Evaluation of the Effect of a Mentoring and Extra Support Programme on the Achievement of English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupils at GCSE

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This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of candidature for the degree of M.A. Education.

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This work has not been previously accepted for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed ........................................
Dated 30/5/03

This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of M.A. [Education]

Signed ........................................
Dated 30/5/03

This dissertation is a result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

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Abstract
This study is an evaluation of programmes (Strategic Development Scheme – SDS and Raising Ethnic Minority Achievement – REMA) designed to raise the achievement of targeted English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupils at a Cardiff secondary school between the years 1998-2002. Pupils with the potential to gain 5 A*-C grades at GCSE were targeted at the end of year 9 and were given in-class support, study skills sessions, study support in homework club and extra revision sessions. They were also mentored on a regular basis. The study involves the analysis of SATs and GCSE results of pupils who were on the programme over the five years to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme and to see if there was a link between SATs attainment and achievement at GCSE. Attainment data at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 of the targets were compared with those of the rest of the cohort. Data was also obtained from former members of the programmes to assess attitudes and opinions about the usefulness of the programmes to them. It emerged that there was indeed a correlation between SATs scores and achievement at GCSE. Total SATs scores were obtained by adding up levels obtained in the SATs examinations and Teacher’s Assessment levels in the remaining subjects. Those pupils, both on the programme and the rest of the cohort, obtaining a Total SATs score of 45 and above gained at least 5 A*-C grades at GCSE. The intervention had a marked effect on those pupils with a total SATs score of 44 and below. It was found that more pupils on the SDS/REMA programme gained 5 A*-Cs in this range of scores than in the rest of the year 11 cohort. Pupils also reported improvements in their self-esteem, self-confidence and motivation.
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Chapter 1

Introduction
1 Introduction

The aim of this study is to analyse the Scholastic Achievement Tests (SATs) and General Certificate of Education (GCSE) results of English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupils on raising achievement programmes and to evaluate the effect such programmes have on pupil achievement, self-esteem, self-confidence and motivation.

1.1 Rationale

The mentoring and support programme being studied was set up using Strategic Development Scheme (SDS) funding in 1997 through the Local Education Authority (LEA). The programme was introduced into four schools in Cardiff and was staffed by six teacher/mentors working for the English as an Additional Language (EAL) department. My role was that of Team Leader, co-ordinating the programme across the four schools.

The under-achievement of minority ethnic pupils has been well documented (Gilborn and Gipps, 1996). Certain groups of pupils have been found to achieve less well than others. The scheme was set up to address the under-achievement at GCSE, which had been identified by analysis of pupil data on the part of the LEA, amongst EAL pupils. All the schools involved initially were in high unemployment, disadvantaged and socially deprived areas. The school involved in this study has 50% EAL, 60% ethnic minority pupils and serves a mixed catchment area which includes areas with high unemployment, social deprivation and high child poverty index ratings (NAfW, 2003a). There are about 30 different nationalities at the school and over 20 languages are spoken.
Although things are improving, under-achievement is still present amongst certain groups of minority ethnic pupils. Cardiff LEA sought to address this under-achievement through the SDS programme. Since its inception in 1997 the percentage of EAL pupils gaining at least 5 A*-C grades at the school has increased. As a baseline in 1997 16% of EAL pupils gained 5 A*-C grades at GCSE. This increased to 35% in 2002 (table 6).

In 2002 the school’s GCSE results were the highest yet at 34% 5A*-Cs. The previous year 29% of the year 11 cohort gained 5A*-Cs (table 6). There has been a steady improvement in results over the past few years. The various strategies being employed by the school appear to be working. However, there is no room for complacency as the Cardiff average for 2002 was 59.5%, the Welsh average was 50% and the national average was 57.9% (DFES, 2003b). It is not surprising then that strategies and initiatives to raise achievement are at the forefront of all stakeholders’ minds.

The SDS programme was initially funded for 3 years after which the schools were expected to have taken ownership. At this point along with a change in the service name from the EAL service to EMAS (Ethnic Minority Achievement Service) came a name change for the programme in the school from the SDS programme to the REMA (Raising Ethnic Minority Achievement) programme. The National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) decided to continue funding the programme through EMAS, however, the schools involved were to implement their own programmes individually. The
programme has not proved to be as successful in the other schools and has not lived up to the expectations and promise shown in these schools initially.

The programme begins in year 10 and continues throughout year 11 and GCSEs. Pupils are targeted by SATs results and teacher consultations at the end of year 9. Each pupil is assigned one of the REMA staff as a mentor. Regular one-to-one mentoring takes place at least once every half term. During mentoring the pupils discuss issues such as attendance or coursework and agree targets and action plans with their mentors. A team of mentor/teachers deliver in-class support, mainly in the core subjects, but also in other subjects as needed. Informal mentoring during supported lessons also takes place and was found to be of great value in building relationships with pupils. It is not possible to support all targeted pupils in every class so borderline groups in each subject are prioritised for in-class support. The package of support also includes a study skills seminar before the year 10 exams and a Summer School at the end of year 10 where pupils are able to mix with other pupils from the schools involved in similar programmes. The Summer School includes an Information Technology (IT) course where pupils are able to improve their IT skills and are given the opportunity to take part in sports and team building activities.

There are numerous strategies being employed in the school to raise all pupils’ achievement. My interest lies in analysing the contribution, if any, of the mentoring and support programme to raising EAL pupil achievement at GCSE. I propose to analyse pupil data collected before the project began and during the time it has been running. My main aims are to evaluate the extent to which the SDS/REMA mentoring and support programme has had an effect on pupil achievement by:
• Analysing KS3 SATs and GCSE results prior to and during the project’s existence

• Analysing questionnaire responses of pupils who have been through the programme.

An analysis of the 2001 GCSE results by a senior member of staff highlighted the potential benefit to pupils of being on the mentoring programme, especially borderline pupils (Appendix 2, Phillips, 2001). Although caution has to be exercised in drawing conclusions, as the analysis was based on one cohort, it was found that pupils could be put into categories depending on their SATs scores and 100% of those with a SATs score of 45 and above (including teacher assessments levels for non SATs subjects) achieved at least 5 A*-Cs. He also found that 80% of borderline pupils on the REMA programme gained 5 A*-Cs compared to 20% of pupils not on any programme and of a comparable KS3 SATs level.

I would like to follow these findings up and investigate whether this is the case with other cohorts and whether this could be a useful tool for targeting pupils. This study could potentially be of immense benefit to both the school and its pupils. If a correlation can be found between SATs scores and attainment at GCSE there are implications for targeting such pupils. If there is a correlation between being on the mentoring programme and enhanced performance at GCSE compared to similar ability pupils in the same cohort then there is a strong argument for mentoring programmes for other pupils in the school. Such targeting could then result in an increase in the number of pupils attaining at least 5 A*-Cs.
1.2 Background

EAL support teaching moved on when the SDS project was introduced, from the specific aim of helping pupils to access the curriculum by improving their language skills to a more holistic approach of raising their achievement in examinations, raising self-esteem and motivation. This has meant looking at the pupil's academic (and at times personal) life as a whole. Mentors have had to develop their skills in a number of areas from increasing subject knowledge in areas outside of their speciality to counselling and mentoring. Some training in mentoring was undertaken by staff, but most of the mentors' skills in supporting and counselling have been picked up over time. As this is an area that is relatively new to the school, county and from the shortage of literature, the country, there were no courses available that would have given the team relevant professional development.

In the first year of the project support for pupils was limited. Although two full time mentors were employed, one was undertaking a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) at the same time as overseeing the implementation of the programme in other schools and the other mentor supported targeted pupils only in English, the rest of her timetable being filled with pastoral duties as a year tutor or general EAL support. Similarly in the second year one teacher undertook most of the in-class support. From the 1999/2000 academic year onwards, as the potential of the programme was realised by the EAL department and the school, more support time was made available in the form of an extra member of staff (part time) and more control over support timetables. The 1999/2000 academic year also saw an expansion of the subject specific after school revision as with an increase in staff more subjects could be covered.
The core subjects of science, maths and English were targeted for in class support. English and maths are timetabled for 6 lessons and science is timetabled for 3 lessons each of chemistry, biology and physics over a two-week timetable. Mentors were timetabled to cover at least 2 lessons (one each week) preferably 3 to build up a relationship with the group. The school has two bands, side 1 and side 2. Side 1 pupils are the more able pupils and the targeted pupils were all on side 1. All three core subjects have 4 sets on side 1. Even with 2.5 teachers we could not hope to cover all the lessons targeted pupils were in. Priority was given to the lower 2 sets in each subject for year 10 and 11. Approximately 40-60 hours per fortnight would be needed to do this for the core subjects, depending on whether 2 or 3 lessons were covered.

There were also requests from other departments for support, for example design technology, business studies and humanities. These subjects have been supported to good effect with some good results being achieved. Good working relationships have been built up with the departments. Again 3 lessons over the fortnight were allocated. A second teacher in the classroom can make a difference, however, colleagues differ as to how they make use of the help. Some are welcoming and build support availability into their lesson plans others are at best tolerant of a support teacher’s presence. The whole thing works better when there is co-operation and team teaching. The presence of mentors is still useful even when this is not happening from the point of view of there being more contact time with pupils. Mentors are able to build up a better relationship with the pupils. Mentors have found that the mentor/mentee relationship is much stronger and works better when mentors are
supporting the mentees in class and are therefore having regular, sometimes daily, contact.

Constraints on the mentor timetables included one of the mentors being a year tutor, another mentor being responsible for co-ordination of the project and study skills for the county as well as part of all 3 teachers' time taken by the EAL department for support of other EAL pupils. Although in the last 2 to 3 years other EAL teachers have been made available for REMA support to pay back the time taken. The teacher support input for targeted pupils worked out as 60-70 hours per fortnight between the 2.5 teachers. In addition to this is the time given to extra revision after school before examinations, this was usually 2 hours per week for up to six weeks at a time for years 10 and 11, and the week long Summer School for year 10.

Mentoring of pupils took place on an official basis once per half term but pupils were also mentored whenever it was felt to be necessary. For example, if there were issues that needed to be addressed from teacher feedback or general progress of pupils was giving concern. As previously mentioned, in-class support allows informal mentoring to take place. If pupils found a topic hard to understand then arrangements were made for the pupil to have extra help during lunchtime or after school. The system is pupil centred. They know that mentors are there to help them and most pupils make good use of this resource.

