of work. He related these skills to feeling confident and passionate and having a love of reading (Coordinator, Freebridge v2).

All four DR coordinators reported using HLT's list of suggested texts for DR but some also used other means to identify texts including their personal knowledge (which was the case at e.g. Amgrove) and alternative sources such as Pie Corbet's website. At Greenwell also, the coordinator noted that books were also identified outside of the HLT list, and that when this was the case, she ensured that other staff were made aware of these titles. The coordinators at both Freebridge and Amgrove reported sticking to the prescribed timings and offering DR lessons daily with a Big Picture lesson on Fridays.

4.3.2 Tracking and assessment of children to ensure progress

Tracking and monitoring of children's progress, using the DR recommended methods and tables provided, took place across the four schools and was considered to be very helpful in monitoring children's progress and identifying need to support some children to progress further and more quickly. This also related to the above outcome of leaders being able to assess the quality of teaching and taking next steps by e.g. identifying children who needed further support to progress faster.

Monitoring, tracking and targeting

Monitoring and tracking of children's progress are important for DR in terms of ensuring consistency in practice, but also to ensure that children made sufficient progress. There were slightly different approaches to this among the four schools.

The coordinators at Freebridge, Amgrove and Debenhurst confirmed that they were setting targets as required by the DR programme and monitoring these for individual children. At Debenhurst this was done on a termly basis. At Amgrove target setting was done at staff meetings.

The coordinator at Debenhurst, Amgrove and Greenwell tracked individual children's reading to ensure progress. Coordinators at both Debenhurst and Greenwell said that tracking also helped children to choose the right level of book as these were colour coded according to their reading level. At Debenhurst, the coordinator reported using Target Tracker to track children's progress in addition to the DR tracking method. At Amgrove the DR coordinator had introduced writing into the programme which served as '*a record of children's learning*

as they progress through a book'. This was therefore used as a form of tracking of reading progress.

Related to the tracking of progress was the issue of DR not being appropriate for children below the White/Lime bookbands. Coordinators are required to provide different or adapted practice for children identified below these bands. At Greenwell there were children in Year 3 who were below the White/Lime bookband and they were taught using DSR as preparation to be able to access DR later. At Freebridge there were children in Year 5 which were below White/Lime and while they participated in DR lessons, they were taken out of the classroom during group reads to be heard reading by another staff member.

4.3.3 Change in culture and practice in the teaching of reading across the whole school

This section is divided into the following sub-sections:

- Previous practice and change
- Impact on teaching
- Impact on children's reading behaviour

Previous practice and change

At both Freebridge and Greenwell, the previous practice for reading was similar to DR in both schools (although not necessarily the same between the schools) in being a programme of practice based on similar strategies and the change to DR was therefore less of a leap. However, the coordinator stated that it was less successful because there was less structure entailing training, monitoring and lacked the '*clear format*' and '*clear visuals*' of DR (Freebridge coordinator, v1). The Greenwell coordinator added that there was more emphasis on developing children's skills in DR compared with their previous practice '*so the teachers feel more confident about the things that they can teach the children*' (Greenwell coordinator, v1).

To some extent echoing the previous two coordinators, their counterparts at Debenhurst and Amgrove identified the explicit teaching of the seven strategies as the key difference to how reading was taught in DR in contrast to previously:

I think before it was sort of come in, be quiet, read your book; whereas now we have 15 minutes using slides of talking...So instead of just teaching children to read and asking questions that aren't necessarily preformed, you're now modelling a strategy, teaching a strategy, and then children the chance to practise it... (Debenhurst coordinator, v1)

Another change pointed out by the coordinator at Amgrove was the use of whole class teaching in DR where there was a class text, so that all children, regardless of reading level could access it and the use of differentiated pairs who worked together as well as more

homogenous groups. In the previous method, which was guided reading, there were only the more homogenous groups which meant that children were segregated by 'ability' throughout the reading session, limiting their access to different books. DR, according to him, enabled him to use the 'best of both worlds' of 'ability' grouping and whole class.

The Debenhurst coordinator also described the change in the teaching of reading as being related to a different approach to comprehension, and the type of teacher questioning changing from closed to more open questioning. Furthermore: *'now I feel with their reading they know they're not just reading; they're summarising or clarifying or projecting'* (Debenhurst coordinator, v1). The DR coordinator at Debenhurst noted that prior to DR staff were less aware of children's progress in reading and that the progress seemed to be slower than it was with DR. Another key different at this school was the use of whole real books in DR where previously they only used extracts from such books.

DR coordinators in at least two of the schools, Freebridge and Greenwell specifically commented on how DR had become a whole-school phenomenon, which was a significant change to the status of reading in their schools. The coordinator at Freebridge felt that the timetabling of DR across all of the KS2 classes in the morning gave it high status and made it whole school as all KS2 classes and teachers were involved. The expectation that everyone engaged with this and spent the required time to deliver the programme was made clear to staff from the outset.

The coordinator at Freebridge said they still had some way to go in their reading practice and culture as a school; she wanted to see more use of the reading corner and a class book that was read aloud from by the teacher every day. All of the coordinators noted that much more time was spent on reading since the introduction of DR.

Impact on teaching

Teachers' aims in developing readers

The DR coordinators were asked about the characteristics of the kind of reader they were aiming for in their teaching. Three of the coordinator's ideas centred on reading for pleasure.

The Freebridge coordinator had the following vision of what readers would be like ideally at her school:

I want them to love [reading]. I want them to be passionate about it. I want them to be really keen to come in and be excited about reading. I don't think we're there at the moment. I think there is a lot of work that needs doing to get them to that point.
(coordinator at Freebridge, v2)

Likewise, she was aiming for a reader who 'loves reading' or at least 'enjoys it and doesn't automatically go to a Play Station or whatever'. The Amgrove coordinator expressed this as children choosing to read *'because they want to'*.

Some of the coordinators also valued children's capacity to be actively engaged with texts and to be confident when reading a whole range of different text types:

Purely because a lot of our children I think, again I think not a lot of them become passive readers. They're reading because they need to get through the text. They're reading because they just keep reading, it doesn't matter if they don't know what that word means, they just keep reading. So, I'd like them to become a little bit more, now I want to know what this is, I need to know what that is, I want to access this, I know it has a purpose. I suppose like in starting to kind of independently take on responsibility for themselves, yeah curious, I think. (Greenwell coordinator, v3)

I would like a good reader to be somebody who wants to challenge themselves, wants to pick rich texts, wants to feel confident that they can approach any text, any form of text as well, not just fiction, sorry not just non-fiction but fiction as well, poetry. (Freebridge coordinator, v2)

There was also evidence that coordinators wanted to develop communities around reading and social relationships based on talk about books:

I want them to be passionate about it to the point where they're talking about reading as well, and they're recommending books to other people in the class, or they come in and they say I've been reading this, and I'd really love to share this particular moment with the class, to the point where they feel confident and happy enough that they can have that conversation with their teacher. (Freebridge, coordinator, v2)

A confident child who likes to talk about what they are reading and asks questions. (Amgrove coordinator, v2)

It was unclear whether these perceptions of readers were a result of working with the DR programme; they were expressed quite early on during the evaluation period (e.g. V 2). An aspect of teachers' perceptions of 'good readers' that changed over the course of the evaluation period was the influence of the seven DR reading strategies. The coordinator at Debenhurst explained how this became part of her concept of a good reader:

Yeah, I definitely would refer to those strategies now, and think about not just, I mean we always knew that it was not just whether they can read fluently or not.

Impact on teaching practice

The DR coordinators (at both Amgrove and Greenwell) felt that their knowledge of texts had widened and deepened significantly since using DR because they needed to know the texts well in order to use the methods and teach the strategies with those texts. Knowledge of texts was also seen to be of value in order to match texts to children's interests.

The coordinator at Freebridge noted that tracking books had made an impact on being able to better support children's development of stamina as they were able to monitor whether children read a book through to the end.

The skills teachers learnt in the teaching of reading and the strategies themselves were reported to be having an impact on other areas of the curriculum. At Freebridge the coordinator spoke of how DR had influenced the planning of strategies in other subject areas:

It was one of the art subjects, I think it was DT or art and they were looking at a range of different texts in that. And we were talking about well what DR strategies can we use here, what's going to help us in finding out the answers? And it was very much like the Big Picture style of days like well we could code, like use CLEAR and look at coding the questions and then we can reread things and explore the text and find the information and then we can check our answers. (Freebridge coordinator, v4)

This coordinator also noted how teachers' everyday conversations were being influenced by the DR stems: '[staff] start having a conversation around the room and they'll say oh can I just build on so-and-so's point, and I'd like to add that blah-blah.'

Teaching reading for enjoyment was also an impact of DR according to the coordinator at Debenhurst, in addition to teaching the reading strategies:

Some reading to them yeah, I think that's good as well, because especially at that age, they're not read to as much. So, they almost need the modelling of enjoying the text as well, not just how advanced you're questioning, but how to read it, how to engage with it. And as you read it together you can discuss as you go along. I think it works really well. So, I think this year I'll know a lot more what I'm doing and I'll be the class teacher for year six for the whole thing. (Debenhurst DR coordinator, v4).

Increased teacher knowledge and understanding of the teaching of reading was identified as a positive impact of DR by the Greenwell coordinator. This was due, she felt to them becoming more conscious of the strategies and skills they were developing and how to select specific ones in order to teach a particular strategy or skill to children:

And I think teacher subject knowledge has really improved as well. Teachers know they've got to teach it well, so they are more aware of what they're teaching. They're making more deliberate choices around vocabulary or around a strategy that they're choosing. Some year groups are better than others at choosing particular texts. (Greenwell coordinator, v4)

Impact on children's reading attainment

The coordinator at Amgrove claimed that there had been a marked positive effect on children's reading attainment:

... the outcomes have been really good. We had a 94% pass rate for year six in 2018 for reading. It was 82% reading and writing in 2017 and reading was at 46% and combined reading and writing at 38% in 2016 so we have really seen huge improvements. (Amgrove coordinator, v2)

Reading aloud was a regular practice in three of the schools, it was unclear whether it took place at Debenhurst. At Freebridge and Amgrove the children read out loud in the initial section of the lesson, when the class worked as whole with a text on the whiteboard. At Greenwell, the teacher also read aloud to children. The coordinator believed that children reading aloud had increased some children's confidence in reading in front of others:

Yes. But they have really, they really enjoy it, they definitely as a group are a lot more confident. Some in front of the class definitely are much more confident...Kind of just that safe environment that I can make a mistake and it's fine. (Greenwell coordinator v4).

Differences in terms of implementation and impact

In a similar way to the DSR coordinators, their DR counterparts felt there had been significant change in the culture of reading at the school. Most schools had previously used either guided reading or independent reading prior to DR and two had used a system in some ways similar to DR, teaching reading strategies, but with less structure and without the wider package covering all elements of practice, including training and monitoring. Those who had used independent reading previously, identified the explicit teaching of strategies as a key change, including a strengthening of focus on comprehension. One coordinator perceived that the use of whole class and 'ability' grouping as a new feature of reading enabled all children to access a wider range of texts At least two of the schools also felt that reading had become a higher priority in the school and had become a whole school approach.

4.4 Summary and conclusion

Data on leadership of DSR and DR presents some positive outcomes, along with evidence of variability in programme coordinators and head teachers' roles and perceptions of impact of the programmes.

4.4.1 DSR Summary of key findings

Key Findings: Daily Supported Reading

- Consistency in knowledge, skills and practice was ensured through monitoring, following lesson scripts and weekly meetings where gaps in teacher's skills and practice were identified and/or addressed through training.

- All the coordinators were very positive about the training they received from HLT as it was perceived as very thorough and high quality. Staff would particularly value observing actual classroom practice as part of training.
- All four schools using DSR confirmed that they tracked children's progress regularly against the DSR levels which was effective in moving children on as readers.
- Both DSR coordinators and headteachers were able to demonstrate their knowledge of children's progress during interviews in all four schools. It was clear that they were engaged with monitoring progress and were able to identify and evaluate the extent of progress.
- The DSR coordinators at the three schools identified a number of perceived changes including: increased time spent reading and frequency of reading sessions, faster progress in reading levels, more structured reading pedagogy, more monitoring of progress and practice consistency, more books and focus on comprehension.
- The coordinators at all schools reported positive benefits of DSR on children's ability to read independently and in increasing their vocabulary
- The reading coordinators at all four schools, saw a marked improvement of children's reading progress in terms of reading levels and book bands. In particular they thought there was an impact on lower attaining children in reading, as well as generally.
- Notable differences in how DSR was implemented and its impact in the four different schools appeared to be related to school size and socio-economic composition of the pupil intake.

4.4.2 DR Summary of key findings

Key findings: Destination Reader

- As with DSR training, DR coordinators' perceptions of Initial training provided by HLT was very positive in terms of the high quality and thoroughness of the sessions. Some gaps were identified, particularly in relation to coordinators wanting to observe actual DR lessons as part of the training
- Monitoring practice was an important way of both identifying training needs and checking the consistency of practice. The leaders used a variety of ways to monitor teaching including observation, teaching planning documents and learning walks.
- Achieving consistency in DR practice was seen as more difficult than with DSR partly because DR did not have scripted lessons.
- Tracking and monitoring of children's progress took place across the four schools and was considered to be very helpful in monitoring children's progress and identifying need to support some children to progress further and more quickly.

- Some teachers' understandings of reading changed to also encompass reading for pleasure where ideally readers are motivated, volitional readers. Evidence also suggests coordinators understood reading as social and the need to foster reading communities at school as part of their practice.
- In a similar way to the DSR coordinators, their DR counterparts felt there had been significant change in the culture of reading at the school including increased status of reading and time spent teaching reading.

4.4.3 Conclusion

From both DSR and DR coordinators' perspectives, both programmes and the way in which they were implemented in the five schools, were largely successful in meeting the three evaluation outcomes assessed in this chapter. In all the schools, tracking of children's reading progress was undertaken, enabling leaders to successfully evaluate the quality of teaching and ensure that children were making more rapid progress. Leaders successfully evaluated the quality of teaching and supported staff to improve within both programmes. The training opportunities provided by HLT and support from other schools, was seen as strong foundations for implementing the programmes and ensuring that teachers became sufficiently skilled in order to practice the respective teaching methods. Coordinators in all 5 schools felt that there were very positive impacts of both programmes on teachers and children. The children's reading behaviours were commonly noted as developing positively, and some coordinators and headteachers perceived progress and attainment also improved. The culture of and practice in the teaching of reading across schools changed significantly in some (and slightly less so in others) in terms of increasing the status of reading and the methods of teaching.

Chapter 5 Teachers and teaching

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on how teachers taking part in the evaluation responded to and implemented Daily Supported Reading and Destination Reader. The chapter addresses the following outcomes:

1. Teacher knowledge of reading and skill in teaching it; staff are more confident in the teaching of reading and have a clear and consistent approach;
2. The quality of the teaching of reading is improving; subject leaders and teachers have the skills and expertise to ensure that pupils make rapid progress in reading, tracking of children to ensure progress is being made;
3. Change in culture and practice in the teaching of reading across the whole school. (Change in culture and practice is addressed here with respect to particular classrooms; change across the whole school is explored more fully in Chapter 4 on coordinating and leading DSR and DR.)

As detailed in Chapter 2, Methodology, data come from teacher/group leader interviews and lesson observations carried out in the five case study schools that took part in the evaluation: Debenhurst, Mornington (DSR only), Freebridge (DR only), Amgrove and Freebridge): see Table 5.1. Table 5.1 Distribution of interviews and observations across schools.

