

# Turning Pages, Changing Lives: *An Evaluation of the Shannon Trust Reading Programme Turning Pages*



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# Forward

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Literacy is a national priority – literacy failure will cost UK GDP an estimated £34 billion by 2025, it is more closely linked to employability in England than in any OECD country and low literacy is more closely linked to poverty in our country than in any other European country apart from Romania. Nowhere is the literacy crisis felt more acutely than in prisons: 46% of people enter our prisons with the literacy of, or below, that expected of an 11-year-old child. This is three times more than the adult population generally.

The literacy fault line creates wider inequality: poor literacy can hold people back at every stage; it can undermine well-being and stop individuals from making a full contribution to the economic and cultural life of our nation. It is also a risk factor associated with reoffending.

Organisations like the Shannon Trust who deliver reading initiatives in our prisons are not just improving literacy, they are transforming lives and by extension society itself. By enabling and encouraging prisoners to engage in the rehabilitative journey, they are performing vital work which underpins the current efforts of politicians and policymakers to break the cycle of reoffending.

The Shannon Trust operates a unique model that inspires prisoners who can read to teach those who can't. This report highlights the positive impact Turning Pages has in terms of the reading abilities of participants, but also and perhaps in the context of rehabilitation, more fundamentally in terms of changing attitudes and behaviours more broadly.

Responses featured in this report demonstrate the critical importance of key elements of the programme: its informal nature, the one-to-one support of mentors and the opportunity it gives learners to work at their own pace. All of these factors are central to the programme's success in engaging those who have had previous experience of, and therefore have preconceived ideas about, 'education'.

Beyond all, this report highlights the far-reaching impact literacy initiatives like Turning Pages can, and do, have in secure settings. As one participant puts it, *"If you can't read you can't get nowhere in life ... I don't want to be like that, I want to do something with my life now, I want to change for the better... this is a step in the door."*

## Acknowledgements

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# Executive Summary

## Shannon Trust and the Shannon Trust Reading Plan

Shannon Trust is a small charity that aims to increase the reading abilities of adult prisoners who identify as beginner readers or who may lack confidence or experience as readers. The charity's vision is "every prisoner a reader". Shannon Trust aims to create a positive learning experience that can inspire adult Learners in prison and provide them with opportunities that support them to go on to pursue crime free lives.

The Shannon Trust Reading Plan initially made use of the Toe by Toe reading scheme, a programme originally designed to support children's reading development through a phonics based approach. In 2015, Shannon Trust replaced Toe by Toe with Turning Pages. Turning Pages was specially commissioned by Shannon Trust and designed specifically to support the reading development of adult Learners. Turning Pages comprises a set of workbooks, known as 'manuals', that the Learner owns and works through systematically. Manuals are complemented by a set of stand-alone Turning Pages 'Readers' (fiction and non-fiction), some of which draw on user-generated content.

The Shannon Trust Reading Plan sits outside formal education and Turning Pages is facilitated entirely by 'peer Mentors' rather than teachers or tutors. Turning Pages makes use of a synthetic phonics approach to supporting reading development and has been implemented in 124 prisons across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Coates Review (2016) identified the Shannon Trust Reading scheme as an example of good practice in unlocking prisoner potential.

## The evaluation

Turning Pages is a newly developed reading programme by Shannon Trust and, whilst it shares a focus on phonics with its predecessor Toe by Toe, it has many unique factors that aim to contribute to the development and acquisition of reading in adult Learners within the context of prison. This evaluation therefore aims to monitor the impact Turning Pages has on Learners and Mentors and by doing so aims to answer the following research questions:

- How effective are the Turning Pages teaching methods in improving reading ability in adults?
- How important are the delivery methods in prisons, the quality of provision and the impact of the one on the other?
- What are the wider benefits/outcomes to Learners and Mentors of involvement in Turning Pages?

The evaluation drew on multiple theoretical perspectives to address these questions and to make judgements about effectiveness. Phonological awareness and de-coding skills were assessed through the use of quantitative, standardised word and non-word reading tests undertaken over a six-month period. As Turning Pages incorporates five manuals that contain interactive learning activities for Learners, the evaluation considered the impact manual progression had on Learners' reading ability. The impact of working with Turning Pages on the lives of Learners and Mentors was explored through semi-structured interviews and discussion groups.

## Key Findings

### How effective are the Turning Pages teaching methods in improving reading ability in adults?

- Turning Pages was able to promote the word decoding skills and sight word reading of adult Learners through the application of a synthetic phonics based approach.
- Significant gains in word reading and non-word reading scores were found for all Learners involved in the Turning Pages evaluation (regardless of their initial reading ability) during the first three months and from baseline to the final six-month period.
- Learners reported an increase in reading confidence over the six-month period.
- Learners reported a significant increase in their self-rated reading attainment, enjoyment and reading comprehension ability over the six-month period.
- Learners who had either completed Turning Pages or were reading the final manual, read significantly more words and non-words compared to their peers and rated themselves as more able readers over the six-month period.
- Learners and Mentors place significant value on the informal, non-institutional nature of Turning Pages and identified the adult focus of the programme, one-to-one support of Mentors and the opportunity to work at their own pace as key factors in supporting successful learning.

### How important are the delivery methods in prisons, quality of provision and the impact of the one on the other?

- The Learner/Mentor pairing is highly valued by all parties and central to the success of the programme. The nuanced, individualised approach to support taken by Mentors ('grounded pedagogies') in negotiation with their Learners is seen by Learners as central to their success.
- The success of Turning Pages is related to the 'un-schooled', social approach Turning Pages has to adult learning (i.e. occurring outside formal education) which, based upon responses in this evaluation, has been shown to attract Learners.

- The number of weekly sessions Learners had with Mentors ranged from 3 to 5. The number of reading sessions was not found to have an effect on reading performance. It may be possible therefore for Learners to vary the number of sessions each week without negatively affecting reading improvement. It is still recommended, however, that the full allocation of 5 sessions is made available to all Learners.
- Learners attending functional skills classes read fewer words and non-words than their peers and they were also completing the reading manuals at a significantly slower rate. However, this sub-group still showed improvement in their reading abilities. The fact that most reported having a diagnosis of dyslexia suggests that this (along with other potential learning needs) may be contributing to their slower rate of reading acquisition and manual progression.
- Learners were progressing through the manuals with most having reached either the second manual or stage two of the first after the first three months and after six-months, most Learners had either completed Turning Pages or had reached the final manual. This suggests that the duration of six months at the intensity of around 3-5 weekly sessions was enough for Learners to reach the final stages of the reading programme.
- Manual progression was related to perceived reading improvement and gains in reading scores, suggesting that improvement in reading over time was related to the Turning Pages manuals.
- Significant positive correlations were found between perceived reading ability, perceived reading enjoyment and perceived reading comprehension ability at the six-month stage, and perceived ratings also correlated significantly with word and non-word reading scores at the three-month stage. This suggests that some importance should be weighted to the promotion of reading enjoyment, comprehension and reader confidence in the reading sessions for Learners engaged in Turning Pages.

### **What are the wider benefits/outcomes to Learners and Mentors of involvement in Turning Pages?**

- Findings show that after the six-month intervention, Learners were reading more for functional participation within prison and for social engagement. This also included reading materials that Learners had reported a lack of confidence reading prior to their engagement with Turning Pages, such as legal letters, books and application forms.
- Turning Pages provided Learners with productive opportunities to re-engage with learning, build confidence and work towards goals that were meaningful to their own lives.
- Phase Two data suggests that working with Turning Pages provided important opportunities for Learners and Mentors to exercise a degree of choice in an

otherwise highly regulated environment – this fed into a re-appraisal of their existing ideas and experiences of education and opened up opportunities for thoughtful reflection on the past, present and future. This enabled participants to begin to articulate new hopes and aspirations for the future.

## Recommendations

### For Shannon Trust

- It is recommended that the reading plan model of participation (peer mentoring) continues to remain separate from formal compulsory education to maintain the un-schooled, social approach Turning Pages has to adult learning, which based upon responses in this evaluation has been shown to attract Learners.
- To provide better access to more reading books (Readers) that accompany the manuals for Learners.
- To consider including building opportunities for reading comprehension in to the manuals or associated materials to encourage Mentors to target reading comprehension in conjunction with the Readers.
- To identify Learners with additional learning needs and Learners who are accessing literacy support to monitor their progression and provide any additional tailored support that focuses on reinforcing components learnt in the manuals. Promoting greater awareness of dyslexia and managing this through reading programmes like Turning Pages could be incorporated in the Mentor training.

### For the prison service and NOMS

- To promote awareness of Turning Pages across all prison staff and prospective Learners and in partnership with Shannon Trust develop a standardised model to which new potential Learners are introduced and encouraged to participate in the reading programme.
- Embed the Turning Pages sessions into the prison routine and other learning/educational sessions so as not to disrupt Learners' free time and to ensure that sessions are being delivered.

### For research

- To fully test the effectiveness of Turning Pages, any outcomes measured would need to be compared to a comparison group who are ideally also receiving a similar educational intervention.
- It would be useful to gain information on the way in which Mentors creatively tailor their approach to Learners in conjunction with the resources used in Turning Pages and to identify the extent to which this contributes to a successful learning experience for Learners enrolled on Turning Pages.

- To assess prison staff's awareness of Turning Pages and its psycho-social benefits in order to highlight potential solutions for increasing awareness and Learner recruitment.
- To monitor the long-term value and benefits of working with Turning Pages in a longitudinal impact study.
- To monitor the implementation of any reading comprehension activities and the extent to which this aids the development of reading.

## Limitations

- This evaluation did not contain a control group of adult Learners with which the progress of Learners participating in Turning Pages could be compared. This limits the extent to which the effectiveness of Turning Pages can be established. However, administering a control group design in a prison context would bring with it additional ethical challenges and would have significant resource implications.
- There was an element of assessor bias present in the study with Mentors completing the reading assessments on behalf of their Learner. This approach was chosen due to limits in staff resource, and the risk of bias was minimised by the intense training all Mentors received on how to accurately complete the assessments.
- Limits in resource also contributed to the reduction of sample size with high attrition rates increasing as time progressed. This is to be expected with longitudinal research in the prison context presenting many logistical challenges associated with prison transfers, data handling and limited staffing. The arm's length approach to data management resulted in further complications that had a negative effect on data collection.
- The large number of assessments used in this study may have contributed to the small sample size and high rates of attrition found in this evaluation. Learners are often put off by having to be tested, especially on items they find difficult and impractical, such as non-word tests. Assessing Learners prior to their participation in Turning Pages also conflicts with the ethos of Shannon Trust.



