



# IMPACT REPORT 2014-2015





Just Teach Them. They'll Learn.

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## INTRODUCTION

We have come a long way. Our educational charity, **Real Action**, now noted for the outstanding achievement of the children it teaches to read, was established in the late 1990s by a community beset by criminality and found to be largely illiterate. 'What we want is real action', they declared.

We have been running one Butterfly Saturday Reading School now since 1999 – with term-time 2-hour classes taught by our specially trained volunteers. We have established two more by popular request. It is in our work with this Saturday model, now also replicated in school interventions, that we can demonstrate a truth:

children from families deemed to be disadvantaged need not be doomed to educational disadvantage. We have the facts and the figures to show this.

The **Right to Read** comes foremost. Our children, however negatively they've been labelled, master literacy in record time. We evaluate as we go. The foundations of their education – mastery of literacy and the subject of English - have been delivered. These 'disadvantaged' children are destined for educational success. Mission fulfilled.

We're a small, dedicated team at Real Action. We're education-effective. We're cost-effective too.

Just ask us.

**READ ON...**



Our mission: to demonstrate that social and economic disadvantage need not result in educational disadvantage.

## WHAT WE DO

We aim to reduce the impact of inequality by rapidly advancing children's literacy achievements. We have proven that all children, regardless of their background, can be taught to read. We don't accept the notion that socially and economically disadvantaged children are unteachable. It is unacceptable that so many of our children leave school unable to read and write. We believe all children have **the right to read**.

**Real Action** is the literacy charity that provides the Butterfly Reading Programme for children from disadvantaged families. We work with children from neighbourhoods with the highest levels of child deprivation in the country. We currently have three Butterfly Saturday Reading Schools and we work directly with primary and secondary schools.

Our Butterfly Reading Programme is delivered to children through direct, inter-active, whole class, scripted, and structured teaching. Priority is given to teaching how-

to-read by synthetic phonics, with The Butterfly Book. Butterfly Grammar follows. Then it's on to elevated levels of comprehension and literary appreciation with The Junior Butterfly Reader. And up through the classes they fly! It is unique in educational charities that focus on literacy.

We offer children from every conceivable background the

opportunity to learn to read quickly. Our aim is for children to learn to read, swiftly and effectively, so that they are reading at the level for their age and beyond. We call children who have benefited from our programme **Butterfly Highfliers... The sky's the limit!**

In this report we are pleased to be able to share with you the difference we have made during the academic year 2014/2015 for almost 700 children.

We are very proud of our success in teaching the children we work with how to read. Our success has shown that **we have the solution to tackle educational disadvantage** and we will work endlessly to ensure all children get the educational opportunities they deserve.

“ THE RIGHT TO READ ”



ACADEMIC YEAR: 2014/2015

## OVERVIEW

In 2014/2015 Real Action recruited and trained 42 volunteers to deliver classes at our Butterfly Saturday Reading Schools. Children come by word of mouth to our popular Saturday classes. The children flock in from the disadvantaged areas and council estates in which the Saturday Schools operate.

Throughout the year we have spread expertise by sharing the Butterfly methodology with 55 teachers and teaching assistants.

In 2014/2015, Real Action's Butterfly Excellence Primary School Programme worked with 431 children who had reading ages, on average, 16 months behind their chronological ages.

We worked in 10 London primary schools all in areas of high need- Brent, north Kensington and north Westminster.

Our focus for the academic year turned to primary schools after our experience working with secondary schools in 2012/2013 where we found 70%-100% of the 11-12-year-olds had reading ages below reading age 10. They were not secondary school ready. Our work, funded by the Education Endowment Foundation, targeted children in year 7 with a KS2 reading level below level 4 (the national average). Of the 200 children taught 49% were entitled to free schools meals and 39% had special educational needs. After an average of 18 hours of Butterfly teaching the reading ages of the pupils increased by an average 18 months.

We taught 250 children at our Butterfly Saturday Reading Schools in north Westminster and north Kensington.

On our primary school programme

We taught 431 children.

E  
A  
L

61% had English as an additional language.

S  
E  
N

45% had special educational needs.

F  
S  
M

44% were entitled to free school meals.



52%



48%



 children leave primary school unable to read and write properly.

## WHY BUTTERFLY TEACHING?

One in four children leaves primary school unable to read and write properly. This means that 1.62 million children can't access the national curriculum in secondary school because they can't read well enough.<sup>1</sup>

70% of pupils permanently excluded from school have difficulties in basic literacy skills.

25% of young offenders are said to have reading skills below those of the average seven-year-old.<sup>2</sup>

The Mozart Estate in north Westminster (where Real Action and the Queen's Park Saturday Butterfly School are based) has the highest level of child deprivation in the country.

The White City area ranks at 45<sup>th</sup> and north Kensington at 1,717<sup>th</sup> for deprivation. These areas are served by our Portobello and Colville Saturday Butterfly schools (opened in November 2015).<sup>3</sup>



## Our Butterfly Programmes

Whether at our Saturday Schools or on our in-school programme our curriculum of Butterfly Phonics (from the Butterfly Book), Butterfly Grammar and then the Junior Butterfly Reader and the Advanced Butterfly Reader is designed to ensure children improve their reading fluency, comprehension and grammar and vocabulary. It can be used for children in both primary and secondary schools. Distinguished educationalist Irina Tyk is the Butterfly Book's author.