Schools	Interviews with teachers and (DSR) group leaders								Lesson observations							
	Visit 1 (March 2018)		Visit 2 (Oct 2018)		Visit 3 (Feb 2019)		Visit 4 (June 2019)		Visit 1 (March 2018)		Visit 2 (Oct 2018)		Visit 3 (Feb 2019)		Visit 4 (June 2019)	
	DSR	DR	DSR	DR	DSR	DR	DSR	DR	DSR	DR	DSR	DR	DSR	DR	DSR	DR
Debenhurst	T	T		T	T, GL	T	T								Wh	Wh
Mornington (DSR only)	T	N/A		N/A	T	N/A	T	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A
Freebridge (DR only)	N/A	T	N/A		N/A	T	N/A	T	N/A		N/A	Gr	N/A		N/A	
Amgrove	T		T		T	T								Gr		
Greenwell	T, GL	T	T, GL		GL		GL	T								

Table Notes

	DSR interview or lesson observation
	DR interview or lesson observation
	We were unable to carry out interviews or observe classes

T = Teacher interview

GL = Group leader interview

Our total data set included:

- 13 interviews for DSR and 10 for DR
- 14 lesson observations for DSR and 11 for DR

Table 5.1 indicates a number of gaps in the dataset, particularly for DR. From the Spring term 2019, DR lessons often seem to have been dropped in favour of SATs practice, or DR lessons were adapted to become a form of SATs practice. Later in the year it was sometimes difficult to arrange DR interviews or lesson observations because of end-of-year activities such as school journeys and performances.

The timing of the evaluation also meant that we were unable to carry out pre-programme visits for either programme.

For DSR, we were unable to follow the same classes through from Y1 to Y2 because DSR was not taught consistently in Y2. DSR data therefore come from two consecutive Y1 classes in each school: we saw one in our first visit and the other in our second, third and fourth visits.

While we have useful data on the perception of the programmes and their implementation, these shortcomings in the data set mean we could not always reliably document the impact of the programmes over time. These issues are addressed in greater detail in Chapter 2.

Teacher interviews were coded in relation to teachers' responses to DSR/DR: their understanding and reported use of the programmes; their confidence in using the programmes; their learning about the teaching of reading; in the case of DSR, their work with group leaders. Observations were coded in relation to teachers' adoption of DSR/DR principles and practices in the classroom. Annex A provides observation checklists for each programme.

The chapter presents our findings separately for DSR and DR. We summarise the main findings at the end of the chapter.

5.2 Daily Supported Reading (DSR)

5.2.1 Teachers' responses to the programme

Teachers' responses to DSR are drawn from teacher/group leader interviews, and are explored in relation to:

- Teachers' understanding and reported use of DSR
- Tracking of children to make sure progress is being made
- Teachers working with group leaders
- Confidence in using DSR

- Teachers learning about the teaching of reading

Understanding and reported use of DSR

Teachers and group leaders were generally positive about the use of DSR and demonstrated consistent and sound awareness of DSR aims, principles and practices, foregrounding:

- The promotion of children’s reading confidence and independence
- The establishment of shared, daily structured reading lessons
- A focus on children’s learning behaviours for reading, and the development of reading strategies
- The adaptation of elements of the programme to meet their children’s needs
- The development of increased reading mileage (the number of books read by each child)

All interviewees emphasised the role of DSR in increasing children’s confidence and independence as readers. Two teachers highlighted a change in their practice: a teacher at Debenhurst (v4) noted she had had learned. Each reported children developing the capability to help themselves (the Debenhurst teacher reported previously being “*guilty of jumping in to help a child too quickly*”; and both Debenhurst and Mornington teachers described stepping back to encourage children to use the reading strategies (Mornington v1).

Teachers and group leaders identified the structure and shared daily routine of DSR as a key strength in promoting children’s independence as readers (Debenhurst v3; Amgrove v2 and 3; Greenwell v3). The daily routine of the programme empowered children in their own learning, for instance encouraging children to have a go at reading in group reading sessions (Greenwell v4). For the Amgrove teacher this reinforced a change in the culture of teaching reading, moving to a shared teacher/pupil learning environment in which children could start to contribute to their own learning using the DSR learning behaviours and reading strategies (Amgrove v2). Teachers and group leaders reported that children could start reading sessions without them, referring, for instance, to the “*bustle and excitement*” of everyone preparing for the session with “*everybody ... on task*”, a contrast to previous ‘off task’ behaviour (Debenhurst vi3 and v4).

DSR’s focus on fundamental reading skills was particularly useful for three teachers working with the lowest attaining readers. Each used DSR for the development of pre-reading skills such as turning the pages and scanning left to right (e.g. Debenhurst v3; Greenwell v2). The Debenhurst teacher adapted DSR scripts for low attaining readers (see further below on adaptation). DSR pre-reading skills were introduced to children prior to starting DSR sessions at Amgrove, using small groups to help children learn about reading by talking about the text together (Amgrove v1).

Teachers universally applauded the positive impact of DSR on increasing reading mileage, for instance:

We're immersing them in that reading. By the end of the year they've read something like 90 books ... (Mornington v3).

The DSR programme ensured that children had the opportunity to read more, and more often (Mornington v3). Children were heard reading by an adult every day, and by different group leaders every few weeks (e.g. Greenwell v1, Debenhurst v3), providing the opportunity for daily encouragement from a range of adults. For two teachers this led to more thorough reading of books (Amgrove v1, Greenwell v1). The Mornington teacher found the increased time devoted to reading and the regularity of reading sessions were effective in supporting and growing children's confidence as readers (Mornington v4). A Greenwell group leader noted that the routine of regularly hearing children read meant that no child "*slips through the net*" (Greenwell v3).

The Amgrove teacher felt DSR gave time to engage in the context of stories and texts, enabling her to guide children through different types of texts (Amgrove v2). Group leaders in Greenwell had the delegated responsibility to choose group books. They did so with their groups' interests in mind, building connections with books children had previously read. This was seen to be particularly supportive of children accessing non-fiction texts, where children sometimes needed additional time and support to understand the concepts presented (Greenwell v3, Mornington v3).

Whilst generally positive about DSR, teachers and group leaders also developed variations to the structure and specific elements of the programme. A teacher and group leader said that they adapted DSR sessions to ensure that children did not get bored by the routine and repeated reading of a text which 'could get monotonous' (Debenhurst v4; Greenwell v4). The Greenwell group leader stated that she varied activities within the DSR structure for her higher group (Greenwell, v4). In Mornington, DSR guidelines were adapted to meet the context of a small school with mixed age group classes, resulting in a hybrid version of DSR/DR. Other schools developed and adapted DSR materials and tools as teacher confidence in using the programme developed. For instance, group leaders used their own ideas in book discussions, (Greenwell v4), relying less on DSR scripts as time went on.

Tracking children's reading progress

Teachers and group leaders valued the programme's emphasis on closely tracking individual children's progress. In their groups, children read to an adult daily. Teachers/group leaders were able to monitor children's reading, move them to new groups with more challenging texts; retain them in the same group; or move them to less demanding texts in order to consolidate learning (Greenwell v3, Amgrove v3). Interpersonal factors could also be important in grouping children. One teacher spoke about ensuring children were comfortable in their reading groups, working with other children they know. On one occasion the teacher

moved a whole group up a reading level rather than moving one child and making her feel anxious in a new group (Greenwell v1/ v4).

Three teachers drew attention to the importance of having a close personal understanding of each child, e.g. rotating the groups they led to give them a chance to hear all children read. The Debenhurst teacher commented that she heard each child read herself every 5-6 weeks, picking up on any patterns where children were having problems (Debenhurst v3).

Monitoring the quantity of books read was integrally related to tracking each child's progress. For instance, in the small school Amgrove, the quantity of books read was monitored for each group, as children moved as a group through books. The other three schools used weekly meetings to compile termly and annual records of each child's progress between levels, and the quantity of books read. Greenwell and Mornington used corridor displays depicting the movement of children between groups and through reading colour bands. Greenwell had begun reviewing its systems of monitoring progress. After reviewing the levelling of books, particularly non-fiction, the school delegated the responsibility for changing groups' books to each group leader, a less time-consuming system than complete class change overs. The teacher was planning to further develop the monitoring system from a wall chart showing each child's reading level to each child having their own record/diary on reading performance, which could be shared with parents. While this school/class review was not directly prompted by DSR, it is clearly consistent with DSR encouragement to review and monitor set texts.

Teachers working with group leaders

Having enough group leaders was a key challenge for each of the case study schools. Some schools were reliant upon non-teaching staff and finely balanced, complex timetabling arrangements with staff across school year groups (e.g. Mornington v3). However, schools reported that this generally worked well because of the commitment of colleagues to a programme they valued. Only Mornington mentioned occasional competing priorities affecting the release of staff (visits 3 and 4). Debenhurst gave formal training to all group leaders in the DSR programme whether teaching or non-teaching staff. Other schools provided a mix of informal training and CPD sessions, often as part of DSR weekly coordination and review meetings. This supported group leaders, in particular those who were non-teaching staff.

Teachers were positive about the input of group leaders. One teacher suggested that children benefitted from working with adults with different viewpoints and different ways of teaching as they progressed around groups (Debenhurst v3). Group leaders helped practically in setting up DSR sessions (Amgrove v3) and contributed to the grouping and allocation of children to book levels (Debenhurst). Group leaders were integral to Greenwell's review of its monitoring system (see above), selecting their group's books, and being involved in levelling the school books. They also read widely and prepared activity packs for their groups (Greenwell v3).

The feedback of teaching assistants and other group leaders was important to all teachers in tracking and managing children's progression. Teachers emphasised the importance of all DSR staff being in close contact with each other about children's weekly progress. This took place informally through emails and notes, with each teacher actively seeking feedback from group leaders. In three schools (Debenhurst v3, Mornington v1, and Amgrove v2) group leaders used in-session tick sheets to record children's progress. This assisted the teacher in allocating children to reading groups and book levels. Notes of weekly DSR meetings and teacher records were used to compile termly and annual records of each child's development in terms of their progress through levels and the quantity of books read.

In weekly meetings, teachers and group leaders would organise the movement of children from one colour band to another, discuss progress and how to both support and challenge children as readers. In successive visits to schools, it was evident to researchers that children had been moved into different groups and were given increasingly challenging texts to read. The allocation of children to groups and reading levels was a collaborative process in each school with teachers placing importance upon the fullest feedback from teaching assistants and group leaders.

Teachers' confidence in using DSR

One teacher spoke about increased confidence in arranging children's reading groups and moving children between groups (Amgrove v3) as time progressed. Teachers from the other case study schools however tended to deflect discussion of their own confidence in the use of DSR, referring instead to the skills of group leaders who included non-teaching staff. One teacher suggested that her group leaders varied in confidence but that the confidence of all group leaders had increased with ongoing training (Debenhurst v4). Even where not explicitly mentioned, confidence was reflected in teachers' and group leaders' frequent comments about adapting DSR scripts to meet the needs of readers at different levels of attainment (see above) and becoming practised in selecting appropriate texts for their groups. Because adults met daily to read with children, DSR enabled teachers and group leaders to select books based on knowledge about children's interests (Greenwell v3). The high quality and accessibility of HLT training and support was universally cited by teachers and group leaders as a key factor in supporting their confidence to implement DSR.

DSR Teachers learning about the teaching of reading

One teacher was very enthusiastic about DSR but didn't feel she had learned anything *new* about teaching reading (Mornington v1). However, all teachers identified features of the DSR programme that had further informed their knowledge and skills. These included:

- The value of a daily structured lesson, where children in small groups led by adults read two books every week and carried out associated literacy activities based on the texts
- Knowledge of, and routine use of, reading strategies
- Promoting readerly behaviours (holding the book, turning the pages, listening and taking turns) to prepare children to read
- Increased appreciation of praise as a way of encouraging good practice amongst a group of children
- Use of a broader range of questions and prompts, particularly more open questions
- Having more conversations about a book and listening to children's ideas.

5.2.2 Teachers' adoption of DSR principles and practice in the classroom

Observation of DSR lessons enabled researchers to witness teachers' implementation of the programme, and observation data generally supported the interview findings discussed above, in particular teachers' emphasis on the value of a consistent structure, engaging children in talk about books, and encouraging children to use reading strategies. Below we discuss the detail of our observations, based on an observation checklist (see Annex A) and observers' notes made during lessons. We focus on:

- The use of DSR structures and scripts
- Prompting and praising
- Talking about books

DSR structures and scripts

Guidance for the DSR programme notes that daily sessions take 25-30 minutes each. Children read a book on day one and re-read this on day 2. The sequence is repeated with a new book on days 3 and 4, with a consolidation session on day 5.

Figure 5.1 shows an example of the 3-part structure that characterises DSR lessons.

Before independent reading:

1. **Tell** the story. Introduce, think and talk about the main idea.
2. **Read** the story, hear the language.
3. **Say** a phrase or sentence.
4. **Know** how to help yourself. (Establish focussed teaching points.)

Independent reading

5. **Engage** independently

Adult

Provides 1-1 support for each group member in turn.

Child

Each child in the group reads the whole text independently, at their own pace. When they have completed their first independent read book they continue to read the book repeatedly until the adult asks them to stop.

After independent reading

6. **Respond** to text.
7. **Learn** a word. (Sentence to word)
8. **Link** language with print. Cut up sentence.

Figure 5.1 Exemplar DSR lesson sequence for a Y1 class

(Source: *DSR Overview and Implementation Guide*, p.10)

Across observations, teachers and group leaders broadly followed the three-part lesson structure, with children regularly reading two books per week in the daily sessions. On two occasions, however, lessons ended after independent reading (see Annex A). DSR scripts were followed, although there was some variability in their use. Group leaders who lacked professional teaching experience tended to rely more heavily on scripts, whereas teachers were more confident in adapting scripts, or going off script, in response to children's ideas and perceived needs.

Across most observations, when reading the story teachers and group leaders did so with expression and interest, interjecting comments about the narrative or noticing something about the story. At the start of lessons, teachers and group leaders consistently set expectations for the readerly behaviours and reading strategies they wanted to see and hear when children read silently or aloud. These expectations were both specific to programme guidance, e.g. 'Slow checking' to make sure each word is read accurately; and non-specific, e.g. 'Smooth reading' to encourage expression and fluency.

Teachers and group leaders were observed to engage children through encouraging talk about the books, posing questions that focused on comprehension and recall, particularly on Day 2 of reading a text. There was also talk about vocabulary and collocations e.g. "*What does that mean, to 'get rid of' the bugs?*" (Greenwell), which was supportive of children who use

English as an Additional Language. In these exchanges, adults would typically correct, recast or extend children's utterances.

When engaging in independent reading, children spent time reading a text repeatedly in most lessons observed. They were clearly familiar with this expectation, and generally complied even when the adult left the group for a short period of time. They could, however, become bored and restless carrying out this activity on the second day, and this observation was confirmed in interviews with children (See also Chapter 6 on children's responses to DSR).

Prompting and praising

The programme's emphasis on prompting and praising was widely evident in observations and transcripts of audio recorded DSR lessons. The programme's specific 'High'-, 'Medium'-, and 'Low-level' prompts²⁷ when hearing a child read were observed, as were children's own use of prompts, although not consistently across lessons (see Annex A). Prompts included:

Prompts used by teaching assistant: *No / Sound it out/ Come back to that / Nearly / Point to the word / Slow check it / No, try again (Greenwell v2)*

Teacher: *Let me hear you say that one again ... Oh, be careful about expression. Well done. ...I like the way you're listening ...Oh nearly. (Debenhurst v3)*

Teacher: *Have another go at that ...yes that's right otherwise it wouldn't make sense would it?... Oh no, where does the sentence start 'Little blue'...? "... What's that first word? Use your sounds to sound it out ... Read the part of the word you can and then read the rest of the sentence and then you will understand what it is. (Mornington v3)*

When children were unsure or struggling, the most commonly-used prompt that adults gave was "sound it out". Other frequently observed prompts were: asking the child to re-read, finger-track, break the word up, slow down to read each word carefully, and check for sense. Prompts were consistently accompanied by praise.

The most comprehensive feedback to children blended praise for effort and learning behaviour, explicit directions to try a specific reading strategy, and noticing aloud when children used a strategy, e.g.:

Group Leader (Teaching Assistant): *I liked how you worked together... you thought about your favourite part of the story ... (Amgrove v3)*

²⁷ When listening to children read aloud, teachers use prompts to observe how children self-correct when they make errors or stop. High-level prompts give children little or no suggestion of how they should self-correct e.g. 'No' or 'Nearly'; children must apply their own strategies which the adult can then observe and assess. Low-level prompts give children substantive or specific support for self-correction e.g. 'Go back to the first word and look at the picture next to it'. The programme aims for teachers to use prompts that match the different ability levels of each child reader.