## Table of contents

Executive Report	3
Shannon Trust and the Shannon Trust Reading Plan	3
The evaluation	3
Key Findings	4
Recommendations	6
Limitations	7
List of Tables and Figures	10
The Shannon Trust Reading Plan	11
Turning Pages	12
Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation	13
Defining Effectiveness	14
An autonomous model of literacy	14
A 'new literacies' (social practice) model of literacy	16
Prison as a particular context for the evaluation of Turning Pages	17
Evaluation Design: a multi-lens approach	20
Ethical clearance	20
Phase One	20
Phase Two	23
Findings	25
Reading effectiveness through an autonomous lens	25
Response from prisons, Mentors and Learners	25
Progression through manuals and number of Turning Pages sessions attended	28
Perception of reading activity and confidence	38
Word reading and non-word reading scores	39
Word reading scores	41
Non-word reading scores	45
Correlations	49
Comparisons of reading scores and perceived ratings across Learner sub-groups	50
Summary and discussion of Phase One findings	56
Triangulating findings with Shannon Trust snapshot data	60
Reading effectiveness through a social practice lens	61
Getting started with Shannon Trust Reading Plan and Turning Pages	61
Becoming a better reader	63
Previous experiences of formal education	66
Working with Turning Pages and the Shannon Trust Reading Plan	67
Learners on Mentors	70
Developing 'grounded pedagogies'	71
Benefits to Mentors	73
Resilience	73



Conclusions	76
How effective are the Turning Pages teaching methods (manuals and Learners) in improving reading ability in adults?	76
How important are the delivery methods in prisons, quality of provision and the impact of the one on the other?	77
What are the wider benefits/outcomes to Learners and Mentors of involvement in Turning Pages?	78
Limitations	79
Establishing effectiveness	79
Assessor bias	80
Small sample size	80
Ethical requirements	80
Administering assessments	81
Recommendations	82
Linking outcomes to the Coates review (2016)	82
Embedding Turning Pages into prison routine	82
Supporting Learners with additional learning needs	82
More Readers	83
Introducing reading comprehension and written literacy	83
Recommendations for NOMS and the prison service	84
Increasing awareness of Turning Pages	84
A recommended agenda for future research	85
References	86
Appendix 1: Semi-structured interview schedule	89
Appendix 2: Summary of the theoretical debate that concerns the study of literacy	92
Appendix 3: Extended discussion of the autonomous and new literacies (social) approach to studying literacy	94

## List of tables and figures

- Table 1: Number of Learners engaged in each manual at the three-month stage.
- Table 2: Manual stage reached at three months for Learners who participated in the evaluation for the whole six-month period.
- Table 3: Number of Learners engaged in each manual at the six-month stage.
- Table 4: Learners' mean perceived reading ability ratings at each manual reached at the six-month point.
- Table 5: Learners' mean perceived reading enjoyment at each manual reached at the six-month point.
- Table 6: Learners' mean perceived reading comprehension ratings at each manual reached at the six-month point.
- Table 7: Central tendency figures comparing word reading scores across the three time-points
- Table 8: Mean word reading scores obtained by Learners at each manual.
- Table 9: Mean word reading scores at each time-point for Learners who scored below the group mean at baseline.
- Table 10: Central tendency figures comparing non-word reading scores across the three time-points.
- Table 11: Mean non-word reading scores obtained by Learners at each manual.
- Table 12: Mean non-word reading scores at each time-point for Learners who scored below the group mean at baseline.
- Table 13: Age range of Learners that formed the six-month cohort.
- Graph 1: Mean number of words read at each time-point
- Graph 2: Mean number of non-words read at each time-point.

## Abbreviations

**RPL (Reading Plan Lead)**

**NOMS (National Offender Management Service)**

**BCU (Birmingham City University)**

**PA (Phonological Awareness)**

**SLI (Speech and Language Impairment)**

## The Shannon Trust Reading Plan

The Shannon Trust Reading Plan is a peer delivered programme through which prisoners support and mentor other prisoners who struggle to read, with the aim of improving their reading, usually outside the formal structures of 'Education' or offender learning services and without the intervention of professional teachers. The STRP programme has been running successfully for over fifteen years and in 2015 involved 4,008 new Learners working with 1,980 peer Mentors across prisons in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. These figures suggest that the Reading Plan approach is both popular and credible within the prisoner community. The Shannon Trust Reading Plan is valued by prison governors, operating in 124 prisons across England, Wales and Northern Ireland and has been recognised in the recent Coates' review of Prison Education (2016) as an example of good practice in unlocking prisoner potential.

**“Shannon Trust reading plans provide a successful, alternative way of learning to read for the many prisoners who have had negative experiences of formal education and struggle to engage in a classroom environment. Prisoners who can read teach prisoners who cannot. The approach allows prisoners to progress at their own pace. They gain confidence in themselves as they develop reading” (Coates, 2016:31)**

The Shannon Trust Reading Plan sits outside formal education and involves the peer mentoring of less able readers by more experienced readers. The programme is aimed at prisoners who are reluctant to engage with classroom teaching. The Reading Plan is based on Learners having five twenty-minute sessions with their Mentor each week. Sessions are private and Learners are supported to progress at their own pace. Building Learner confidence as well as capability is an expressed priority of the scheme.

Until 2015 the Shannon Trust Reading Plan made use of an existing, commercially available reading scheme, Toe by Toe. Toe by Toe is a well-regarded, market leading resource written originally for parents supporting children who struggle to keep pace with norm referenced expectations of reading development, particularly those who are considered to display characteristics of dyslexia. Toe by Toe is a highly structured programme that teaches phonic skills. The reading of non-words is also a feature of this programme, and there is considerable emphasis on recording progress. Learners engage with the programme on a very regular basis, in the case of Shannon Trust Reading Plan twenty minutes five days a week, alongside a Mentor. The progress which reading Toe by Toe seems to secure has seen the programme transition from a parent/child context to compulsory education contexts and to adult education settings in the absence of adult specific material.

## Turning Pages

Turning Pages is a new reading programme for inexperienced readers, commissioned by Shannon Trust in 2013 and specifically designed for adult learners in response to a gap in the market for adult specific materials for non-expert, peer delivery. As such, Turning Pages aims to secure the continuing and future success of the Shannon Trust Reading Plan. Turning Pages uses the synthetic phonics approach also found in Toe by Toe scheme but is attuned to the needs of adults learning to read in the nuanced context of a prison setting, often outside the formal structures of institutionalised or organised education.

Turning Pages consists of a stand-alone reading programme based upon the five manuals that form the programme and the thirty Readers (reading books) that accompany the different reading levels that each manual also targets. The Readers include fiction and non-fiction, two of which were written by Mentors. The manuals and Readers that form Turning Pages were developed in accordance with the vision of the Shannon Trust, which is to make every prisoner a reader in order to promote essential life skills. Turning Pages reading manuals aim to be interactive, stimulating, enjoyable and appropriate for adult learners who cannot read or have limited reading ability. There is no element of formal assessment before or during the reading programme and all Learners begin at the same first manual and continue progressing through to more advanced manuals. As Turning Pages aims to create a positive learning experience for Learners, the variety of enjoyable interactive activities and the emphasis on achievement, together with progress checks that monitor Learners' progress and embed their learning of synthetic phonics, promote Learner engagement and aim to inspire Learners to pursue other opportunities for learning in the future. Despite Turning Pages being primarily a reading programme, the manuals also contain elements of activities that target reading comprehension and written literacy including writing and spelling. The programme incorporates a peer mentoring approach to its delivery, with Learners expected to work through each manual consecutively with their peer Mentor. The intended pattern of work is five twenty-minute sessions per week. At completion of each manual the Learner is rewarded with a certificate and congratulated on their progress.

## Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

The development of a bespoke 'in-house' reading programme attuned specifically to the needs of the Shannon Trust Reading Plan client group signified a new departure for Shannon Trust. It represented considerable resource investment and a degree of risk in relation to potential impact by moving away from using a well-established reading programme. This independent evaluation was therefore commissioned to enable Shannon Trust to understand the efficacy and value of the new Turning Pages programme to Shannon Trust Reading Plan Learners.

The evaluation sought to establish:-

- The effectiveness of Turning Pages teaching methods in improving reading ability in adults;
- The importance of delivery methods in prisons and the quality of provision and the impact of the one on the other;
- Any wider benefits or outcomes to Learners and Mentors of involvement in Turning Pages.

## Defining Effectiveness

Defining effectiveness in relation to reading ability is not a straightforward task as definitions of what it means to read, to read effectively and to identify or be identified as a competent reader are hotly debated and highly contested within the broader field of literacy.

Contemporary perspectives on adult literacy can be broadly described in terms of a central debate between two competing, polarised positions: a perspective that understands literacy as a skills 'tool kit' that once acquired can be applied successfully across a range of different reading and writing contexts; and an alternative view that sees literacy not as a discrete skills set but as a range of social practices embedded in specialised contexts and therefore distinctive to those contexts. This latter perspective argues that literacy, singular, is not a meaningful concept and that it is more accurate to think of different types and forms of 'literacies' (in the plural) occurring in different aspects of our social, cultural and professional lives. These two viewpoints are known as the autonomous model and the social practice or 'new literacies' model respectively.

Understanding these different (and often competing) positions is important because each has significant implications for the way reading effectiveness might be defined, described and assessed and the way in which judgements about the quality and nature of 'literate' might be made. As such, these debates have had an important bearing on the design of this evaluation and the decisions that have been made about the kind of evidence base required to satisfy the varying expectations and curiosities that different groups of stakeholders bring to the conclusions. A short summary of each position and the implications for evaluation design is offered below with further detail provided in appendix 4.

### **An autonomous model of literacy**

As indicated above, this position treats literacy as a set of technical competencies or skills that can be atomised into four discrete domains of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Once acquired, this skills toolkit enables the holder to function effectively across a range of contexts and settings for a variety of purposes. Some commentators have used the idea of the 'literacy ladder' (Crowther et al, 2001) in the process of skill acquisition. The student or learner starts their journey at the bottom of the literacy ladder with an 'illiterate' identity. Literacy is achieved through a linear process of becoming literate as the learner progresses mono-directionally up each rung, or learning stage, of the ladder towards a 'literate' identity. Permission to progress from one rung to the next is externally regulated and mediated through tests and assessments that specify and fix what should be learned at each level and are referenced to 'normal' rates of progression and levels of achievement. Testing is assumed to be a generic process, designed to say something about the learner in relation to other learners. Tests may be

referenced to real life scenarios but assessment is limited to test performance and does not take account of success in daily life interactions. Progress of learners, cohorts and populations can be measured and compared quantitatively often using 'objective' standardised tests.

### Judging effectiveness with an autonomous lens

Reader effectiveness as viewed through the autonomous lens is often assessed quantitatively using standardised tests that measure skills central to the development of reading such as phonological awareness (PA).

Phonological awareness has been widely documented within this frame as an essential skill for achieving literacy competence and involves the identification of, and the ability to manipulate 'sounds in words' (Snowling and Hulme, 2012; Carroll and Snowling, 2004; Catts et al, 2001). Intervention and tests that measure PA ability often incorporate tasks that require the decoding, blending and segmenting of sounds in words, at the level of the phoneme, onset-rime and syllable. Judging reader effectiveness through this lens, therefore, is underpinned by the idea that reading acquisition can be assessed by measuring the development of cognitive processes and the capacity to implement these processes when faced with text. This approach is primarily focused on de-coding.

Standardised tests that demonstrate strong validity and reliability are often the favoured method of assessing these cognitive processes as they contain words that have already been validated on a specific population (DfES, 2012). Words used in standardised reading tests will also aim to contain words of varying grapheme to phoneme correspondences that differ in difficulty based on the incorporation of other factors influential in literacy acquisition, such as word length or word frequency (Spencer, 2007). Standardised tests also provide referenced 'norms' which enable comparison across groups and make it possible to identify delays or variation from a norm, in the development of reading and phonological awareness (Torgesen, 1998). It also means that change and improvement in reading ability and its associated processes (phonological awareness) can be monitored over time in accordance with the autonomous model of literacy (Street, 1984). One frequently used method of measuring phonological awareness is that of non-word testing. Non-word tests control for semantic processing that occur in sight word reading or in the reading of exception words that do not conform to the typical grapheme-phoneme correspondences and thus require phonetic decoding. It is therefore common for intervention research to measure reading effectiveness using standardised word reading and non-word reading tests (Torgesen, 1998).

Judging reader effectiveness through this lens is primarily focused on a reader's ability to de-code, that is to say to demonstrate their competence in relation to phonological awareness and phoneme (sound) and grapheme (letters) relationships in English.



### A 'new literacies' (social practice) model of literacy

An alternative account of literacy generally and reading in particular has been offered by research informed by the New Literacy Studies (see for example Barton and Hamilton, 1998; Barton, 1994; Gee, 2000; Street, 1984). Researchers working within this paradigm treat language and literacy as social practice rather than technical skills learned exclusively in formal education. This kind of research orientation, argues Street, "requires language and literacy to be studied as they occur naturally in social life, taking account of the context and their different meanings for different cultural groups" (2001:17). Barton and Hamilton's (1998:7) five tenets offer a useful summary of the principles that underpin these alternative positions.