<sup>1</sup> Jama, D. & Dugdale, G. (2012) Literacy the State of Nation, National Literacy Trust  
<sup>2</sup> Jama, D. & Dugdale, G. (2018) Literacy the State of Nation, National Literacy Trust  
<sup>3</sup> IDACI 2015





“Can you read the first line for me?”  
“No, I don’t know.”

## HASSAN’S STORY

Hassan, an eight year old pupil on our primary school programme, is hostile and unable to read. He is labelled as special educational needs, has English as an additional language and is in receipt of pupil premium.

“Can you read the first line for me?”  
“No, I don’t know.”

He doesn’t want to talk or participate in the classes. Three-letter words defeat him. For several weeks he angrily refused to be taught. Eventually Hassan accepted a few minutes of Butterfly teaching. Then he started to sit, with his Learning Support Assistant alongside, for an increasing number of minutes in the class. Sometimes he would revert to his customary bad behaviour - picking up a chair and hurling it at a glass door one day, and at a window the next.

Hassan’s number of minutes of class attendance grew. He started to read words and then sentences. His behaviour improved although he still reverted to his old behaviour when he felt ‘stupid’ for not knowing something. His Learning Support Assistant could “really see the improvement in Hassan’s reading”.

Hassan has started to read paragraphs from the Butterfly Book fluently. His behaviour is much better and his Learning Support Assistant confirms that his reading levels have really improved. He has progressed from barely being able to read to having a reading age of a 7 year old in just 13 hours of Butterfly teaching.

NOVEMBER 2014

JANUARY 2015

MARCH 2015

“ FROM BARELY BEING ABLE TO READ TO HAVING A READING AGE OF A 7 YEAR OLD IN JUST 13 HOURS OF BUTTERFLY TEACHING. ”

“Real Action helped me in every possible way”

*Mohammad, Butterfly graduate*

## OUR IMPACT

We believe our success does not just transform the lives of individual children, but has the power to transform whole communities. Many of our Butterfly graduates who were at risk of gang life are now at university. We have been instrumental in inspiring their educational aspirations.

Our 17-year-old Butterfly Saturday school operates in Queen’s Park the country’s ward with the highest level of child deprivation. Improvement here over a ten-year period in 11-year-olds’ reading was almost twice that for Westminster as a whole.

We work with children who are among those deemed most at risk of educational failure. YET -

Across our two **Butterfly Saturday**

**Schools** in the academic year 2014/2015, **98 children** who were pre- and post-tested made an average **12 months’ improvement in their reading ages in an average 22 hours** of Butterfly teaching.

On our Butterfly Excellence Primary School Programme pupils’ reading ages improved by 10 months in an average 18 hours’ Butterfly teaching. At the start of the programme 80% of the pupils had a reading age on average 20 months below their chronological age.

After the 18 hours of teaching their reading age deficits were reduced to an average 13 months. **Pupils with SEN made the same rate of progress as their peers, as did pupils on pupil premium. EAL pupils out-performed their peers.**

“ FOR KIDS WHO ARE SCARED, FAILING, OR NOT HITTING THEIR LEVELS... THE BUTTERFLY CLASSES CAN DEFINITELY CHANGE THAT ”

*Gianni, Butterfly graduate*



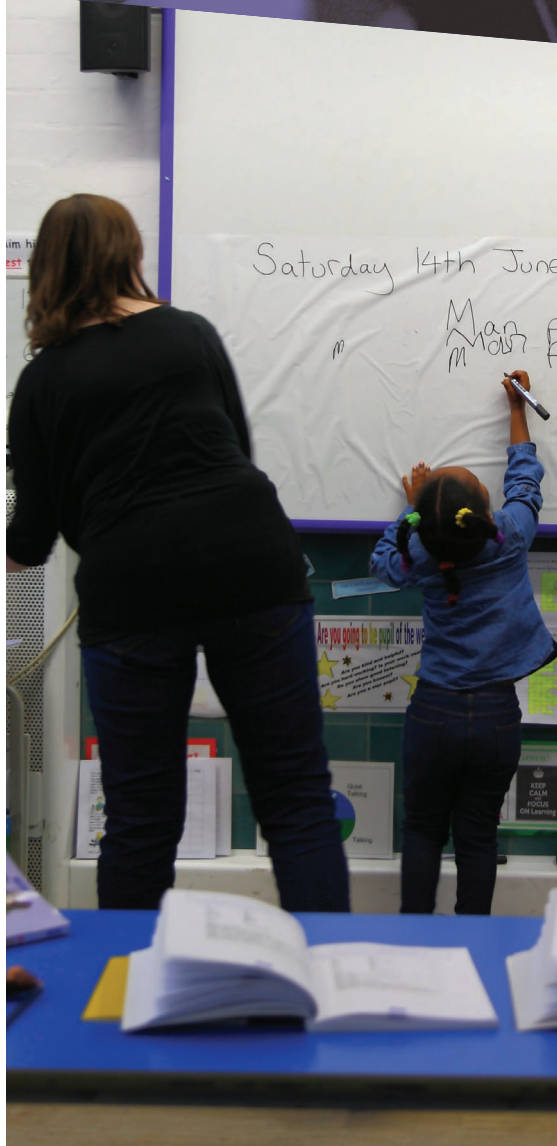
## MEASURING PROGRESS

To understand the progress children make in reading we use nationally recognised tests.