Group Leader (Receptionist): *I like how you went back to look at the sentence in order to find your answer.* (Debenhurst v1)

Teacher: *... I was really impressed that you were reading the punctuation, pausing for commas and full stops, exclamation marks, putting emphasis in your voice. Fantastic. And I really liked that if you read something you thought was wrong, you paused and re-read it.* (Greenwell v2)

Adults were observed to hold back and wait before prompting a child who was stuck on a word or a phrase. It was evident that children who were not yet able to apply strategies independently would rely on the adult's suggested prompt in order to move forward.

Talking about books

Across all observed lessons, there was a noticeable pattern in the way group leaders managed children's talk about the book over two days. On Day 1, when the book was new, group leaders would ask children to predict what might happen and what the book might be about; after the first reading, adults would ask children what part they learned the most from, and to identify specific words or phrases. There were explanations of new vocabulary (e.g. 'krill') and unfamiliar collocations (e.g. 'get rid of'). On Day 2, when children were reading the book for the second time, group leaders posed questions that focused on comprehension and recall, and would praise, correct, recast or extend children's utterances. There were few observed instances of open-ended or child-led discussions about the book, which may be the result of adherence to lesson timing and structure.

5.2.3 Changes in the teaching of reading

While it was not possible to document incremental change over time, evidence from observations and interviews indicated that the fact of implementing DSR produced changes in the culture and practice of the teaching of reading in Key Stage 1. DSR established a reading culture, implementing a daily session where every child reads with an adult. It was a collective endeavour where staff regularly observed each other in reading sessions, shared ideas and suggestions, and decided children's progression together. DSR scripts, structured lesson plans and set texts allowed less experienced staff (and unqualified staff such as the school secretary, dinner lady or caretaker) to support children's reading and to develop their own knowledge and skills in the process. The highly structured nature of DSR enabled staff to develop a high degree of fidelity to the programme. According to interviews with school leaders, DSR was straightforward to implement and embed if there were enough staff in place (see also Chapter 4). Importantly, however, its sustainability was at risk from staff cutbacks and staff mobility.

Some distinguishing features of the schools taking part in the evaluation may have influenced the impact of the DSR programme on the teaching of reading. Debenhurst had a number of children with speech and language support needs (approximately 33% of the class regularly

observed). This led to particular challenges for the school to show progress in their low attaining readers, who started at a level below the first starting set of DSR books. Amgrove was smaller than the other schools and this was reflected in some differences in practice, for instance fewer formal weekly coordination meetings to discuss the grouping of children and the movement of children as a group through texts. As mentioned above, in Mornington the DSR teacher (and coordinator), whilst extremely positive about DSR and the impact that it had had upon the teaching of reading in the school, did not feel that she had necessarily learned anything new about the teaching of reading herself. She appeared to attribute this to her background in Early Years (EY) teaching and drew parallels between EY practices and DSR teaching strategies.

Notwithstanding these differences between schools and teachers, each teacher spoke of their own and support staff's growing confidence in the use of the DSR programme, which was demonstrated in reduced reliance upon scripts and the development of their own ideas and activities. Teachers also reported that their knowledge development increased their confidence to arrange reading group levels and select appropriate levelled texts.

All teachers interviewed identified the daily routine of a small-group, adult-lead reading session as the key change in the teaching of reading across their schools. In particular, they identified the positive impact of children having a guaranteed, regular opportunity to read to an adult daily. They compared this to previous routines where small-group teacher-led reading sessions happened less often, for instance once a week at Mornington. Teachers and group leaders commented on children getting more reading than they had previously (e.g. Greenwell v3).

One teacher commented that DSR, overall, "*promotes a love of reading*" (Mornington v1) and the enthusiasm of teachers' responses to DSR appeared to support this as a core cultural change in the teaching of reading. Another spoke of the programme "*drawing in*" all the adults to the session to give attention to children reading, which children didn't get at home (Greenwell v1).

Teachers reported that children enjoyed reading and did not complain in ways they might previously have about reading sessions (Debenhurst v4); children were becoming immersed in reading (Mornington v3) and were more willing to focus on their reading (Amgrove v1). Teachers also identified broader impacts of the programme, for instance the value of talking about books (Amgrove v1); positive support for reading coming from home (Debenhurst v4); the positive impact of reading upon writing (Amgrove v1). One teacher included additional reading at other times of the day and tried to add a full story at the end of the day (Greenwell v1).

5.3 Destination Reader (DR)

5.3.1 Teachers' responses to the programme

This section draws mainly on interviews with teachers who led DR sessions. Findings are explored in relation to:

- Teachers' understanding and reported use of DR
- Teachers' confidence in using DR
- Teachers learning about the teaching of reading

We do not discuss tracking in DR in this chapter because we did not find evidence of tracking in the classes we visited. Interviews with school leaders do provide such evidence, as discussed in Chapter 4.

Understanding of DR and its reported use

All teachers displayed understanding of DR principles and practices, commenting particularly on the programme's systematic approach and the development of reading strategies. Teachers generally welcomed the systematic approach. One teacher commented more specifically that prescriptive timings helped in the effective delivery of DR sessions (Freebridge v1). The Debenhurst teacher felt that the use of DR had led to a more direct focus on reading, in contrast to previous practice which was *"very written based, a lot less reading and a lot more answering questions"* (Debenhurst v1). She also commented that the use of DR reading strategies (predicting, summarising and so on) *"actually teaches them to read"* (Debenhurst v3). The Greenwell teacher compared DR favourably with programmes that provided for children to be heard reading by an adult no more than weekly (Greenwell v1).

This led to teachers highlighting the way in which children gained a deeper understanding of reading. Talking daily about grammar resulted in children being explicitly aware of reading strategies which one teacher found made *"such a difference"* (Debenhurst v2). Children were seen to become more focused when they had mastered the reading strategies (Freebridge v3). The approach also led to increased levels of independence in reading (Debenhurst v2). Furthermore, children used learning behaviours underpinning DR in other lessons (Debenhurst v2; Freebridge v1).

Teachers spoke of children's deeper connection to and understanding of books (Freebridge v4; Debenhurst v1). Children were seen to show a greater interest in understanding what they were reading (Debenhurst v1) and to pay more attention to what they were reading (Greenwell v4). Children who were once not engaged readers were now:

... starting to pick up books, and they have opinions on [books]. They're interested, and they want to talk about it ... [they are] more focused than they were before. (Debenhurst v1)

Teachers reported that children were broadening their reading across a greater range of books (Greenwell v4; Debenhurst v2), increasing their reading stamina and spurring each other on (Debenhurst v2).

While promoting children's wider reading, DR also allowed a useful focus on individual reading skills. (Greenwell v1). This was seen as helpful in supporting children with special reading needs (Freebridge v1).

In addition to these mainly positive responses there were a few qualifications. Across all interviews, teachers reported that the impact of DR on reading skills and enthusiasm for reading varied between children. One teacher noted that some children remained reluctant to apply themselves to reading with understanding (e.g. Freebridge v3). Another feared the active engagement required by DR might not suit all children, such as those who preferred to read quietly on their own: DR could push such children "*out of their comfort zone*" and potentially alienate them from reading in school (Debenhurst v1).

Teachers also mentioned ongoing challenges in supporting children's reading at home. Half of the DR case study schools used incentive schemes to encourage reading at home, in order to increase children's reading stamina. One school, Freebridge, reported initially (v1) that there was more reading at home, but after two terms of the DR programme (v3) still only a third of the children had joined the home reading scheme.

Confidence in using DR

In interviews, teachers referred not just to confidence in using DR itself, they also attributed increased confidence in the teaching of reading to the structure of DR lessons and the quality of support materials. An early career teacher, who had had little training in teaching reading, stated that she had a "*much better understanding of what (I) am teaching with the programme*" (Debenhurst v1), and that the programme encouraged her to read more children's literature. She commented that DR "*makes the teacher really confident in their own subject knowledge*" (Debenhurst v2). The detailed structuring of the programme enabled teachers to develop a thorough knowledge of each element of the DR week (Freebridge v1), and inexperienced teachers (e.g. Amgrove v3) emphasised the usefulness and positive impact of the DR tools, for instance modelling reading strategies.

Observations showed high levels of teacher enthusiasm and energy in most lessons, which may be associated with confidence. One teacher was particularly highly animated throughout successive observations of DR classes as illustrated in this one observation:

Reading to the class, used the voice of the different characters. ... asked children about the meaning of "gawped" – asked all the children to gawp at him. Dramatised "No it's not fair" by banging fist down in the air ... Lots of body language and gestures. (Debenhurst v2)

However, whilst most DR teachers injected considerable energy and animation into talking about reading, there were some examples where they were more lacklustre (Freebridge v2; Amgrove v1). This highlights the importance of preparedness for and continuing commitment to the programme in order to model interest in, and enthusiasm for, reading.

DR teachers learning about the teaching of reading

All teachers interviewed said that DR had supported them in teaching reading. However, none said that they found DR strategies new. This may suggest that DR is not introducing new ideas per se to teachers but is providing a set of discursive tools and a structure for talk, creating more consistency in method and knowledge. One teacher commented that DR made clear *how* to teach reading at Key Stage 2 (Debenhurst v1); another Debenhurst teacher felt DR helped teachers to understand *"what a good reader is"* (v3). At Freebridge, a teacher felt that the programme reminded her that she needed to help children develop *"a love of reading"* (v3). Other teachers reflected on the texts used for DR lessons: one teacher had become more interested in what children were reading (Greenwell v4); another felt her knowledge of literature had widened (Amgrove v3); and another that she was more thoughtful about the texts used in class and what children might see in a book (Freebridge v1). Teachers appreciated the integration of talk and reading in DR and reported increased awareness, or renewed awareness, of the importance of discussion in teaching reading. A Debenhurst teacher liked the fact that DR was *"very focused around the actual reading and discussion about reading"* (v1). Teachers also reported that the programme prompted them to model a variety of reading strategies, and to remind children to use these strategies (Freebridge v3). Teachers reported increased/renewed awareness of the importance of specific programme elements: modelling reading strategies (Freebridge v3; Amgrove v3); more precise questioning (Freebridge v3); more precise and concise use of language (Freebridge v4); and the breaking down of reading strategies in order to help children make progress (Greenwell v4). One teacher felt that the learner strategies promoted in DR may have rubbed off on her because she found herself using these herself when she read (Freebridge v4).

5.3.2 Teachers' adoption of DSR principles and practice in the classroom

Teachers in interviews identified features of the DR programme that enabled them to support children's progress in reading, and some of these were consistently observed across lessons, in particular:

- Providing dedicated time and tools to help children understand texts

- Modelling how to think and talk about reading
- Regular focus on vocabulary and word study

However, whilst teachers in interviews demonstrated sound awareness of DR principles and structure, implementation varied across the observed lessons. There was, for instance, evidence of different ratios of talk to reading, and of incomplete lessons (see Annex A and below). Furthermore, because DR uses a single text for the whole class, tracking and progression are based on children’s outcomes or outputs, rather than on the level of the text they are reading. (As mentioned above, teacher interviews and observations do not provide evidence of children being tracked in DR)

Providing dedicated time and tools to help children understand texts

DR lessons have a 3-part structure, consistent with that in DSR. Figure 5.2 shows an illustration from the programme guidance.

<p>Whole class teaching</p> <p>Introduce or revise a key focus/strategy</p> <p>Model strategy through use of a Think Aloud with displayed text</p> <p>Mixed ability partner work answering questions/practising strategies</p> <p>Learning behaviour/key vocabulary focus</p> <p>Independent reading</p> <p>Partner or independent reading related to the strategy focus where possible</p> <p>Post reading</p> <p>Celebrate good use of strategies</p> <p>Clarify tricky vocabulary</p> <p>Assessment snapshot</p> <p>Evaluation against learning behaviours</p>
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Figure 5.2 Destination Reader lesson sequence

(Source: *Destination Reader: guidance for the teaching of reading in Key Stage Two*, p.7)

The DR observation checklist in Annex A shows that, while elements of the DR lesson sequence were observed, there was considerable variation between schools and between different parts of the lesson. There was greater adherence to whole class teaching, less to independent reading. Very few of the post-reading elements were observed. There was a

teaching focus on inducting children into learning behaviours and the use of specific language and strategies to enable a deeper understanding of texts. Strategies included:

- inference
- clarification
- expanding or building on initial responses
- skimming and scanning
- predicting
- using prior knowledge
- making connections

Teachers set an explicit expectation that children would actively participate, and most children were observed to do so as demonstrated in these extracts, representative of DR observations:

The teacher never speaks herself for more than a few minutes at a time. She consistently asks questions of the students for them to either share out loud or discuss within their pair. (Debenhurst v1)

Constant show of hands raised to respond to his questions and requests for opinions and thoughts e.g. "does anyone want to build on that?" (Freebridge v1; this point is made in a very brief introduction)

The whole lesson centres on "clarifying" as a learning behaviour ... with children focussing solely on clarifying and using the method several times with different self-chosen examples from the text they are working with. (Amgrove v2)

Modelling how to think and talk about reading

In most schools teachers focused upon teaching children how to think and talk about reading. This involved teachers modelling and 'thinking aloud', with a focus on learning behaviours and reading strategies such as those listed above. Teachers asked children to discuss and describe the different strategies; they modelled the strategies and then encouraged children to use these, adopting a particular strategy as a theme throughout a lesson. This oral meta-cognition about reading dominated most DR lessons.

Greenwell Teacher: What is inferring? Children [in their own words]: 'I think it's re-capping?'; 'Maybe linking?'; 'Guessing something that might happen?'. T: I like that answer... [Teacher accepts all responses] (Greenwell v1)

Today we are combining strategies ... clarifying words and phrases to make sure we really understand what we are reading ... Our learning behaviours are to discuss and explain our ideas ... I want you to talk though your own thought processes and give evidence for your ideas ... (Debenhurst teacher v3)

What does the title of the book mean? ... Look at the front cover and see if that gives you any clues. (Amgrove v1)

'Stem' phrases²⁸ were consistently evident in classroom displays and as cards or sheets for children to use as discussion prompts, and teachers across all observations set the expectation that children would use the stems in speaking and in writing.

Regular focus on vocabulary and word study

Vocabulary and word study were elements of the DR lesson structure that were observed in several lessons, and when doing this, teachers often used exploratory talk to guide the class to an understanding of a word:

... 'lavishly'. [Teacher] first goes back to read the sentences again for context. Then asks questions – e.g. 'If a hall belongs to a king or queen how is it likely to be furnished?' Children answer 'beautiful', 'posh', 'royal'. He uses a similar strategy with more words ... (Amgrove v2).

The time spent on vocabulary varied, however, from extended exploratory talk to a minute or less. In the majority of observations, vocabulary was not returned to at the end of lessons as set out in the lesson format.

Variable balance of talk to reading, and incomplete lessons

Although teachers clearly understood the DR three-part lesson structure, there was little consistency in the ratio of talk to reading across the observed lessons. In some lessons, there was limited independent reading and a preponderance of talk, where teachers organised children to discuss (in pairs or as a whole class) the meaning of an extract or their responses to a text. In other lessons there were more extended periods of independent reading, although the focus here was on working with partners rather than individual reading:

The actual reading time for the two observed children in the lesson is 10 minutes, with the rest of the time given to teacher talk, child pair talk, and children writing an inference post-it note, a sentence and a tree diagram in their writing books. (Greenwell v2)

Teacher allowed the children 29 minutes for reading. Groups are only reading and not discussing their inferences in the book. (Debenhurst v3)

Far more time is spent talking than reading. (Amgrove v2)

²⁸ Phrases to help children form oral and written responses to a text e.g. 'This tells me that...', 'I think this because...', 'I agree/disagree because...', 'The word/part that suggests this is...' etc.