- Literacy is best understood as a set of social practices; these can be inferred from events which are mediated by written texts.
- There are different literacies associated with different domains of life.
- Literacy practices are patterned by social institutions and power relationships, and some literacies become more dominant, visible, and more influential than others.
- Literacy is historically situated.
- Literacy practices change, and new ones are frequently acquired through processes of informal learning and sense making.

(Barton and Hamilton, 1998:7)

What is central to these ideas is that literacy is not understood as a context free, technical skill-set but as practice deeply embedded in social and cultural interactions.

Learners may bring their own definitions about literacy to the classroom space that reflect their participation in 'non-school' contexts and are therefore likely to be 'literate' in specialist domains outside the classroom. Adult learners are recognised and acknowledged as experiencing functioning adult lives that involve participation in a variety of communities of practice that in turn mediate literacies and texts.

### Judging effectiveness with a social practice lens

The concept of reading and what it means to read and be a reader are understood very differently within a multi-literacies perspective than within the autonomous perspective described above, as texts are not understood to "stand on their own as bearers of their own self-defining meanings. Any text is always read from a particular point of view, by a subject (or subjects) positioned at a particular point...the 'true' text – is never more than an abstraction, an idea distinct from particularly positioned readings of aspects of the textual object." (Peim, 1993:73). As such, reading and writing practices are conceived as context bound, the

'listener/reader, speaker/writer are seen not as an isolated individual, but as a social agent, located in a network of social relations, in specific places in a social structure.' (Kress: 1990:5). Judging reader effectiveness through this lens is about understanding whether a reader self-identifies that their reading enables them to be and act in the world in ways that they consider support their personal well-being (social, cultural and economic) and aspirations across the range of different contexts that they operate. In the prison context specifically this may relate to a capacity to build the sort of desistance identities that will support realisation of positive aspirations, big or small, for the future.

### **Prison as a particular context for the evaluation of Turning Pages.**

Researchers interested in literacy as social practice argue that prison provides a very specific context for literacy that positions prisoners, as well as other members of the community, in very particular ways. Informed by the new literacy studies, prison ethnographer Anita Wilson has developed the concepts of third space literacy and educentricity to help think through prisoners' relationships with literacy and literacy education in the prison context.

Wilson uses the idea of 'third space' to understand the spaces prisoners create and sustain (Wilson chooses the term 'defend') between the powerful and pervasive 'inside world' practices that represent the constant presence and authority of the security regime (to which prisoners are inevitably subject) and the personal practices that link to and extend out of the social cultures of 'outside world' identities and communities and which prisoners may be keen to assert and protect:

On the one hand, prison tries to push prisoners into an institutional space which prioritizes institutional literacy, while, on the other hand, prisoners resist by defending their personal space with contextualized literacies that carry the traces of outside world practices and activities. From what appears to be a no-win situation, the tension is resolved by the selective amalgamation and colonization of institutional space and situated literacy/ies which both constitute and are constitutive of a third space (Wilson 2000:70)

Creating and occupying third space, Wilson contends, is an important act of controlled choice that enables prisoners to forge a sense of self and identity that makes it possible for them to see themselves as more than just 'prisoners'. The notion of agency, of taking back and asserting some form of personal choice, influence or control is just as important, Wilson argues, in relation to how prisoners experience Education in prison. She uses the term 'educentricity' to describe the positions individuals or groups take up in relation to Education – that is to say the collection of ideas, concepts, values and attitudes that define their meaning making about Education and inform they position themselves (and indeed the ways they are positioned by others) in relation to it. Educentricity is, she says,

the way in which certain groups or individuals position education within the

parameters of their own personal and professional experiences which then go on to influence the opinions, perceptions and understandings of the education of others – who are of course doing the same thing! From this position each group or person compares and contrasts, judges and assesses the position and meaning of education in other worlds, using their own experience as a yardstick by which to measure others (Wilson, 2007: 192)

Thinking with ‘educentricity’ enables an exploration of how prisoners may experience the education offer available in the prison context. For many prisoners, Wilson argues, “education is something that has been done to them, taken away from them, imposed, ordered, required. It is an experience that stays with them, something by which they are judged, something by which they critique their own ability and something that goes on to influence the way they perceive themselves long after their involvement with the school system and something which subsequently forms the basis of their educentric position.” (Wilson, 2007: 191) Thus they may take up an educentric position that is suspicious or sceptical of the motives of formal education – which works with a very different educentricity – and its capacity to respect or reflect their world-view and aspirations. Wilson does not, however, advocate uncritical acceptance of the version of educentricity invoked by many prisoners; indeed she suggests that to “support only the negative educentricity of prisoners towards education – such as poor spelling, bad hand writing, non-affirmative experiences” would be a disservice that fails to offer a “chance to see education as something much broader that can be interesting and useful.” Neither does she feel it productive to install an alternative educentric, for example that held by practitioners or policymakers; this she suggests may represent an equal disservice “in a world swamped with qualifications, portfolios and records of achievement, do we have the right to encourage them to believe that such will automatically negate the prison record that they also have to carry around?” (Wilson, 2007: 198). Her solution lies at the intersection of educentricity and third space:

where education in the conventional sense – a serious business, intent of raising standards, core curriculum and identifiable outcomes – moves to a place where ‘teachers treat you like individuals’...‘where I can blether with my mates’...and as a place ‘to get away from cockroaches’. It has less to do with learning and more to do with the maintenance of a social identity. (Wilson, 2007: 199)

For Wilson then, literacy education in the prison context is defined as practice that combines recognition of, and respect for, the educentricity/ies that individuals bring to learning as starting points for new learning. New learning should create ‘third space’ opportunities that enable Learners to build new social identities that are meaningful to them and useful for them.

### Judging reading effectiveness in the prison context

Like the theory of multi-literacies outlined above, the concepts of third space and

educentricity emphasise the idea of mobile identities made and re-made through complex participation in social and cultural practices.

Researchers working in the field of desistance argue that “the rehabilitation of offenders depends crucially on the construction of a more adaptive narrative identity” (Maruna, 1997; Ward and Marshall, 2007:280). These researchers argue that the capacity to build a ‘desistance narrative’, that is to say to imagine new stories about who they are and who and how they might be in the future, is vital to a prisoner’s chances of successful and sustained rehabilitation. Reading effectiveness in the prison context would therefore need to be orientated toward supporting Learners to build new identities in ways that are sensitive to the issues described above.

## Evaluation Design: a multi-lens approach

The design of the evaluation responded to each of the positions on literacy effectiveness outlined above in order to provide rich, multi-perspective insights into the effects of Turning Pages and to illuminate the widest possible range of benefits for Learners and Mentors. Phase One of the evaluation viewed Turning Pages through a primarily 'autonomous lens' focusing on exploring impacts on phonological awareness and de-coding in relation to 'objective', standardised assessments of achievement whilst Phase Two used a 'social practice lens' to explore self-reported, 'subjective' evaluations of the benefits and effects of engaging with the programme.

### Ethical clearance

Before prison governors were approached for Phase One of the study and before any data was collected, the research design, method, procedure and all of the intended resources had to undergo ethical review from the Birmingham City University (BCU) ethics committee and the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) ethics committee. Ethical clearance was granted for the study on the basis that data was sent from prison via confidential post and all interviews were recorded using a secure encrypted audio recording device, which had to be cleared by each individual prison visited for Phase Two of the study.

### Phase One

Phase One related to the autonomous lens and so required a quantitative approach to test the effectiveness of Turning Pages. Phase One consisted of three testing periods. This design aimed to understand reading gains over time and to take account of the possibility of high attrition rates found in research in this area, (Crisanti et al, 2014; Farrington, 1979).

The aim of the first stage of testing was to obtain quantitative baseline data, two further stages at three and six months aimed to assess gains over the period. Prisons that already had a robust system in place for ensuring adequate learning activity, resources, staffing and training were included in the sample group and youth offending institutions were excluded from the study as the focus was on adult prisoners. Prisons that formed categories B and C were included in addition to prisoners with English as an additional language and female prisoners, so as to accurately reflect the adult prison population.

Calculations of sample size drew on similar research on prison literacy intervention (Taylor & MacAtee, 2003), and a review of effective prison mentoring interventions (Bagnall et al, 2015) in combination with Cohen's (1992) estimation of statistical power. It was estimated that a final sample of 60-100 would produce the required statistical power needed to generate significant effects over the six-month testing period. After applying the specific inclusion criteria mentioned previously, 49 prisons were identified as being suitable prisons for participation in both phases and an

invitation was sent to each prison governor, informing them of the evaluation. Consent to participate was obtained from governors of 48 of the 49 prisons. Learners completed hard copies of the information sheets and consent forms which were designed in collaboration with the Shannon Trust to ensure maximum accessibility. These were distributed via Shannon Trust Reading Plan Leads (RPLs) at each prison.

As Phase One required Shannon Trust prison Mentors to deliver the reading assessments and questionnaires to the Learners, Mentors who consented to Phase One attended an intensive day training event, which was accompanied by a training manual to support and instruct them through the assessment process. In order to measure reading ability and phonetic decoding ability, Learners were asked to complete a word reading and non-word reading test at each of the three time-points, all of which were administered by their prison Mentors. In addition to the reading assessments and to obtain further quantitative data on Learners' reading perception, Learners were asked to complete a questionnaire measuring their perceived reading enjoyment, ability and reading activity, which was also administered by their Mentors. This questionnaire also contained questions on other Learner demographic information considered important to measure in relation to reading ability and the effectiveness of Turning Pages. Completed Learner questionnaires and reading assessments were sent back through confidential recorded delivery to the field researchers at BCU for analysis. Shannon Trust staff and the field researcher continued to actively remind RPLs at each prison for the Phase One data at each time-point.

### Self-perception ratings

Learners' self-perception of reading ability, enjoyment and comprehension was measured using a question containing a scale of 1-10 (1=lowest level, 10=highest level). Learners were asked to rate themselves on how good they perceived their reading ability to be, their understanding of what they read and how much they enjoyed reading.

Reading experience and activity was also measured through self-report. A question containing a fixed choice of answers was provided to Learners, asking them to indicate which of these they believed matched their reading experience. These questions asked Learners to indicate the types of reading material they read, as well as which of these they felt confident and least confident reading. Learners could choose more than one of the categories and as many as they felt matched their reading experience.

In order to gain more personal information on reading experience, Learners were also asked an open question regarding how they would describe their reading. Answers were recorded and common themes were generated by the researcher. Similarly, Learners were also asked an open question about the purpose of their reading.

### Other demographic information

The questionnaire on reading perception also asked Learners to provide information on their gender, ethnicity, age range, whether English was their first language, details of any other languages spoken and if they believed they had a diagnosed learning disability or speech language impairment. Information on past experience with the Toe by Toe reading intervention was also obtained to account for previous experience in a similar reading intervention and information on whether Learners were participating in other functional classes in numeracy or literacy was also obtained for the same reason. Finally, dates of prison transfers (of Learners and Mentors) and the date of resumption of the Turning Pages intervention was also recorded in the questionnaire.

### Measuring word and non-word reading ability

In order to measure word reading ability, the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT II -UK) was used. This test included sections on letter sounds, real word reading and non-word reading. Non-word reading was included for the purpose of measuring Learner's ability to accurately decode phonetically, whilst controlling for the contribution memory has in the reading of real words.

In order to measure the letter knowledge of Learners and phonic cluster awareness, the word-reading test commenced at the letter sound section. For the letter-sound section, Learners were asked to identify, (from a possible choice of four) the correct letter or cluster of letters highlighted in a word. This element of the test contained six questions with each correct letter identification providing a score of 1. This resulted in a maximum score of 6 for this section.

For the real word reading test, Learners were asked to read a list of words aloud, one at a time from a possible list of 90. As per the test guidelines Learners were asked to stop when they gave seven incorrect answers in a row. The total number of correct words was then recorded providing a total score (one for each word read correctly) and a possible maximum of 90 words.