As a starting point for the research, in the next chapter I am going to review the literature to see what the current thinking is around issues of raising achievement, mentoring and study support.
Chapter 2

Literature Review
2 Literature Review

The programme being evaluated is a raising achievement programme aimed at improving schools and pupil achievement. Raising achievement is something that lies at the heart of all school improvement strategies. School effectiveness and improvement has been a topic of research since the early sixties. According to Samons, Hillman and Mortimore (1995) 'an effective school is one in which students progress further than might be expected from consideration of its intake' (p1).

There is vast amount of literature on a wide range of issues around raising achievement in the literature. I have concentrated on those issues that impact the most on my own particular area of research in this review. Various strategies have been employed in schools as they strive to raise pupil achievement. These include, improving teaching and learning, tackling gender differences in achievement, study support, mentoring and target setting amongst others. Some initiatives cited in the literature have been in response to Government initiatives and policies, other innovations have been school or LEA led. To have lasting durable effects an innovation needs longevity. As noted by Stoll (1995):

Superficial solutions, or 'bandwagons' have been demonstrated not to work or to lead to unnecessary overload. Successful innovations meet a need, are clear, complex and of high quality.

(Stoll, 1995:3)

She goes on to say:

Successful change is not a speedy process .......for some pupils, however, the time they have in school is the only time for them. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, to determine any ways in which improvement can be accelerated.

(Stoll, 1995:7)

The Government White Paper 'Excellence in Schools', written in 1997, declares that there is evidence to indicate standards rise fastest in schools that take responsibility
for their own improvement. The paper maintains that national measures of pupil achievement:

Show that children, whatever their background, can achieve a great deal if they are well taught and well motivated but they also show that, in practice, schools with similar intakes of pupils achieve widely differing results. The differences are a measure of a school’s effectiveness in teaching and motivating its pupils.

(DfEE, 2002a: 25)

2.1 School Effectiveness

School effectiveness researchers are generally in agreement on factors that are characteristic of an effective school. They include:

1. Participatory leadership
2. Shared vision and goals
3. Teamwork
4. A learning environment
5. Emphasis on teaching and learning
6. High expectations
7. Positive reinforcement
8. Monitoring and enquiry
9. Pupil rights and responsibility
10. Learning for all
11. Partnership and support

(Stoll and Mortimore, 1995: p5)

These factors are not necessarily an absolute recipe for turning an unsuccessful school into a successful one. It has to be remembered schools are all different and in unique
situations. An innovation that works in one school may not necessarily work in the same way in another school.

School improvement is the way schools use school effectiveness strategies to improve outcomes. Hopkins (1994) defines school improvement as ‘a distinct approach to educational change that enhances student outcomes as well as strengthening the school’s capacity for managing change’ (p3). An ‘improving school’ is described by Gray et al (1999) as ‘one which secures year-on-year improvements in the outcomes of successive cohorts of similar pupils…. in other words, it increases in its effectiveness over time’. Assessment of schools has to be on progress made from their respective starting points.

Mortimore (2001) makes the observation that:

The challenge of continuous improvement is to marry culture and structure. Structures without an under-pining culture of improvement are doomed to be ineffective. Strong cultures without sustaining structures will not survive from one generation to the next.

(MacBeath and Mortimore, 2001: p18)

An implication of the research for our school is that, like many others, it has taken its improvement in its own hands and has a number of strategies in place to raise achievement. However, projects such as the SDS/REMA programme need to be thoroughly evaluated to see if they are working and to improve on them if necessary. A degree of self-analysis is imperative if schools are to meet their aims of improvement. Initiatives need to be monitored and evaluated to see if they work. This piece of research on the SDS/REMA programme was undertaken with this aim in mind. Whole school support of initiatives is also important, if they are to be successful, as is taking up of ownership of them and support from colleagues.
There appears to be concern about schools taking up every new initiative that appears on the scene. Such schools run the risk of ‘forgetting that there are several routes to success and that these may be in competition with each other’ (Gary, 2001:32) and staff being alienated by initiative overload. This raises the importance of the role of ‘critical’ friends and Governing Bodies in deciding which initiatives should be tried.

Change for charge sake is obviously not desirable, neither is implementation of an innovation necessarily going to result in school improvement. Seeing what works and what does not, drawing upon promising innovations and being prepared to take a risk and experiment with alternative ways of raising achievement are all part of the improvement process, as are inclusion of initiatives in the school development plan and analysis and evaluation of them.

2.2 Target Setting

Target setting currently plays an important part in school improvement plans. The DfEE describes it as ‘taking action by setting specific goals and targets designed to raise educational standards’ (DfEE/OFSTED, 1999: 5). The following system of national target setting was introduced in September 1998:

1. The DfEE sets national targets

2. Each LEA receives specific targets set by the DfEE and incorporates these into an educational development plan

3. Governors negotiate specific performance targets for their pupils at the end of each National Curriculum Key Stage aimed at improving results with their LEA

4. To help school governors on deciding targets two documents are available
Benchmark figures provided by the QCA
- Performance and assessment report completed by OFSTED

Each school therefore has targets to reach and has to devise an action plan relating to:

- Whole school e.g. to increase the percentage of A*-C grades
- Individual departments – identifying departments where under-achievement is most extensive
- Individual regular assessment of year 10 and 11. The results are given to pupils and staff and form the basis of individual counselling and target setting. It is claimed that this motivates pupils and introduces healthy competition.

The aim of the latter is to move beyond retrospective analysis of past performance by analysing current performance in terms of grades and setting targets at regular intervals raise pupils' standards can be raised. Target setting was intended to be broad based to allow scope for teachers and LEAs to devise their own means of raising achievement. Trickey (2002) comments that if looked at in a narrow and mechanistic way this could inadvertently increase stress in the classroom and thus prove to be counterproductive. However, schools are increasingly using pupil data to raise achievement. Data can be used effectively to improve pupil performance. There is an increasing trend of sharing of information with pupils, parents and teachers that can only help in the process of raising achievement. One of the strengths of the SDS/REMA programmes was the gathering of pupil information pertaining to attendance and academic progress. Initially this was felt to be quite burdensome by some teachers who understandably saw it as extra paperwork being forced on them.
However the team found the information useful when mentoring pupils and monitoring their progress. The setting of individual short-term and long-term targets with each pupil has been central to the raising achievement programme and has helped focus pupils on their education. There has been a recent increase in shared information on pupil progress throughout the school. This means that extra demands do not have to be made on staff and everyone is well informed throughout the school.

Target setting and monitoring through numerical performance indicators lead to a great deal of useful data but what is important is what is done with it. Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham (1999) argue:

Of course, the use of performance indicators, careful monitoring and benchmarking does a great deal to create a data-rich context, which is characteristic of successful school improvement. However, the creation of this data-rich context is a necessary but not sufficient attribute – what is done with and as a result of the data is the more important side of the equation.

In a survey of good practice, ‘Setting Targets to Raise Standards’, (DfEE/OFSTED 1999) it is claimed that schools where target setting has been practised have achieved great improvements. The DfES (2002b) currently provides a package of pupil performance information ‘The Autumn Package’ that supports schools with the process of target setting and school improvement. This is meant to help schools:

- Understand what progress they are making
- Compare the progress made by individual pupils with progress made by other pupils with similar prior attainment
- Compare their performance with similar schools

In Wales the NAfW sets targets for schools and provides similar benchmark data, based on advice from representatives of the Qualifications and Curriculum
Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales (ESTYN) amongst others for schools in Wales.

The analysis of pupil data gives useful information about performance and allows the setting of individual targets as well as general overall school targets. Schools are becoming data rich places but the data can only be of use if it is used effectively. The SDS/REMA programmes have been using pupil data from the beginning to highlight pupils’ weak areas, under-achievement and for targeting pupils for extra revision. The data was also used to set individual targets with pupils during mentoring sessions with pupils.

Recently, Key Stage 3 has been in the limelight, as pupils have not been achieving as well as they should. The Government has put money into this area so that schools can tackle the under-achievement. As a result revision and mentoring programmes have been set up in the school in an effort to improve achievement at Key Stage 3. Henry and Shaw (2002) reports that the plans to include test results for 14 year olds in league tables ‘have raised the stakes for secondary schools’.

There appears to have been increased activity in this area as a result of Government action. Government SATs targets are that 75% of 14-year-old pupils should gain at least level 5 in English, maths and IT, and 70% in science by 2004. The National Assembly for Wales (NAfW, 2003b) in its White Paper ‘The Learning Country’ has set targets for the core subjects to be in the 70-80% range by 2002 and by 2007 in the 80-85% range. Is piling pressure the best way to raise achievement? Schools serving disadvantaged areas are already experiencing pressure at Key Stage 4 to improve
GCSE results. It could, however, be argued that this public display of results brings accountability into the equation, as has happened with GCSE results. Schools are being forced to look at and do something about under-performance at this level.

There is an argument for targeting at Key Stage 3. If pupils’ achievement is improved at an earlier stage then at Key Stage 4 pupils should be better prepared, better motivated and achieve better results. Earlier specific targeting would require looking at Key Stage 2 data perhaps this could be the basis of future research work.

On the REMA programme targeting at Key Stage 3 is not specific. EAL pupils are given in-class support by the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS). The REMA team contribute to this to allow familiarisation of staff with the pupils in the various year groups. The REMA team also contributes to EMAS revision classes for EAL pupils in year 9. This is an example of how initiatives can make a difference to schools by the initiation of provisions, which improve pupils’ achievement. The EMAS year 9 revision programme was born of an SDS pilot year 9 English SATs revision programme funded by an outside agency, which proved to be successful. Prior to SDS/REMA the EMAS (previously EAL) department was concerned mainly with provision for new arrivals and mainstream support of EAL pupils.

There have been calls to abandon testing at Key Stages 1-3 recently (Key Stage 1 testing has already been stopped in Wales). This would have an effect on league tables, target setting and performance management plans. However, if SATs are abandoned an alternative assessment would have to replace them to ensure pupils are achieving as well as they should be and to ensure that there is accountability. League tables may not be popular, may not be a fair picture of individual school situations,
but they do indicate the direction in which a school is going. Value added data could be a better indication of performance as it is then possible for schools to compare themselves with a school in similar circumstances. Target setting appears to have had a positive role to play in the raising of pupil achievement and is obviously here to stay.

