

# Supply Desk Love to Read Case Study



**"Ten-week literacy intervention in West Yorkshire boys' school  
improves reading age by an average of 18 months  
in 80% of learners."**

Supply Desk's reading intervention programme 'Love to Read' improved learners' reading age across the school, which has a high proportion of English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Special Educational Needs (SEN) learners.

[www.supplydesk.co.uk/love to read](http://www.supplydesk.co.uk/love%20to%20read)

0800 027 2737  

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# Love to Read Case Study

Upper Batley High School - West Yorkshire

Headteacher: Samantha Vickers

Website: [www.ubhs.co.uk](http://www.ubhs.co.uk)

## About the school

Upper Batley High School (UBHS) in Batley, West Yorkshire is a secondary school catering for boys aged between 11 and 16. Of the 674 learners on the roll, 95% come from ethnic minority groups (the national average is 28%) and for 61%, English is a second language. 33% of learners receive free school meals – 5% higher than the national average. UBHS also has a high intake of lower ability learners (based on reading, writing and mathematical ability) at 30% – the national average is 10-16%. The school has a low proportion of high ability learners at approximately 20%, which is half the national average of 40%. The proportion of SEND learners is 34%, against the national average of 28%.

In 2014, UBHS was rated 'Inadequate' by Ofsted but has improved rapidly over the past three years, achieving a 'Good' rating in its 2016 Ofsted inspection. Attendance has improved considerably, in-line with the national average; persistent absence and exclusions have decreased and GCSE results have improved. Additionally, enrollment of high achieving learners has increased over the last three years, from 481 to 676.

## The challenge

Despite significant improvements in literacy outcomes throughout the school since 2014, increasing reading comprehension continued to be a key focus for UBHS, with particular attention on the large number of EAL learners.

For many of these learners, English is not the first language spoken at home and their access to reading material outside of school is limited. Typically, a child's reading age improves through parental involvement, including reading bedtime stories, but in UBHS's local community this is much less common.

For learners to access and comprehend their GCSE papers in Year 11, a reading age of 15 years and six months is required – at the start of this study, the majority of UBHS learners were well below this level. It was imperative that those learners, especially those in the years preceding GCSEs, increased their literacy skills. With improved confidence in accessing and understanding exam papers, they would be much better placed for success across all subject areas.

## The solution - Love to Read

'Love to Read' is a reading intervention programme developed to work in partnership with schools to overcome literacy difficulties that affect the life chances of children, young people and adults. Love to Read is a book based reading intervention, proven to boost reading ages by up to 2 years in the space of a 10-week programme. It focuses on core aspects of literacy including, comprehension, de-coding and vocabulary - whilst bolstering pupil confidence.

Supply Desk created the intervention in response to the shocking statistic that approximately 1 in 5 (20%) of school-aged children are unable to read. The programme is designed to boost learners reading ages by up to two years in ten weeks.

As one of the UK's leading education recruitment specialists, we contacted UBHS about our new 'Love to Read' reading intervention programme and the pilot we were hoping to run in schools across West Yorkshire. UBHS agreed to take part.

The 10-week intervention pilot ran at UBHS from January to Easter 2018. The school then continued with the programme until the summer. It consisted of each learner undertaking two 20-minute one-to-one reading sessions, per week with a Love to Read trained Teaching Assistant. Students were encouraged to read at home between sessions and an after school reading club was opened and supported by the Love to Read Teaching Assistant.

## The Learners

28 learners participated in the reading intervention:

- 8 learners were mainstream
- 5 had an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- 4 learners had English as an additional language (EAL)
- 4 had Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
- 3 had both MLD and Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH)
- 2 had SEMH
- 1 had dyslexia
- 1 had an attention deficit disorder/autism spectrum disorder (ADHD/ASD)

## Key results

The results were incredible – the impact of the reading intervention was widespread across the participant group with some of the boys increasing their reading age by two years in the space of a term. 80% of learners improved their reading age by more than a year, with one learner progressing by over three years in the 10 weeks.

### Year 7 results:

- All students made significant progress.
- The most significant rise was 18 months – the learner progressed from a reading age of 14.01 to 15.07.
- The second greatest improvement overall was a Year 7 learner with MLD who improved by 14 months – from a reading age of 7.04 to 8.06.

### Year 8 results:

- 80% made an average increase of 14 months, or more.
- The most significant improvement of the pilot was seen in one Year 8 learner with an increase of 3.5 years – with the learner moving from a reading age of 6.09 to 10.3 in just 10 weeks.

One of the most important outcomes of the programme was the high level of engagement and intrinsic motivation shown by the learners.

Headteacher, Sam Vickers, commented that:

“They really enjoyed working with the Love to Read Teaching Assistant. He was great at improving their comprehension and vocabulary by

ensuring new words were practised in sentences throughout the week. Parents were also engaged in their children's literacy journey and the triangulation between school, the pupils and their parents ensured encouragement, support and praise from all sides.”

## Conclusion

All of the learners who took part in the Love to Read pilot at UBHS substantially increased their reading age. The project was a great success both quantitatively and qualitatively. The intervention boosted learners' confidence and self-esteem. They enjoyed the consistent support and loved seeing the progress they were making on a daily basis.

Headteacher, Sam Vickers, commented:

“The headline results of the programme were astounding and the pupils who participated in the intervention have kept reading. We now have a school-wide reading culture, evidenced by pupils increasingly reading in their own time as well as in lessons.

Perhaps the greatest benefit was observed among our EAL pupils – the programme increased their access to English reading material and the one-to-one support they received, particularly around new vocabulary, greatly improved their confidence and empowered them to read in English.

We aim to continue the intervention and encourage our pupils to keep engaging in reading – it is reading little and often that makes the biggest difference for our pupils. We are expanding the project this year to include more parental involvement as this ensures the development is sustainable. We would definitely recommend the Love to Read intervention to other schools.”

## Contact

For more information about the Love to Read programme visit our website [www.supplydesk.co.uk/lovetoread](http://www.supplydesk.co.uk/lovetoread) or contact us today on **0800 027 2737** to speak to your local branch consultants.