For the non-word reading test, Learners were asked to read aloud each non-word at a time from a list of 55 non-words. As above they were asked to stop after seven consecutive incorrect answers. Every correct non-word read resulted in a score of 1 and all recorded scores were summed to provide a total for this test. The maximum possible score was 55 for this test.

### Snapshot data

The evaluation also took account of 'Snapshot data' generated by the Shannon Trust through their annual monitoring processes. The Snapshot questionnaire was designed by Shannon Trust and is routinely sent to all Learners and Mentors enrolled on the Turning Pages reading programme on an annual basis. The questionnaire contains a mixture of open and closed questions that relate to the provision of the programme and reasons for volunteering.



It was not possible to identify and track snapshot responses from Learners and Mentors who were participating in Phase One of this evaluation. However, this snapshot survey data provided further information on the provision of the Turning Pages programme in relation to all Learners and Mentors enrolled during the snapshot period, which was generalised to the sample involved in Phase One of this evaluation.

The snapshot data was obtained from 662 Learners and 767 Mentors (63% and 72% of those who were involved in the reading programme respectively) who were participating in the Shannon Trust Reading Plan during the first two weeks of February 2016, which was approximately four months from the initial Turning Pages session for Learners and Mentors involved in this evaluation.

Learners and Mentors were made aware of the fact that researchers at Birmingham City University had access to the snapshot survey data.

## Phase Two

Phase Two addressed the social model of literacy by adopting a qualitative approach to the evaluation. This consisted of semi-structured individual and focus group interviews and involved both Learners and Mentors who had participated in Phase One of the evaluation. Phase Two interviews began three months after the final sample of quantitative baseline data (Phase One) had been obtained. This ensured that all Learners had been engaged in the evaluation for at least three months, with some having almost completed the six-month evaluation by this point. An equal number of Learners and Mentors were identified by the researchers and the RPLs from each of the prison categories, including female prisoners and those who had English as an additional language. A total of twelve prisons that had an adequate number of Learners and Mentors who were still engaged in Phase One of the evaluation from the three-month period were identified for Phase Two interviews. Letters were then sent to the governors of each prison identified, inviting them to participate for Phase Two of the evaluation. Of the twelve prisons identified, eleven governors agreed to participate in Phase Two but an additional two were not included based upon one prison closing and another prison requiring further ethical procedures that could not be supported within the timescale of the evaluation. An additional prison withdrew from Phase Two due to issues with staffing. The field researchers to conduct individual and focus group interviews with Learners and Mentors visited a total of eight prisons. In order to obtain themes from prisoners that represented the whole sample and to adopt a flexible approach to recruitment under time constraints, the researchers aimed to conduct at least two individual interviews and two focus groups (one for Mentors and one for Learners separately) from each prison category (B&C), of which would include females and prisoners whose first language was not English. Therefore, the researchers aimed to conduct at least 6 focus groups in total with an additional 6 individual interviews.

In addition to the individual interviews, it was anticipated that each focus group

would include 5 prisoners and so the researchers aimed to recruit an estimated total of 15 Learners and 15 Mentors for Phase Two.

The semi-structured interview (See Appendix 1) contained twenty-five open ended questions that addressed prisoners' experiences and attitudes towards reading and towards Turning Pages.

Specific themes included in the interview schedule were as follows:

- Volunteering for the Turning Pages reading programme;
- Change of reading perception;
- Implications for functional reading in prisons and for future practice;
- The resources and processes used as part of Turning Pages;
- Mentor-Learner dynamic.

The same interview schedule was used for both Mentors and Learners, but slight changes to the wording of questions were made to the Mentor schedule, in which they were asked to reflect on their role as a Mentor and to answer questions in relation to the Learner they supported. In addition, Mentors were asked questions concerning demographic information (similar to that asked of Learners). This included questions on age gender, ethnicity, English as first language and any previous Shannon Trust Reading Plan experience (Toe by Toe).

Each individual and focus group interview was audio recorded using an encrypted digital audio recording device, as required by NOMS ethics, and to support reliable thematic analysis. Due to time constraints not all interviews were transcribed and for those that were not, researchers obtained themes inductively by listening to the recordings.

In order to validate the process of thematic analysis, both researchers independently transcribed or listened to all the interviews and obtained themes using an approach described by Braun and Clarke (2006). This process required familiarisation process, after which common codes are generated from each interview to later form overarching themes that are then compared across different interviews. Superordinate themes are then altered and refined based upon new data and any new themes that emerge through this generative process. Both researchers compared and discussed their themes and a mutual consensus on the final set was agreed upon as well, as was the interpretation of these in relation to the data and research questions. Themes generated from the qualitative analysis were then compared to the main trends obtained from the quantitative analysis in order to validate findings through a process of triangulation.

## Findings

### Reading effectiveness through an autonomous lens

For the purpose of the analysis below, where findings resulted in a numbered score, the group of Learners were represented using the mean score (and associated standard variance from this mean represented by SD) for each question/test. For other questions where Learners were asked to indicate a choice from a possible set of options or asked to provide an open response, the overall percentage frequency of responses from the group were descriptively analysed.

Statistical analysis was applied to the data to identify whether any differences were due to chance or due to the intervention (Turning Pages programme). Where statistical differences are reported, this is due to changes or differences associated more with the intervention than by chance alone and is indicated with the following symbol:  $p < 0.05$ .

It was predicted that a sample of approximately 60 would result in enough statistical power to produce statistically significant findings. However, as presented below, many of the comparisons produced significant results ( $p < 0.05$ ) suggesting that existing group differences were large enough to be detected in a sample size smaller than that originally predicted.

The appropriate statistical test to use for parametric data of a follow-up intervention design such as this, is a Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). This test was applied to measure the main effect of Turning Pages on reading test scores and mean self-perceived ratings over the six-month period. Other Learner demographic information, such as perceived learning disability, was compared to the word reading scores to test whether this was having an independent main effect on word reading scores or whether this interacted with time. In other words, using the above example, a mixed methods ANOVA was applied to test whether Learners with a learning disability read more words than those without a learning disability (main effect of learning disability) or if this effect changed over time (interaction effect).

In circumstances where a statistically significant main effect was found, further tests (post-hoc Bonferroni) were conducted to identify what factors were accounting for the overall significant main effect.

### Response from prisons, Mentors and Learners

- Baseline data from 161 Learners was received from 30 prisons of varying categories and 328 Mentors from these prisons consented to participate in the evaluation.
- At the three-month stage, data from 67 Learners was received from 20 prisons and at the final six-month stage, this response decreased to 30 Learners from 8 prisons.

- At both time-points, Learners were reliably completing the Phase One assessments with their Mentors on time.

### Baseline figures

A total of 49 prisons from both the private and public estate were initially contacted about the project and all were given the opportunity to participate in the evaluation of Turning Pages. Of these 49 prisons, 48 agreed to participate but baseline data was obtained from 30 of these 48 prisons, resulting in a 61% response rate.

Of the 30 prisons that sent baseline data, just over half (n=16) were adult category C prisons and 12 were adult category B prison, with two additional female prisons.

Of the 30 prisons that sent baseline data, this consisted of data from 161 Learners. In comparison to the possible number of 432 Learners who had enrolled on Turning Pages during this baseline period, a response rate of 37% was obtained.

At the baseline period, 246 new Mentors had recently joined Turning Pages and of the 30 prisons, 328 Mentors consented to participate in the evaluation meaning that the sample of Mentors engaged in this evaluation consisted of Mentors new to the Reading Programme and Mentors who were already actively enrolled in Turning Pages.

### Three months post-baseline

Three months after the baseline stage, data was obtained from 67 Learners from 20 of the 30 prisons that had initially consented and provided baseline data. Of these 20 prisons, 11 formed category C prisons, 8 were of category B and one was a female prison. This resulted in a prison response rate of 67% from the 30 who provided initial data and a participant (Learner) response rate of 40% from those that also provided baseline data. The high attrition rates were due to a number of potential factors that are discussed below (See high attrition rate section). Of the 67 Learners, 44 were from category C prisons, 22 were from category B prisons and one was a female prisoner.

### Six months post-baseline

At the six-month post baseline phase, data was received from 30 Learners, of which all but 3 formed part of the three-month post-baseline data cohort. This resulted in a response rate of 40% from the three-month period, where data from 67 Learners was obtained. Based on comparisons to the initial baseline data cohort of 161 Learners, a response rate of 19% was obtained six months later. Of all the Learners that formed the six-month phase, data was obtained from 8 prisons, equally obtained from category B and C prisons. This resulted in a prison response rate of 40% since the three-month stage involving 20 prisons and 27% since the initial 30 that sent baseline data. Of the six-month data received from the 30 Learners,

seventeen Learners were from category C prisons and thirteen Learners were from category B prisons.

### High attrition rates

High attrition rates in the number of Learners participating in the evaluation were found at each time point, although this is commonly found with research in prisons (Crisanti et al, 2014; Farrington, 1979). Prison staff responsible for data collection provided multiple reasons for lack of response/consent from prisoners. Reasons included reduction in staff numbers due to sickness, leave and changes in staff roles. Some prisons had high prisoner turn-around, 'the Churn' which is well recognised in prison research literature, which made it difficult to maintain prisoner involvement. Some Learners refused to participate due to suspicion about the research agenda (being asked to provide their prison id number) or were embarrassed about their perceived low levels of reading ability. In addition, the fact that the Shannon Trust Reading Plan engages new Learners without enforcing a battery of initial assessments, suggests that Learners may have been put off taking part in the evaluation by the assessments required for this evaluation (See limitations section for further detail).

### Reliability of data collection at each time-point

To ensure that the data received for the second time-point was reliably completed three months after the date for which the baseline data was obtained, dates for both time-points were compared.

Dates were missing from 9 of the Learners involved. The mean difference from the expected time of the second stage of data collection (three-month stage) and the actual date of this second stage was +2 days (14SD). This means as a group, Learners were reliability completing the second stage of data three months after the start of their involvement with Turning Pages. No differences were found on completion dates between prison categories ( $p > 0.05$ ).

To check how long after the group of Learners completed the third stage of data collection from the initial period of the evaluation (six months after), dates were compared and differences from the expected day of this third stage of data collection were calculated. Dates were missing from 3 of the Learners involved. The mean difference from the expected time of the third stage of data collection and the actual date of this third stage was 1.3 days (27sd). This means as a group, Learners were reliability completing the third stage of data six months after the start of their involvement with Turning Pages, despite large variance caused by outliers. Nine of the Learners had completed Turning Pages earlier than the due date adding to this variance. One extreme outlier involved a Learner who began the six-month stage an additional two months later than the specified date. Most of the Learners who continued until the six-month stage completed the questionnaires and reading tests within a range of either 18 days before the due date or 23 days

afterwards. Learners who were from category B prisons completed the six-month data a mean 11 days later whereas Learners from category C prisons completed their six-month data only 5 days before the due date but this difference was not statistically significant ( $p>0.05$ ).

### Progression through manuals and number of Turning Pages sessions attended

- At the three-month stage, most of the Learners were still studying the first manual and the next highest proportion of Learners were studying the third manual.
- At the six-month stage, most of the Learners were studying the final manual and a statistically significant difference in manual progression over the three-to six-month period was found ( $p<0.00$ ).
- There was no significant difference on manual progression rates across the different prison categories across the whole six-month period ( $p>0.05$ ).
- At the three-month stage, Learners were attending an average of four weekly sessions but this did not significantly correlate with manual progression ( $p>0.05$ ).
- During the final three months, the most frequent number of weekly sessions Learners were attending was five.
- For Learners who had engaged in the evaluation for the whole six-month period, a mean number of 3.5 sessions were attended weekly.
- Learners were attending significantly more weekly sessions in category B prisons in comparison to category C prisons during the final three months.

### From baseline to the three-month stage

Table 1: Number of Learners engaged in each manual at the three-month stage.