The majority of the 21-minute lesson is taken up with child pair talk (14 minutes) following a brief introduction which took just a couple minutes. At the end of the lesson the teacher took 5 minutes to review the events they have listed. (Freebridge v1)

There is further evidence on this Freebridge lesson in the observation checklist (Annex A), where it is clear that most DR elements are absent.

Interestingly, although we have very limited evidence of individual reading in class, children and teachers suggested the programme had a positive impact on their individual reading outside DR lessons (see further Chapter 5).

Observations found considerable variation in how teachers ended DR sessions. In the majority of observations, key elements of Part 3 of the DR lesson (celebrating strategies, clarifying vocabulary, creating an 'assessment snapshot' (a 'selfie') and evaluating children's progress against learning behaviours) were absent. Teachers concluded DR lessons by, for instance: a game, unrelated independent reading, finishing off other literacy work, using the 'stems' in other contexts, and having a general discussion about the DR lesson's text extract. As a result, the elements of 'closure' and 'assessment' were largely missing in the observed lessons, although it is likely that assessment in DR was taking place at other times during the week when evaluators were not present. In only two of the 13 DR lesson observations, at the end of the lessons, teachers collected the children's writing books to mark their 'selfies' and responses to comprehension questions.

5.3.4 Changes in the teaching of reading

Because DR operates in single classrooms led by individual teachers, there is some evidence that the routine can change the culture and practice of reading within that classroom. Interviews and observations point to the value of an increased focus on reading; the systematic support provided by DR; the integration of talk and reading; the adoption of particular strategies for reading and talk about reading. Two teachers mentioned very specific changes to their practice: one reflected that she was 'forced' to go through books and read more carefully to understand fully what she was going to teach. She needed to understand the questions associated with each book or prepare appropriate questions for the books she chose herself and felt encouraged to vary questions more as she began to gain experience in delivering DR (Debenhurst v1). Another teacher noted that as children adopted reading strategies and increased their independence as readers, she was becoming more aware of reducing teacher talk and encouraging children's talk (Freebridge v1). Overall, as mentioned above, teachers in interviews felt they were already aware of the DR reading strategies but noted that the programme presented opportunities to use these in explicit and repeated ways with children.

DR is dependent on the individual teacher (unlike DSR, there are no scripts or set texts), and so the effectiveness of the programme over time relies on teachers' knowledge of children's literature and their skill in using children's literature in the classroom. DR also requires

teachers to model interest in reading the focus texts, in effect presenting themselves as keen readers. We saw evidence of teachers demonstrating great enthusiasm in their reading, but not all teachers may feel confident to do this.

Whilst the programme has a list of suggested books for DR, it is up to teachers to decide which of these, or others, to use, how to initiate and sustain a discussion about a selected book, which points to focus on, and how to shape the DR session around the book or an extract from this. Selected books must be interesting and complex enough to sustain in-depth discussions, and teachers must familiarise themselves with books in order to use them effectively for teaching. There is a risk that teachers who feel short of time may rely on familiar and much-used authors for DR lessons (such as Dick King-Smith, as observed in Greenwood v1), and not widen their own or children's reading repertoires through the programme. Furthermore, because DR emphasises that children should use 'stems' for speaking and writing, teachers may narrow their focus to how a selected book can support technical aspects of reading rather than wider reading for enjoyment.

Although there is evidence of the use of DR strategies within other areas of the curriculum, it is less clear how DR may contribute to a change in the culture and practice of reading more widely in school. This is because, across the schools we visited, there were several other reading activities and initiatives (such as author visits, library sessions, the reading of class novels, and children reading class or library books at home). All these may have an impact on the culture and practice of reading in a school, and it is therefore difficult to isolate a specific school-wide influence of DR.

5.4 Summary and conclusion

5.4.1 DSR: Summary of key findings

Data on Daily Supported Reading present generally positive outcomes, along with evidence of some adaptation to the delivery of the programme. The timing of the evaluation, and the fact that schools were not systematically following DSR in Y2, meant that we could not say anything about change over time beyond Year 1, or the longer-term impact of DSR.

Key finding: Daily Supported Reading

- Teachers/group leaders were consistently enthusiastic and committed to the use of the programme. They had generally high levels of awareness of DSR principles and the practical application of the programme, and adopted these in the classroom.
- Teachers noted DSR's focus on fundamental reading skills was useful in working with the lowest attaining readers; they sometimes adapted materials to support these readers, and also to maintain the interest of higher-level readers.

- They were particularly positive about the role of DSR in increasing children’s reading mileage.
- They welcomed the programme’s emphasis on tracking individual children’s progress and commented that they regularly monitored children’s reading.
- There were variations in the way children were allocated to groups and re-grouped, including a focus on children’s social relations as well as book/reading level.
- There were challenges in securing the effective involvement of group leaders (e.g. timetabling arrangements; variability in group leader skills). The system generally worked well, however, and teachers commented on group leaders’ increasing confidence in working with DSR. All schools organised some form of training for group leaders.
- The implementation of DSR produced a stronger reading culture in classrooms, in which children read regularly with an adult, and adults worked collaboratively to support children’s progress.

5.4.2 DR: summary of key findings

Data on Destination Reader present some positive outcomes, along with evidence of variability in teachers’ and children’s responses to the programme and use of programme elements in the classroom. Limitations to our evaluation include the fact that, from the Spring term, DR lessons were sometimes dropped in favour of SATs practice and other activities. Classroom observations and teacher interviews were, necessarily, inconclusive about the developing use and potential effects of DR over the full duration of the programme.

Key findings: Destination Reader

- As in the case of DSR, teachers generally had high levels of awareness of all aspects of DR; in the main, they demonstrated enthusiasm and animation in their presentation of the programme and achieved high levels of active participation by children in lessons.
- Some teachers mentioned finding the structured approach of DR particularly helpful for lower-attaining readers and children with special reading needs.
- Teachers identified the systematic focus on talk, key reading strategies and specific language (‘stems’) as helping children to increase their understanding of what they read, although there was some variation in children’s adoption of such practices.
- In the classroom, teachers were observed to focus on teaching children how to think and talk about reading, modelling this for children and focusing on learning behaviours and key strategies. In many lessons there was limited time for independent, and particularly individual reading.
- Elements of concluding the lesson were consistently missing in observed lessons: specifically, celebrating strategies, creating an ‘assessment snapshot’, and evaluating children’s progress against learning behaviours. During lessons, there was variation

in the time and depth devoted to vocabulary and word study, and vocabulary was not usually revised in lesson conclusions.

- Teachers commented favourably on the value of DR in developing and supporting children's reading stamina. Supporting reading at home, however, remained a challenge.
- Teachers found DR useful in further developing their own understanding of, and confidence in, the teaching of reading.

5.4.3 Conclusion

There are many variables that influence individual teacher practice and affect what happens in lessons, and different factors appear to underly the successes and challenges of Daily Supported Reading and Destination Reader.

Hackney Learning Trust can confidently claim that Daily Supported Reading works in the schools we visited. The key success factor in DSR is ensuring that children read daily with an adult. DSR is structured to increase reading mileage and the amount of time children spend reading in school. When children read frequently and regularly, their reading skills improve. DSR is a collective endeavour where staff regularly observe each other in reading sessions, share ideas and suggestions, and decide together on children's progression. DSR scripts, structured lesson plans and set texts allow less experienced staff (and unqualified staff such as the school secretary, dinner lady or caretaker) to support children's reading and to develop their own knowledge and skills in the process.

Destination Reader received positive responses from teachers, who also demonstrated their awareness of key aspects of the programme. A problem with our evaluation is that we were unable to observe all classes at a later stage in the programme, and it was not always possible to interview teachers during our visits, so our data set is incomplete. In the lessons we observed, key elements of the programme were also missing in several cases, particularly during 'post reading'. This does not of course mean they were absent on other occasions, but it is something for HLT to consider. Our observations did reveal teachers' enthusiasm in presenting the programme, and their encouragement of children's active participation.

In the conclusion to this report we suggest a number of points HLT may wish to take into account in further developing both programmes.

Chapter 6 Children

6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on how children in the data set, particularly children in the case study schools, responded to Daily Supported Reader and Destination Reader. The chapter addresses the following outcomes:

1. Children’s learning behaviour, e.g. using strategies and language stems (DR only)
2. Children’s increased deep understanding of texts
3. Children’s reading for pleasure at school and home
4. Children’s attitudes to reading and engagement in reading

As detailed in Chapter 2, Methodology, data come from children’s focus group interviews and lesson observations carried out in the five case study schools that took part in the evaluation: Debenhurst, Mornington (DSR only), Freebridge (DR only), Amgrove and Freebridge): see Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Distribution of focus groups and observations across schools.

Schools	Children’s focus group interviews								Lesson observations							
	Visit 1 (March 2018)		Visit 2 (Oct 2018)		Visit 3 (Feb 2019)		Visit 4 (June 2019)		Visit 1 (March 2018)		Visit 2 (Oct 2018)		Visit 3 (Feb 2019)		Visit 4 (June 2019)	
	DSR	DR	DSR	DR	DSR	DR	DSR	DR	DSR	DR	DSR	DR	DSR	DR	DSR	DR
Debenhurst									FC= M	FC= H	FC= H	FC= H	FC= M	FC= M	FC= L	
Mornington (DSR only)		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A	FC= L	N/A	FC= M	N/A	FC= H	N/A	FC= L	N/A
Freebridge (DR only)	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A	FC= L	N/A	FC= L	N/A	FC= H	N/A	FC= M
Amgrove									FC= H	FC= H	FC= M	FC= L	FC= M	FC= H		FC= L
Greenwell									FC= M	FC= M	FC= L	FC= M	FC= H		FC= L	

Table notes:

	DSR interview or lesson observation
	DR interview or lesson observation
	We were unable to carry out interviews or observe classes
FC=	The focus child for each observation is shown by reading attainment level: H (High); M (Mid); L (Low)

Chapter 2, Methodology sets out how children were selected by the class teacher for focused observation and interview groups to reduce any potential bias in findings.

Our data set included data from teacher interviews covered in Chapter 5 Teachers, together with children's data from:

- 11 interviews for DSR and 13 for DR;
- 15 lesson observations for DSR and 12 for DR across a balanced range of reader levels

Table 6.1 reflects the same gaps in data collection already set out in Chapter 5 Teachers.

Children's focus group interviews were coded in relation to children's responses to their DSR/DR lessons and reflected in the evaluation outcomes identified at the start of this chapter: children's understanding and reported use of learning behaviours; understanding of texts; reading for pleasure both at school and at home; attitudes to reading and engagement with reading. Observations were coded in relation to children's use of DSR/DR learning behaviours and independent use of reading strategies.

This chapter presents our findings separately for DSR and DR. Pseudonyms are used to reference evidence from specific children and where appropriate children's reading level is noted along with their school, the source of data (focus group interview or observation) and which of the four visit cycles the data come from e.g. (Nancy, L, Greenwell, int. v4). Differences in the impact of DSR/DR across case study schools and changes that appear to be related to the programmes are identified from findings in each section. We summarise the main findings from both programmes in the conclusion to the chapter.

6.2 Daily Supported Reading (DSR)

This section of the chapter focuses upon the Daily Supported Reading (DSR) programme outcomes which are encapsulated in the stated aims of the DSR programme for children:

- *To enjoy daily independent reading in small groups (of no more than six) led by a trained adult, and to increase the quantity and challenge of texts read across the year.*
- *To learn to solve problems in text independently while keeping a story or message in mind.*

(Hackney Literacy Trust, n.d., p. 8).

6.2.1 Reading independently, problem-solving strategies and engagement with text.

The DSR programme aims to embed DSR reading strategies into children's reading behaviours. The planned outcome of these behaviours is that children learn to engage independently with text to read with understanding. The key reading strategies comprise:

- Self-monitoring and self-correcting reading (in response to adult levelled prompts)
- Engaging with text (through the use of language encoded in print)

(Hackney Literacy Trust, n.d.).

Problem-solving strategies

All children across each school and visit could describe problem solving strategies. Children demonstrated high awareness and understanding of self-monitoring and self-correcting behaviours to support independent reading. Key themes in the data related to:

- Children’s awareness and preferences for strategies to solve problems
- Impact of teachers’ prompts and praise on children’s use of self-monitoring and self-correcting strategies
- Children’s unprompted use of strategies during independent reading.

Sounding out words was the first and most frequently identified self-monitoring strategy. Most focus children mentioned this strategy when explaining what they could do when they met words they did not understand (e.g. Michael, H, & Fiona, M, Amgrove, int. v2). Children were also knowledgeable about the technique:

Neville (H) ‘Like when you sound it out you have to put all of the letters together, and find the word that it makes, like make the word’ (Mornington, int. v3).

Children also understood using sounding out in combination with other strategies. For instance, Mary (L) explained finger tracing: ‘You put your finger there, and then say the word, say the letter’ (Mornington, int. v3).

Reading on and then going back to the word, re-reading and saying the word over were strategies mentioned by several children (e.g. Debenhurst, Edward H, Taniya, M & Patricia, L, int. v2).

‘I pronounce it wrong first, then I see it some more. Then when I see the word all the time in the book I try and try, then I think I get it right, then I ask the teacher.’ (Deerin, H, Greenwell, int. v4)

‘I just start the sentence over again, and then correct it.’ (Taniya, M, Debenhurst int. v2)

Only Amgrove children mentioned asking a grown up for support if sounding out didn’t help them (Michael, H, Amgrove, int v2). This might be attributable to the smaller class size where teachers were more able to give individual attention to children and could invite children to use such a strategy.

As outlined in Chapter 5: Teachers, sounding out was a universal strategy emphasised by all teachers. Thereafter different teachers appeared to place emphasis upon different strategies which children then mirrored. For instance, the Amgrove teacher encouraged finger tracing

and slowing down when children came to a difficult word so that they could sound it out as they read (Amgrove, obs. v1). Whilst few children volunteered this self-correcting strategy in focus group discussion, it was later observed during independent reading.

Both Mornington (obs. v3) and Debenhurst (obs. v1) teachers focused strongly upon reading forward and then going back to work out words which children did not understand:

'Go to the end of the sentence, then go back and work it out' (Class Teacher, Mornington, obs. v4)

Teacher emphasis was strongly reflected in children's responses when children described self-correcting strategies to researchers. Furthermore, children were seen to respond positively to teacher prompts to self-correct when in one-to-one situations:

The TA prompted him to read just with his eyes i.e. without using his finger to follow each word. She pointed using her pencil to a word when Keith missed it. Keith went back and read the word and continued on with the sentence (Teaching Assistant (TA), Mornington obs. V4).

Prompting in group situations could be less effective:

'Slide your fingers across Yeah? No jumping.' She has to reinforce this to Deerin (H) several times and continuously looks around the group as she reads: 'Are we keeping up with our fingers?' Deerin loses his place and his partner is not fingering the text. (TA and Deerin, H, Greenwell, obs. v3).

This potentially highlights the importance for not only setting up independent reading with prompts to remind children about self-monitoring and self-correcting strategies (e.g. *Teacher, Mornington, obs. v3 & T/A obs v4; TA, Greenwell, obs. V3 &4*); but also the importance of ongoing prompts during independent reading (*Teacher, Debenhurst, obs. v2*).

Children responded positively to the use of sequenced high, medium and low level-prompts together with praising. Children's were encouraged to persevere and apply self-monitoring and correcting behaviours as observed with this teacher when a child was stuck:

Used silence to give the child time to work the word out; she then used her finger to point at the word; more silence; then she encouraged the child to sound out the word and then modelled the sound for her. Praised her: 'Well done' [when the girl mastered the word]. (Class Teacher, Mornington, obs. v4)

Praise also appeared to positively reinforce children's use of self-correction (e.g. Class Teacher, Mornington, obs. v3) as in this observation:

'Good correcting. I liked that you were listening then.' This appeared to result in children persevering in self-correcting reading behaviours. (Teacher, Debenhurst, obs. v2).

