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FOREWORD

By Dr Dan White

Sydney Catholic Schools (SCS) aim to develop in students a love of learning and a passion for pursuing knowledge that will be carried with them for the rest of their lives. To enable this lifelong independent learning, we need to ensure that all students have an opportunity to attain high standards of literacy.

Reading Recovery is a proven, research-based early intervention designed to provide a safety net for students who are struggling with reading and writing. Our data provides ongoing evidence that Reading Recovery is the most effective and efficient way that our school system has helped students at risk to make accelerated progress towards independence in literacy. For this reason, Reading Recovery continues to be Sydney Catholic Schools’ preferred early literacy intervention.

This SCS system-wide approach is enhanced by the regular turnover of Reading Recovery teachers every three to five years, and the continuous training of new teachers. This ensures teachers trained as literacy experts share their skills and knowledge broadly through classroom teaching, improving literacy instruction for all students.

I commend these guidelines to you as a practical resource to support school leaders and teachers in providing our students with the most fundamental pillar of education – the ability to read and write!

“And in the end it is the individual adaptation made by the expert teacher to that child’s idiosyncratic competencies and history of past experiences that starts the upward climb to effective literacy performances” (Clay, 2016).
Reading Recovery is Sydney Catholic Schools’ preferred early literacy intervention. It was developed in New Zealand by educator, psychologist and Emeritus professor Dame Marie Clay. The Reading Recovery early intervention was designed to accelerate literacy acquisition for most of the children falling into the lowest 20 percent of literacy learners after a year of school’ Clay (2016). In Sydney Catholic schools, Reading Recovery provides a second chance opportunity for children identified as being most at risk of literacy failure after a year at school.

Reading Recovery requires the provision of daily, intensive, high quality instruction to students experiencing reading and writing difficulties during the second year of school. Lessons are individually tailored to provide explicit instruction for each student. The intervention aims to accelerate students to an average reading level as quickly as possible, so they can obtain maximum benefit from classroom instruction.

Individually administered observation tasks (An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement, Second Edition, Clay, Marie M. 2013) are used to identify students in need of supplementary support.

Reading Recovery is supplementary to classroom literacy instruction, and teachers trained in delivering Reading Recovery provide daily individual instruction for 30 minutes for a maximum of 20 weeks.

There are two positive outcomes from this intervention:

1. Students are discontinued from Reading Recovery as they have made sufficient progress to participate within the average band of students in their classroom.
2. Students are referred from Reading Recovery after a maximum of 20 weeks as they have not made sufficient progress to participate within the average band of students in their classroom without ongoing support.

Critical to the success of Reading Recovery is that experienced early years teachers have their skills further developed through an intensive training model. This relies on a team approach supported by Sydney Catholic Schools.

Reading Recovery provides learning that is purposeful, relevant, rigorous and empowering, which reflects the principles of the Authentic Learning and Assessment Statements. It also recognises and addresses learning diversity that is identified as important in the Literacy Statement.

“What is Reading Recovery?”

“Instruction that is individually designed and individually delivered provides the intensive care that results in the fastest recovery of a normal trajectory of progress for any child” (Clay, 2016).
PURPOSE OF READING RECOVERY IN SYDNEY CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

For Students
Reading Recovery aims to assist the lowest achieving Year 1 students who are experiencing early literacy difficulties. Students will:

+ receive a comprehensive literacy assessment
+ receive quality individual teaching daily from a specially trained teacher
+ have their competencies and learning needs addressed in order to achieve accelerated progress in a maximum of 20 weeks
+ have their progress continually monitored by the school literacy team
+ catch up to their peers and close the achievement gap
+ discontinue the series of lessons when they reach class average expectations and demonstrate independence in the classroom
+ develop the foundations of a self-extending system.

For Schools
Reading Recovery aims to assist schools to meet the educational needs of students in literacy. Schools will:

+ ensure early identification of students at risk of failure in literacy
+ lift the performance of the lowest achievers in literacy so they can successfully access classroom instruction
+ provide a means of identifying students who may have long-term support needs
+ promote best practice in Authentic Learning and Assessment by equipping teachers with additional knowledge and skills in early literacy, so they can implement quality early intervention for individual students
+ build teacher capacity.