2.3 Learning Organisations

The current emphasis on improving schools has moved teaching and learning to the forefront. How pupils learn and how teachers teach is central to this refocusing of attention back to the classroom.

Kennedy (1999) thinks schools should be places of innovation where working practices illustrate how they have learned from the past and are committed to finding new and better ways of educating children. Sammons et al (1997) found that some departments are more effective than others in promoting better results. They claim that there are greater differences between departments in the same school than between schools. For schools in this position this might be a starting point for self-analysis. A study of the reasons for any discrepancies may be a pointer to implications for staff development and the initiation of correctional procedures to be put in place. It is taking the opportunity to learn from self-observation and self-analysis and learning from each other that could make a difference.

A popular concept gaining favour is the idea of schools as ‘Learning Organisations’. A Learning Organisation is one in which pupils and staff are continually developing
knowledge and skills. In a Learning Organisation lifelong learning is part of the
culture. Perhaps we should take note of the following quote:

Research shows that you begin learning in the womb and go right on learning
until you pass on. Your brain has a capacity for learning that is virtually
limitless, which makes every human being a potential genius.
(M.J.Gelb, cited in Smith, 2002)

West-Burnham and O’Sullivan (1998) believe that pupil learning, and so achievement
is linked to teacher learning. Teachers are central to the process of raising pupil
achievement. It has been argued that teachers are likely to be more successful if they
themselves are determined to keep learning about how their pupils learn (Trickey,
2002). He claims that the ‘concept of learning community could contribute to raising
achievement. However, changing established pupil and teacher culture is a most
difficult challenge’. In order to benefit from learning, and apply it to new situations,
it is essential to ‘learn how to learn’ at every stage from reception to continuing
professional development.

People learn in different ways, they have preferred learning styles. In an attempt to
improve teaching and learning one school carried out pupil interviews to ascertain
pupils’ learning styles (Harrison, 1999). Teacher questionnaires were also used to
analyse teaching styles. The intention was to construct pupil learning profiles
showing how pupils learn best and match this to teachers’ teaching styles to get the
best ‘teacher-learner partnership’. How practical or feasible construction of such
‘teacher-learner partnerships’ is in schools is uncertain but it can be useful for pupils
and teachers to understand that there are different learning styles. An awareness of
individual learning styles might help learners to learn better and teachers to teach
better. As part of the study skills programme the REMA team try to raise pupil awareness of their own learning styles and the implication for their learning. This allows pupils to gear their studying or revision to their preferred style.

2.4 Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning is what education is all about so no review on achievement would be complete without giving it a mention. Research suggests that teachers’ attitudes and perceptions of major school processes are associated with the attainment level and socio-economic balance of the school (Robertson and Toal, 2001). Schools in less privileged places are seen to be less effective in terms of pupil achievement. The implications are that low teacher expectation and low morale may be additional barriers to improvement. The researchers conclude that if schools are to make increasing improvements in pupil achievement, it may be that issues of staff attitude and expectation require greater attention, particularly in disadvantaged and low-attaining schools. One of the factors listed as a characteristic of effective schools is ‘High Expectations’. Smith (2000) claims that limiting beliefs, if unchallenged, will impact on performance and can lead into a cycle of low motivation and under-achievement. A focus of the REMA team is the raising of pupils’ self-esteem, which leads to raising of motivation and letting them know we believe they have potential.

In the quest for more effective learning the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum (SCCC, 1997) suggests teachers put the following questions to themselves on a regular basis:

- How often do I encourage pupils to think for themselves and try out new ideas?
• What techniques do I use to help learners be more aware of how best they learn and why?
• What assumptions do I make about the individual learner when I teach?
• On what are these assumptions based?
• How would I describe the climate I am trying to establish in the classroom?
• What do I say and do to establish this climate?

This encourages an evaluation of classroom practice that should, hopefully, impact on pupil learning and ultimately pupil achievement. This is something that REMA takes particular note of as far as revision classes are concerned. We have found it important to create the correct climate in the class for pupils to want to return. Since these sessions are outside school hours they are optional and pupils will attend out of choice. Sessions are relatively informal, relaxed, fun and carried out in a supportive environment. Pupils are encouraged to participate and ask questions. An added incentive is the provision of refreshments for the pupils. Staying after school lengthens the school day for them and a snack is always appreciated although pupils tend to turn up whether or not refreshments are available.

2.5 Ethnicity

In its White Paper, ‘Excellence in Schools’, the government sets out an agenda for raising achievement across the board (DfES, 2002a). It also acknowledges that raising standards in schools with a diverse intake of pupils is particularly challenging. David Blunkett (2002) as Education Secretary made available extra funding to schools to tackle under-achievement and stated that:
Too many children from ethnic minority backgrounds are under-performing. If you are black or of Pakistani or Bangladeshi origins your chance of gaining five good GCSEs is half that of white pupils.

The money that the government makes available, as the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG), is devolved directly to schools in England, who can then spend it as they see fit. Anecdotal problems cited with this arrangement include the funding of extracurricular activities such as music and steel pans bands instead of employing EAL support teachers. In Wales the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) has given the money to LEAs to administer and the money is used to benefit EAL pupils. EAL teachers are employed centrally by LEAs and are allocated to schools where they are needed.

According to an OFSTED research (OFSTED, 2000) undertaken in schools where minority ethnic pupils achieve well factors that make a difference include:

- A strong emphasis on raising expectations
- A positive culture and ethos throughout the school
- Strong links with the community and a commitment to parental involvement
- A commitment to ethnic monitoring to keep track of pupils' academic progress

OFSTED reported on the effectiveness of initiatives to raise the attainment of minority ethnic pupils in its report ‘Raising the Attainment of Ethnic Minority Pupils’. They focused on:

- Evidence of the relative performance of pupils from different ethnic groups
- Strategies implemented by schools to raise attainment
- Policies developed for tackling stereotyping, ensuring high expectations and promoting good race relations
- How LEAs work in partnership with schools to achieve successful outcomes in these three main areas

OFSTED found that the majority of schools were ‘engaged in a wide variety of initiatives to improve provision and raise the attainment of all pupils. However, few schools monitor these activities systematically and rarely do they have a specific ethnic focus’.

They also found that few secondary schools use the information obtained by analysis of attainment by ethnicity as a key management tool for raising standards and in those schools that have most successfully raised the attainment of minority ethnic pupils, senior managers make it clear that the under-performance of any group is unacceptable and challenge teachers and departments to identify what they can do to improve the situation.

The report concludes that despite some pockets of sound practice ‘many schools and LEAs are not nearly as effective as they should be in tackling the under-achievement of minority ethnic groups’. A lack of performance data by ethnicity has been a barrier to progress. In the absence of such data it is easy to turn a blind eye to minority ethnic under-achievement and look at the wrong priorities. There are two extremes, those schools and LEAs holding very little ethnic data and those with a considerable amount of data but who do not know how to use it. The report emphasises that:

Even though schools and LEAs may be uncertain about how to use this information, its existence at least raises awareness of under-achievement; it
puts a healthy pressure on the providers of education and support services to seek ways of tackling under-achievement, and brings a sense of urgency to dealing with the issues.

(OFSTED, 2000)

Much of the information obtained relates to England and English schools. Some schools are using their minority ethnic pupil data to set targets and this is having a positive effect in raising achievement. The school analyses GCSE results by ethnicity. A breakdown of pupil achievement by nationality can highlight under-achieving groups allowing the school the opportunity to address the situation. However, in general, Wales appears to be behind England in this area and no research has been done on minority ethnic pupils in Welsh schools up to now. However, research commissioned by the NAFW is shortly to be published and should give an indication of the situation in Wales. ESTYN has introduced reporting on EAL provision in schools as part of its inspection framework and has initiated training for inspectors in EAL issues. So it appears that progress is being made.

Cardiff LEA used data showing under-achievement of minority ethnic pupils, from schools with a large number of pupils from a minority ethnic background, to gain funding for a project aimed at raising achievement of these pupils. Specific programmes were set up in the schools involved, targeting pupils in year 10 based on KS3 results. In our school extra support was given to this group of pupils throughout year 10 and 11 with good results (Appendix 2). For the 1999/2001 cohort, 93% of the targeted pupils achieved 5 or more A*-C grades. This clearly shows the way in which data can be used to good effect, to set targets and raise achievement for minority ethnic pupils or for that matter for any pupil.
2.6 Study Support

Professor John MacBeath (2002), a leading figure in educational research claims that although good schools and good teaching is crucial to pupils’ learning and achievement, this is not enough. He states that:

Success for young people also relies on the homework and self-directed learning that they do out of hours, and classroom learning flourishes when good teaching and self-directed learning meet.

(MacBeath, 2002)

Study support has been defined in ‘Excellence in Schools’ (DfES, 2002a) as ‘an activity outside normal lessons, which helps pupils to reach higher standards’.

Funding has been given for out-of-hours learning to schools, libraries, sports and other organisations. The Tower Hamlets Study Support Project (Yipp, 1997), one of the earliest study support programmes cited in the literature was started in 1989. Out of thirteen schools involved in the programme five with similar backgrounds were selected randomly for the study of results and experiences of study support. The schools had different lengths of time of being on the programme. The study analysed and evaluated the effect of the programme on the schools’ GCSE results. Schools with study support were compared with schools without study support. The findings were that:

- Schools in which examination scores increased most were the schools with the longest established study support programmes
- The schools with the longest history of study support experienced the highest percentage increase in GCSE scores
- Schools with study support had an average increase in GCSE results of 30%, ten times higher than the schools without study support
The support varied from intensive short courses of revision to continuing study support programmes. The author of the Tower Hamlets study concedes that the research does not prove study support is solely responsible for the improvement but believes ‘the findings clearly indicate that the introduction of study support has had a positive impact on schools’ overall GCSE performance’. This is an opinion I can thoroughly agree with since the introduction of study support in our school has resulted in positive attitudes of pupils to learning that must impact on their examination performance. However, this takes nothing away from the good teaching and learning that goes on in classrooms. This has to be acknowledged as central to successful pupils’ learning. On the REMA programme it has been found that study support can be seen as a safety net, for those pupils in danger of under-achieving, and as a source of enrichment for the more able. Short courses of revision in the core subjects have proven to be useful in focusing pupils’ revision and have helped improve performance.

