

English results soar as school signs on to 'Success for All'

An inner city primary in one of Leeds' most deprived areas has turned to the USA for inspiration. Ebor Gardens Primary in Burmantofts has seen its English results soar since signing up to an innovative literacy programme.

Pupils have been taking part in Success For All sessions since 2001, when just 40 per cent of children aged seven were gaining the expected level 2 or above in their Key Stage 1 tests.

This year, 100 per cent of pupils gained level 2 or above.

"We are an inner city school with the children entering on a fairly low base line," said Success For All co-ordinator Denise Maruszczak.

"We didn't feel the literacy hour was meeting their needs so we jumped at the chance of introducing Success For All. The children learn co-operatively at their own level so they can become a lot more articulate and confident.

"As they can all access the curriculum we have no behavioural problems at all in SFA classes."

The national test results of 11-year-olds has also improved markedly.

In 2002, 45 per cent of children gained the expected level 4 or above; a year later, the pass rate had risen to 64 per cent.

Success for All is a literacy programme that runs for 90 minutes every day.

At Ebor Gardens, it replaced the literacy hour, which became part of the national curriculum in 1998.

Under the scheme children are grouped according to their ability rather than their age.

They are assessed every eight weeks and, if ready, move up to a higher level.

The sessions focus on reading, writing and spelling, with children working in pairs and teams to share what they are learning and encourage each other.

It was introduced through the school's education action zone - The Learning Zone - which is led by Harehills-based education charity Learning Partnerships.

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