For System Leaders
Reading Recovery aims to reduce the numbers of students in Sydney Catholic schools who experience literacy difficulty. System leaders will:

+ ensure high-quality intensive early literacy intervention provided for individual students
+ build the capacity of teachers in the system by providing professional training in Reading Recovery to become experts in literacy acquisition
+ promote Reading Recovery as the system's preferred early literacy intervention
+ promote the regular training of teachers in Reading Recovery who will then return to the classroom every three to five years.
RESPONSIBILITIES IN IMPLEMENTING READING RECOVERY

Reading Recovery requires a team approach and it is expected that each school will implement the intervention according to Sydney Catholic Schools’ guidelines.

Reading Recovery Tutors

Reading Recovery Tutors will:

+ ensure quality control of Reading Recovery as per the intervention’s trademark
+ support all aspects of the implementation of Reading Recovery at a regional and system level
+ provide initial teacher training in Reading Recovery (22 sessions)
+ provide ongoing professional learning for previously trained teachers (minimum of six sessions)
+ provide support visits to both training teachers (six per year) and trained teachers (at least one per year)
+ provide visits on request for children whose acceleration is compromised
+ teach two Reading Recovery students on a regular basis
+ assist teachers in monitoring the progress of Reading Recovery students
+ collect, analyse and report on Sydney Catholic School’s annual Reading Recovery data
+ consult with school literacy teams regarding the intended referral of any student who has not made accelerated progress.

Principals

School principals will:

+ recruit a teacher who meets the selection criteria to train in Reading Recovery
+ ensure that the teacher’s commitment to daily teaching, training and ongoing professional learning takes precedence over all other claims on his/her time
+ nominate a person to be the Reading Recovery support teacher
+ allocate a sufficient budget for Reading Recovery resources
+ design a suitable teaching area for Reading Recovery
+ lead the selection of students into Reading Recovery by adhering to the Sydney Catholic Schools selection guidelines
+ ensure that students are transported to the Reading Recovery Centre when required
+ recruit and select a new Reading Recovery teacher for training every three to five years
+ plan for Reading Recovery to operate as part of the whole school literacy plan
+ adhere to the trademark to protect the quality and integrity of Reading Recovery
+ ensure Year 1 classroom teacher/s and a member of the school executive meet regularly and provide practical and professional support to the Reading Recovery teacher.
School Teams
School teams will:
+ monitor the progress of students after Reading Recovery
+ ensure Reading Recovery students are a shared responsibility
+ inform the school community about the purposes and requirements of Reading Recovery.

Reading Recovery Teachers
Reading Recovery teachers will:
+ identify and select the lowest achieving students for inclusion in Reading Recovery and teach the designated number of students in daily 30-minute lessons
+ liaise with the Reading Recovery tutor when training and working in Reading Recovery
+ contribute to the development and operation of a school team that will manage the implementation of Reading Recovery at the school level
+ submit data regularly to the Reading Recovery Tutor Team via the Reading Recovery database
+ keep an annual register of Reading Recovery students
+ work closely with the class teacher and observe Reading Recovery students in the classroom to ensure a smooth transition when the individual teaching ends
+ arrange to meet with the parents or caregivers of children as they are about to enter Reading Recovery, invite them to observe a lesson and maintain communication throughout the intervention
+ commit to Reading Recovery training and to the role of Reading Recovery teacher for a maximum of five years.

Reading Recovery Support Teachers
The Reading Recovery support teacher will:
+ participate in professional development in the administration of the Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (Clay, 2013)
+ administer the Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (Clay, 2013) when it is recommended that the student’s Reading Recovery lessons should be discontinued
+ assist the Reading Recovery teacher in the monitoring of former Reading Recovery students in years 2 and 3

It is ideal if the school’s Year 1 teacher is the support teacher.

“Reading Recovery teachers need special training to make superbly sensitive decisions about how to interact with the responses of the children finding literacy learning troublesome” (Clay, 2016).
**Year 1 Teachers**  
The Year 1 teacher will:

+ provide Reading Recovery students with high-quality classroom literacy instruction and understand that Reading Recovery is supplementary to this instruction
+ gain an understanding of Reading Recovery and its role in the school’s overall literacy plan
+ assist in the identification of students for Reading Recovery
+ enable selected students to attend daily teaching sessions
+ monitor and support the progress of students once Reading Recovery lessons are discontinued
+ regularly meet with the Reading Recovery teacher to discuss student progress.

**Parents/Caregivers**  
The parents/caregivers of Reading Recovery students will:

+ ensure their child’s daily attendance at school
+ provide their child with literacy learning assistance at home.