A three year longitudinal evaluation, ‘The Study Support National Evaluation and Development Programme (SSNEDP), has been carried out to investigate the impact of participation in study support on the academic attainment, attitudes and school attendance of secondary school pupils. The research conducted by MacBeath et al (2002) was carried out with 51 schools. The quantitative study found evidence that:

- Pupils who participate in study support do better than would have been predicted from baseline measures in academic attainment, attitudes to school and attendance at school than students who do not participate
- The effects are large, an average of three and a half grades or one more A*-C pass at GCSE
• Study support appears especially effective for students from minority ethnic communities and, to a lesser extent, for students eligible for free school meals

As well as improvement of results they report that there are significant, indirect effects influencing motivation and self-esteem. MacBeath’s research also shows there are cumulative effects.

Participation in study support activities in year X has effects which are measurable in year X+1. We therefore infer that indirect and cumulative effects are contributing to the impact of study support.

(MacBeath et al, 2002)

In a qualitative study of SSNEDP schools (Sharp, 2002), 12 schools were taken as case studies and interviews carried out with 160 students and 60 staff about the six main factors attracting students to attend out-of-school activities and the benefits the students derived. The study revealed that study support began in schools often in the form of a homework club and a later development was the ‘growing understanding that study support could form a coherent programme of activities, including the extra-curricular activities which most schools already provided’. Sharp (2002) also reports a link between self-regulation and study support. Study support encourages pupils’ self-regulation as they are given the choice to attend or not. Many researchers and theorists believe learning is an inherently social activity (Wigfield et al, 1998). Wigfield concluded that students are more likely to seek help when they are self-regulated learners and self-regulation is linked to motivation. Changes in attitude, self-confidence and motivation are known to play a significant part in raising achievement. Yipp (1997) believes that attendance at study support contributes to an improvement in academic achievement (fig.1).
Sharp (2002) found that:

Students struggling in class said they were reluctant to ask for help for fear of exposing their lack of understanding to teachers and peers. The study support environment enabled students to seek help from peers, mentors and teachers. Seeking help led to greater understanding, which enabled pupils to achieve mastery of the material and a greater confidence in their ability to be effective learners.

Opportunities for social interactions around learning have been shown to improve children’s achievement. Sharp observes that students saw benefits in working with friends and spoke of the positive relationships they found with teachers and learning mentors during study support activities.

Sharp also suggests that:

...study support requires certain conditions in order to work well. It is not simply a question of offering a few activities after school or allowing pupils access to a ‘homework club’. To achieve its potential, study support needs to be viewed as a whole school initiative and an integral part of school’s provision for learning.
MacBeath (2002) believes ‘it can even make the difference between success or failure at school and in later life’ and calls for an agreed national framework. Brighouse (2001) claims that in one school ‘Peer group pressure towards achievement is now so great that pupils ask teachers in the corridor if they can lay on extra tutorials or revision classes’ (p251). This is claimed to be due to a successful change in pupil attitude brought about by the creation of an environment for learning, staff training, teaching and learning initiatives, the ‘imaginative’ use of support staff amongst other strategies. Many of their support staff have a teaching background and the school appears to have made use of this. The effective use of support staff can make a difference to pupil achievement. This is an area that is currently underdeveloped and undervalued in the school. It needs to be seen as a valuable resource and ways of collaborative teaching need to be sought.

This has also been the experience of SDS/REMA teachers. Pupils have come to expect extra revision, asking ‘when it is going to start?’ and are very good at asking for one-to-one help on specific topics. The culture that has been built up is that it is ‘cool’ to learn and ask for help. One thing the programme appears to have given the pupils is the self-confidence that they have the ability to achieve and as a result they take study support seriously.

Study support and out-of-hours learning has been funded by organisations such as Barclays Bank and The Prince’s Trust as well as more recently the New Opportunities Fund (NOF). The purpose of study support is defined in The Prince’s Trust code of practice as follows:
The purpose of study support is to raise achievement by motivating young people to become more effective learners through activities which enrich the curriculum and improve core skills.

(MacBeath, 1997:1)

Organisations funding study support have made a significant contribution to the development of a much-needed service for pupils. With the implementation of the Cardiff LEA learning centres initiative NOF funding has meant that schools have been able to put on a variety of out-of-hours activities for pupils. Our school, as one of the earliest learning centres to come on line, is no exception. A variety of age groups have been targeted (not just the GCSE pupils) including pupils from primary feeder schools and Key Stage 3 pupils. As a result of specific targeting and homework clubs one of the schools in the LEA has seen GCSE result rocket from 6% to 23% 5 A*-Cs in one year.

During five years of out-of-hours provision, I have found in my experience that subject specific help has resulted in a general increase in pupil self-confidence and more specifically in the subjects revision is offered in. I have also observed that a high teacher to pupil ratio is important to be able to help individual pupils. One of the limitations of a homework club is the staffing issue. There are problems with teachers working out-of-hours. Apart from pressure of work there is the question of payment. Many teachers already carry out extra revision without any payment therefore the payment of some teachers for out-of-hours work would correctly, be seen by staff as divisive. Ways of getting over such obstacles have to be found if study support is to be developed to its potential. Flexible ways of learning and teaching may be the way forward. We have a member of staff, responsible for study support, who was on a flexible timetable. One of the initiatives that have been tried is an evening homework.
club located in the community rather than in school. The member of staff concerned was able to work on a reduced timetable to accommodate this. As part of the REMA programme teachers are able to take time in lieu for out-of-hours work such as revision after school and Summer School. How this would work in schools on a larger scale I am not sure. With more teachers involved and the implications for timetabling would this be a feasible venture? Alternatively, if funds could be found, teachers could be paid for the extra hours.

Another Cardiff school managed to build organised study support into its day. Lunchtime and after school subject specific revision sessions by subject teachers resulted in a significant increase in the number of pupils gaining 5 A*-Cs. I do not believe all schools would accept such a programme easily as in our school staff are happy to put on extra sessions of their own accord but would not respond positively to dictates.

Interviews with pupils in the SSNEDP study showed that the presence of older students in a tutoring or mentoring capacity was popular with students. Possibly, because of the closeness in age, pupils find it easier to relate and talk. A pilot project we conducted with year 12 ex-REMA pupils in the homework club has had some success and has meant teachers could then give one-to-one attention to individual pupils when necessary knowing the other pupils’ needs were being met as well. The incentive for the year 12 pupils was a certificate for their Record of Achievement and the fact that they can include this in their UCAS personal statements as voluntary work.
An evaluation of out-of-hours learning initiatives (MacBeath et al, 2002) supports the idea that study support can help improve schools and influence attitudes to learning. The researchers recommend that ‘study support should be seen as an element of all initiatives to raise achievement and promote social inclusion’. They also maintain that ‘professional development of staff, co-ordinated planning and assured long-term funding’ are necessary.

Sharp (2002) concludes that the SSNEDP research conducted demonstrates that ‘Study support adds an extra dimension to learning which it is impossible to fulfil within the constraints of the normal curriculum’. She suggests that any school contemplating making such an investment will find it worthwhile. I am in total agreement with this as many of the approaches that the REMA team have identified and employed to raise pupils’ attainment appear to have been justified by the findings of the SSNEDP research including:

- Subject specific revision sessions
- Use of role models tutoring younger pupils
- Extra curricular activities linked to studying

The provision of study support can make a tremendous difference to pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. Since 1999 weekend homework clubs in the community provided by help from outside agencies have proved to be so popular with Somali pupils of a wide range of ages and abilities that larger premises are currently being sought. These pupils benefit from:
• A quiet place to study
• Help with homework and projects
• Access to the internet and reference books
• Revision classes for Key Stages 2 and 3 SATs and GCSE
• Reading club to improve reading skills

The pupils are willing to give up their free time to be there as they realise it is of benefit to them. Many of the children have no access to help or reference material at home. The atmosphere is different than that within school as it is very informal to allow pupils learn in a relaxed and fun way. Pupils come back year after year and have a positive attitude to learning. Mother tongue learning appears to help learners in several ways:

• Pupil self-confidence and self-esteem are increased
• Transferable skills are learnt by pupils

Brighouse (1999) maintains that if importance is given to the development of the language of the home with bilingual children ‘the transference of a language scaffolding into English will as it were, be easier since it will build on a confident grasp of the first language’ (p158)

Perhaps more of such provision should be looked at to bring learning into the community, as it seems to work.
2.7 Mentoring

Mentoring has been described as a method of supporting young people to achieve their potential (Careers Scotland, 2002). Different types of mentoring are being tried in schools including peer mentoring, use of learning mentors and mentors coming in from business and industry. All have their place and uses in raising pupil self-esteem and achievement. Some schools use mentoring to target under-achievement (Rudduck and Morrison, 2001). If a pupil is seen to be at risk then a mentoring system comes into play. Other mentoring programmes mentioned by Rudduck and Morrison include:

- 'Buddy' system for year 7 pupils being paired with year 12/13 pupils
- Teachers supporting under-achieving pupils
- Subject-related mentoring for year 10 and 11

When a single sex subject mentoring scheme was introduced by one school specifically for C/D borderline pupils in English it was found that:

Scrutiny of examination results indicated the scheme was successful. Levels of confidence, the ambition to succeed and examination results were improved in the target group.

(Penny, 2000:p90)

Under-achieving year 9 pupils were paired with year 12 pupils for peer counselling (Ryder, 2000). As a result of the scheme pupils 'set themselves higher targets for success in GCSE and beyond'.

Mentoring schemes are currently in their infancy in our school. Attempts have been made to establish mentoring systems with varying degrees of success including:

- Form tutor mentoring of years 7-11
- Senior staff mentoring of year 11
- Mentoring of year 11 by volunteers from the business community
- Mentoring of Black Caribbean pupils
- Mentoring of EAL pupils (SDS/REMA)

For the last five years I have been involved in the last scheme, the targeting and mentoring of EAL pupils. The scheme involves regular mentoring of year 10 and 11 pupils by teachers, in-class support in the core subjects as well as extra support in the form of homework club and subject specific revision classes. The results have been pleasing in terms of GCSE results and raising of pupil self-esteem. Of the 1999/2001 cohort 26 out of 28 pupils achieved 5 or more A*-C grades in their GCSE results. The borderline pupils of this group did considerably better than pupils of similar ability who were not on any scheme (Appendix 2). One of the outcomes that has been observed, as a result of being on mentoring schemes, is the raising of the pupils’ own expectations of themselves.