Manual number and corresponding sections within each manual.	Number of Learners studying the manual and each manual section (of those who responded; n=67).
One	22
Section 1	7
Section 2	10
Section 3	5
Two	10
Section 1	3
Section 2	5
Section 3	2

Three	14
Section 1	4
Section 2	4
Section 3	6
Four	9
Section 1	5
Section 2	1
Section 3	3
Five	12
Section 1	5
Section 2	0
Section 3	7

At the three-month time point, of the 67 who responded with this information, the largest proportion of Learners were still on the first manual, followed by the third manual. After experiencing three months of Turning Pages, twelve Learners were studying the fifth and final manual. When specific sections of each manual were analysed, section 2 of the first manual was the stage for which the largest number of Learners were currently reading at (n=10), followed by 7 Learners who were still on the first stage of the first manual and another 7 who had reached the last section of the last manual. Half of the group had at least reached section 3 of the second manual (light blue) by this three-month point in time. No differences were found on manual progression between Learners from the different category prisons ( $p>0.05$ ).

The whole group had experienced a mean number of 46 (SD=21) sessions since starting Turning Pages. This ranged from 2–104 sessions with most experiencing 37–60 sessions. No statistically significant correlations were found between the number of sessions attended and the manual stage Learners had reached during the first three month period ( $p>0.05$ ).

The current expectation is that the prison service should make it possible for each Learner to get 5 x 20 minute sessions a week. The mean number of weekly sessions was calculated for each Learner at the three-month period resulting in a mean number of 4 sessions a week (SD=1.3). The actual length of each session was not recorded. No statistical difference was found between the number of weekly sessions attended and the manual reached at the three months stage ( $p>0.05$ ). However, the general trend shows that for Learners who had reached the fifth manual, they had attended an average of 4.5 weekly sessions compared to the rest of the Learners who were attending just short of 4 sessions a week. No difference was found on the average number of weekly sessions between Learners from category C or B prisons ( $p>0.05$ ).



Table 2: Manual stage reached at three months for Learners who participated in the evaluation for the whole six-month period.

Manual number and corresponding sections within each manual.	Number of Learners studying the manual and each manual section (of those that reported this; n=24).
One	5
Section 1	2
Section 2	2
Section 3	1
Two	3
Section 1	0
Section 2	3
Section 3	0
Three	8
Section 1	3
Section 2	3
Section 3	2
Four	5
Section 1	3
Section 2	0
Section 3	2
Five	3
Section 1	2
Section 2	0
Section 3	1

### From three to six months

Table 3: Number of Learners engaged in each manual at the six-month stage.

Manual number and corresponding sections within each manual.	Number of Learners studying the manual and each manual section (of those who reported this; n=29).
One	2
Section 1	0
Section 2	2
Section 3	0
Two	4
Section 1	0
Section 2	2
Section 3	2

Three	6
Section 1	2
Section 2	2
Section 3	2
Four	6
Section 1	1
Section 2	2
Section 3	3
Five	11
Section 1	1
Section 2	1
Section 3	9 (Completed)

At six months post-baseline, of those that responded to the question (n=29), the highest percentage of Learners in this cohort had reached the final manual (38%, n=11) and of these Learners, 9 had completed Turning Pages. Compared to the three-month stage, the progress found in the average manual stage reached by the cohort was statistically significant ( $p < 0.00$ ). For these Learners, the mean number of months it took them to complete Turning Pages was 5 months (SD=1). An additional 6 Learners had reached the fourth manual and 6 Learners had reached the third manual. Two Learners were still on the first manual and these were the same two Learners who were still also on the first manual at the three month stage. These Learners were from two different prisons and both were attending functional skills classes due to low reading ability. This is probably due to other learning needs that warrant this additional literacy support, especially as one of these two Learners also reported having a diagnosis of dyslexia, which may have affected progression through the manuals of Turning Pages. The same Learner also attended fewer than three sessions at both the three- and six-month stage of the evaluation.

No difference was found between the manual progressions of Learners in different prison categories. The group at six months post-baseline had attended a mean number of 43 sessions (SD=26) in the last three months, but this ranged from 26–56 sessions. Over the whole period of this evaluation, for this cohort of Learners for whom we had data (n=15) they had attended a mean number of 85 sessions (SD25.2) ranging from 60–102 session. This equates to an average of 3.5 sessions per week.

Based on the last three months, this equated to a mean attendance of 3.7 sessions per week (1.5SD), ranging from 2.6–4.1 sessions. The most frequent number of sessions was calculated at 5. A statistically significant difference on the mean number of weekly sessions reported was found on prison category with Learners from category B prisons attending more frequently (Mean=4.6; SD=2.0) in comparison to Learners in category C prisons (Mean=3.2; SD=1.1). The current

expectation is that the prison service should make it possible for each Learner to get 5 x 20 minute sessions a week. However, outliers are more likely to affect the mean scores of a small sample size as that obtained for the six-month data set, and so the modal score is a more reliable statistic, which in this case results in the expected 5 sessions per week.

No significant correlations were found between manual progression and the number of sessions attended per week ( $p > 0.05$ ) across the whole six months or the final three months as found at the first three-month stage.

### Self-perception of reading ability, enjoyment and comprehension

The same questionnaire provided to Learners at the baseline stage was completed by Learners three months after baseline and again six-months after baseline.

- Perceived ratings in reading ability, reading enjoyment and reading comprehension significantly increased over the six-month period ( $p < 0.05$ ).
- No main effect of manual progression was found for any of the above ratings, but significant effects of manual progression were found at the three-month stage for perceived reading ability and enjoyment ( $p < 0.05$ ).
- Manual progression in the last three months significantly predicted perceived reading ability ( $p < 0.05$ ).
- The number of sessions Learners attended at any time-point failed to significantly correlate with any of the perceived ratings.

### Perceived reading ability

Table 4: Learners' mean perceived reading ability ratings at each manual reached at the six-month point.

Time-point perceived ratings were obtained	Manual book reached at six months	Mean perceived reading ability scores	Standard deviation
Baseline stage	First	3.5	3.5SD
	Second	4.3	3.2SD
	Third	3	2.6SD
	Fourth	4.5	2.6SD
	Fifth	4.5	2.0SD
Three-month stage	First	2.0	1.4SD
	Second	5.0	1.0SD
	Third	5.4	2.3SD
	Fourth	6.5	1.7SD
	Fifth	6.8	1.1SD

Six-month stage	First	3.5	0.7SD
	Second	5.0	1.0SD
	Third	5.6	2.7SD
	Fourth	6.4	0.9SD
	Fifth	7.3	1.5SD

When asked how good they believed their reading ability was at six months, 29 Learners responded and the group's mean rating was 6.0 (SD1.9), out of a maximum of 10 suggesting above average perceived reading ability compared to the mean rating of 4.3 at baseline and 5.8 at Phase Two. A repeated measures ANOVA compared perceived reading ability of those Learners who provided data from onset (N=25) and a significant main effect on perceived reading ability over time ( $F(2, 50) = 14.1, p < 0.00$ ) was found with a small effect size of 0.36. Bonferroni post hoc analysis revealed that this difference was from baseline to Phase Two ( $p < 0.00$ ) and baseline to Phase Three ( $p < 0.00$ ). This shows that perceived reading ability of Learners increased significantly from baseline and three and six months later but did not increase by much between three to six months of reading.

#### Perceived reading ability and manual progression

It is important to find out whether increase of self-perceived reading ability was also influenced by manual progression over the six-month period. To test this, a mixed ANOVA was performed to compare perceived reading ability over the whole six-month period with manual reached at the six-month stage. A statistically significant main effect of increased perceived reading ability was obtained (as found previously) ( $F(2, 40) = 4.9, p < 0.01$ ) but no further statistically significant main effect or interaction was found with manual progression and perceived reading ability ( $p > 0.05$ ). This suggests that manual progression had no statistically significant effect on Learners' perceived reading ability. However, small sample sizes and the lack of variability in the manuals Learners had reached at this point may have resulted in lack of statistical power to detect any difference and reference to Table 4 shows that perceived ratings were generally larger for Learners who had reached the later manuals in comparison to the rest of the cohort.

Manual stage was also obtained at the three-month stage and so Learners' perceived reading ability during the first three-month stage was compared with manual progression obtained at the same time-point. Mixed ANOVA revealed a main effect of improved perceived reading ability over the three-month period ( $F(1, 61) = 33.4, p < 0.00$ ). In addition, a main effect of manual progression was also found ( $F(1, 61) = 12.6, p < 0.00$ ) with a medium effect size of 0.45, showing increased ratings of perceived reading ability for Learners who were progressing through the manuals during the first three months. Further tests revealed that this overall difference was mainly due to large differences in ratings provided by Learners who were at the first manual compared to Learners who had reached all the other

manuals apart from the second manual ( $p>0.05$ ). In addition, significant differences in ratings were found between Learners who had reached the second and fifth manual and between those who were on the fourth and fifth manual ( $p<0.05$ ), with higher ratings given for those in the later manuals.

The extent to which manual progression during the final three months influenced perceived reading ability at the sixth-month stage was also calculated by comparing the difference in manual sections reached at the three-and sixth-month periods. A linear regression analysis revealed that manual progression during the last three months statistically significantly predicted perceived reading ability at six months ( $b=0.52$ ,  $t(22) = 2.9$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) with manual progression accounting for approximately 24% of the variance associated with perceived reading ability ( $F(1, 22) = 8.2$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).

No significant correlations were found on reading ability and the number of sessions (total and weekly) attended by Learners at either time-point ( $p>0.05$ ).

### Summary

These findings suggest perceived reading ability increased over the six-month period, especially during the first three-month stage and that manual progression had an effect on this increase in perceived reading ability. The fact that perceived reading ability did not increase as much in the final three months may be associated with a slight ceiling effect in rated scores of ability. High ratings were provided at the three-month stage and Learners may have been less inclined to increase these by much when constrained to a small scale of 0-10.

Table 5: Learners' mean perceived reading enjoyment at each manual reached at the six-month point.

Time-point perceived ratings were obtained.	Manual book reached at six months	Mean perceived reading enjoyment scores	Standard deviation scores
Baseline stage	First	2.0	1.4SD
	Second	4.3	3.5SD
	Third	4.0	3.7SD
	Fourth	4.3	3.2SD
	Fifth	4.8	3.0SD
Three-month stage	First	2.0	1.4SD
	Second	6.7	2.3SD
	Third	6.0	3.4SD
	Fourth	7.0	2.4SD
	Fifth	6.3	1.7SD

Six-month stage	First	5.5	3.5SD
	Second	7.0	3.0SD
	Third	5.2	3.3SD
	Fourth	6.0	1.6SD
	Fifth	7.0	2.1SD

### Perceived reading enjoyment

When asked how much they enjoyed reading at six months post baseline, 29 Learners responded and the groups mean rating was 6.3 (SD2.4) out of a maximum score of 10, suggesting above average enjoyment compared to 4.5 at baseline, and 6.1 at Phase Two. A repeated measures ANOVA compared perceived reading enjoyment over time for Learners who had provided this at onset (n=26) to find a significant effect ( $F(2, 50) = 11.9, p < 0.00$ ) with a small effect size of 0.32. Bonferroni post-hoc comparisons revealed significant differences between baseline and Phase Two ( $p < 0.00$ ) and baseline and Phase Three ( $p < 0.00$ ). This suggests that perceived reading enjoyment significantly increased three and six months post baseline but did not increase much between three and six months.

### Manual progression and perceived enjoyment

It is important to find out whether increase of self-perceived reading enjoyment was also influenced by manual progression over the six-month period. To test this, a mixed ANOVA was performed to compare perceived reading enjoyment over the whole six-month period with manual reached at the six-month stage. A statistically significant main effect of increased perceived reading enjoyment was obtained (as found previously) ( $F(1.5, 30) = 7.0, p < 0.01$ ) but no further significant main effect or interaction was found with manual progression and perceived reading enjoyment ( $p > 0.05$ ). This suggests that manual progression had no effect on Learners' perceived reading enjoyment and Table 5 shows no obvious trends on perceived ratings for Learners reaching various manuals at the sixth-month stage.