The combination of starting with high level prompts and giving children time to self-correct, appeared to be significant in encouraging children to apply self-correcting behaviours and where time was not given potentially reduced the development of those behaviours. *This could also potentially impact low-level readers more.* One researcher observed that, across a class, lower-level readers had to work harder at self-correction because adults always started with high-level prompts (Greenwell, obs. V1). *Another researcher observed that although the teacher prompted children to think of strategies they could use, they didn't give children the chance to remember strategies for themselves:*

*... so the student is still reliant on the adult to remind them how to problem solve
(Teacher, Mornington obs. v1)*

Whilst children were seen to respond positively to teacher prompts, particularly one-on-one prompts, evidence of unprompted use of strategies during independent reading was mixed. There were examples of independent use of strategies (e.g. Greenwell, obs. v4; Amgrove, obs. v1):

Without any teacher prompts Amgrove children were set off to read independently and Fiona (M) was observed to apply a range of self-monitoring and self-correcting strategies. She read out loud to herself; sounding out words that were tricky and then repeating the word. At one point she inserted a wrong word into her reading and then went back to correct it; repeating the correct sentence a second time. (Fiona (M), obs. v2).

On other observations however researchers did not see children independently using prompts to monitor or correct their reading (Mornington, obs. v4; Debenhurst, obs. v2). Researchers reflected that:

Children appeared to simply read. Except for the emphasis on finger tracking no other strategies appeared to be mentioned. (Greenwell, obs. Visit3)

In all groups, there are no explicit examples of children using prompts independently. For the most part, they respond to prompts that the teacher has laid out for them. (Debenhurst, obs. v1).

Engagement with text

The following DSR strategies are designed to engage children in text with a view to developing their skills to read independently with understanding:

- Engagement in talk about their stories
- Learning to link language with the text
- Learning new words from sentences in their books.

Data was primarily drawn from observation of teacher prompts in DSR lessons.

Generally, all children engaged positively in talk about their text, skilfully drawn into discussion by their teachers (e.g. Debenhurst, obs. visits 1 and 2; Amgrove obs. v1). Researchers observed very good practice for instance one noted she hadn't seen '*any student not talking about the story at some point in the lesson*' (Mornington, obs. v1). Discussion occurred after reading the introduction to stories and after independent reading (Mornington, obs. v3. Greenwell, obs. v4). Notwithstanding, only ten of the fifteen DSR classes observed included talk about the stories read after independent reading (see annex: observation checklist).

The nature of talk about stories also varied. Children could lead free flowing discussion (Debenhurst, obs. visit2, but by contrast talk about the story after independent reading could be '*much more structured*', using teacher-led question and answers (Greenwell, obs. v3) as a frequent way of prompting discussion (Greenwell, obs. v4; Debenhurst, obs. visit2). On occasion, discussion was observed to be '*a bit cursory*' (Mornington, obs. v4) and less successful for instance after a teacher introduced one story:

The children gave a mixed response, not really understanding what she (the teacher) wanted and so the teacher moved on quite quickly. (Amgrove, obs. v1)

Discussion of text after independent reading could be disturbed by other activities in the classroom as lessons came to an end (Amgrove obs. v2; Mornington, obs. v2) and appeared to be slightly more challenging.

Teachers reported that DSR had encouraged children who lacked confidence to engage in talk about texts (Teacher, Amgrove, int. v1). Teachers attributed this to small group reading and to the familiarity of the routine of DSR. (Teacher, Mornington, int. v4; Amgrove, int. v3; Teacher, Debenhurst, int. v3; Teacher, Greenwell, int. v2)

Similarly, linking language to their texts and learning a new word from the text at the end of lessons appeared to be challenging. Approximately a third of observations omitted these elements of lessons. Where activities did take place tasks were adapted to the different level of reader. For instance in Mornington (obs. v1) the lower group reorganised and copied out cut up sentences; the middle group wrote a question they would like to ask one of the characters in their book and the higher group discussed and chose a question prompt which the whole group used to prepare questions about their book. Simple games were made up by a TA made for the lower reader group who struggled to finger frame words or phrases in their books (Debenhurst, obs. v4). In Amgrove children finger framed specific words rather than phrases (obs. v1&2).

Children were generally able to locate specific words and phrases in the text e.g. 'invaded; 'get rid of' (Greenwell, obs. v4). They used indexes in non-fiction books to match words and locate specific pages to find information in their texts (Greenwell, obs. v1). Debenhurst children simply framed words and phrases in their books which the teacher asked them to find (obs. v2 & 1). However, some children didn't (Keith, L, Amgrove obs, v2).

Practice in learning new words from the text varied across schools. This activity could be a strong aspect of children's lesson which *'elicited a good discussion and participation by all children'* (Greenwell, obs. v3) after independent reading. Alternatively learning words from the text could be introduced at the start of the lesson using finger framing (Debenhurst, obs. v2, 3 & 4) when on one occasion the researcher observed that *'Nothing more was done or said about the word after it had been found' in the text'* (obs. v2).

Learning new words could be a more spontaneous rather than planned activity used when a child came across a difficult word. (Greenwell, obs. v3; Mornington, obs. v4; Amgrove obs, v2 & 3). On occasion children did not learn new words from the text (Mornington, obs. v2). Again, activities were differentiated by reading group levels with less vocabulary discussion taking place in lower level groups in some cases (Mornington obs. v1) and more in others (Greenwell, obs. v1).

The planned outcome of children's engagement with text is that children develop as independent readers equipped with strategies to read with understanding and enjoyment. Each of the Mornington focus group children were able to relate the plot of their stories from their DSR lesson. Mary the lower level reader gave noticeably less detail and a less coherent account whereas Keith (M) and Neville (H) gave proficient summaries and Neville engaged in an embodied elaboration of his story of two friends at a sports day:

... 'and Kyle never won anything. So, he kept on trying. And then he won a big jump and he had to jump in the air'. (Neville, H, Mornington, int. v4)

One researcher observed children had strong *'comprehension of what children had read'* (Greenwell obs. v3). The following visit, both Nancy (L) and Deerin, (H) illustrated their understanding of their texts when they broke into their own discussion of Deerin's book:

Nancy: Which bit of the lion do you think made her think it was a sunflower?

Deerin: The hair. Because the hair was too big. (Greenwell, int. v4)

Similarly, Tina (H) and Colin (L) each *'talked to the researcher with knowledge and understanding about the books they had been reading'* Each *'recalled the whole story'* they had read (Debenhurst, obs, v1).

During independent reading, children could be highly committed to read continuously until told to stop by an adult:

Paired with another high-level reader, Neville (H) was an enthusiastic participant in the class throughout. When he and his partner finished reading the book, they started it again. Reading in turn was collaborative and supportive. Occasionally both would pour over a word and appeared to work all words out for themselves. (Mornington obs. v3)

Some children however were reticent and were not enthusiastic to recall their stories (Simon, M, Debenhurst, int. v1). For Taniya (M) and Patricia (L) this may have been linked to their

dislike of reading out loud (Debenhurst, int. v4). Similarly, children could become disengaged and bored with reading and re-reading as occasionally observed (Greenwell, obs. v1) and expressed by Keith (L):

'OK that's enough. I already read it. Do blue sharks swim like this [gestures swimming]?

[To another child] You do this part [he reads a few sentences] – Now your turn. Finished!'
(Mornington, obs. v1).

Generally, teachers did not identify such reticence. Teachers felt that DSR had led to increased engagement *'particularly by those children who find it difficult to focus or are reluctant readers, or have challenging behaviour'* (Teacher, Greenwell, int. v1). Others mentioned that children were clearly motivated and would get on with reading even when not supervised (Teacher, Greenwell, v4 & 3; Teacher, Amgrove, int. v1).

Teachers differentiated the impact of DSR on the development of independent reading. Higher group readers could be left to discuss books on their own during independent reading. Higher and average level readers increased their independence as readers (Teacher, Amgrove, int. v1). However, *'comprehension issues (existed) for children at the lower ability levels'* (Teacher, Amgrove, int. v2). The Debenhurst teacher also noted that there was quite a lot for children to remember in DSR (int. v3) and inferred that this could be harder for lower level readers.

6.2.2 The impact of DSR on children's enjoyment of daily independent reading

Implicit in the aim to engender enjoyment in daily independent reading in lessons is that this might lead to broader enjoyment of independent reading generally. Children's enjoyment of independent reading was evaluated both during lessons and outside lesson time.

Children's response to the impact of DSR on their enjoyment of daily independent reading was more nuanced. Key themes in what children expressed comprised:

- Sources of enjoyment in DSR independent reading
- Comparisons children made between their enjoyment of independent reading during DSR lessons and reading at home
- The impact of physical and social spaces/times upon children's enjoyment of independent reading
- Aspects of DSR independent reading children said they did not enjoy.

Enjoyment of DSR independent reading

Teachers from each school stated on multiple occasions that DSR had had a positive impact upon children's enjoyment of daily independent reading as well as a growth in confidence for

reading. Teachers attributed growth in confidence to reading in small groups, the additional adult attention this facilitated, and the routine of the programme.

Children highlighted sources of enjoyment in DSR independent reading from:

- the subject matter and content of books
- the process of learning to read

Sources of enjoyment in the subject matter and content of books were characterised primarily by exciting often humorous events within the stories and a connection with the narrative of the story; but also included learning facts and enjoyment of the images used in books.

Children often explained enjoyment of texts by foregrounding key events in stories:

'Father duck playing a trick on the dog' (Fiona, M, Amgrove, int v2)

'When the dinosaur Lily got eaten by the crocodile, and he thought it was a log, but it was a crocodile'. (Neville, H, Mornington, int v3)

'the big bad wolf got killed by the dad' (Edward, H, Debenhurst, int v2).

Furthermore, children's enjoyment was emphasised in the imaginative and embodied way they explained what they enjoyed. For instance, Keith (M) enacted the powers of the characters in his book:

'So first I'm going to do Iron Man. Iron Man's got like he can fly, and he go, like his feet have fire at the bottom, and it makes him go up like a space rocket.' (Mornington, int v4).

Children connected with narratives and empathised with characters:

Mary (L): *He was scared of going down the pole. Because it was his first down. I don't, (go down the pole) because it's going to be my first time.* (Mornington, int v3)

Nancy (L) also demonstrated enjoyment from engagement with the plot of her book:

And I like another book, and 'I've Got A Friend' but she's a girl and she has yellow hair everywhere. And she is, she wanted to have some friends, was the teacher that didn't let her have friends in the school. And then she went away. And then she went away, and she saw her family and then she was happy' (Nancy, L Greenwell, int. v4).

This sense of engagement and empathy with characters was supported by the Amgrove teacher who reflected that the books used enabled *'children's own experiences (to) come out through the stories'* (int. v2) and that *'children were curious about what is going to happen in the stories'* (int. v3).

Children frequently cited humour, particularly the sense of the ridiculous in what they enjoyed. Deerin (H) liked *'The Hamster is an Astronaut'* which the researcher observed was making him laugh (Greenwell, int. v4). Nancy (L) meanwhile said:

'I like Bob on the Moon, because he likes space and he eats cocoa every time when he goes to bed. And he has friends at the moon'. (Greenwell, int. v4).

Images were a further source of enjoyment. One Debenhurst focus group were animated in their discussion of a picture of woods which Colin (L) associated also with the outdoors:

Tina (H): *'Yeah, because I like all the trees.'*

Tina (H): *'Because I love green.'*

Simon (M): *'I liked the ending because it has all of my favourite colours'*.

(Debenhurst, int. v1)

Another group at Amgrove were observed to *'like 'Brave Triceratops' because the pictures of the dinosaurs are good'* (Urvine (H), Fiona (M) and Keith (L) Amgrove, obs. v1).

A third focus group shared their enjoyment from learning facts as exemplified in this observation:

'...focus children spoke enthusiastically about the book they were reading: 'It's SO INTERESTING because of the facts'; 'It's about water and I love water, so I like this book'; 'It's FASCINATING.' (Greenwell, Kieron (H), Isabel (M) and Nina (L), obs. v1).

Teachers overwhelmingly confirmed that children enjoyed reading with the DSR programme. DSR overall promoted *'a love of reading'* (Mornington, int.visit1); children *'liked the books'* (Amgrove, int. v2). The Debenhurst teacher referred to a *'bustle and excitement'* in the classroom as children prepared for their DSR lesson which *'they all seem to really enjoy'* (int. v4); and the Greenwell T/A to *'a positive environment'* and *'clearly motivated children'* for DSR, which they loved (int. v4).

Three children associated enjoyment of DSR independent reading with a sense of achievement from learning to read. For instance, Keith (M) enjoyed: *'learning lots of new words'* (Mornington, v4). Deerin (H) highlighted his sense of achievement from his progression onto reading *'chapter books'* (Greenwell, v4).

The thing that Patricia (L) liked best about independent reading was that: *'We change different books. We change every single day'* and she goes on to highlight the reading record system where the children's reading achievements were celebrated and displayed: *'We've got colours on the wall'* (Debenhurst, int. v2).

A few children associated independent reading with playing:

'Because after when you read, we get to play some reading games' (Deerin, H, Greenwell, int v4)

Edward (H) *'love(d) doing sentences'* (Debenhurst, int. v2). Simon (M) liked *'playing together'* and talking to his partner about what they were reading in DSR lessons (Debenhurst, int. v1).

Enjoyment of independent reading at home

Those children who read at home mostly found independent reading preferable at home than at school. For instance, Edward's (H) response about reading was that it was *'boring at school reading, but it's fun at home'* (Debenhurst, int. v2). The reasons cited were:

- Associated with special, social time with close family
- The availability of relaxing spaces/times in which to read
- Linked to more enjoyable texts than read at school

Children from Debenhurst and Mornington frequently associated enjoyment of reading at home with special time with parents and also grandparents and siblings. This was frequently reading together at bedtime (Neville, H, Mornington, int. v3; Keith, M, Mornington int. v4; Simon, M, Debenhurst, int. v1; Colin, L, Debenhurst, int. v1; Patricia, L, Debenhurst, int. v2 and Mary, L, Mornington, int. v4). For instance:

It was *'fun reading at home'* because *'My mummy comes in my bed'* to read (Taniya, M, Debenhurst, int. v2)

Children also associated enjoyment of reading at home with private, quiet, comfortable and relaxed spaces/times for reading. Whilst Colin (L) and Reilly (H) both identified their sofa at home as the place they liked to read (Debenhurst int. v1) children most frequently associated reading with their bedrooms. For instance, Michael (H) described a space in his bedroom where his parents had created *'a secret little hideout'* where he liked to read his stories (Amgrove, int. v2). Bedrooms were places where children could get away from siblings to *'just quiet read'* (Neville, H, Mornington, int. v3; Mary, M, Amgrove int. v2).

By contrast with most children, Deerin (H) liked to read best at school in the after-school book club (Greenwell, int. v2) and Neville (H) in class. The common characteristic remained that this was the best place to find peaceful space for reading. Keith (M) highlighted this point further explaining how he *'also put music on ... Sea water, like you can hear the sea water. ... Because it's relaxing'* (Mornington, int. v4). The Amgrove teacher also highlighted this feature of DSR which promoted *'a calm atmosphere every morning'* when DSR was scheduled. (int. v2).

Children highlighted enjoyment from the content of the books they read at home as they did in school independent reading. Children chose books to read at home which enabled them to engage vicariously in exciting events, for instance Keith (L) highlighted his enjoyment of *Spiderman*, especially where *'that boy's turned into Spiderman'* (Mornington, int. v3); and by the fourth visit he identified a favourite set of *Avengers* adventure books, which he liked

because the characters were 'so cool' and 'Because they fight and they've got powers' (Mornington, int. v4). Children enjoyed picture books and interacting with illustrations. Neville (H) liked his 'Star Wars, search book' because:

'You get to find lots of characters, and at the end, on the last page you get to look at all of the special things, like there's a giant worm in the Death Star and you can find it' (Mornington, int v3).

Simon (M) and Colin (L) both enjoyed finding Wally in their picture books (Debenhurst, int. v1). Colin (L) also liked an adventure tiger book and books with funny characters such as pranksters like in *Horrid Henry* because they could be 'so horrid' (Debenhurst, int. v1). Humorous books also attracted Neville (H) who liked 'stories by Dr. Seuss and Julia Donaldson such as *Gruffalo* and *Ugly Five*, and by Axel Scheffler' (Mornington, int. v4).