A student who hopes for, and expects to be successful, may well maintain attention in the face of difficulty. A less confident student may give up under the same circumstances.

(Entwistle, 1988:263)

Part of the success of mentoring lies in getting pupils to believe in their own ability and have self-confidence. Mentoring programmes appear to have positive outcomes on the whole but recent Durham University research claims that under-achieving pupils who are given extra attention do less well than their peers (Henry, 2002). However, as the research is based on one study it is inconclusive. Although there is a significant amount of literature on mentoring, including the use of ‘Learning Mentors’ in schools, who are not qualified teachers, and mentors from industry. I did not find...
anything that resembled the SDS/REMA programmes in its provision. Birmingham Education Service (2003) has Learning Mentors working with disruptive pupils on a one-one basis. The general view is that mentoring can make a difference to pupil achievement but perhaps this area would benefit more from research into the best way to use this potentially powerful way of helping pupils achieve.

From the literature there are many examples of good practice in the areas of study support and mentoring. There is evidence that the activities identified by the SDS/REMA programme to be useful in bringing about a raising of pupil achievement appear to work. Both study support and mentoring have been shown to be effective in raising achievement in addition to other school systems that may be in place for the same purpose.

Evidence from other schools points toward usefulness of targeting, mentoring and study support. Study support is an important component of many schools and exists in a variety of forms. They all seem to have an impact on pupils’ learning but of course as previously mentioned cannot take the place of good teaching. It is more about giving opportunities and learning skills needed for successful study. The literature review has served to highlight that a lot of the current successful good practice in the area of raising pupil achievement is being employed at the school.

It is hoped that this evaluation of the SDS/REMA programme will reveal whether there is any evidence that this programme has been successful in achieving its aim of helping raise the achievement of targeted pupils using the range of strategies that have been employed.
Chapter 3

Methodology and Research Design
3 Methodology and research design

Two sources of data were used for the analysis. The pupil achievement data held at the school comprising grades achieved by pupils in public examinations and the data collected by the use of questionnaires sent to pupils who have either been on the SDS or the REMA programme. I chose this method of obtaining information from pupils because using questionnaires is a good way of collecting information from a large number of people, who may be in several locations, in a short period of time. Ex-pupils are widely dispersed and some may be away at university ruling out interviews, as a source of data, also the time available to carry out the study is short, hence my choice of using a questionnaire. The questionnaires were to be used to evaluate pupil opinions and attitudes to the programme and its effect on their self-esteem and motivation.

In research there is no one correct method of addressing a problem. Brown and Dowling make the observation:

No position or method that you can adopt… will give you an indisputable clear view of the empirical field……. There is no such thing as the correct method or even best method for addressing a particular research interest or question.

(Brown and Dowling, 1998: p8)

They go on to say that ‘this does not mean that all methods and positions are as good as each other for the purposes of empirical research’. Most researchers apply two or more methods to the problem in question so that a full picture can be obtained. This
multi-method approach is known as triangulation. According to Cohen and Manion (1998) triangulation is 'the use of multiple data sources, data collection methods and theories to validate research findings'. Triangulation also 'helps eliminate bias and can help detect errors or anomalies in your discoveries'.

The research was carried out according to the following timetable:

**Table 3.1   Proposed Research Timetable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By October half term</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By end December</td>
<td>Design and pilot pupil questionnaire</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literature search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By end January</td>
<td>Complete literature search, research design and methodology</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Send out questionnaires</td>
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<tr>
<td>By end February</td>
<td>Analyse pupil data and questionnaires, compare with pupil data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By end April</td>
<td>Write up evaluation of methodology and abstract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>Hand in draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By end May</td>
<td>Hand in final draft</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Resources required were:

- Pupil achievement data
- Data from questionnaires
The time available was limited and deadlines were very tight but on the whole the above dates were adhered to.

In this study, data on pupil attainment at KS3 and KS4 for the five cohorts of SDS/REMA pupils from 1998 to 2002 has been collated and analysed. A questionnaire was designed to assess pupil attitudes, self-esteem and motivation, and how successful they have been academically. The information obtained from these two sources should give an idea of how successful the scheme has been over the five years in terms of raising pupil achievement, self-esteem and motivation.

Quantitative data was to be obtained from school records and a questionnaire was to be designed to obtain qualitative and quantitative data from pupils. Quantitative data was to be analysed to investigate if there is any correlation between:

- KS3 SATs achievement and achievement at KS4
- Mentoring, study support and pupil achievement at KS4
- Mentoring, study support and pupil self-esteem and motivation

Due to time constraints and the wide distribution of ex-pupils a structured questionnaire seemed to be the most practical way of gathering information. In all 120 pupils were sent the questionnaire along with a covering letter explaining the purpose of the study and a stamped addressed envelope for returning the completed questionnaire. Cohen and Manion (1998) claim that ‘a well planned postal survey should obtain at least 40% response rate’ (p98). If correct I expected to get about 48 questionnaires back.
The questionnaire was designed with both qualitative and quantitative features. In designing the questionnaire I had to decide what information I wanted to get from the pupils and formulate questions that would hopefully result in that information being given. Questions were checked for ambiguity and bias for example, avoiding use of leading questions, anything that would affect the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. Colleagues were enlisted to check the questionnaire, following which a few adjustments were made and finally it was tested on a group of 6 pupils, and as no problems were detected with the questionnaire, it was mailed out to the larger group.

Questionnaires are a relatively easy way of getting information from a large number of people who are widely distributed, however, there are limitations which one must be aware of:

- Any misunderstanding of questions cannot be corrected
- Non-response could be a problem
- Issues of truthfulness of responses and accuracy of recording

Questions were checked at the piloting stage for ambiguity and the stamped addressed envelopes would it was hoped encourage return of completed questionnaires. Interviews using an unbiased interviewer could have been employed to obtain information from the pupils. This would have eliminated these two possible problems but interviews would have taken more time than was available to set up and conduct and there is also the problem of location of pupils some of whom may have moved out of the area. However, if there are any interesting developments from the questionnaires respondents were asked to give contact addresses and numbers if they
were willing to be interviewed if needed. A face-to-face or phone interview to probe areas further or clarify answers then remains a possibility.

The issue of non-response would be tackled to some extent by the stamped addressed envelope. Accuracy of recording can be checked at the analysis stage by editing and contacting pupils if a contact number has been given, however, the issue of truthfulness of response also holds for other methods such as interview. One hopes that respondents are giving accurate and valid responses. According to Cohen and Manion ‘in general questionnaires that are anonymous tend to be more reliable’ and it was made clear in the covering letter to pupils that their responses would be anonymous. The questionnaires were, however, numbered to identify the cohort of the respondent so that cohort performance could be compared.

Clarity of wording and simplicity of design are essential in questionnaires. The design of the questionnaire I used is such that for most of the questions all that is required from the respondent is a tick in the appropriate box with the response that most expresses their answer to a particular question out of five possibilities, similar to a Likert Scale but with questions instead of statements. Respondents have to agree with one of five answers given to the questions. Filter questions were added to guide respondents to different branches and the number of questions were kept as low as possible without compromising the information I was trying to obtain. It was hoped that the use of the 5-part response would make it easier to analyse the results of the questionnaire. A few open questions were put in to allow pupils to express their opinions.
Analysis of the school KS3 SATs and GCSE data was carried out and the results were put into tables. Accuracy and validity of this data is not in question as they are from nationally recognised tests. However, in the analysis of the SATs data Teacher Assessments (TA) for subjects other than the core subjects of English, maths and science have been added to the levels achieved in the SATs to give a Total SATs score. This was then used to investigate the link between Total SATs score and achievement at GCSE.

Although the questionnaire was tested and seemed to be fine, on analysis it was found that the design could have been improved upon. Some questions seemed repetitive to the pupils. On the whole, however, the questionnaire was efficient in yielding the required information. After the initial mailing, 40 questionnaires were received which is 33%. This increased by a further 12 after the second mailing increasing the returns to 48 % slightly more than the 40% expected.
Chapter 4

Results and Analysis
4 Results and Analysis

4.1 Analysis of KS3 and KS4 data

A comparison of the school’s GCSE results from 1997 to 2002 shows an increase in the number of EAL pupils gaining at least 5 A*-Cs (table 4.1). Figures include both side 1 and side 2 pupils. In 1997, the baseline year, the number of pupils gaining 5 A*-Cs was 16% compared with the rest of the cohort where 24% of pupils gained at least 5 A*-Cs. There was a steady increase over the next 5 years and in 2002 the number of EAL pupils gaining 5 A*-Cs rose to 35%. Most of these were in the REMA target group. Over the years the achievement of EAL pupils has improved to the extent that in 2002 they have achieved better than the rest of the cohort.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1997</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% EAL pupils gaining 5A*-C</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Rest of year 11 cohort gaining 5A*-C</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Whole year 11 cohort</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 Percentage Total EAL pupils gaining 5A*-C in each cohort (including both side 1 and side 2 pupils)

The increase in pupil achievement has been due to a number of whole school improvement initiatives employed by the school and individual departments, the introduction of study support provision funded by the Cardiff LEA NOF grant for out-of-hours learning, which has also helped individual departments put on extra support for pupils, as well as the work of the REMA programme with EAL pupils.

45
Fig 4.1  SDS/REMA pupils gaining at least 5 A*-Cs predicted and actual

Fig 4.1 highlights the difference between predicted and actual GCSE results. A breakdown of SDS/REMA GCSE results from 1998 to 2002 (table 4.6) comparing the predicted grades with the actual results shows that in the first year of the programme there was a drop in the percentage 5A*-Cs. This first cohort only received one year of input and less hours of support than any of the other cohorts as previously mentioned in chapter 1 (1.2) due to constraints on the teachers. Subsequent cohorts show a significant increase when comparing predicted with actual grades.