As mentioned, this lack of statistical significant difference could be due to lack of variability in manual progression obtained at the six-month time-point. As manual progression was obtained at the three-month time-point, this was compared to perceived enjoyment obtained at the three-month period. As found above, a main effect of increased perceived enjoyment was found in the first three months ( $F(1,61) = 18.9, p < 0.00$ ) and in addition to this, a main effect of manual stage at the three-month period was also found ( $F(1,61) = F = 2.9, p < 0.03$ ) with a small effect size of 0.2. Further tests revealed the overall difference in perceived enjoyment was due to difference found between Learners on the first manual and those who had reached the fifth at the three-month stage ( $p < 0.05$ ).

The extent to which manual progression in the final three months influenced perceived reading enjoyment at the sixth-month stage was also calculated by comparing the difference in manual sections reached at the three and sixth month

periods. A linear regression analysis revealed that manual progression during the last three months did not statistically significantly predict perceived reading enjoyment at six months ( $p>0.05$ ).

No significant correlations were found on reading ability and the number of sessions (total and weekly) attended by Learners at either time-point ( $p>0.05$ ).

### Summary

These findings show that reading enjoyment increased over the six months, especially during the first three-month period and that this could be related to manual progress during this first three-month stage. Similarly to findings obtained for reading ability, it may also be due to a slight ceiling effect in rated scores of enjoyment, with high ratings provided at the three-month stage and Learners may have been less inclined to increase these by much when constrained to a small scale of 0–10.

Table 6: Learners' mean perceived reading comprehension ratings at each manual reached at the six-month point.

Time-point perceived ratings were obtained	Manual book reached at six months	Mean perceived reading comprehension scores	Standard deviation
Baseline stage	First	7.0	4.2SD
	Second	4.7	2.9SD
	Third	3.8	1.5SD
	Fourth	4.5	4.0SD
	Fifth	4.8	1.7SD
Three-month stage	First	6.5	4.9SD
	Second	5.7	2.3SD
	Third	5.6	2.4SD
	Fourth	5.8	3.4SD
	Fifth	6.5	1.3SD
Six-month stage	First	6.5	4.9SD
	Second	5.0	1.7SD
	Third	6.0	1.6SD
	Fourth	7.1	2.7SD
	Fifth	7.1	1.6SD

### Perceived reading comprehension

When Learners were asked how much they understood what they read six months post-baseline, 29 Learners responded and the group's mean rating was 6.3(SD2.0),



out of a maximum of 10, suggesting above average perceived reading comprehension compared to 4.3 at baseline and 5.9 at Phase Two. A repeated measures ANOVA compared perceived reading comprehension over time for Learners who had provided this data since onset ( $n=26$ ) to find a significant effect over time ( $F(2, 50) = 14.1, p < 0.00$ ) with a small effect size of 0.36. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests revealed significant differences between baseline and Phase Two ( $p < 0.00$ ) and baseline and Phase Three ( $p < 0.00$ ). This suggests that perceived reading comprehension significantly increased three and six months post-baseline but did not increase much between three and six-months.

### Manual progression and perceived reading comprehension

It is important to find out whether increase of self-perceived reading comprehension was also influenced by manual progression over the six months. To test this, a mixed ANOVA was performed to compare perceived reading comprehension over the whole six-month period with manual reached at the six-month stage. Whilst a main effect of reading comprehension ratings was found (as above;  $F(1, 20) = 8.0, p < 0.01$ ), there was no significant main effect of manual at the six-month stage on perceived comprehension ratings ( $p > 0.05$ ) nor did manual statistically significantly interact with perceived ratings ( $p > 0.05$ ).

As manual stage was also obtained at the three-month stage, this was compared to perceived reading comprehension ratings during the first three months to account for the small amount of variability in manual stages obtained at the final six-month period. A mixed ANOVA revealed a main effect of perceived ratings over time ( $F(1, 20) = 4.7, p < 0.00$ ) and as found on manual stage at six months, no statistically significant difference was found over ratings for Learners at various manual points at the three-month stage, nor was a significant interaction found between them both ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Manual progression was calculated for the final three-month period (as per previous analyses on perceived reading ability and enjoyment) in relation to perceived reading comprehension obtained at six months. A linear regression was conducted to find that manual progression during the last three months did not significantly predict perceived reading comprehension ( $p > 0.05$ ).

### Summary

These findings suggest that whilst reading comprehension increased over the six months, this had no association with manual progression. This may be due to small sample sizes but also due to the fact that the manuals do not focus on reading comprehension. As mentioned, the fact that reading comprehension did not change as much in the last three months suggests it may be due to the high ratings obtained at the three-month stage and so Learners may have been less inclined to increase these by much when using such a constrained rating scale.

### Perception of reading activity and confidence

- More Learners described their reading as having improved and enjoyed reading as time progressed and as they progressed through the manuals.
- Learners were reading a wider variety of texts and developed an increase in confidence reading texts that served a functional purpose in prison.
- Learners read to obtain knowledge, and read for enjoyment and for social contact.

### Learners' description of their reading

Since the baseline stage, more Learners were describing their reading as having improved and more enjoyed their reading at the six-month stage and fewer Learners described their reading as below average in the same time-frame. The fact that most of the Learners who had reached this six-month point had either completed Turning Pages, or were studying the more advanced manuals, suggests that manual progression had a role in promoting these reported descriptions.

Slight reductions in the number of Learners who described their reading as either having improved or as average were found during the last three months. This could be based upon the difficulty faced with learning more advanced words and phoneme blends that also form part of the advanced manuals, which Learners were now beginning to experience. It may also be a reflection of a typical trajectory associated with learning and participating in new experiences, whereby initial progress may be perceived as developing at a faster rate because this experience is regarded as novel.

Lastly, Learners reported reading a variety of reading texts they had not read before such as novels, magazines, letters and canteen sheets. This finding corroborates evidence from the reported reading activity at six months post-baseline (See what Learners read and Learner confidence below). Although at this stage, these are based upon extremely small sample sizes.

### Why Learners read

Learners stated they read to obtain more knowledge and this theme was reported more frequently through time and as Learners were progressing through the manuals. Similarly, through the progression of Turning Pages manuals over the six-month period, Learners reported reading more for enjoyment and to obtain knowledge for the necessity of getting by functionally in prison. At each time-point Learners also stated that they read to improve their reading skills and to stay in contact with others.

### What Learners read

Learners reported reading canteen sheets and letters from family and friends at each time-point and the frequency at which this was reported increased over the six-month period and as Learners were progressing through the manuals. Examples of other types of reading activity that increased over the six months include the

reading of application forms, books, information leaflets and legal letters. This supports the finding that Learners' reading activity had changed over the six months incorporating reading items that are considered by Learners themselves as items they were not confident reading initially (See confidence section below).

### Learner confidence in reading

Learners responded being most confident reading letters from family and friends and canteen sheets at each time-point and as Learners progressed through the Turning Pages manuals over the six-month period Learners reported feeling more confident reading other items, such as legal letters, books and application forms. As mentioned, this supports the confidence found in reading items that had a functional or social purpose, such as reading canteen sheets or reading letters from family and friends.

### Summary

Learners reported to be least confident reading books and legal letters at each time-point and reported being less confident reading information leaflets, application forms and news related material although the frequency at which all of these were reported reduced over time and as Learners were progressing through the manuals. This supports the findings above in relation to the items Learners felt confident reading. Previous findings indicate that more Learners were now reading items such as legal letters and application forms, which they had felt less confident reading in earlier time-points, suggesting that as their confidence grew so did their willingness to read varying material they may have been less familiar with.

### Word reading and non-word reading scores

- Word reading and non-word reading scores significantly improved over the six-month stage and as Learners progressed through the manual stages.
- Learners who were studying the more advanced manuals at each time-point were able to read significantly more words and non-words than Learners at the first manual.
- Attrition rates were constant throughout the six months for Learners who were performing either above or below their peers. Slightly fewer Learners performing below their peers at baseline continued until the end point of the evaluation.
- Number of sessions Learners attended at any of the time-points did not correlate significantly with either word or non-word reading scores.
- All but two Learners were able to correctly identify letter sounds at the six-month stage.

### Letter reading scores

For the first section of the word reading test Learners were asked to correctly identify letter and cluster sounds from the WIAT test. The mean score from the 29

Learners who completed this six months post-baseline was 5.9 (SD0.6) with most Learners correctly reading all 6 letter sounds. This compared to mean scores of 6.0 (0.2SD) at the three-month stage and 5.4 (1.3SD) at the initial stage. Only 2 Learners at both the three- and six-month post-baseline stage were unable to read all 6 letter sounds. In addition one of these Learners, who had English as an additional language, was still on the first manual at the six-month point. Both Learners also reported attending functional skills classes, suggesting that Learners' additional learning needs may be contributing to their low-level reading ability. However, the other Learner had reached the third manual by the six-month point and the fact that these Learners were able to read some of the words and non-words from the same test and had been able to read more of these letters previously suggests there may be other reasons for this, such as difficulty in attention.

No significant differences were found on letter reading ability over the six-months ( $F(2, 50) = 2.4, p < 0.05$ ), which may not be surprising given the high proportion of Learners who correctly identified all six letter sounds.

Graph 1: Mean number of words read at each time-point.

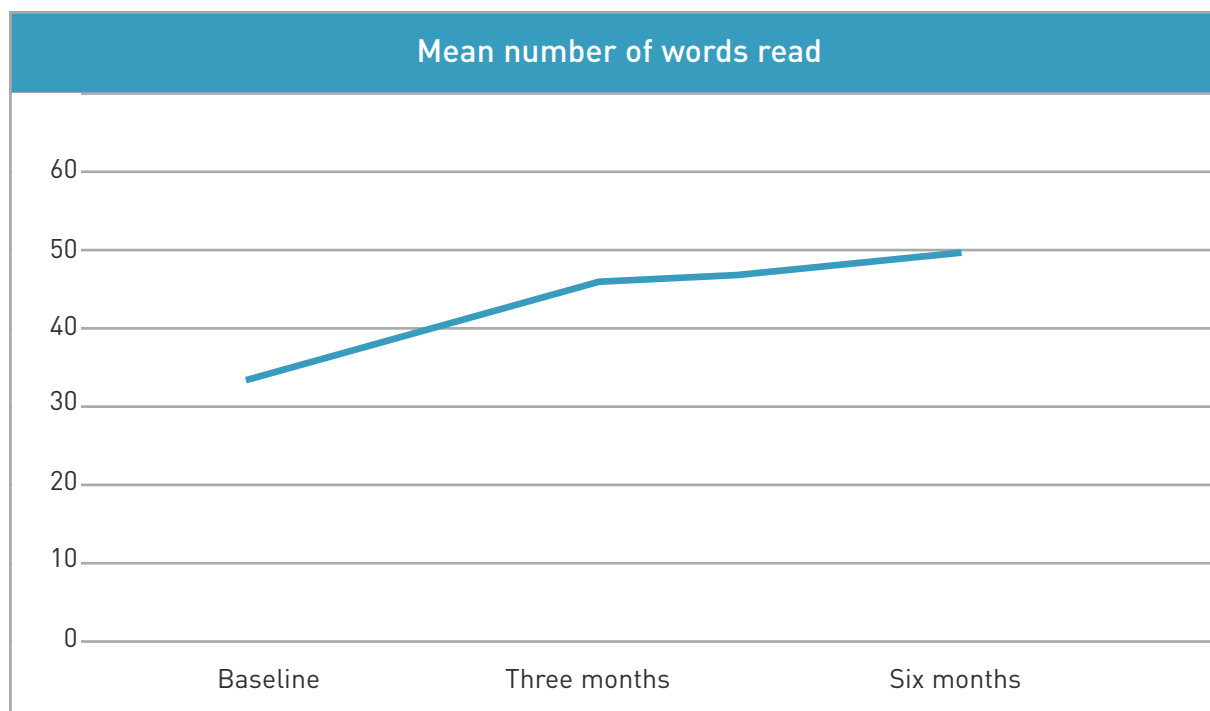


Table 7: Central tendency figures comparing word reading scores across the three time-points.

