

# I AM PART OF THEIR STORY

Niddrie Mill Primary School,  
Edinburgh

Niddrie Mill is a non-denominational school in an area of Edinburgh recognised as having particularly high levels of social deprivation. The school has approximately 250 students, over 50% of which receive Free School Meals.

Accelerated Reader was introduced to the school over five years ago to encourage the development of a 'Reading culture'. The goal was to raise attainment in literacy and encourage Reading for Pleasure by providing more access to, and interest in, books.

Diane Bell, an IT Teacher with responsibility for Library Services, talks about the important role AR has in the school.



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[renlearn.co.uk/partofthestory](http://renlearn.co.uk/partofthestory)

Motivation

Reading culture

Progress monitoring

Parents

Reading for pleasure

## “We have all witnessed the genuine joy with which the students are now reading.”

We are located on the outskirts of Edinburgh in an area that is undergoing considerable regeneration. This brings its own problems in that some of our families are transient and some new to the area, although the majority of our students are second or third generation Niddrie Millers!

The school itself is relatively new having moved from an old Victorian building some three years ago; we now share a campus with St Francis RC Primary School. Our school is a Positive Discrimination school in that it is in an area of multiple social deprivations, which is reflected in our results across the curriculum. However, since the introduction of AR our students have shown a huge increase in their language and literacy skills across the board! In particular, they have benefited hugely from the element of personalisation offered by AR and their love of reading is now almost tangible.

I work with a number of support staff who help implement the programme on a daily basis and we have all witnessed the genuine joy with which the students are now reading. They look forward to 'AR time' and show great pride in themselves and each other as they move up the points system.

When a student achieves 80% or above they are given a certificate to recognise their achievement. The certificates are held in each class where, at the end of each week, a

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draw is made; the 'winning ticket' holder will choose a prize from a huge range of books available in our Accelerated Prize bookcase!

The winners of the draw are posted on our plasma screen and on our website, but all of our readers are recognised and celebrated at our weekly assemblies. The idea was devised by the children themselves as they are consulted annually on ways to improve how Accelerated Reader is implemented and how success should be rewarded.

Each term we assess the students' progress with STAR Reading baseline assessment software. The results are analysed and fed back to staff and parents – many of whom visit the school to see the whole process in action and find out how they can support their child's reading.

Unfortunately, books are not always readily available in the homes of some of our students, so it is fantastic that they choose to read so voraciously in school. As a result, our Library is now almost entirely given over to AR books – such is the success of AR and the students' demand for books across a wide variety of genres.

We have found AR to be very user-friendly – so much so that we use it with students as young as five years old who love the quizzes and instant feedback. It was most gratifying that our recent HMIE noted the strong reading culture at Niddrie Mill, which is exactly what we wanted to achieve with AR.

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