Girls' choices of reading for pleasure at home appeared to contrast with the boys' choices in this part of the study. Girls' interests were less about exciting or humorous events and more about engagement in story lines. Fiona (M) liked to read *Little Red Riding Hood* (Amgrove, int. v1). At home, Taniya (M) had *Gingerbread Man* and also enjoyed reading *Jack and the Beanstalk*, which she recounted in great detail for the researcher (Debenhurst int. v2). Mary (L), meanwhile, liked *Mary Poppins* (Mornington, int. v3) and *Sleeping Beauty* (Mornington, int. v4).

When children did not enjoy independent reading

Sometimes children didn't enjoy what happened in their stories:

'... when the baby dinosaurs were hungry' (Keith, H, Mornington, int. v3)

'I didn't like the killer whales attacked the baby blue whale' (Neville, M, Mornington, int. v3)

Children also found some aspects of the DSR independent reading environment detracted from their enjoyment. Michael (H), preferred the reading environment at home:

'Because at home you get to sit on your chair without the table, because it's much more comfortable than this.' (Michael, H, Amgrove, int. v2)

Neville (M) sought a calm and relaxed environment and didn't like being interrupted when he was doing DSR independent reading:

'I don't really like when people come and talk to me when I've just been in the middle of a book, because then I lose my speed, and it's not as quiet anymore, and I lose where I was.' (Mornington, int. v4).

Taniya's (M) enjoyment of DSR independent reading appeared marred by the reading level difficulty in contrast to reading at home:

'sometimes I don't read my schoolbooks, I just read my normal books what are easier to read' (Debenhurst int. v2).

One Debenhurst focus group (v4) disliked reading out loud during DSR independent reading: *'I had to read I hate saying the words'* (Edward, H). Patricia (L), a low-level reader was uncomfortable reading aloud in a group because it took her time to read her part:

'It took a long time for me to read it. Yeah. All the people on my table call for me. When it's my turn'. (Debenhurst, int. v4)

Teachers had mixed views about the impact of reading aloud on children's enjoyment. The Debenhurst class teacher (int. v3) recognised that lower-level readers like Patricia could struggle with aspects of the DSR programme. It does not however explain Edward's (high-level reader) dislike of reading aloud. Meanwhile in stark contrast two teachers suggested children enjoyed the novelty of group reading (Teacher, Mornington, int. v1) and associated enjoyment from reading in small groups, reading and re-reading books.

6.2.3 Difference and change

Although schools were very different in their demographic profile, we were unable to identify significant differences in the impact of DSR across schools. A potential nuanced difference was detectable between high/middle-level readers and low-level readers as highlighted in the summary of findings. However, most children across each school enjoyed independent reading and were very knowledgeable about reading strategies which would help them develop as independent readers. Simultaneously there was little evidence of change in children's enjoyment of independent reading or in children's engagement in self-monitoring and self-correcting behaviours as independent readers.

Rather than interpreting this as a weakness of the programme this finding could be primarily due to the universally positive impact of the programme and the speed with which the programme impacted children's enjoyment and engagement in independent problem solving. By the time of researchers' first evaluation visits children had already discovered enjoyment of independent reading in the way it was being presented through the DSR programme. They had also already embraced strategies to solve problems in text to help them develop as independent readers. This was evidenced both in children's enthusiasm in describing what they enjoyed about reading and the way they explained the strategies they applied to their reading; together with teacher's favourable comparison of the DSR programme with those with which they had previously worked. A positive cycle of achievement leading to enjoyment and further achievement as more independent readers appeared to become quickly established as evidenced in this report.

6.3 Destination Reader (DR)

This section of the chapter focuses upon Destination Reader programme outcomes:

- The adoption DR learning behaviours
- The use of DR self-monitoring strategies

It then goes on to assess the impact of DR on:

- Children's attitudes towards and engagement with reading and reading for pleasure.

Differences in the impact of DR across case study schools and changes DR appears to have affected are identified from findings to conclude the section.

6.3.1 Children's adoption of DR learning behaviours

Most case study children across all four schools cited learning behaviours as generally supporting their development as readers together with better enjoyment of reading, although there were some reservations. Teachers were also generally positive about the impact that DR learning behaviours had upon learning to read. The key learning behaviours comprise:

- Supporting and actively listening to others
- Discussing and explaining ideas
- Taking responsibility for one's own and others' learning

Supporting and actively listening to others

Case study children widely reported the value of supporting and actively listening to others. Neville felt he increased understanding of the text in paired reading: *'Because sometimes you know something the partner doesn't, so you can always give them the information they need'* (Greenwell, int. v4). Donna, (a low-level reader), said she liked *'to hear about what other people have to say and to learn from what they think'* (Debenhurst, int. v1). Katie highlighted the opportunity to engage her imagination:

'I enjoyed working with a partner, because you can get ideas for like if you predict something, you can use each other's ideas, and there's never a wrong answer' (Greenwell, int. v4).

Susan felt she had got better at reading: *'because I've been listening to other people read like different kind of style books'*. Similarly, George felt: *'I've been listening and then I've got better at my reading'* (Freebridge, int. v1). Listening to each other was the way that Dulcie could *'get the understanding of the book'* and she also associated listening with being a good reader: *'it makes a good reader when you listen and you speak up, ...'* (Freebridge, int. v2).

Discussing and explaining ideas

Observation of lessons showed generally high levels of understanding and practice of learning behaviours, i.e. supportive discussion of texts using active listening linked to the practice of reading strategies (Greenwell, v1 and 2; Amgrove, v1) but with some variations. Observations are discussed below in relation to children's discussing and explaining ideas.

Children said that discussing and explaining the text improved their use of reading strategies, e.g. Susan, Freebridge, v1); and helped them to read (Tim, Amgrove, v3; George, Freebridge, v1). George and Dulcie felt discussion of the texts had made them better readers because it moved them on from just reading in their heads. Dulcie stated:

'Because we have to like talk to other people and read to other people, it's got me a lot more stable reading to other people and reading out loud as well.' (Freebridge, int. v1)

Jamal and Colin both found DR and their teacher's questions about texts made them think (Debenhurst, int. v1). Colin reflected:

'Before, I used to just read, and no one cared if I knew what it meant. Now I have to know what it's about and the teacher will know if I don't.' (Debenhurst, int. v1).

Other children highlighted enjoyment from discussing and explaining their ideas about the text. Dulcie, (L):

'I like all the new words that we come across and learning the definitions, so we find the right words.' (Dulcie, Freebridge, int. v1).

Each of the case study teachers stated that children benefitted from the use of DR learning behaviours. The Freebridge teacher said it took a week or so to understand new DR learning behaviours and that children needed reminding of behaviours after a while. Children started to want to get ahead with their reading and not stop to talk about the text (Freebridge, v1). The Debenhurst teacher felt DR focused children on reading and talking about a text more than a previous system. Some children were *'really good at discussing books'* (v2).

Dulcie and Donna pointed to the importance of social factors impacting discussion of text:

'We also need to like the people that we got put with, we need to actually talk to them. Otherwise there'll just be no help at all, and then we might as well just read in our heads.' (Dulcie, Freebridge, int. v1).

Observations at Freebridge showed children were initially off-task but became increasingly engaged. By the fourth (in Y6) the researcher commented:

During independent reading they broke off and discussed pages read to each other and appeared to engage and support one another in building their appreciation of the text. (George (M), obs. v4)

Other observations demonstrated a reliance upon teacher prompting and instigation of discussion. Debenhurst children for instance appeared to engage in discussion at best to only fulfil teacher led basics to 'find evidence' or 'infer' from the text. In some lessons, children did not get the chance to independently practice learning behaviours (Freebridge, v2).

There appeared to be less opportunity to practice learning behaviours when there was increased concentration upon reading strategies and SATs towards the end of the academic year (Amgrove, Teacher, v3; Greenwell, Teacher, v4).

Taking responsibility for one's own and others' learning

Children demonstrated responsibility for their own and others' learning when explaining what it meant to be a good reader. For instance: '*staying ... (with) a book ... keep on going through, and through and through*' (Colin, Debenhurst, int. v4); persevering even though '*quite a lot of books, at first they don't seem interesting. But the more you get into it, the more you read it the better they get.*' (Jamal, Debenhurst, int. v4)

Dulcie (low-level reader) explained how she used the DR strategies and the support of her friend Susan (H) to do additional practice outside lesson time:

'... I feel like she's really helped me along with my reading a lot. Because she's quite good at reading, and DR's helped me as well. ... because I can now understand more words.' (Dulcie, Freebridge, int. v4)

Two children referred to the use of DR reading strategies to support their reading at home, e.g. Francis, Greenwell int. v4 and Danielle:

'I think it's fun to learn something new that you can just use, and when you're at home reading to yourself.' (Amgrove, int. v4)

Francis's teacher felt that with DR reading had become more collaborative linking teacher, child and parent (Greenwell, Teacher, v4).

Observations are often consistent with children's positive responses. For instance, at Amgrove children would take up independent reading between tasks whilst waiting to continue (visits 1 and 2). At Greenwell children were observed taking the initiative in discussion pairs:

Katie: [after reading] 'I'm gonna make an inference, yeah;'

Reading partner: 'I'm gonna read from here, to here. [reads] This part tells me that'

(Obs. v1)

Children could be left to organise themselves in group and paired reading sessions, for instance arranging turns to read aloud (Amgrove, obs. v1; Greenwell, obs. v2).

However, some children were more easily distracted. Teachers and Teaching Assistants were seen to continuously tour classrooms during paired reading *'to keep students focussed and on task'* (Debenhurst, v1). Whilst children were able to use reading behaviours one observation revealed *'there is very little of this going on when students are working independently'* (Debenhurst, obs. v2).

At Freebridge, the researcher observed that children were generally engaged in independent reading across the class. However, higher level pairs stopped discussing the text to practice question-making behaviours with each other whilst other groups were off task and not reading (v1). Dulcie was distracted throughout the paired reading period (Freebridge v1). George (M), whose teacher described him as generally disengaged from learning, did not take up learning behaviours despite several reminders, *'in the end his partner did all the reading'* and George *'followed in his own book listening.'* (Freebridge, obs. v4)

6.3.2 Developing children's independence as readers using self-monitoring strategies and reading strategies

DR aims to build upon children's learning behaviours to develop children as independent readers by encouraging the use of strategies to self-monitor their own reading comprising:

- Skimming and scanning
- Reading around it
- Right there
- Think and search
- Evaluate

(Hackney Learning Trust, n.d.).

Simultaneously reading strategies using 'stems', supported by cards or classroom displays gave most but not all children confidence to form ideas and articulate them to the class or with a partner. Reading strategies comprised:

- Predicting
- Inferring
- Asking questions
- Evaluating
- Clarifying
- Making connections
- Summarising

(Hackney Learning Trust, n.d.).

Across lessons, this oral and written meta-cognition about text analysis could dominate, often taking up the entire lesson and as highlighted earlier to the detriment of other aspects of DR such as learning behaviours, particularly during practice for SATs.

Key themes in the data are reported in relation to:

- Children's awareness and use of self-monitoring strategies
- Children's responses to the different DR reading strategies

Self-monitoring strategies

Children were generally highly aware of the DR self-monitoring strategies, confident in explaining and practicing the strategies in lessons. That awareness was demonstrated in children's use of the strategies to:

- Independently work out the meaning of words and sentences
- Discuss and develop understanding of the text using stems

All case study children understood the range of DR strategies to make sense of a word or sentence ranging in independence from asking an adult (teacher/parent) or friend to using a dictionary. Children appeared to apply strategies differently, possibly influenced by their teacher's preferred strategies and reading level. For instance, at Debenhurst, Donna (L) said she would immediately ask a friend and then the teacher, whilst Jamal (M) would go to a dictionary and then '*probably read it again*' (int. v1). Meanwhile Colin (H), before seeking help from a friend or teacher, would read around the text (int. v1).

Donna, Jamal and Colin each used finger tracing, sometimes thinking the words in their heads (v2). These children used the same strategies consistently throughout the study in their approaches suggesting that the DR programme did not significantly develop their use of independent strategies.

Children at Freebridge school stated that they were not allowed to use dictionaries in their DR classes nor immediately ask their teacher for explanations before going back to the text. Instead, they described each of the other strategies available to them (George and Susan, H, v1).

Dulcie, (L) said she would say a word she didn't know '*in my mind and then say(ing) it out loud*' (int. v4). She also favoured breaking down words although she was aware of the reading around strategy. Two case study children at Amgrove school were also able to describe the full range of self-monitoring strategies using the CLEAR (Clue, Locate, Explore, Answer, Re-read) strategies (Diana, v2).

Finally, at Greenwell school by the fourth visit, Katie (H) said if she was reading something and didn't '*get what they're trying to say, I'll just read stuff before and after it to see if it will make sense*'. Meanwhile, Neville (M) would look at the word type: '*I would get the word, I just get inside it and then I just realise what the word is*'. Francis (L), meanwhile, was the only case study child to mention the use of pictures to help understand words.

Reading strategies

The Greenwell teacher said that, with DR, children were more actively than previously trying to work out words (Greenwell, v4). The Freebridge teacher was seeing children independently using stems in other classes and this was increasingly becoming embedded and routine (v3). Teachers also observed that DR:

... helped link children's understanding of reading texts in different subject areas. They used the reading strategies and learning behaviours across the curriculum (Teachers, Debenhurst, v2 and Freebridge v2).

Children's reported behaviours were also observed. For instance, Tim (high level reader) was observed to be: *'self-regulating – he stops himself when he doesn't understand something and re-reads the sentence'* (Amgrove, obs. v1)

DR reading strategies; learned singly and then in combination, acted as a scaffolding tool. Stems associated with each of these strategies effectively supported children's oral rehearsal for writing about their reading, even if this was sometimes formulaic (e.g. Neville, L, Greenwell, visits 1 and 2; Amgrove, v2). Predicting, inferring and clarifying were the most commonly practised strategies and were part of early lessons visited. Whole lessons centred strongly on one or two reading strategies (e.g. Amgrove, v4). Children were not observed 'asking questions'; the 'evaluating' and 'summarising' strategies were only observed once (Freebridge, v2 and v3 respectively).

All case study children understood predicting, inferring and clarifying strategies and applied each confidently to their reading (e.g. Graham and Gwen, Amgrove, v4). With a few exceptions, children were also positive about the use of the strategies. They explained such processes in interviews, e.g.:

Predicting is *'like when you have a text and you have to look at, scan through the text and predict something that's going to happen next, or what's going to happen later'* (Katie, Greenwell, int. v3).

Inferring is *when you use the words in the text to think of something that the author didn't tell you'* (Katie, Greenwell, int. v3).

Neville explained *'the method of making an inference Because we use PEE: point, evidence and explanation'* (Greenwell, int. v4).

Danielle explained how she would **clarify** a word by setting out a sequence of actions comprising: finding out what word class it was, trying to substitute the word in the sentence, reading around the word, looking at prefixes and suffixes, and identifying a root word (Amgrove, v4).

Classroom observations showed children applying pairs and small groups of these strategies to their reading building their skills towards using all in combination. For instance, children were observed using inferring, predicting and clarifying reading strategies in partner discussion and in response to teachers' questions about texts:

the children supported each other in reading the text, clarifying words and helping each other read more difficult words out loud (Amgrove, obs. v1).

Children were seen to access and use stem phrases from cards or classroom displays (Amgrove, v1). Children explained that using the stems made reading more enjoyable because they understood more about what the author was saying (Neville, Greenwell, int v4); it helped give them a sense of achievement (Leslie, Amgrove, int v4) and it helped them to concentrate (using skim and scan to answer questions) (Dulcie, Freebridge, int v3).

By contrast some children found describing and using strategies more challenging and less enjoyable. For instance, Francis (lower-level reader) didn't know when to stop reading to practice inferring from the text (Greenwell, int v1). George (middle level reader) found skimming and scanning his book to find key events in the right order 'really hard' (Freebridge, int v3) Oliver (low-level reader), demonstrated less resilience in pursuing meaning in text.