The time period	Median	Standard deviation	Mode	Interquartile range	Maximum	Minimum
Baseline	29.0	24.0	0	12-54	83 (1 Learner)	0 (10 Learners)
3 months	45	26.0	28	27-74	83 (1 Learner)	2 (3 Learner)
6 months	49	23.0	29	30-73	83 (1 Learner)	8 (1 Learner)

Table 8: Mean word reading scores obtained by Learners at each manual.

Reading scores for each time-point	Manual reached at each time-point	Mean word reading scores	Standard deviation
Baseline stage	First	4	4.9SD
	Second	25	14.6SD
	Third	17	7.5SD
	Fourth	41	14.2SD
	Fifth	50	19.6SD
Three-month stage	First	10	2.8SD
	Second	44	12SD
	Third	24	4.8SD
	Fourth	44	21.2SD
	Fifth	62	20.7SD
Six-month stage	First	11	4.2SD
	Second	40	13.6SD
	Third	32	4.5SD
	Fourth	61	21.0SD
	Fifth	67	19.3SD

## Word reading

### Word reading improvement over time

As graph 1 shows, of the 30 Learners who completed the reading test at six months post-baseline, the mean score for the group resulted in 50 words read correctly (SD23.0). This compares to the mean scores of 33 (24.3SD) words read correctly at

baseline and 46 (26.5SD) words read correctly three months post-baseline.

A repeated measures ANOVA compared word reading ability over the six months for Learners who had provided this data since onset ( $n=26$ ) to find a significant effect over time ( $F(2,50) = 19.8, p < 0.00$ ) with a small effect size of 0.44. Additional post-hoc Bonferroni tests revealed significant differences between baseline and three months after ( $p < 0.00$ ) and baseline and six months after ( $p < 0.00$ ). This suggests that word reading ability significantly increased three and six months post-baseline but did not increase much between three and six months. The mean scores reflect this finding, with 17 more words read six months after baseline in comparison to 4 from the three- to six-month period.

### Manual progression and word reading

It is important to consider the manuals Learners had reached at the final six-month stage and whether this had any effect on the word reading improvement over the whole six months stated above. In order to find out, a mixed ANOVA was performed on word reading scores over the six-month period but also comparing this to the manual book reached at the six-month period. A significant main effect of word reading improvement was still found (as above) ( $F(2, 38) = 11.9, p < 0.00$ ) but in addition to this a main effect of manual book across the six-month period was also found ( $F(4, 19) = 8.4, p < 0.00$ ) with a medium effect size of 0.6. This means that word reading scores reported over the six-month period were affected by the manual progression as reported at the six-month stage, with more words being read correctly by Learners who were at the final stages of the manuals at the six-month period. Further tests revealed that this difference was mainly due to the large differences in word reading scores found between Learners who were still at the first manual with those who had completed Turning Pages ( $p < 0.05$ ) as well as with Learners reaching the third manual compared to those who had completed Turning Pages ( $p < 0.05$ ).

No statistically significant interaction was found between manual book reached and word reading scores ( $p > 0.05$ ), meaning that this finding was constant across the three and six month stages.

As data on manual stages was also obtained at the three-month stage, the same analysis was applied but this time using the manual reached at the three-month stage with the word reading scores obtained at the three-month stage. A similar finding with a main effect of word reading over time found ( $F(1, 60) = 20.0, p < 0.00$ ) but with a main effect of manual progression also found ( $F(1, 60) = 13.6, p < 0.00$ ) with a large effect size of 0.85. Further tests revealed that the overall difference was mainly due to large differences found in correct words read by Learners who were still at the first manual compared with those who had reached all the other manuals apart from the second ( $p < 0.05$ ).

In addition, other large differences were found between Learners on the second and

third manual and the second and fifth manual at the three-month stage ( $p < 0.05$ ). No statistically significant interaction was found with manual progression and word reading scores over time. ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Finally, in order to see whether manual progression specifically in the final three months predicted reading ability obtained in the six-month stage, a linear regression analysis was performed using the calculated difference in manuals reached at three-month and six-month stages. No significant relationship was found between manual progression at the final three-month period and word reading scores at six months ( $p > 0.05$ ).

No significant correlations were found between the number of sessions Learners were attending at the three- or six-month stage and word or non-word reading scores ( $p > 0.05$ ).

### Summary

Despite manual progression increasing the Learners word scores over the six-month period and in the first three months, there was little difference found in word reading scores in the last three-month period. This may be due to differences in the level of word difficulty and grapheme-phonetic expectations in the final manuals compared to the words used in the WIAT assessment.

### Attrition and later reading performance dependent on reading ability at baseline

Table 9: Learners' mean perceived reading ability ratings at each manual reached at the six-month point.

The time period	Ability group	Mean word reading score (standard deviation)
Baseline	Below group mean at baseline	18 (9.6)
	Above group mean at baseline	54 (13.0)
3 months	Below group mean at baseline	31 (17.5)
	Above group mean at baseline	65 (16.1)
6 months	Below group mean at baseline	37 (17.9)
	Above group mean at baseline	68 (17.7)

To identify whether the six-month cohort of Learners consisted predominately of those considered more able readers at baseline (based upon baseline reading

scores), the six-month cohort was split using the baseline mean score of 33 words. Of those who scored below 33 words at baseline (n=85), 15 (18%) of these Learners had continued with the evaluation up to the six-month period, forming 45% of the final cohort of Learners and 28 of this sub-group continued up until the three-month period forming 42% of the three-month cohort.

This suggests that at each three-month time-point of this evaluation, just below half of the Learners who were performing below their peers continued with the evaluation to the next time-point, a figure which is similar to the overall response rate of Learner data for the whole cohort from both three-month time-points (40%). For the six-month interval (baseline to six-month period), only 18% of the sub-group of low level Learners had continued to the end point, but this is exactly the same percentage response rate obtained for the whole group of Learners over the six-month period.

To identify the extent to which both sub-groups of low and higher performing readers improved over time, the sub-groups mean scores at each time-point were compared (See table 7). A repeated measures ANOVA revealed a main effect of time ( $F(2, 48) = 19.1, p < 0.00$ ) and of ability group ( $F(1, 24) = 42.4, p < 0.00$ ). This shows that both groups were showing a significant improvement in their word reading scores over time and that the low ability group identified at baseline were reading significantly fewer words overall, indicated by Bonferroni post hoc analyses ( $p < 0.00$ ) which is as expected based on the grouping method. Further post-hoc Bonferroni tests also revealed that as per the whole cohort analysis, the main differences in word reading improvement were evident at baseline up to three and then up to six months later ( $p < 0.00$ ). The lack of a significant interaction between both variables of time and ability group suggest that neither variable significantly affected the other.



## Non-word reading scores

Graph 2: Mean number of non-words read at each time-point.

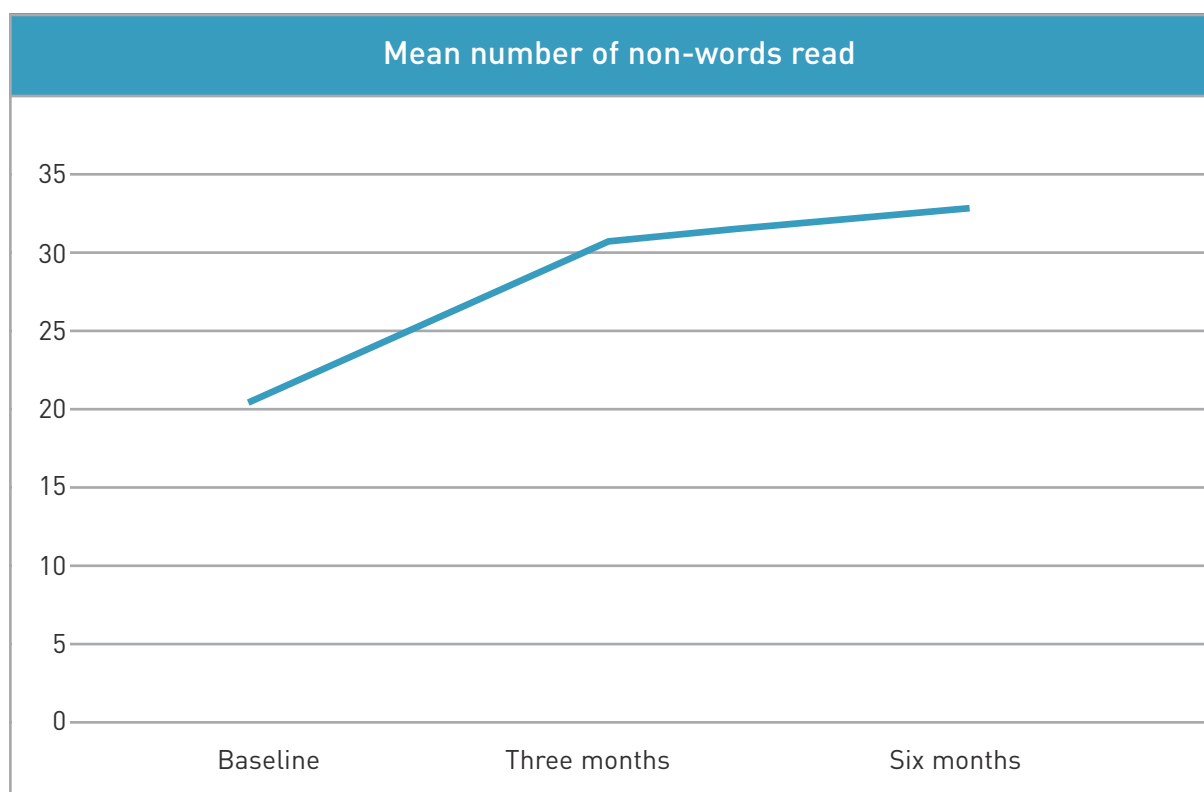


Table 10: Central tendency figures comparing non-word reading scores across the three time-points.

The time period	Median	Standard deviation	Mode	Interquartile range	Maximum	Minimum
Baseline	14	17.0	0	6–32	55 (5 Learners)	0 (18 Learners)
3 months	32	18.0	55	15–51	55 (7 Learners)	0 (1 Learner)
6 months	35	18.0	25	16–50	58 (1 Learner)	4 (1 Learner)

Table 11: Mean non-word reading scores obtained by Learners at each manual.

Time period	Manual reached at each time-point	Mean non-word reading scores	Standard deviation
Baseline stage	First	0	0.0SD
	Second	13	6.1SD
	Third	14	5.6SD
	Fourth	17	19.1SD
	Fifth	36	11.9SD
Three-month stage	First	3	4.2SD
	Second	25	12.1SD
	Third	16	7.8SD
	Fourth	23	20.1SD
	Fifth	45	8.4SD
Six-month stage	First	5	0.7SD
	Second	23	13.2SD
	Third	23	6.2SD
	Fourth	38	21.3SD
	Fifth	47	18.9SD

As graph 2 and table 10 indicate, of the 29 Learners who completed the non-word reading test six months after baseline, the resulting group mean score of 33 non-words (SD 18.0) shows an improvement compared to the group mean non-word score of 20 non-words read at baseline and 31 non-words read correctly three months after baseline.

A repeated measures ANOVA compared non-word reading ability over the six months for Learners who had provided this data since onset ( $n=26$ ) to find a significant effect over time ( $F(2, 49) = 11.5, p < 0.00$ ) with a small effect size of 0.33. Further post-hoc Bonferroni tests revealed significant differences between baseline and three months later ( $p < 0.00$ ) and baseline and six months later ( $p < 0.00$ ). This suggests that non-word reading ability significantly increased three and six months post-baseline but did not increase as much during the last three months.

