AN EVALUATION OF READING RECOVERY AT BLAYNEY PUBLIC SCHOOL (2010 – 2013)

Blayney Public School has implemented the Reading Recovery program for 17 years. There has been no fewer than five staff members trained as Reading Recovery teachers during that time. This evaluation is focussed on the four years of the program from 2010 to 2013.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND
Reading Recovery is a research-based intervention with the prime goals of accelerating literacy learning and reducing reading and writing failure difficulties by targeting those students performing in the lowest 20% of Year One.

Reading Recovery implementation is systematic and comprehensive. It encompasses professional development for teachers, a network of professional support for teachers and administrators, and a research and evaluation component to monitor program effectiveness and ensure accountability.

Reading Recovery:
- identifies students experiencing reading and writing difficulties after their first year of school
- provides an intensive, individually designed and individually delivered series of lessons for 30 minutes each day
- is supplementary to the ongoing literacy activities in the classroom

By intervening in Year 1, the second year of school, Reading Recovery can prevent a cycle of failure for students at risk and, through intensive daily instruction, generally brings the lowest literacy performers up to average classroom levels within as short a time as possible.

Reading Recovery’s goal is for students to fully participate in classroom activities with their average peers. Therefore, Reading Recovery is not a remedial reading program. Rather, it is based on early identification to prevent reading failure occurring.


CONTEXT
Over the period 2010 – 2013, Blayney Public School provided Reading Recovery lessons for twenty-seven Year 1 students, with eight students in 2010, 7 students in 2011 and 6 students in both 2012 and 2013.
The success of a student in Reading Recovery is measured through a number of assessments:

- Book Level
- Letter Identification
- Concepts of Print
- Word Test
- Burt Reading
- Writing Vocabulary
- Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words

The Reading Recovery teacher delivers one to one instruction for 30 minutes a day. The 30 minute lesson is individually designed to meet the student’s literacy and learning needs. Reading Recovery at Blayney Public School is timetabled in the morning and mid-morning sessions, alongside the school’s regular classroom literacy sessions.

**FINDINGS**

Of the twenty-seven students who participated in the program, eleven were discontinued, meaning they met the required exit point standards of the program after completing the full allocation of time; fourteen were discontinued after being found to have met the exit point standards of the program at the end of a calendar year but who had not completed the full allocation of time for the program; and two students were referred off the program into an alternative support mechanism.

The average number of lessons for students participating in Reading Recovery at Blayney Public School is 68.92 over an average period of 16.6 weeks. In 2010, NSW students participating in Reading Recovery achieved the target of “catching up” to their peers, on average, in 14 weeks.

**Book Level Measures**
The average start level for the 25 students who were discontinued from the program was 4.6. The average end level was 18.56 with an average growth in book levels of 13.96.

**Letter Identification Measures**
The average start level for the 25 students who were discontinued from the program was 49.08. The average end level was 53.48 with an average growth in letter identification of 4.4. The maximum possible score for letter identification is 54. Fourteen of the 25 students attained this score. The remaining 11 students had an endpoint score of 53 or 52.

**Concepts of Print Measures**
The average start level for the 25 students who were discontinued from the program was 16.64. The average end level was 22 with an average growth in concepts of print of 5.36. The maximum possible score for concepts of print is 24. Three of the 25 students attained this score. Thirteen students scored 23 or 22. The remaining 9 students had an endpoint score of 20 or 21.

**Word Test Measures**
The average start level for the 25 students who were discontinued from the program was 7.68. The average end level was 14.36 with an average growth in word test of 6.68. The maximum possible score for concepts of print is 15. Twelve of the 25 students attained this score. Eleven students scored 14. The remaining students had an endpoint score of 12 or 13.
**Burt Reading Measures**
The average start level for the 25 students who were discontinued from the program was 14.44. The average end level was 32.28 with an average growth in Burt Reading of 17.84. Burt Reading scores are used to monitor students’ progress after discontinuing from Reading Recovery. The average rate of growth for those students who have discontinued is 8.66.

**Writing Vocabulary Measures**
The average start level for the 25 students who were discontinued from the program was 23.04. The average end level was 63.16 with an average growth in writing vocabulary of 40.12.

**Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words Measures**
The average start level for the 25 students who were discontinued from the program was 26.32. The average end level was 36.76 with an average growth in hearing and recording sounds in words of 10.44. The maximum possible score for hearing and recording sounds in words is 37. Twenty-two of the 25 students attained this score. The remaining three students scored 36.

**CONCLUSIONS**
The Reading Recovery program has been successful at Blayney Public School.

On average it takes a little longer for Reading Recovery students at Blayney Public School to meet the exit point standards but there is a high rate of success for the students in the program.

The majority of students exceed the minimum exit-point standards at the time of discontinuation.

Students who have participated in Reading Recovery have demonstrated reading skill levels consistent with their peers when measured at the end of Year 2 and Year 3.