The Debenhurst teacher had sympathy with these children and stated that some children would find reading strategies challenging (Debenhurst, v1). Teachers cited the focus on reading and reading strategies as a way in which children developed greater interest in reading and understanding what they were reading and paying more attention to what they were reading (Greenwell v4) and "*the children really understanding what they've read*" (Debenhurst v1). Children's confidence and skills in reading strategies contributed to their attitudes and engagement with reading as reflected in the following sections.

6.3.3 The impact of DR on children's attitudes towards and engagement in reading

Children stated that DR had supported them to develop as readers and find enjoyment leading to enhanced engagement in reading e.g.

'It's (DR) helped me, because before I didn't really understand reading and I would hate it, but now I love it.' (Katie, Greenwell, int. v4).

Tim highlighted the fact that the opportunity to read as part of DR had re-engaged him as a reader:

'I got put off reading and then when Destination Reader came along I was like oh really more reading stuff, and then I was like oh this is actually quite good.' (Amgrove, int. v4).

Observations of DR lessons indicated that most children were engaged most of the time throughout the lessons. All children appeared knowledgeable and well-practised in reading and most applied the programme learning behaviours and reading strategies.

Teachers also reported seeing an increased engagement in reading as a result of DR. They referred to '*a massive improvement*' in children's reading (Debenhurst, v1) and '*phenomenal progress*' in reading ability (Greenwell, v4). Children's deepening understanding of reading

was accompanied by increased confidence, enjoyment and raised stamina for reading, which lead to a greater quantity of books being read. One teacher for instance noticed that previously children who were once not engaged readers were now *'interested, and they want to talk about it.'* (Debenhurst, int. v1).

Some but not all children spoke positively about reading in DR lessons. For instance, for Jamal, Donna and Colin reading was *'no longer boring'* (Colin) and it was *'interesting discussing reading'* (Jamal) and *'working with other people'* (Donna). This sense of enjoyment from the freedom to reflect with a partner on texts was echoed by Katie:

'I enjoyed working with a partner, because you can (get) ideas for like if you predict something, you can use each other's ideas, and there's never a wrong answer.'
(Greenwell v4)

Tim also liked the collaborative activities in DR:

'It's fun to help people do Destination Reader, and then it's fun to do it at the same time.'
(Amgrove, int. v4).

As with DSR, children wanted to work with partners who were engaged and who they liked. Dulcie complained that sometimes *'people were silly'* (Freebridge, v4). Group members who were day-dreaming and talking when someone was reading took away from Tim's enjoyment of the class (Amgrove, v4).

Some children were also concerned about getting things wrong in front of other children. Jamal (M) found it:

'really hard that we have to talk all the time. I don't always know the answers to everything and I don't want to say something silly.' (Debenhurst, int. v1).

Donna (L), who struggled with reading, echoed this concern about reading aloud:

'I have a hard time saying words the right way. Sometimes I don't like to answer the questions out loud because it's hard to say things and I don't want to mess it up.'
(Debenhurst, int. v1).

Not all children were motivated therefore by DR lessons, e.g. George, for whom the best bit of the lesson was watching the film when the class had finished reading (Freebridge, int. v4).

Tim (H) and his classmate showed comprehensive awareness of reading strategies and didn't like repeatedly going over these in each lesson. Having had his love of reading re-kindled he was keen to read independently and get on working with texts (Amgrove, int. v3). Similarly, the worst thing about DR for Oliver (M) was:

'When like sometimes you read it, and then we have to stop at a certain bit, when it starts to get on an exciting bit sometimes, or like you want to know what happens next.'
(Amgrove, int. v2)

It was harder to detect a direct impact of DR upon reading for pleasure. Two schools used incentive schemes in conjunction with DR to encourage reading at home, reading stamina and the volume of books read. Colin associated DR with his classmates taking out more books from the classroom to read at home (Debenhurst, v4).

In relation to reading for pleasure Tim commented: *'I need a wider range of books, apparently'* (Amgrove, v4) but continued to argue that books offered were too long to complete in a week, and as a result he sometimes read his own books rather than the book school provided.

The Debenhurst teacher said that, as a result of DR, children better appreciated their reading levels when choosing books for home (v2). The Greenwell teacher was encouraged by children being proud to have their own copies of the class reader if parents bought it for them (v1).

6.3.4 Changes in children's learning to read

Children generally felt that learning behaviours and reading strategies increased enjoyment of reading and supported them to develop as independent readers. However, we saw a difference between high- and low-level readers. High-level readers appeared to rapidly internalise learning behaviours and reading strategies and applied these quickly to positive effect. Low-level readers were aware of the behaviours and strategies but continued to identify challenges and to use simpler strategies such as clarifying by sounding out in the head rather than reading around the text (see Section 6.3.3).

There was some evidence to suggest that DR learning behaviours developed over time and supported children's development as independent readers. For some children, reading strategies became embedded in their learning to read behaviours i.e. children supported and actively listened to one another, discussed and explained their ideas and took responsibility for their own and others' learning. Tim, for instance, felt that adherence to learning behaviours in his lessons had improved: *'because we used to have people all the time just talking to each other while someone's reading, but now it's a lot better.'* (Amgrove, int. v4).

6.4 Summary and Conclusion

6.4.1 DSR: summary of key findings

Key findings: Daily Supported Reading

- There was little evidence of change in children's enjoyment of independent reading or in children's engagement in self-monitoring and self-correcting behaviours as independent readers as a direct result of engagement in DSR over the period of the study. However, this may be attributed to how quickly children generally engaged with the programme which had already become routine by the start of the study. Children's general enjoyment continued throughout the study. The next stage of

embedding learning behaviours and reading strategies as independent readers is a longer process which would reasonably take longer than the period of the study to become obvious.

- DSR independent reading also provided children with enjoyment from a sense of achievement linked to their mastering self-monitoring and self-correcting reading strategies and moving up through reading levels. Children spoke positively about the public celebration of reading achievements such as wall charts showing the books they had read, and the reading colour level achieved.
- Children were generally highly knowledgeable about strategies to solve problems in text and could explain what these were. They also responded well to teacher prompts to use self-monitoring and self-correcting behaviours and also to praise when they succeeded.
- Discussion of texts and linking of language with text at the close of DSR lessons was often highly teacher led and/or could be cursory or missed altogether. This appeared to impact low-level reader groups more than others. Where adequate time was given to discussion, sometimes naturally occurring within the body of the lesson, rich child-led discussion took place.
- When included in lessons, all children engaged in linking language with text and learning new words from their reading with enthusiasm, some characterising these activities as playing after independent reading.
- A few children did not enjoy DSR independent reading at school either because of the busy class environment or because they did not enjoy reading aloud with their peers. Whilst teachers associated this with lower level readers, a higher-level reader also identified discomfort about reading aloud. The general enthusiasm with which DSR has been received may disguise challenges that less confident readers have if their low-level reading skills are exposed; or if they are simply less socially outgoing.
- Whilst two teachers suggested that DSR was more challenging for lower level readers, teachers did not generally identify the issues children (albeit a small minority of children) raised which could detract from their enjoyment of DSR lessons.

6.4.2 DR: summary of key findings

With respect to DR programme, children were mainly positive towards developing their reading skills. Even the less keen readers appeared to value the opportunity to develop their skills although several still found reading somewhat 'boring' when they were unable to locate a book which engaged them.

Key findings: Destination Reader

- Children showed good awareness of DR strategies although there was limited evidence of children independently using the strategies unless specifically guided. Observed use of reading strategies was highly teacher-led and primarily focused on predicting, inferring and clarifying.
- The higher-performing children rated themselves more highly as readers, i.e. the more confident they were, the higher the chance they also enjoyed reading and the converse was also true.
- Some high-level readers could find stopping to discuss the text detracted from their enjoyment of reading.
- Most children enjoyed class discussion and felt this supported their understanding of the text being read.
- Reading aloud to partners was problematic for some lower level readers and for children generally if partnered with someone they did not get along with.
- There was little change in children's reported engagement in reading or attitudes over time; children were either consistently engaged or 'bored' by reading and there was little evidence to demonstrate that the DR programme impacted children's reading for pleasure. Notwithstanding this finding, investigation of children's motivations for reading for pleasure highlighted the importance of social reading at home. It may be that the DR focus upon engaging with text through discussion, partner and group reading supports this social reading aspect even if children did not articulate it in this way in this study.

6.4.3 Conclusion

Children in both DSR and DR lessons generally had a good level of skill in using the learning behaviours and strategies from the programmes. They were able to apply this when questioned by teachers or peers and in class or group discussions. Children in both key stages showed evidence of enjoying the lessons and the reading involved. This was with some exceptions in relation to reading aloud to a partner or group. While there was evidence that some less experienced readers were particularly benefited by DSR, less experienced readers were less likely to enjoy reading. Nevertheless, most DR children enjoyed other aspects of the lessons, particularly discussions about reading.

Despite children having adopted the behaviours expected of them, there was little evidence of children using them more independently over the course of this year. However, there was some evidence that children used behaviours independently, but it was not consistent. Similarly, there was no evidence that children's levels of reading for pleasure increased during the evaluation period. This is possibly a reflection of children already enjoying reading.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and recommendations

7.1 Conclusion

The DSR and DR programmes were developed and launched in 2016 to enable local schools in Hackney and neighbouring boroughs to raise their attainment in reading, primary school children's reading skills and teachers' knowledge, skills and practice in the teaching of reading. HLT were then funded in 2017 by DfE to implement the programmes in schools located in different contexts including coastal towns, a more rural location as well as urban. This evaluation sought to develop an understanding of how the programmes were implemented in these diverse locations, the challenges which different schools experienced, and the role of support provided by HLT. It also aimed to understand the impact of the programmes on teacher knowledge and practice as well as children's reading behaviour, skill and engagement and attitudes.

The bulk of our evaluation focuses on the five case study schools, whose work on Daily Supported Reading and Destination Reader we were able to follow from the spring term in 2018 to the end of the summer term in 2019. This kind of case study research provides an essentially 'local' and contextualised perspective on the implementation of the programmes: we foreground the voices of participants – school leaders and coordinators, teachers and group leaders, and children – and their reception of the programme in their own teaching and learning contexts: their understandings of the programmes, what seemed to work well, what they were enthusiastic about, what might need further consideration. As a complement to this, through close observation and recording of lessons, we sought to document processes of teaching and learning as these occurred in diverse classrooms. As researchers we necessarily stood outside these processes and brought fresh understandings - a 'fresh pair of eyes' – to their evaluation.

In our analysis of the case study data in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 we found some differences between programmes: responses to DSR were slightly more positive in certain respects than responses to DR. By and large, however, the programmes were well-received. Coordinators found DSR and DR successful in meeting the planned outcomes of each programme. In most schools, the tracking of children's reading progress was seen as effective in enabling leaders to ensure progress was being made. Leaders also felt confident they could evaluate the quality of teaching and offer support to staff. They commented favourably on the training offered by HLT and its value in improving teachers' skills to deliver the programmes. While there was some variation between schools, leaders, overall, identified positive changes in the culture and practice of teaching reading and, importantly, an increase in the status of reading.

For those at the 'sharp end' of the initiative, the teachers, group leaders and children who worked through the programmes in their classrooms, responses were, again, largely positive. In general, teachers were confident in their understandings of the principles of the

programmes and their applications in the classroom. They were enthusiastic in their reception of the DSR and DR, highlighting the value of the programmes in supporting children's progress as readers, and in increasing reading stamina. Most children showed good awareness of reading strategies associated with each programme, and our interviews and observations suggest the programmes contributed to their enjoyment of reading, and their developing independence as readers. This seemed to develop quickly – by the time of the first researcher visit in the case of DSR.

Our evaluation points to some specific qualifications to which we consider it is worth drawing attention. For example, in the case of both programmes some children were concerned about reading aloud in front of their peers; and there was a potential in DSR for some children to become bored during the repeated reading of a text. These deserve attention to ensure the programmes provide a positive experience for all. We address such issues further in our recommendations.

Teachers sometimes adapted aspects of a programme to suit their local circumstances – this is clearly a legitimate activity, and in fact it is valuable if programmes are open to a degree of adaptation. On the other hand, particularly in DR, we found that elements of lessons were sometimes missing, and priority seemed to be accorded to SATs practice and other activities during the summer term. HLT may wish to consider how schools can be encouraged to complete lessons, and indeed the programmes themselves, to ensure children derive full benefit from these – again, we return to this in our recommendations.

An important outcome for DSR and DR was that the programmes would help raise reading attainment. As we pointed out in Chapter 3, we were able to assess this only for Key Stage 2 (DR) and we could not find positive and consistent evidence of the impact of the programme on standards or progress in reading, at least as measured by national assessment. We remain unconvinced of the value of this form of national assessment in evaluating standards/progress at the end of a five-term initiative in a context where many other factors were at play that would affect children's performance. We would suggest HLT consider carefully its aims for DR (and DSR) with respect to national assessment. If improvement in attainment and progress scores remains an intended outcome, the implementation and duration of the programmes need further thought to ensure this outcome is realistic. On the other hand, our case study research indicates that the programmes have a great deal to offer in supporting children's reading, including their reading stamina and enjoyment of reading, which may not be captured in national assessment. This is a legitimate strength that HLT may wish to emphasize.

7.2 Recommendations

These thoughts for consideration by the programme team (HLT) draw on the data identified from this OU evaluation; they focus on possible adaptations and ways forward. They also

make some reference to the Hackney team's reflections on project, which were developed following a meeting with the OU team in May. As the two programmes differ and DSR was seen to be slightly more successful than DR overall (in terms of teacher and children's responses and fidelity to the programme), the recommendations are offered separately, although in some areas there is a degree of overlap. The recommendations cluster around small scale programme adaptations, additional support for staff and ways to sustain schools' engagement in the programme across the full year.

7.2.1 Daily Supported Reader

Programme adaptations

As with any programme there are aspects which work smoothly and some which afford opportunities for adaptation and development. We recommend considering the following.

- **Low/mid level readers.** Observation of classes and teacher feedback suggested that DSR could be quite demanding for lower-level readers. Consideration might be given to specific provision for those who have not yet reached the pink entry book level. This could include time in which these readers could engage in texts not primarily designed to develop their reading skills, but for pure enjoyment and reinforcing advice to teachers to give these children time to self-correct when supporting their independent reading.
- **Re-reading.** Teachers generally contended that children read and re-read texts with enjoyment until told to stop. Observation of lessons and some children's feedback suggested that some however became distracted and bored by re-reading. Methods of reinforcing re-reading, that motivate and engage the children may increase commitment. This might include the nature of adult and child talk on Days 2 and 4 of the weekly schedule (when children repeat their readings of the books started on Days 1 and 3) in order to address children's observed boredom with repeated re-reading of the same text. Talk on Days 2 and 4 might, for instance, include questions that encouraged reflection such as *'Have we read any books that are similar to this one?'* and allow children space and scope for self-initiated and extended talk. Another strategy might be to join with a child of their own level of experience to engage in some of the re-reading, whilst this has its own challenges, if it serves to keep the children on talk and re-reading, not switching off, it could prove useful.
- **Grouping challenges.** There were variations in the way children were allocated to groups and re-grouped, including a focus on children's social relations as well as book/reading level. In one school where class numbers were small, children moved as

a group rather than individually. The programme could consider and share the benefits and drawbacks of different grouping approaches.

- **Lesson endings.** Variable endings to DSR lessons were observed, with group leaders doing different things based on the available time, their expertise and confidence. The programme could consider the extent to which lesson endings should be consistent and what should optimally be covered in concluding a lesson.

Support for staff

Staff were well supported and mainly very positive, nonetheless it is a complex programme delivered by a range of staff and additional support would be advantageous.

