

# The cre8us effect...

## Speak out: literacy, boys' motivation, and parents

*"We need to improve literacy, boys' motivation and get parents more involved. We think developing a more engaging curriculum is the means to do this. Our results are well below the national average, particularly with regard to writing; our multi-ethnic catchment area is one of high social deprivation and transience and 21 languages are spoken across the school."*

Mrs. Islam, Headteacher

## Stanton Bridge Primary School, Coventry

### Our Achievement

- A total of nine children in the class made accelerated progress (3 APS) within the term, compared to the average of 4 APS that is expected in a whole academic year. There was an 11% increase in children achieving level 3A+ for writing and by the end of the project 43% of children had achieved 3A or above.
- The children's enjoyment of writing increased without question. All except one were happy to write more often and willing to tackle a range of genres - letters, poems, captions, collective lists, and going on to write stories.
- Many have carried on the project at home, following their own lines of enquiry: "My daughter did lots of work at home without being asked to... she was very inspired."
- The Storytelling Café attracted 17 parents and grandparents. The class comprises only 23 children, so this is a high proportion demonstrating the commitment and engagement of parents and carers.



### The Feedback

Some children, especially boys, who had been reluctant to write, were excited by the activities. As shown by the need for less adult help, the children have gained confidence and now find it easier to develop their ideas. "We didn't have to ask for as much help because we listened more carefully." "I changed my story ideas about Blodin when I remembered what sort of person he was."

Their class teacher said *"I was surprised at their ability to draw on their own experiences and generate imaginative ideas... they completed and extended school work for their own pleasure; I've never seen this happen before, and with such enthusiasm."*

The parents too noticed the improvement. *"I have never seen children participating and learning as much. My daughter did lots of work at home without being asked to... she was inspired."*

One of the non-English speaking parents said at the end *"thank you for inviting me"*, having asked her child to translate the phrase for her.

*"The values of confidence, independence and harmony permeated the entire creative process where the children were exposed to working in a variety of ways and challenged throughout."*

## The Cre8us Effect ... at Stanton Bridge Primary School: Speak Out

The main focus for the project was to expose young people to meaningful writing experiences that had a real purpose and so the school opted to work with storytelling practitioners. Because the school works in a cohesive way, the children's own cultures were used as starting points.



Parents were actively encouraged to participate, with the hope that they would see their culture and language being valued by the school and be able to experience a different approach to teaching and learning. A Storytelling Café was created; the classroom was transformed into the world of the story of Blodin the Beast, by Michael Morpurgo. Children greeted their parents dressed in costumes and escorted them to the classroom area whilst talking about the project. The displays were developed and created by the children and the whole classroom was covered in children's work. Children wrote their own invites and took ownership over the project ensuring that pupil voice was at the heart of learning. Clearly, this helped to not only engage but to consistently motivate learners.

Class assemblies, which have generally attracted a high turnout, were used as a key means of sharing the project with parents and a dedicated staff meeting was held to provide feedback within the school. The creative practitioners led the staff workshop and included learning and teaching techniques to inspire the whole staff team as well as highlighting the benefits of working in such a way.

### How to find out more...

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