The analysis of the KS3 and KS4 results revealed some interesting information. The tables show a correlation between SATs results and success at GCSE (tables 4.2 - 4.5). The comparisons of SATs and GCSE results were only possible for the years 1999-2002 because prior to 1997 SATs teacher assessments were not carried out.
Table 4.2  REMA programme GCSE results comparison 1999
*adjusted for omitted IT scores in this cohort
< less than

Table 4.3  REMA programme GCSE results comparison 2000
Φ Targeted pupils were actually 29. SATs scores were unavailable for 2 pupils

Table 4.4  REMA programme GCSE results comparison 2001
### Table 4.5 REMA programme GCSE results comparison 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KS3 SATs Score</th>
<th>REMA pupils gaining 5 A*-Cs</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Rest cohort gaining 5 A*-Cs</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>13/13</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>9/9</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30/30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>10/15</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>29/53</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>6/34</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;35</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1/11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The categories of SATs results used are arbitrary ones, which were initially devised by a senior member of staff in an analysis of the 2001 GCSE results (Appendix 2). They are based on the numerical value of the pupil's SATs levels in English, maths and science and assessment levels in the other subjects. Total SATs scores were obtained by adding up levels obtained in the SATs examinations and Teachers' Assessment (TA) levels in the remaining subjects. The categories used in the analysis were adopted, as they met the needs of this study adequately. The pattern appears to be such that pupils with a SATs score of 45 or more are almost certain to gain at least 5 A*-Cs. Pupils with a score of 44 and below have varying success rates that decline with declining SATs scores.

A comparison between SDS/REMA pupils' results and the rest of the GCSE cohort's results shows that they generally follow this pattern. Where the difference lies is in the lower SATs score categories. In the 40-44 category 100% of the targeted SDS pupils and the rest of the cohort gained 5 A*-C in 1999, however, SDS pupils did considerably better than the rest of the cohort in the 35-39 and <35 category. In subsequent years a greater percentage of targeted pupils (SDS/REMA) achieved 5A*-
Cs than the rest of the cohort (tables 4.2 – 4.5) in the 40-44, 35-39 as well as the <35 total SATs score ranges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort year</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of pupils</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>31</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number predicted 5A*-Cs</td>
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<td>85</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number gaining 5A*-Cs</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils achieving better than expected</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils achieving as expected</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils achieving worse than expected</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>12.5</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6 SDS/REMA programme GCSE results 1998 – 2002

In 1999 there appears to be a dip in the SDS/REMA results as only 50% of the pupils gain at least 5A*-Cs compared to 80% in 1998 (table 4.6). However, a comparison of the predicted to the actual results shows that 1999 was a weaker cohort than 1998. In 1998 the prediction was 85% 5 A*-Cs and the actual results were 80% whereas in 1999 the prediction was 37.5% and the actual results were much higher at 50%. Half of this REMA group had total SATs results of 39 or less. In this category 25% of the REMA pupils gained 5 A*-Cs compared to 16% of the rest of the cohort. This highlights the danger of just looking at isolated figures. Statistics, such as these, need
to be looked at in context to get the whole picture. SATs scores for 1999 were
adjusted for the absence of IT results, which have been included in the total score in
subsequent years, so that cohorts could be compared. A score of 5 was added to all
pupils’ results.

The pattern is repeated for 2000, 2001 and 2002 results. In each the actual results are
much better than predicted. In 2000, 55% of pupils were predicted to gain 5 A*-Cs
and the actual figure was 79. The prediction was 75% % in 2001 and the actual was
93%. In 2002 the prediction was 55% and 77% was the actual figure. Comparisons
are between predictions based on mock results and actual results achieved, as these
were the only data available to compare. Pupils have had over a year’s support by the
time they sit their mock examinations perhaps a better indication of the effect of the
intervention might have been a comparison of prediction data in year 10 with actual
GCSE results.

From the individual results breakdown for each pupil (tables 4.7 – 4.11) the increase
in GCSEs obtained per pupil can be seen. The average increases in the number of
GCSEs per pupil were 0.8 in 1998, 0.6 in 1999, 1.8 in 2000, 1.9 in 2001 and 1.5 in
2002. On the whole the trend is a significant increase when compared to the first
cohort. As discussed previously 1999 was a particularly weak cohort in general and
this is reflected in the reduced average increase.
Table 4.7 1998 Individual GCSE Results

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Pupil</th>
<th>SATs score*</th>
<th>Predicted GCSEs (mocks)</th>
<th>Actual GCSEs</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Total</td>
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</table>

Average increase in GCSEs per pupil = \(\frac{16}{20}\) = 0.8

* No SATs scores available for this cohort
### Table 4.8 1999 Individual GCSE Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil</th>
<th>SATs score*</th>
<th>Predicted GCSEs (mocks)</th>
<th>Actual GCSEs</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>32 37</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* IT assessment omitted adjustment made by adding 5

Average increase in GCSEs per pupil = \( \frac{13}{24} = 0.6 \)
Table 4.9  2000 Individual GCSE Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil</th>
<th>SATs score</th>
<th>Predicted GCSEs (mocks)</th>
<th>Actual GCSEs</th>
<th>Difference</th>
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<td>+2</td>
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</table>

Average increase in GCSEs per pupil = \( \frac{53}{29} = 1.8 \)
Table 4.10 2001 Individual GCSE Results

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<th>Actual GCSEs</th>
<th>Difference</th>
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Average increase in GCSEs per pupil = $\frac{48}{28} = 1.9$
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Average increase in GCSEs per pupil = \( \frac{48}{31} = 1.5 \)
The decision on which pupils to target was taken in consultation with year tutors and was based mainly on core SATs results and teacher recommendations. As a result of the analysis done on the 2001 GCSE cohort (Appendix 2), the process of targeting was altered in 2002. Year 10 pupils for the REMA programme were chosen from the 35-44 total SATs score group. At the same time the school introduced a new qualification, the Vocational General Certificate of Education (VGCSEs) into the curriculum to replace the General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs). The school has three streams of pupils depending on ability, side 1 for the most able, side 2 for the middle range of pupils and side 3 for entry level pupils. Most of the pupils in the GNVQ cohort have been from ‘side 2’. Even if their total SATs score is comparable to a ‘side 1’ pupil taking GCSEs they have not been targeted up to now as they did not fulfil the criteria of having the potential to gain 5A*-Cs because they followed foundation level courses. With the change to VGCSE it was decided that since some pupils of the SATs scores being targeted were in this group and could potentially get 5 A*-Cs, they should be included in the REMA targeting. The success or otherwise of this strategy remains to be seen in 2004.

The results obtained in this study seem to agree with the claim by OFSTED (DfEE, 1999) that target setting with individual pupils does help raise pupil achievement. The gathering and sharing of information is important but as Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham (1999) have pointed out, ‘what is done with and as a result of the data’ is of greater importance and can make a significant contribution to raising achievement.
4.2 Analysis of Questionnaire Results

Out of 120 questionnaires that were sent out 52 were returned, about 43%. This is slightly better than the 40% expected. Most were from more recent years. It is possible that movement of pupils has occurred where they have left the area to go to university or have moved house. Comments from pupils were mainly positive. Possible explanations for this skew could be that those pupils returning questionnaires were the ones that had a reasonably good attitude towards the programme. Only one return was very negative. A couple of respondents felt that the programme had not really helped them that much but these were pupils who fall into the 45+ score range and were confident enough of their ability. Another reason for the better return with the more recent cohorts could be the fact that they received more input in terms of extra support and revision or the fact that 2001 and 2002 cohorts were still on site and easily accessible as most of them stayed on in the sixth form.

4.2.1 Attitudes

Most of the pupils said their attitudes towards the programmes and school and schoolwork had changed during the course of the two years and they had become positive or very positive (figs. 4.2 – 4.5).
Prior to being placed on the programme many of the pupils say they were positive but a significant number say they were indifferent to school and school work (fig. 4.2).

Fig. 4.2  Pupils attitudes to school and school work before SDS/REMA programme

Fig. 4.3  Pupil attitudes after SDS/REMA programme
At the end of two years there is a marked decrease in the indifferent column. Most pupils (over 90%) say they were positive or very positive (fig. 4.3).

![Bar chart showing pupil attitudes at the end](image)

**Fig.4.4 Initial pupil attitudes to programme**

When asked about attitudes to the programme before they were placed on it a large number said they were positive. This could be because they had already heard about it from other pupils (fig.4.4).

![Bar chart showing initial pupil attitudes](image)

**Fig.4.5 Pupil attitudes to programme at the end**
At the end of the programme (fig. 4.5) there was a more positive attitude towards the programme and a considerable reduction in the number who had felt indifferent.

Sixty five percent of pupils said their motivation had increased (fig. 4.6).

![Bar chart showing the effect of the programme on pupil motivation.](image)

**Fig. 4.6** Programme effect on pupil motivation

Fifty five percent said their self-confidence had increased during their time on the programmes (fig. 4.7).
Fig. 4.7  Programme effect on pupil self-confidence

In the questionnaire pupils were given opportunities to make comments on aspects of the programmes. Many took the opportunity and gave some useful feedback (figs. 4.14 – 4.15). Many of the comments reflected their appreciation of the programme and many had suggestions for improvement, which will be looked at by the REMA team.

Out of the 52 returns there was only one negative comment from a pupil who did not believe the programme was useful to him. This pupil did not appear to have a negative attitude when on the programme but disliked being monitored and chased for homework. His parents were very positive towards the programme and appreciated feedback on his progress. He attended revision and study skills sessions and went on to gain more GCSEs than he was expected to. Whether this was due to REMA or he would have done well anyway is hard to say but compared to none targeted pupils with similar SATs scores he had achieved well.
4.2.2 Support

The most useful provision by SDS/REMA according to those returning questionnaires was extra revision, one-to-one help and in-class support (fig. 4.8).

![Bar chart showing the most helpful provisions of the programmes]

**Fig.4.8** Most helpful provisions of the programmes

Structured maths and science revision sessions were introduced as a pilot in the academic year 1999/2000 to year 10 pupils. Prior to this a homework club was provided and revision was on a supply and demand basis, in other words on request. It was felt that specific revision would help raise achievement more than ad hoc revision in a homework club. Revision sessions were continued for the 1999/2001 cohort in year 11. Subsequent years also benefited from extra revision in maths and science. The 1999/2001 REMA cohort achieved an A*-C success rate of 93%.

