



24 August 2010

Every Child a Chance Trust

Messaging Script

Overarching Narrative

The Government is committed to creating more choice in the education system, while also devolving power to schools. Every Child a Reader and Every Child Counts tick both of these boxes. But to enable schools to make the choice of running these programmes, central Government needs to invest £6m to support the required national infrastructure. This money will mean that the specialist teachers can be trained and the vital development and evaluation of the programmes can continue.

The most recent data shows that three quarters of the children on the programme attained the expected levels of achievement at the end of Key Stage One, when none were previously predicted by their schools to do so. Our evidence base proves that the programmes work and we know that head teachers will choose to use them, because they have seen for themselves how effective they are in closing gaps in attainment and helping to raise standards across the school. Evidence also shows that the programmes improve teaching craft skills across the whole school, acting as valuable in-school professional development.

If the Government commits the funding, the programmes can continue to play a major role in enabling schools to close the unacceptable performance gap between disadvantaged and better-off children, acting as an engine for improving social mobility.

The programmes evolved from a grassroots partnership of volunteers, business and teachers committed to improving opportunity and employability in their communities. This coalition is enthusiastic about the opportunity presented by the Big Society because this fits with their original vision and the approach it is already taking to helping some of the most disadvantaged children in our schools through collaboration and local action.

ENDS

Three Key Messages

Key benefit message:

Our programmes are recognised by head teachers as helping to shape whole school improvements in literacy and numeracy whilst targeting the 5% lowest achievers for whom current approaches have proved ineffective.

Three quarters of the children involved (amongst the most disadvantaged in their schools) achieve age related results when none were predicted to do so by their teachers. Follow up tests show that they are continuing to learn and make progress six months later.

The 'in-house' expertise of the specialist teacher benefits teaching and standards across the entire school, as they use their specialist training to help improve class teaching craft skills and to train and support teaching assistants.

Key funding message:

In order to train and accredit a specialist teacher, schools need to access a national framework run by universities. **Without the £6m needed for the national infrastructure, primary schools will not be able to train and accredit the specialist teachers which are essential to the success of the programmes. To fulfil its vital function as an enabler of choice, central government needs to fund this basic infrastructure.** ECaCT research shows that Head Teachers are anxious to have the choice to buy our programmes because of their quantitative evidence base, accountability and ultimately long-term value for money.

Key community message:

Parents, who often lack literacy and numeracy skills themselves, recognise the benefits that our programmes achieve over a short three to five month period. They have been encouraged to attend their children's lessons and support their learning at home. Many businesses have provided financial support to local schools with some employees volunteering as reading and maths mentors to increase confidence and career aspirations in children who have completed their tuition. **Our programmes are embedded in deprived communities and involve a wide range of people. They are an excellent example of the 'Big Society' in action - helping to improve social mobility through local action, collaboration and empowerment.**