**Reading Recovery Advisory Committee**  
The Reading Recovery Advisory Committee is a conduit for communication between the regional consultant, primary principals and Reading Recovery tutors. The Reading Recovery Advisory Committee will:

+ meet four times a year
+ provide regional perspectives concerning the effective implementation of the Reading Recovery intervention
+ plan for the future successful operation of the Reading Recovery intervention throughout the Sydney Catholic primary schools
+ disseminate advice and recommendations at regional principal meetings.
**TEACHER TRAINING**

**Criteria for Selection**
Teachers nominated by their school for training will:

- be well informed as to the requirements of training prior to application
- be accredited as a proficient teacher (NESA) and will have at least four years’ teaching experience
- have a minimum of two years’ recent, successful experience teaching early literacy as a Kindergarten, Year 1 or Year 2 classroom teacher
- preferably be a permanent member of staff
- commit to Reading Recovery for a minimum of two years and a maximum of five years
- demonstrate high levels of organisation and excellent time management skills
- work well in a team and be open and flexible to new ideas and practices
- have highly developed communication skills, enabling them to liaise with classroom teachers and parents
- teach for their peers behind a one-way screen.

**The Training Year**
Reading Recovery teachers are trained over a one-year period by Reading Recovery tutors. During the training year Reading Recovery teachers will:

- attend four assessment training sessions and 18 consecutive fortnightly in service sessions
- teach four Reading Recovery students at any one time (two hours daily) in daily lessons of 30 minutes, five days a week. Teaching also takes place on the day when the teacher attends the training sessions
- participate in six school visits with the Reading Recovery tutor and colleagues to discuss students’ progress and improve teaching practice
- teach for their peers, as required, behind a one-way viewing screen to enable the group to observe and analyse student responses and critically evaluate teaching decisions
- collect, analyse and maintain data on students
- consult with Reading Recovery tutors regarding the selection and the discontinuation of the lesson series.

“The Reading Recovery intervention was designed to accelerate literacy acquisition for most of the children falling into the lowest 20 percent of literacy learners after a year at school” (Clay, 2016).
Trained Teachers
Trained teachers will:
+ attend six scheduled ongoing professional learning sessions a year
+ teach for their peers, as required, behind a one-way viewing screen, to enable the group to observe and analyse student responses
+ teach daily the required number of students as determined by the school’s allocation
+ collect, analyse and maintain data on students
+ participate in school visits with the Reading Recovery tutor and colleagues to discuss students’ progress and improve teaching practice.

It is recognised that Reading Recovery training influences a teacher’s classroom practice. Therefore, to enhance professional development at a school level, a turnover of Reading Recovery teachers occurs after three to five years.

Returning to a Reading Recovery role
Former Reading Recovery teachers can reapply for Reading Recovery teaching positions, but are required to be out of the role for five years and demonstrate evidence of recent and successful classroom teaching experience.

A consultative process with the Reading Recovery tutors and principal will determine if the teacher is suitable to return to Reading Recovery, and if successful, they will be required to retrain.
IMPLEMENTATION OF READING RECOVERY

Allocations for Training Teachers
When training a Reading Recovery teacher, the allocation is 0.5 for the training year.
The 0.5 allocation is distributed in the following way:
+ 0.4 allocation = four children taught per day, (two hours per day)
+ 0.1 allocation = The teacher travels to and attends training sessions once a fortnight. The 30 minutes a day is accumulated to cover the teacher when attending the inservice training session once a fortnight. The teacher teaches all students in the morning before attending the training session from 12.30-3.30pm.

Allocations for Trained Teachers
Reading Recovery allocations will vary from school to school, depending on size. In all cases:
+ 0.3 allocation = three children taught per day
+ 0.5 allocation = five children taught per day
+ 0.7 allocation = seven children taught per day
+ 0.9 allocation = nine children taught per day

Additional self-funding
After receiving Reading Recovery allocations, some schools choose to provide additional Reading Recovery funding, enabling the school to reach a larger percentage of Year 1 students.

Students eligible for Reading Recovery:
+ The lowest achieving text readers (Reading Recovery levelled books) in Year 1 regardless of age
+ EAL/D students
+ New arrivals - there is an expectation that a case conference would take place to determine the student’s level of English language proficiency that is required for the Reading Recovery intervention.
+ Students with diverse needs - there is an expectation that a case conference would take place to determine the level of need
+ Students who have transferred to the school during their series of lessons are entitled to the first available place.

Students not eligible for Reading Recovery:
+ Students who are enrolled in their third year at school (i.e. students who have repeated Kindergarten or Year 1).
Identification of Students
The below student selection cycle is to be followed in all cases.

