Catch Up Literacy

This page covers the first (efficacy) trial of Catch Up® Literacy, which tested whether it could work in schools under best possible conditions. To read about the second (effectiveness) trial - testing a scalable model under everyday conditions in a large number of schools - click here.

Catch Up Literacy© is a one to one intervention for learners who are struggling to learn to read. It is delivered by Teaching Assistants and consists of two 15-minute sessions per week.

EEF Summary

There is evidence that Teaching Assistants are more likely to have a positive impact when delivering structured interventions than as general classroom support. The EEF funded Catch Up® Literacy because it is a structured intervention that is widely used in schools.

EEF tested whether the programme could have a positive impact on readers during the transition between primary and secondary school. The programme was delivered by its original developers and the pupils involved made two months additional progress in comparison to pupils receiving standard provision. There was also a positive impact on pupils’ enjoyment of writing and the job satisfaction of teaching assistants.

Based on this, the EEF then evaluated a revised model of the programme, which was designed to be delivered to a larger number of schools at the same time, and which was aimed at pupils in years 4 and 5, rather than pupils moving from primary to secondary school. This second study found no evidence that Catch Up® Literacy had an impact on pupils’ reading comprehension outcomes when compared to ‘business as usual’ teaching assistant support. The less promising result may be due to the changes introduced to programme after the first evaluation.

There is mixed evidence across the two trials of Catch Up Literacy. Due to the lack of impact in the second trial, the EEF will be removing Catch Up Literacy from the list of promising projects. There remains strong evidence that one to one tuition is an effective way of improving literacy attainment, and the EEF continues to be interested in TA-led structured interventions.
Research Results

Research Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome/Group</th>
<th>Impact - the size of the difference between Catch Up Literacy pupils and other pupils</th>
<th>Security - how confident are we in this result?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>2 Months' Progress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading (FSM)</td>
<td>0 Months' Progress</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Were the schools in the trial similar to my school?

There were 15 secondary schools in the trial, the majority located in urban areas, with 4 located in smaller towns and 1 in a rural area. 73% were rated good or outstanding by Ofsted.

21% of the pupils in the trial were eligible for free school meals.

Could I implement this in my school?

Catch Up Literacy is available for schools to purchase from the Catch Up team.

Delivered by TAs  
Participant group Individuals  
Intervention length 30 Weeks

How much will it cost?

The training provided by Catch Up costs £350 per attendee. The cost of TA salaries and cover while TAs are training should also be considered.

Cost per pupil £30  
Training time per staff member 3 Days

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Pupils</th>
<th>Key Stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>557</td>
<td>Key Stage 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Start date  
End date  
Type of trial  
January 2012  
January 2014  
Efficacy Trial

Evaluation Conclusions

1. The pupils that received Catch Up Literacy made more progress than pupils that did not. However, this difference was not statistically significant so we cannot be confident that it was not due to chance.
2. Catch Up Literacy did have a statistically significant impact on pupils’ attitudes to school, self-assessed ability in reading, and their confidence in and enjoyment of writing.

3. Schools should ensure that Catch Up Literacy sessions are located in a private and quiet location, and that teaching assistants are given adequate time to prepare before each lesson.

4. Teaching assistants reported a number of benefits for their own professional development. These include increases in confidence, knowledge of literacy support and overall job satisfaction.

5. Future research could test the impact of Catch Up Literacy against an “active” control group that receives the same amount of one-to-one tuition as the pupils who receive Catch Up Literacy.