Ninety one percent of pupils attending the study skills session in year 10 found it useful or very useful (fig. 4.9). One pupil felt time spent on this was too short.
4.2.3 Achievement

Eighty four percent of pupils felt they had done better in their GCSE examinations than they expected to. Most pupils felt they would obtain less GCSEs when they were in year 10 than year 11 showing that their confidence in themselves increased while they were on the programme. Ninety six percent of pupils felt the programme had focused them on their GCSEs (fig. 4.10).
Summer School was found useful or very useful by 97% of those who took part (fig. 4.11).

**Fig.4.10**  Programme focused pupil on GCSEs

**Fig.4.11**  Opinion of Summer School
As well as gaining IT skills this was an opportunity for pupils to meet other pupils from other schools and participate in activities that they might not otherwise have been able to.

Comments made by the pupils show that they found the revision sessions very useful (fig. 4.12). One pupil commented ‘I didn’t realise revision could be so fun!’ Others commented that they would have liked revision sessions to cover other subjects too. Expertise in the REMA team has been limited to maths and science as far as out-of-hours revision is concerned. The English expert within the team was not on flexi-time and was unable to do after school sessions. Her role as a year tutor also made it difficult to offer this provision.

![Opinion of revision sessions](image)

**Fig.4.12** Opinion of revision sessions
4.2.4 Destinations

Of the 52 pupils returning questionnaires, 97% had gone on to university or were in further education intending to go on to university (fig. 4.13).

![Pupil destinations](image)

**Fig.4.13** Pupil destinations

4.2.5 Pupils' comments on how the programme helped them

Fig. 4.14 shows the comments made by pupils on the questionnaires. The comments from the different cohorts are mainly positive and the pupils appear to have identified as useful the same strategies that have been discussed in the literature review.

Comments include:

- We always talked about positive goals and worked hard on them (trying to achieve them).

- Gave me more confidence to achieve my goals.

- Helped me focus on my aims and objectives.
Helped me focus more on my education and probably the reason why I am still in full time education.

They found the setting of targets/goals useful in reaching their potential and focusing them on their education. Pupils realised that they had the potential to do well. SDS/REMA staff constantly reinforced this.

Made me realise that I had the potential to do well reason for me being part of the SDS group.

Made me realise I had more potential and knowledge than I realised.

It motivated me to achieve my potential.

It helped me focus on my education and helped me realise my future ambition.

Many also comment on an increase in their self-confidence and motivation:

It helped me gain confidence so I could do my best in GCSEs.

I gained help constantly, which increased my self-confidence.

I had more motivation, more confidence and started to take more interest in my future. I feel that REMA has helped me a lot! Thanks to all who were involved?

Pupils returning questionnaires appreciated the extra attention on the whole. The one negative comment received highlights the fact pupils are all individuals and this needs to be acknowledged:

Completely against the idea of REMA, found it annoying.

An agreement with pupils as to how they would like to be supported may be a way forward with pupils who may respond negatively to the current approaches being used. The Durham University research (Henry, 2002) shows that strategies may not
work with everyone. Allowing the pupil to decide which aspects of support they wish to take advantage of may improve their attitude enough to gradually change their negativity to other support on offer. We need to perhaps listen to pupils more and gear support to the individual pupil.

Pupils have commented on the extra help they received:

- Extra help was good because it was available when I needed it.
- Gave confidence in yourself, always had someone to support you.
- When you found a subject difficult and was able to improve in a certain area by extra work.
- By asking for help with homework and coursework was able to gain knowledge on the same topic from different person and explained in a different way to make it easier for understanding.

Extra help in class was also mentioned as:

- Improving understanding on certain areas of work.
- Gave me extra time and help (more) than I would have had form normal class lessons.

One pupil summed up what she had gained from the programme:

- The SDS made me realise that everyone needs help no matter how ‘smart’ or ‘unsmart’ you are and that asking for help when you need it is the ‘smartest’ thing to do

On study support comments by pupils include:

- Provided a place to revise.
Provided access to the Learning Centre and computers to do coursework and homework.

I got extra revision and practice done in certain topics in certain subjects which I was weak at.

Revision techniques, revision sessions helped me focus on my studies

Revision timetable and note organisation was very useful

Many pupils mention gains in focussing, encouragement, motivation, setting of aims and goals, self-esteem, confidence, potential and organisation skills. I believe that these outcomes are a result of mentoring pupils. The positive results of mentoring schemes mentioned by Ryder (2000), Rudduck (2000) and Penny (2000) all show that mentoring can make a tremendous difference in pupil attainment. Self-confidence appears to be the key to unlock potential. The difference it can make is evident in this quotation from Entwistle.

A student who hopes for, and expects to be successful, may well maintain attention in the face of difficulty. A less confident student may give up under the same circumstances.

(Entwistle, 1988:263)
Pupils' comments on how the programme helped them

SDS/REMA GCSE 1998-2002 questionnaire

1998 cohort
- Help and advice was readily available.
- Good revision – helped me to revise.
- Helped organise the time.
- Gave me confidence.
- I think that REMA is doing a good job.

1999 cohort
- Revision tips were useful.
- Made me more confident in my work overall.
- Revision timetable and note organisation was very helpful. Overall increase in confidence and motivation.
- Great assistance in helping and improving my exam technique.
- Made some major differences in some aspects such as exam technique, confidence, self-esteem and the ability to confront problems confidentially.
- Provided lessons on important subjects.
- We always talked about positive goals and worked hard on them (trying to achieve them).
- We all had something in common – ethnic background – so I wasn’t on my own. Speaking to the mentor was good.

2000 cohort
- Helped me to concentrate on my GCSEs, gave further help and advice.
- Realisation of how important examinations are for future prospects.
- Knowing that help was available.
- Provided that extra help in class, improving understanding on certain areas of work. Also made me realise that I had the potential to do well, reason for me being part of the SDS group.
• The programme gave good advice on coursework, revision and it also helped me gain extra from IT which helped in particular with my Business GCSE coursework.

• The programme helped me greatly and prepared me for the GCSEs. I think the programme was well managed and very helpful.

• Made me more aware of my weak points and boosted my confidence to be able to focus and keep on top of the workload.

• Allowed me to ask for extra help and also allowed me to use the facilities in the Learning Centre.

• Gave me extra time and help than I would have had from normal class lessons.

• It helped me gain confidence so I could do my best in GCSEs.

• SDS helped me so much in my GCSEs I was able to achieve more than my goals.

• Extra revision lessons, ability to approach SDS teachers for help.

• Improved my self-confidence.

• I gained extra help constantly, which increased my self-confidence.

• It boosted my self-confidence and enabled me to revises efficiently.

• It helped me pick up on topics I missed.

• It helped me to focus on my education and helped me realise my future ambition.

• It made me concentrate on my work as I was part of the SDS programme

• The extra help was good because it was available when I needed it

• Gave me more confidence to achieve my goals

2001 cohort

• Helped with revision and to build up my confidence towards school work

• Helped me achieve more GCSEs than I thought I’d get

• It told us that there was always help, when we needed it

• It motivated me to achieve my potential

• The SDS made me realise that everyone needs help no matter how ‘smart’ or ‘unsmart’ you are and that asking for help when you need it is the ‘smartest’ thing to do
- It helped me with coursework where to get relevant information from
- I could rely on the project to give me advice and help with understanding pieces of work
- By asking for help with homework and coursework was able to gain knowledge on the same topic from a different person and explained in a different way to make it easier for understanding
- By having someone else than subject teacher to ask help and had opportunity to use more books/resources for the work to be completed
- Gave confidence in yourself, always had someone to support you when you found a subject difficult and was able to improve in a certain area by extra work

<table>
<thead>
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<th>2002 cohort</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Helped me focus on my aims and objectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Encouragement, information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Gave encouragement and motivation and help on specific subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- They were there if you needed extra help</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Made you aware of what you could achieve with hard work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Make me aware that the sky is the limit and my future is in my hands (and also it helped people to think positively about their ethnicity).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- It was very helpful in completing courseworks and revision</td>
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<td>- Helped me improve my revision and therefore improved my GCSE grades</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Made me more work focused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Provided access to Learning Centre and computers to do coursework and homework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Helped me to get through coursework and homework</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Helped me focus and get organised for the exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- It improved my year 10 exam marks and year 11 exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Made me focus more on revision so that I can pass GCSEs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Extra help was useful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Much more confidence, helped plan my spare time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Completely against the idea of REMA found it annoying</td>
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</table>
• It helped me to understand questions and things that were difficult to understand in lessons
• Made me more determined and focused on my weak points
• Always provided a place to revise
• Made me realise I had more potential and knowledge than I realised
• The teachers were always there when I needed them
• Helped me focus more on my education and probably the reason why I am still in full time education
• I understood a lot more a lot quicker
• Helped me in my work. I got extra revision and practice done in certain topics in certain subjects which I was weak at
• It helped me understand my work if I never understood it first time
• It helped gain confidence and develop new skills
• I had help with courseworks and also a lot of revision time was provided by REMA. I didn’t realise revision could be so fun!
• A lot of revision done and also I was motivated to hand coursework in on time
• I had more motivation, more confidence and started to take more interest in my future. I feel that REMA has helped me a lot! Thanks to all who were involved?
• It made me feel confident
• It made me more organised and confident
• I understood the work better
• Revision technique, revision sessions, helped me focus on my studies
skills sessions are now provided several times during the two years in addition to that run by the school.

On revision sessions:

Pupils at different levels i.e. higher, foundation etc could be separated and each one could be helped accordingly with pupils at the same level simultaneously

Revision sessions are now targeted at C/D borderline pupils in science and intermediate level for maths so that pupils feel comfortable and can ask questions if they do not understand. A more supportive, non-threatening environment is thus created than if sessions are open to all pupils.

Interesting comments were made by several pupils about improvement in communication that they felt was needed:

Much better communication with subject teachers.

Better communication with staff – some staff didn’t recognise it and therefore didn’t like students getting help from the SDS as they think they are getting other people to do their work.

The problem with communication is lack of time. Teachers do not have that much spare time. However informal communication takes place during and in-between support lessons to check on pupils’ progress. The REMA team has tried to reduce paperwork sent to teachers as, understandably, they will see it as an extra burden. However, as the project has become more established teachers are communicating concerns as well as achievements to REMA staff. Work still needs to be done on staff
relationships to ensure they understand we do not do the work for pupils but enable them to do the work themselves.