Teachers assess all lowest Year 1 students and enter results on Reading Recovery database

Is the student one of the lowest? Yes → Does the student have diverse learning needs? Are they a new arrival? Yes → Case Conference, Reading Recovery team, Reading Recovery tutor and other relevant specialist personnel assess student for Reading Recovery

No → Exclude from Reading Recovery until next selection intake

No → Student enters Reading Recovery

Is Reading Recovery best for the student? Yes → Final selection of students entering Reading Recovery is made in consultation with the Reading Recovery tutor.

No → Student continues in existing specialist/support program and rationale recorded on Reading Recovery database

Possible Outcomes for Students
The two possible outcomes for students are:

+ **Discontinuing from the lesson series**
  One positive outcome of Reading Recovery is that students are able to catch up with their classmates in a short-term intervention (Clay, 2016). This occurs when a student reaches class average levels in reading and writing. Students are then able to continue progressing in the classroom without additional support.

+ **Referral from the lesson series**
  The second positive outcome of Reading Recovery is referral from the lesson series. A few children do not make enough progress to ensure they will reach the average in their classrooms without continuing support. When this diagnosis is made the child is referred for further assessment and for longer-term assistance (Clay, 2016). The decision to refer a student must be made in consultation with the Reading Recovery tutor.

Final selection of students entering Reading Recovery is made in consultation with the Reading Recovery tutor.

All students who are administered the Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (2013) are entered into the Reading Recovery database.
Students Carried Over
Students who do not complete their series of lessons by the end of the school year can continue the following year and are considered ‘carried over’ students. Decisions to carry over a student to the next year must be made in consultation with the Reading Recovery tutor. These students continue their series of lessons in the following school year and their lesson series will be finished before the end of Term 1.

Transfer of Students
Reading Recovery students who have transferred from another school have the right to complete their series of lessons at the new school if a place becomes available. A Reading Recovery transfer form should be provided for the student as part of the transfer procedure.

Reading Recovery Student Absence
Daily individual teaching is essential to student success in Reading Recovery. Thus, children’s absence from school and school-based disruptions must be minimised. Student absence reduces the effectiveness of Reading Recovery. When one student is absent from school, another student is to receive two separate 30-minute lessons.

Reading Recovery Teacher Absence
To maximise the effectiveness of Reading Recovery, teacher absence needs to be minimised. Teachers who know they will have to take extensive leave are strongly discouraged from teaching Reading Recovery in that year.

Process of Monitoring Students
Monitoring of students occurs after their series of lessons at the end of Year 1 and in June and November of Year 2 and Year 3. This enables:

+ schools to check the progress of students who have been in Reading Recovery
+ the identification of students who may need support to guarantee they continue to use effective reading and writing strategies
+ Sydney Catholic Schools to monitor the effectiveness of the Reading Recovery intervention.

Responsibility for careful long-term monitoring rests with the Reading Recovery teacher, class teachers and support persons, who are encouraged to keep regular running records of each student’s reading, and to analyse samples of their writing.

Home/School Partnership
The power of Reading Recovery as an intervention is increased with the support of parents. Parents of Reading Recovery students are encouraged to work in partnership with the school by:

+ ensuring their child’s daily attendance at school
+ supporting their child’s literacy learning by reading familiar easy books and assembling the cut-up story provided by their child’s teacher.
+ accepting invitations to observe lessons and to discuss their child’s literacy development with their teacher.

Reading Recovery teachers regularly inform parents about their child’s progress throughout the intervention.

Further suggestions for developing a partnership between the Reading Recovery teacher and parents are provided in the Sydney Catholic Schools brochure ‘Reading Recovery: Home and School Working Together’ (https://goo.gl/GiEJ72).
REFERENCES


Publication Details

Developed by Sydney Catholic Schools’ Reading Recovery tutors in consultation with the Reading Recovery Advisory Committee and Reading Recovery teachers.


Trademark

The trademark for Reading Recovery in Australia was given to the Marie Clay Literacy Trust by founder, Professor Dame Marie Clay. Permission to use the royalty-free trademark is contingent upon compliance with the original research-based Reading Recovery standards on which these guidelines are based. By adhering strictly to trademark, Sydney Catholic Schools protects the quality and integrity of Reading Recovery.

Contact

Further information can be obtained from the Reading Recovery tutors at the Reading Recovery Centre at St Fiacre’s Primary School, 98 Catherine Street, Leichhardt, NSW 2040. To contact the Reading Recovery tutors, please phone (02) 9568 8170 or e-mail: reading.recovery@syd.catholic.edu.au