



# Success story

## Stukeley Meadows Community Primary School, Northampton

### School Profile

Number of pupils	373
EAL	tbc
Free School Meals	tbc

Accelerated Reader had to work harder to create a love of reading, but this is just what it has done. Now a gentle word to reluctant readers that they are on "Karen's reading nag-list" is enough to nudge their noses right back into a book.

Initially it was introduced to help manage reading, particularly in Key Stage 2 where reading was becoming unmanageable, and where the reading habit was not being developed, even though the school was awash with literacy strategies.

Staff needed something that would drive itself, and Karen Stanton - Co-ordinator of Reading - set about swotting up on Accelerated Reader to squeeze every drop of value out of the reading management program.

It had been bought by her Head, who had seen it in other schools, before Karen joined. She spent time refining how they used it, and introduced other changes. She says every second of modification has paid off because the program now runs itself.

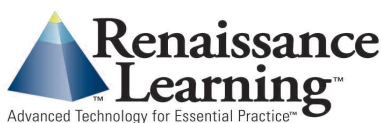
Within six weeks of using it in classes, with pupils taking quizzes, earning points and certificates, she and her colleagues were delighted to see "a snowball effect." The discovery that pupils would read in order to have the satisfaction of taking the quizzes was a revelation, and it all took off from there.

The school created a dedicated, centrally-located Accelerated Reader Library for KS2 pupils. This houses all of the books and materials used with the software, including materials for pupils with special needs. Pupils come here to get their latest books wearing passes. This replaced an earlier method where children below their chronological reading age would need to collect their books from a lower-year group, which had an unfortunate, stigmatising effect.

In fact, the school has introduced many bright ideas. Reading teams where children read and earn points as teams, winning team prizes and privileges - like no-uniform

Continued overleaf

For more information on Accelerated Reader please call FREEphone **0800 917 4447** or visit [www.renlearn.co.uk](http://www.renlearn.co.uk)



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# Success story

## Stukeley Meadows Community Primary School, Huntingdon *continued...*

days and picnic trips out of school - re-energise the approach and keep the youngsters reading. Buddy-reading exercises, where Year 6 pupils read with Year 3 children, create a very powerful sense of reading across the year groups. *"It's all about reading for a purpose and helping one another, and this positive spirit infects everyone,"* says Karen.

The AR Library is managed by the older pupils, appointed as managers and assistant managers, who take pride in the look and feel of the snug, warm, inviting place, quick to chide pupils abusing the place and just as quick to recommend engaging books to them.

Teaching assistants keep a booking-in diary, which logs who has done quizzes and who has not, and what progress is being made. With Diagnostic Reports printed out, staff can intervene with children who are not participating in full, urge parents to provide more support and chivy everyone on to do better. These reports remove the guesswork on progress and provide a concrete record to share with parents.

Parental involvement is actively encouraged. *"That means sharing unwelcome news when needed,"* says Karen. *"Part of the power of the reports,"* she says, *"is that they can substantiate reasons for slow progress and support a decision to lower the book level for a struggling reader, when an ambitious parent might otherwise apportion blame."*

Karen believes they would never have had such a clearly measurable, manageable record, or progress, without Accelerated Reader. *"As professionals, we can say categorically which pupils are reading. We can track when things go wrong and take remedial action much faster. With the core children, where schools tend to face the greatest challenge, we can also see which are staying at the same level."* But for Karen the real result is that a real reading habit has been established; not just the mechanical page-turning that boys tend to fine-tune, but higher-level reading skills, such as inference and deduction.

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