The **Holborn Reading test** is used to evaluate the children's reading age when they start on the Butterfly Programme, and after approximately 20 hours of Butterfly teaching. It is also used to place children into classes.

The **NGRT Comprehension test** was used on our primary school programme to evaluate the children's comprehension age at the start of the programme and at the end of the programme.

The **Salford Sentence Reading test** is used on our primary school



programme to evaluate children's reading age at the start of the programme and at the end of the programme.

The **Salford Comprehension test** is used on our primary school programme to evaluate the children's comprehension age at the start of the programme and at the end of the programme.

Attendance of all pupils on our programmes is recorded to determine progress in relation to number of hours of

OUR NORM:  
“ OUR PUPILS' READING AGES RISE BY AN AVERAGE 12 MONTHS IN 20 HOURS' PACEY BUTTERFLY LITERACY TEACHING. ”

Butterfly teaching received.

We also try to understand the qualitative changes that we can make. We do this by talking to the pupils to see how they feel about the programme and by asking the class teachers for feedback about the impact of our classes and their perspective on the training we have provided them.





"BEFORE MY BUTTERFLY CLASSES I WASN'T THAT GOOD AT LITERACY AND READING BUT NOW I AM A LEVEL 3B. I HAVE GONE UP!"

Chloe, age 9



87% of class teachers noticed an improvement in the pupils' reading and comprehension skills. 74% agreed that the Butterfly classes contributed to this improvement.



"I ENJOYED THE LESSONS BECAUSE IT IS NOT LIKE CLASS WHERE PEOPLE DON'T LISTEN AND MY TEACHER HAS TO SHOUT. IN MY BUTTERFLY CLASSES MY TEACHER DID NOT SHOUT AND IT HELPED ME IMPROVE WHAT I DIDN'T KNOW AND GET ME TO THE NEXT LEVEL."

Ifeoma, age 7

## WHAT CLASS TEACHERS SAY:

"Yes, they have all become more confident and fluent readers."

Literacy leader

[when asked if they noticed an improvement in the reading and decoding skills of the children who took part in the programme]

"Absolutely! These kids exceeded expectations in literacy by the end of Y2."

Year 2 teacher

[when asked if the programme contributed to positive outcomes.]

"Yes there has been a noticeable improvement in the fluency and decoding in most children... the children can read and scan text more effectively for key information and are showing development in their inference."

Year 4 teacher

"Butterfly classes have certainly contributed greatly to the improvement in the children's reading skills... pupils are far more confident in their approach to reading and can read unfamiliar vocabulary with far greater fluency."

Literacy leader

"The children demonstrate an increased confidence when tackling comprehension questions and use their developing skills."

Year 6 teacher

"THE CLASSES WERE GREAT FUN... I WAS VERY BAD AT READING. I COULDN'T EVEN READ 'IMPATIENT' BUT NOW I CAN."

Filipe, age 9



Thank you!  
Our work would not be possible without the support of our volunteers and our supporters.

## WHAT VOLUNTEERS SAY:

"I think the Butterfly lessons are run very well. The programme creates blocks of knowledge that the children continue to build upon, week after week."

*Jerome d'Orchimont*

"It's important to help kids that are behind in school and Butterfly programme does that."

*Lauren Rayner*

"The classes are well structured and to get to know the children, along with witnessing ongoing progress is an invaluable experience and a heartwarming start to every weekend!"

*Melissa Forbes*

## BUTTERFLY TRAINING

**87%** of class teachers felt our training sessions helped them understand more about the Butterfly Programme.

**73%** of class teachers felt more confident to use the programme in their classes after our training session.

**77%** of class teachers would like extra support from us to use the programme in their school.

## 2015-2016 TARGETS

- work with a further 4 primary schools, benefiting at least 180 pupils
- open a third Saturday School benefiting at least 60 pupils.
- maintain our two Butterfly Saturday Schools benefiting at least 350 pupils
- recruit and train 36 new volunteers

It costs £245 per child per term for our Butterfly in-school programme. That is £12.25 per hour for at least 20 hours.

For our Butterfly Saturday schools, they cost around £41,000 per year to keep them open for at least 350 pupils. This comes to around just £117 per child per year: a low cost to disconnect educational disadvantage from social and economic disadvantage.

Finally, it costs £444 to recruit and fully train a volunteer to become a Butterfly Practitioner!

Please support us by donating your time or money.

To find out how you can help please contact us:

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