Pupils also commented on communication with parents:

More one to one contact via telephone for pupils, with parents.

This is an interesting observation. Contact with parents was reduced to a report after exams as union guidelines reduced the amount of paper work teachers should do and school interim reports became a casualty. Currently more frequent communication with parents is being tried for the current REMA cohort. Not just when there is cause for concern but to praise and also keep parents informed of progress.

More specific area/room should be available for SDS and more resources are required.

The use of a small room has been provided for the team recently, however, its usefulness is limited to the mentoring of one or two pupils. Certainly the need for a larger space for pupils to be able to work and receive help was highlighted during the final weeks of the current year 11. The pupils were rushing to meet deadlines and as lessons were going on in the rest of the school space for them to do work was difficult to find. Perhaps this is something that could be looked at for future cohorts.

One can create a scheme and run a programme for pupils but there is no guarantee that it will be successful in its aims and objectives. Obviously monitoring and evaluation will give some indication of the effectiveness but the end users are the ones that can give the best kind of feedback as to whether it has been of benefit to them or not. Much of the feedback has confirmed information obtained from current research
and SDS/REMA team findings. Some of the feedback has raised issues for improvement of the provision, which hopefully will result in a better service being provided for the pupils and raising of their achievement.

Fig.4.15 Pupils’ suggestions for improvement of the programme

SDS/REMA GCSE 1998-2002 questionnaire

1999 GCSE cohort
- Weekend sessions and other support apart from educational – social support, religious rights.
- Triple science – get more maths and science teachers involved who have more knowledge in that field for GCSE.
- More and frequent monitoring.
- Learn another subject in summer school.

2000 cohort
- Could have used more one-to-one attention.
- Sessions for subjects which individuals think they need extra help on.
- Reminding pupils that it is there to help them.
- Include sessions like how to revise.
- Focusing on ……..methods to improve exam skills and to have a much better communication with subject teachers.
- More activities to further boost confidence.
- More flexible revision lessons-more lunchtime revision.
- It should be extended to AS/A2.
- Learning Centre open at all times
- The Learning Centre to be open more often for the SDS students

2001 cohort
- Highlight the fact that you are there to help, not there as a teacher-maybe less formal
- Some more help with English language
- More revision on topics in the syllabus
- More teachers, more revision on the less important subjects
- More specific area/room should be available for SDS and more resources are required
- More one to one contact via telephone for pupils, with parents

### 2002 GCSE cohort
- Better communication with staff- some staff didn't recognise it and therefore didn't like students getting help from the SDS as they think they are getting other people to do their work
- Might help if there were more teachers
- Provide help for pupils who do other subjects, e.g. history, RE etc
- Help in more subjects
- Pupils at different levels i.e. higher, foundation etc could be separated and each one could be helped accordingly with pupils at the same level simultaneously
- It was too short (study skills)
- More specific revision on certain topics
Chapter 5
Conclusions and Recommendations
5 Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

On the whole the analysis of GCSE and SATs results show the programme to have been successful in its aims of helping to increase the number of EAL pupils gaining at least 5A*-Cs at GCSE. There has been an increase in the achievement of minority ethnic pupils from 1998 to 2002 from 16% to 35% since SDS/REMA has been in existence. It has to be acknowledged that it is hard to measure the effect of the programme on pupil achievement and it must also be acknowledged that without good teaching in the classroom the programme would not be effective. There has also been an introduction of a whole school study skills scheme over the same period of time, which must be recognised too. The raising of achievement has been due to several initiatives all making their own specific contribution including extra support for pupils from individual departments. The REMA programme can be thought of as a safety net for those pupils who may otherwise fall by the wayside or not do as well as they could.

The results have highlighted where the programme has been most effective. The greatest success has been with the borderline pupils within the SATs range of 44 and below. As a result of this success the school has already set up a similar scheme at Key Stage 3 supporting pupils with the potential to gain level 5 and is aiming to replicate the scheme for GCSE pupils who are not targeted by REMA or other targeting projects operating in the school.

The results from questionnaires highlight the positive effect the programme has had on pupils some of whom were initially unconvinced and wary. The pupils have
generally confirmed that there had been an increase in their self-confidence in their own abilities, increase in their self-esteem and an increase in their motivation. The comments made by the pupils were mainly positive and demonstrate what each child got out of the programme. They also show that most pupils understood what the programme was trying to do for them and had responded well to it. Some of the suggestions for future improvements have already been addressed. Others will be considered as to possible benefits for pupils and ways of implementation.

5.2 **Recommendations for the future:**

- Targeting of pupils with a total SATs score of 44 and below
- Mentoring to be on a more regular basis – currently once each half term
- Revision sessions to be conducted at one level, for example, intermediate or foundation
- The study skills programme to be extended to regular sessions throughout the two years of the GCSE course
- Summer school, if continued, to be introduced in year 9 to get pupils ready for the following two years and equip them with the skills needed for producing good quality GCSE coursework. Also to allow the pupils to ‘gel’ as a group.
- Encourage more involvement of ex-REMA pupils in the sixth form with mentoring and homework clubs
- More work to be done in the communities.
5.3 Future work

Further research work that might be worthwhile considering is an evaluation of the effect of gender on achievement to see if the current trend of boys lagging behind girls holds for pupils on the REMA programme. It would also be interesting to see if pupils’ ethnic group influences their achievement. There is a suggestion that from recent results some ethnic groups are achieving less well than their peers. Analysis of KS2 data to see if any correlation can be found between attainment and future performance at GCSE might be useful and therefore earlier targeting of pupils to raise their achievement. Some work on mentoring of pupils, a potentially powerful tool, would be useful to ascertain the most effective ways of carrying this out and optimal frequency required to have a positive effect. Also, group versus individual mentoring whether there is a place and an argument for both.
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Appendices
Appendix 1

Strategic Development Scheme (SDS)/Raising Ethnic Minority Achievement (REMA) Questionnaire

Please tick the relevant boxes.

1. How did you feel about school and schoolwork before you were put on the programme?
   very positive □ positive □ indifferent □ negative □ very negative □

2. How did you feel about school and schoolwork after you were put on the programme?
   very positive □ positive □ indifferent □ negative □ very negative □

3. What was your initial attitude to SDS/REMA?
   very positive □ positive □ indifferent □ negative □ very negative □

4. What was your attitude to SDS/REMA at the end of the programme?
   very positive □ positive □ indifferent □ negative □ very negative □

5. In year 10 how many GCSEs did you think you could get at A*-C grade?......

6. In year 10 how many GCSEs did you think you could get at A*-C grade?......

7. Did the programme help you to focus on your GCSEs?
   yes □ no □

8. Was the programme of help to you during your GCSEs course?
   yes □ no □
   If yes how?........................................................................................................
   .........................................................................................................................

9. How did the programme affect your motivation?
   greatly increased □ increased □ no difference □
   decreased □ greatly decreased □

10. How did the programme affect your self-confidence?
    greatly increased □ increased □ no difference □
11. Did you attend the SDS/REMA Study Skills session in year 10?
   yes ☐ no ☐
   If yes, how did you find it?
   very useful ☐ useful ☐ don’t know ☐ slightly useful ☐ no use at all ☐
   further comments............................................................

12. Did you attend the SDS/REMA Summer School in year 10?
   yes ☐ no ☐
   If yes, how did you find it?
   very useful ☐ useful ☐ don’t know ☐ slightly useful ☐ no use at all ☐
   further comments............................................................

13. Did you attend the SDS/REMA after school revision?
   yes ☐ no ☐
   If yes, how did you find it?
   very useful ☐ useful ☐ don’t know ☐ slightly useful ☐ no use at all ☐
   further comments............................................................

14. Did the project help you in any way?
   yes ☐ no ☐
   If yes, how?.................................................................

15. Are there ways in which the programme could have helped you but did not?
.................................................................

16. Can you suggest any changes to the programme that might improve the
    programme for future pupils?
.................................................................

17. How were your results (GCSEs)?
   much better ☐ slightly better ☐ no difference ☐
   than expected than expected
   worse than expected ☐ much worse than expected ☐
18. Have you been through or are you currently in further or higher education?

   yes □   no □

   If yes, where?.................................................................

   and what course............................................................

   If no, what are you doing now?

   .................................................................

19. If you have finished a degree course what class degree did you get?

   .................................................................

20. Would a similar programme have been helpful for you in your
    AS/A2/Advanced GNVQ (Delete as required)

   yes □   no □

21. What part of the SDS/REMA programme did you find the most helpful?

   mentoring □  one-to-one help □  revision sessions □

   homework club □  in-class support □

22. What difference, if any, did SDS/REMA make to you?

   .................................................................

   .................................................................

   .................................................................

Thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire. Please return as soon as possible to:

Mrs A. Ali
Fitzalan High School
Lawrenny Ave
Cardiff  CF11 8XB

If you have no objection to being contacted to discuss any of the points you have made please fill in your name and address below.

Name ............................................
Address ..........................................
............................................
............................................
Telephone .....................................
# Appendix 2

## Comparative Analysis – SATS 1999/GCSE 2002: SIDE 1 PUPILS

### 1999/2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SATS TOTALS</th>
<th>SATS TOTALS</th>
<th>%5A-Cs</th>
<th>B/R</th>
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<tr>
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<td>10/10</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 - 45</td>
<td>29/29</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>9R; 1B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44 - 40</td>
<td>21/42</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>7R; 3B</td>
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<tr>
<td>39 - 35</td>
<td>11/41</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>10R; 5B</td>
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<td>34 - 29</td>
<td>1/14</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1B</td>
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### 2000/2002

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<tbody>
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<td>55 - 50</td>
<td>13/13</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>3R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 - 45</td>
<td>30/30</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>44 - 40</td>
<td>29/54</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>15R; 2B</td>
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<tr>
<td>39 - 35</td>
<td>7/34</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>4R; 6B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 - 29</td>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T=79/140</td>
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<td>56%</td>
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### NOTES

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<th>SATs</th>
<th>5A-Cs</th>
<th>%5A-Cs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>44 - 40</td>
<td>7/7R = 100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>39 - 35</td>
<td>8/10R = 80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 - 29</td>
<td>0/1B = 0%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- B = Black Caribbean
- R = REMA

B. Phillips 2001