- **Weekly meetings.** The evaluation findings suggest that these meetings are instrumental to successful management of the project and children's progression through the reading levels. We recommend therefore, that HLT profile this even more loudly and offer more encouragement and support to overcome logistical challenges to holding weekly meetings throughout the year.
- **Observation of a live lesson.** As part of the initial training we recommend HLT consider including observation of real DSR lesson to enable staff to better understand what a lesson should look like and to get the feel and temperature of one. This could be unpicked with staff present, not offered as a perfect lesson but as one to understand and discuss. A video could also be made.
- **Renewed support for using prompts.** Whilst there was evidence of group leaders using High, Medium and Low-level prompts, the most commonly observed prompt was 'sound it out'. HLT could usefully give greater emphasis to the implementation of prompts, and how and when to use them. This is likely to develop the skills of group leaders to apply in-the-moment assessments of children's strengths and areas for development.
- **A reading for pleasure focus.** As HLT note where schools and teachers had a wider commitment to and love of reading, they were better positioned to deliver the programme. Thus, foregrounding this as part of the staff support from the outset would help ensure enhanced buy in and enriched understanding of the programme per se.
- **Targeted training for non-teaching staff.** Such staff were widely required in order to provide enough adults to hear children reading in small groups. While responses to this were positive, the arrangement led to variability in the skills, knowledge and confidence of group leaders, some of whom lacked professional teaching experience.

Schools offered training, but the development by HLT of more targeted training for non-qualified staff would be appropriate. This could be delivered online and possibly be required for all group leaders.

Sustaining schools' engagement in the programme

According to interviews with programme leaders and headteachers, the sustainability of DSR may be at risk due to staff mobility and staff cutbacks. In order to mitigate this and to support the move to DR, we recommend the following points are considered.

- **Involving Headteachers more.** Headteachers should be expected and encouraged to become actively engaged in the running of the programme, for example in terms of monitoring children's reading progress or at least a sample. MOUs could be revisited during the programme and as HLT recognise sustaining SLT buy-in is crucial. This would help to increase understanding, foster and showcase commitment and ensure that the senior leadership report to governors. This in turn may serve to increase the success of implementation.
- **Bridging to DR.** The timing of the evaluation, and the fact that schools were not systematically following DSR in Year 2, meant that change over time, or the longer-term impact of DSR was unable to be closely documented. HLT may wish to consider how DSR approaches could be continued more systematically in Year 2 to ensure schools continue to benefit from these and to provide a bridge into DR.

7.2.2 Destination Reader: Recommendations

As noted above the evaluation indicates that the DR programme was valued by children and teachers and contributed to children's enjoyment of reading, and their developing independence as readers. Nonetheless the case studies indicate there are several points that the programme developers, HLT could consider in order to fine tune the programme going forward.

Programme adaptations

As with DSR there are aspects which work smoothly and some features of the programme which afford opportunities for adaptation and development. On the basis of the evaluation, we recommend considering the following.

- **Motivating strategy use during independent reading.** Notwithstanding general high levels of understanding, there were variations in children's unprompted use of strategies during independent reading. There were occasional examples of strong use of a range of strategies, but also observations when there was no apparent use of

strategies across the whole class during this time. Teachers generally set up independent reading periods with clear prompts about the learning and reading strategies to be used, but there was less attention to continuing with these during independent reading. When ongoing prompts were coupled with praise these were seen to be powerful. Thus, reinforcing the continuous use of prompts and praise during independent reading may support children to embed the behaviours and strategies which leads to increased independence.

- **Assigning more time to independent reading.** There was relatively limited time afforded independent reading and particularly individual reading. Whilst it is important to acknowledge that reading can include ‘thinking aloud’ and talking about a text, we recommend HLT consider how much sustained reading time children should be guaranteed in lessons, and the extent to which changing the balance of reading activities may provide variety in lessons over time and therefore be appropriate.
- **Child choice in reading.** This could be enhanced, potentially providing children with the opportunity to choose the books to be studied and read and by giving children more choice in engaging with reading partners with whom they are comfortable. The former point relates to enriching children’s investment in the programme and the books and the latter to the impact that reading aloud to others can have on some children.
- **Linking the programme more overtly to the reading for pleasure agenda.** This could prove fruitful, by encouraging schools to make more use of informal reading areas such as reading corners to develop this aspect of the programme and by assigning more time to independent reading and encouraging choice as noted above. Reading for pleasure is child-led, choice-led and volitional and positioning this more clearly within the wider framing of the specific DR programme would represent a valuable adaptation.
- **Encouraging discussion.** It is recommended that thought be given to the practicalities of encouraging discussion of the texts because of the challenges that there appear to be in focusing this at the close of lessons which can be interrupted. A more flexible approach giving time to discussion at different points of the lesson to enable proper focus and the use of naturally arising moments of discussion led by children could be considered.
- **Ensuring the re-visitation of vocabulary.** There was variation in the time and depth devoted to vocabulary and word study, and vocabulary was not usually revised in lesson conclusions. The programme could consider how to embed this element more consistently in practice.

- **Investigating strategy use according to levels.** DR self-assessed lower level readers appeared to continue to use simpler strategies more often than higher level readers who more confidently engaged with the programme's wider range of strategies. This would be worthy of further investigation.

Support for staff

Staff were well supported and mainly very positive about this aspect of the programme, nonetheless it is a large and layered offer and additional support could be advantageous. We therefore suggest the following:

- **Training on orchestrating the lessons.** In the lessons there are a number of activities and potential activities for teachers to plan and orchestrate, e.g.: teacher reading aloud, teacher 'thinking aloud' and modelling key strategies, children using 'stems' to formulate oral or written responses to teacher or partner questions, pair discussions, pair reading, individual reading. Whilst it is appropriate for teachers to decide how to organise lessons, and how much time to give to different activities, some teachers struggled to manage an appropriate pace and balance of the different elements of DR and would have benefited from training focused on this aspect.
- **Revisiting lesson conclusions.** Elements of concluding the lesson were consistently missing in observed lessons: specifically, celebrating strategies, creating an 'assessment snapshot', and evaluating children's progress against learning behaviours. In refresher or new training, the programme could place emphasis on the value of these elements and support teachers to include all of them more regularly.
- **Collective lesson planning.** This could be encouraged within schools as a method for supporting colleagues. Two effective ways of practicing this kind of planning are noted in the findings.
- **Fostering the sharing of practice.** We recommend HLT consider encouraging DR teachers to 'buddy' with another teacher or group of teachers, perhaps in a WhatsApp group that stretches beyond their school in order, to share their ideas and practices. Such informal support network if initiated by a couple of face to face meeting and 'led' by one named person could also support their sustained engagement in the programme as practices across schools

Sustaining schools' engagement in the programme

From the Spring term, DR lessons seemed to be dropped in two schools in favour of SATs practice and other activities e.g. school journeys and performances. This no doubt influenced

children's adoption of reading strategies and learning behaviours. Classroom observations and teacher interviews were also, necessarily, inconclusive about the developing use and potential effects of DR over the duration of the programme.

- **Underscore the need for coherent provision.** Revisiting the school's commitment is clearly necessary during the year HLT may wish to consider ways to encourage schools to implement DR through the whole school year, to emphasise the specific ongoing benefits that DR could have for SATs preparation and for reading and learning in other subjects.
- **Supporting staff reading repertoires to support the programmes and reading for pleasure more widely.** In addition to providing a list of suggested books for DR, as at present, it would be useful to support teachers in the selection of a range of reading in order to widen their own and children's reading repertoires as they progress through the programme. This will enable staff to increase their knowledge of children's literature, will prompt sharing with colleagues and is likely to support staff commitment to the programme, both as support for reading (as assessed within SATS) and for reading for pleasure (also mandated).
- **Overtly link DR to learning across the primary curriculum.** HLT could explore further how the strategies underpinning DR apply to other curriculum areas. This could encourage more schools to extend their use and impact of DR in different areas of curriculum.

Moving forward more widely

The HLT team have clearly created a strong programme which impacts upon professional knowledge and understanding and positively supports children as readers in various ways. To begin to scope next steps for this work, we recommend the HLT team consider partnering with a Higher Education Institution to train student teachers in the use of DSR or DR and seek to pilot such a partnership with a PGCE or Year 3 English subject specialism cohort of students.. At this time of the Covid-19 crisis, many student teachers have experienced significantly depleted professional practice opportunities and Universities and SCITTS might well be open to additional training and support as well as new opportunities for their students to work with children. This would not only afford the young trainee teachers excellent training in aspects of reading but would also enable the programmes to be monitored though focused delivery in a small number of London schools. It could also establish a new longer-term partnership

Both programmes had a positive effect in the participating case study schools in that staff felt it impacted in a beneficial way on their practice, and for children on their engagement with reading lessons and reading skills and enjoyment. A key strength of the DSR and DR

programmes is the broad focus on both reading skills, on comprehension in terms of meaning, enjoyment and on reading for pleasure. This may be germane to fostering life-long readers who achieve well and are enabled to engage in a range of reading for diverse purposes.

ANNEX A DSR and DR Classroom observation checklists for all schools and visits

DSR summary of classroom observations all schools all visits		DEBENHURST				MORNINGTON				AMGROVE				GREENWELL			
Visit		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Throughout lesson:																	
1	Is the teacher enthusiastic in terms of their tone of voice, body language etc.?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y	Y	Y	Y
2	Does the teacher and/or adults engage all children in talk about reading?/i	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y	N	Y	Y
3	Are children engaged throughout the lesson?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	N	N	Y	Y
Part one – before independent reading																	
4	Teacher telling the story and talking with children about the main idea in it	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N/A	Y	Y	Y	N/A!
5	Teacher reads the story	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N/A	Y	Y	Y	N
6	Teacher establishes focus points – children’s strategies for helping themselves	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N/A	Y	Y	Y	Y
7	Teacher encourages children to respond to teacher’s introduction to story	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N/A	N	Y	N	N
Part two – Independent reading																	
7	Children divided into small groups on basis of reading stage	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/Aii	N	Y	N/A	Y	Y	Y	Y
8	Adult encouraging children’s independent use of strategies	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y	Y	Y	Y
9	Adult provides 1-1 support to each child	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N/A	Y	Y	Y	Y
10	Adult’s use of prompts for children to monitor their reading	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N/A	Y	Y	Y	Y
11	Are adults using the High, Mid and Low level prompting sequence	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N/A	Y	Y	N	N
12	Children use prompts to monitor their own reading	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N/A	N	Y	N	Y
13	Children read repeatedly until adult asks them to stop	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y	N	Y	Y
15	Teachers’ praise links to focussed teaching points (e.g. I like...)	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y	N	Y	Y
16	Teacher prompts children to problem-solve independently	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N/A	Y	Y	N	Y
Part three – after independent reading																	
17	All children engaged equally in talk about the story	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N/A	Y	N	Y	Y
18	Children learned about a word from one of the sentences in the book.	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N/A	Y	N	Y	Y
19	Children learned to link language with print (e.g. through cutting up a sentence.	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	N/A	Y	Y	Y	Y

Notes: N/Ai = second day: no need to re-read story

N/Aii – small class so no need to divide into small groups

DR summary of classroom observation all schools and visits		DEBENHURST				FREEBRIDGE				AMGROVE				GREENWELL				
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
Throughout the lessons																		
1	Is the teacher enthusiastic in terms of their tone of voice, body language, etc?	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N/A	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	N/A
2	Does the teacher engage all children in talk about reading (e.g. Think Aloud)?	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N		Y	Y	Y	Y		
3	Does the teacher make talk central?	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N		Y	Y	Y	Y		
4	Do all children engage with the teacher?	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N		Y	Y	N			
5	Do all/many children use child learning behaviours?	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		
Pt 1: Whole class teaching																		
6	Teacher introduces or revises strategy	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		
7	Teacher models Think Aloud with displayed text	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		
8	Children work in mixed 'ability' partner work answering questions	Y	Y	N	N/A	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N		N	Y	Y			
9	Children work in mixed 'ability' pairs using Strategies	N	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y		N	Y	Y			
10	There is a focus on children's learning behaviours	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N		Y	Y	Y			
11	There is a focus on key vocabulary	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y		Y	Y	Y			
Pt 2: Independent reading																		
12a	Do children work individually?	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N		N	N	N			
12b	Do children work with partners?	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y		N	Y	Y			
13	Children are focussed/engaged	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y			
14	Teacher monitors balance between talk/independent reading to build stamina	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y		N	Y	N			
Pt 3: Post reading																		
15	Class celebrates use of strategies	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N		Y	N	N			
16	Teacher/children clarify tricky vocabulary	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y		Y	N	N			
17	Teachers/children create 'assessment snapshot'	N	N	N	N	N	N	N		N	Y		Y	N	N			
18	Children's progress evaluated against learning behaviours	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N		N	N	N			

ANNEX B The Open University Evaluation Project Review

Reflections on SSIF project HLT:

Accountability

- Some of the Hackney schools had the involvement of School Improvement Partners to assist if there were any issues arising.

Lesson Learnt:

- Set up a contract /service level agreement at the start to ensure that there was a more formal leadership involvement from the head teacher. This would clearly set out the expectations of the schools e.g. allowing teachers to come out on training etc. In addition, ensuring the head teachers attend all training and subsequent meetings.
- Ensure that if working with schools that were not accountable to us e.g. from another LEA or multi Academy chain, that there was a meeting or communication with a representative to ensure that they are clear of the expectations and provide support if a school is not engaging as well as they could be.

Leadership:

- Where it worked well the SLT was involved and worked closely with HLT from the beginning. They attended all training and supported the literacy lead. Training time was given and support for monitoring and coaching developed.
- New leaders to a curriculum area felt supported and the project built their leadership skills through coaching by partner

Lesson Learnt:

- Ensuring that all schools SLT was involved in all aspects and were available for visit feedback. In schools without SLT involvement, working with middle management and teachers meant that changes were not always successfully implemented.

Teaching and resourcing:

- DR and DSR provided schools with a more consistent approach to the teaching of reading and developed teachers subject knowledge.
- The structure was supportive to teachers
- Where teachers were enthusiastic and engaged and had a love of reading the lessons were more engaged and children were more responsive and enthusiastic

Lessons Learnt:

- DR and DSR sits within the whole school reading provision and where schools have a strong reading culture they work best. Ensuring schools worked at developing this would have led to a better expectation of teacher engagement in some schools.

- Where teachers were finding aspects of the teaching of reading more challenging this seemed to be reflective across all of their teaching. This is where the support of SLT was crucial.
- Development of the programmes since the project has looked at how schools evaluate their wider reading curriculum and also developed how, particularly DR, supports developing a love of reading,
- Resourcing of books is key and some schools would not make this a priority for both DR and DSR. The DfE would not allow any funding from the project towards this apart from the DSR books.

Training:

- Including the bespoke training elements meant that schools could be more strategic in what they were developing rather than time being spent on training that was less relevant to their needs.
- Forums were developed for the school leads to attend. This meant that good practice could be shared and knowledge developed. The forums helped maintain momentum and build a collective focus for the reading approaches.

Lessons learnt:

- Ensuring the SLT was involved and present at all training from the start in some schools and as the project continued.
- Ensuring that attendance at forums was compulsory and if lead could not come then another member of SLT or staff would attend
- Development – for schools outside of London we had forums but having a system for remote training for them to be part of a bigger group would have been useful.

Giving support through partners:

- Having a partner that supported the schools through the process that was consistent over 5 terms. This means that the schools built up a relationship and that the partner knew the context and circumstances of the school. Consequently project delivery could be more tailored to the school and reflective of their needs over the 5 terms. Having partners who were school based was also a positive as schools could visit and see good practice.

Lesson Learnt:

- For 2 of the schools the partner relationship was not as strong as it could have been. For 1 school the partner swapped however for the other 1 this only came to light after the project finished. Having a mechanism in place for the schools to raise issues with someone who was not their partner would have helped. Although regular meetings were in place with partners and feedback was sought from schools, perhaps an informal check up by the coordinator of the project in each school would

have highlighted this earlier. Where the partner was swapped the School Improvement Partner approached the corodinator.

Evaluation documentation:

- Evaluation documents were useful, particularly the ones done with partner and the school.

Lessons learnt:

- Have less evaluation paperwork or simplified paperwork that could be more accumulative over the 5 terms would better allow for changes rather than termly paperwork.
- Ensuring that all documentation was systematically filled in

Range of schools being supported:

Lessons learnt:

Work in one area rather than across 2 different areas e.g. focus on East Sussex as the range of schools and organising support /training etc. across a wide area was more challenging.