### Manual progression and word reading

It is important to consider the manuals Learners had reached at the final six-month stage and whether this had any effect on the non-word reading improvement over the six-month period as stated above. In order to find out, a mixed ANOVA was performed on non-word reading scores over the six-month period but also comparing this to the manual reached at the six-month period. A statistically

significant main effect of non-word reading was still found over time (as found above) ( $F(1.4, 23.1) = 0.64, p < 0.02$ ) but in addition to this, a statistically significant main effect of the manual was also found for the whole six-month period ( $F(4, 17) = 9.9, p < 0.00$ ) with a large effect size of 0.7 obtained. This means that non-word reading scores were affected by the manual progression as reported at the six-month stage, with more words being read correctly by Learners who were at the final stages of the manuals. Further tests revealed that this difference was mainly due to the large differences in non-word reading scores found between Learners who had either completed Turning Pages or were at the final manual at the six-month stage compared with Learners who had reached at all of the other manuals apart from the fourth book at the six-month stage ( $p < 0.05$ ).

No statistically significant interaction was found between manual book reached and word reading scores ( $p > 0.05$ ) meaning that this finding was constant at the three- and six-month stages.

As data on manual stages was also obtained at the three-month stage, the same analysis was applied but this time using the manual reached at the three month stage with the non-word reading scores obtained at the three-month stage. A similar finding with a main effect of non-word reading over time found ( $F(1, 60) = 28.9, p < 0.00$ ) but with a main effect of manual progression also found ( $F(1, 60) = 8.7, p < 0.00$ ) with a strong effect size of 0.8. Further tests revealed that the overall difference was mainly due to large differences found in correct non-words read by Learners who were still at the first manual compared with those who had reached all the other manuals apart from the second ( $p < 0.05$ ).

No statistically significant interaction was found with manual progression and non-word reading scores over time. ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Finally, in order to see whether manual progression specifically in the final three months predicted reading ability obtained in the six-month stage, a linear regression analysis was performed using the calculated difference in manuals reached at three-month and six-month stages. No significant relationship was found between manual progression at the final three-month period and non-word reading scores at six months ( $p > 0.05$ ).

### Summary

A significant increase in the reading of non-words was found over the six-month period and this was affected by manual progression. Despite manual progression increasing the Learners' non-word scores, there was little difference found in non-word reading scores in the last three-month period. This may be due to differences in the level of word difficulty and grapheme-phonetic expectations in the final manuals compared to the non-words used in the WIAT assessment.

### Attrition and later reading performance dependent on non-word reading ability at baseline

To identify whether the six-month cohort of Learners consisted predominately of those considered more able phonetic decoders at baseline (based upon baseline non-word reading scores), the six-month cohort were split using the mean baseline score of 20 non-words. This resulted in 15 Learners (52% of the six-month group and 16% of the 94 Learners who scored below their baseline mean score) that previously scored below the group's initial mean score had continued for the six-month duration. In comparison to the three-month cohort, 11 Learners out of the 35 Learners (31%) who scored below the group's mean at 3 months had continued up until the six-month period. This formed 38% of the six-month group of Learners who completed the non-word test at this time point.

In reference to the response rate obtained for the whole data cohort, the above findings suggest that fewer Learners who were performing below their peers initially continued to the end point of the evaluation, in comparison to the first three months and in comparison to those who performed below their peers on the word reading test.

Table 12: Mean non-word reading scores at each time-point for Learners who scored below the group mean at baseline.

The time period	Ability group	Mean non-word reading score (standard deviation)
Baseline	Below group mean at baseline	9 (6.4)
	Above group mean at baseline	37 (10.3)
3 months	Below group mean at baseline	21 (16.2)
	Above group mean at baseline	44 (10.1)
6 months	Below group mean at baseline	27 (18.1)
	Above group mean at baseline	45 (14.0)

To identify the extent to which both sub-groups of low and higher performing readers improved over time on the non-word test, the sub-groups' mean scores were compared (See table 12). A repeated measures ANOVA was conducted to compare the non-word scores of Learners who performed below the groups' mean

at baseline to the rest of the cohort across the six-month period. A significant main effect of time ( $F(2, 44) = 11.2, p < 0.00$ ) and ability group was found ( $F(1, 22) = 28.8, p < 0.00$ ). This means that both groups improved their word reading scores over the six-month period and post hoc Bonferroni tests reveal the significant differences to have occurred from baseline to three-month and then to the six-month period ( $p < 0.00$ ). It also means that the lower ability group read significantly fewer words than their remaining peers across all time points as expected based on the groupings ( $p < 0.00$ ). Whilst there was no significant interaction, the Learners who were scoring below their peers at baseline improved more at each time-point than their peers.

### Correlations

- Stronger relationships were found between perceived reading ability and reading enjoyment across the six months but all perceived ratings obtained at six months correlated with each another.
- Perceived reading ability correlated the most with word reading and non-word reading across the different time-points.
- All perceived ratings significantly correlated with word and non-word reading at the same respective time-points when obtained at baseline and at the three month stage.

### Correlations with perceived ratings

Pearson correlations were performed on the perceived levels of reading ability, perceived reading enjoyment and perceived reading comprehension to identify how much they were associated with one other. Perceived reading ability six months post baseline correlated significantly with all other variables at different times ( $p < 0.05$ ) apart from reading comprehension at both baseline and three months post baseline ( $p > 0.05$ ). Perceived enjoyment at six months post-baseline correlated significantly with other variables at different time-points ( $p < 0.05$ ) apart from reading comprehension at baseline and reading ability at baseline ( $p > 0.05$ ). This shows that perceived comprehension obtained at six months did not relate to perceived reading ability at baseline or at three-month stage and did not relate to perceived enjoyment at the three-month stage despite finding significant correlations with reading ability and reading enjoyment at other time-points and at the six-month stage ( $p < 0.05$ ). Stronger relationships were found with perceived reading ability and enjoyment with the exception of reading ability at baseline, suggesting that Learners felt they enjoyed their reading when they perceived they were good at it.

### Correlations between perceived ratings and with word reading scores

Perceived word reading ability correlated significantly with word reading scores at each time-point ( $p < 0.05$ ) apart from word reading at the six-month stage, which failed to correlate significantly with perceived ratings taken at baseline. This suggests that perceived ratings at these stages were good indicators of actual word reading ability. Perceived reading enjoyment at six months, did not significantly

correlate with word reading at any time-point, but at baseline and at three months, it did correlate with word reading at the same time-points ( $p < 0.05$ ). This suggests that Learners' enjoyment in the first three months related to their word reading ability during the same time but this was not the case during the last three months. The reason for this may be due to small sample sizes and small variance in scores and perceived scores. Perceived reading comprehension obtained at each time-point significantly correlated with word reading scores obtained at the same respective time-points ( $p < 0.05$ ). This suggests that Learners' perceived ability to understand what they read related with how much they could read at each time-point.

### Correlations between perceived ratings and non-word reading scores

Perceived word reading ability obtained at three and six months correlated significantly with actual non-word reading at all time-points but the only significant correlation for perceived reading ability at baseline was found for non-word reading at the same time-point ( $p < 0.05$ ).

Perceived reading comprehension obtained at six months failed to significantly correlate with non-word reading at any time-point, and the only significant correlations found were for perceived reading comprehension at baseline with baseline non-word reading and perceived reading comprehension at three months with non-word reading scores at baseline and three months ( $p < 0.05$ ). The exact same trend was found for perceived reading enjoyment and non-word reading scores.

As mentioned, the fact that few significant correlations were obtained for the six-month periods could be due to the small sample size. Apart from this, the correlations show that Learners' perceived reading ability related to their non-word decoding ability across each different time-point and perceived reading enjoyment and perceived reading comprehension also related to non-word reading scores, when all three of these measures were obtained at baseline and at the three-month stage.

### Comparisons of reading scores and perceived ratings across Learner sub-groups

#### Age

- The largest group of Learners was aged between 25 and 35 years. No significant trend was found on manual progression or number of sessions attended with age and no difference was found on word or non-word reading in respect of the different age groups ( $p > 0.05$ ).
- No difference was found in perceived ratings across the different age groups ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Table 13: Age range of Learners that formed the six-month cohort

Age of Learners	Number of Learners in each age group at the six-month stage (of those that responded; n=29).
18–24 years	5
25–35 years	8
36–45 years	6
46–55 years	6
56–65 years	2
Over 65 years	2

Similar to earlier time-points, the largest group of Learners that made the six-month cohort were aged between 25 and 35 years (n=8). No statistically significant differences were found on either manual progression or the number of sessions received over the three- and six-month period with respect to the different age categories ( $p>0.05$ ).

No statistically significant differences were found on either word reading scores between the age groups beyond the main effect found with time across all age groups for word reading ( $F(2,38) = 11.5, p<0.00$ ) and non-word reading ( $F(1.2,21) = 5.5, p<0.05$ ).

In addition no statistically significant differences were found on perceived word reading ability, enjoyment and comprehension scores between Learners of different age groups and no obvious trends were found at either time-point ( $p>0.05$ ).

#### Previous Toe by Toe experience

- Almost half of the six-month cohort had previous Toe by Toe experience but no significant trend was found on manual progression, the number of sessions attended or word/non-word reading ability by Learners with or without prior Toe by Toe experience ( $p>0.05$ ).
- No difference in any of the perceived ratings in reading was found between Learners with or without prior Toe by Toe experience ( $p>0.05$ ).

#### English as an additional language

- Five of the Learners at the six-month point considered English as an additional language and five of this sub-group were also attending functional skills classes.
- No significant difference was found on manual progression, number of sessions attended or word/non-word reading for Learners with English as an additional language compared to their peers ( $p>0.05$ ).

- No significant difference on any of the perceived reading ratings were found for Learners with English as an additional language compared to their peers ( $p>0.05$ ).
- Mean trends show that progression through six months of the Turning Pages manuals helped Learners with English as an additional language progress from being behind their peers initially, to reading at a similar level to them six months later.

At the six-month stage, only 5 Learners had stated that English was considered an additional language, forming 17% of the six-month cohort of Learners. Since the baseline stage, only 3% of the total number of Learners whose first language was not English continued the evaluation up to this point. The languages these Learners considered as being their first consisted of Welsh, Tamil, Bengali, Sinhalese and German. In comparison, at baseline 30% ( $n=50$ ) of the group reported to have English as an additional language with the majority of this sub-group's first language at baseline being Eastern European followed by Punjabi. At the three-month stage, 38% ( $n=11$ ) of the group reported to have English as an additional language and every Learner in this sub-group spoke a different first language.

Of those Learners who reported English as an additional language at baseline 9 had prior Toe by Toe experience which reduced to 4 and 2 in the three- and six-month stage respectively.

Eight Learners who reported English as an additional language at baseline also reported a diagnosis of learning disability and this reduced to three during the three-month period and only one Learner at the six-month period.

Eighteen Learners who reported English as an additional language at baseline were also attending functional skills classes and this figure dropped to 4 at the three-month stage and 3 at the six-month stage.

No statistically significant differences were found on the manual progression or number of sessions attended at either the three- or six-month stage for Learners who reported having English as an additional language in comparison to their peers ( $p>0.05$ ).

### Word reading scores

Analysis was conducted for Learners who spoke English as an additional language and those who consider it their first language on reading performance. Both groups' word reading improved over time as they progressed through the manuals ( $F(2, 46) = 13.7, p<0.00$ ) but that there was no statistically significant difference in word reading skills for those with or without English as an additional language. The mean trend shows that Learners with English as an additional language read fewer words at baseline and at three months, whereby their performance was in line with their peers at the six-month period. This finding suggests that the progression through six months of the Turning Pages manuals has helped them progress from being



behind their peers to reading at a similar level to them.

### Non-word reading scores

Both groups' non-word reading improved over time as they progressed through the manuals ( $F(1.5, 31) = 6.3, p < 0.01$ ) but there was no statistically significant difference in non-word reading skills for those with or without English as an additional language ( $p > 0.05$ ). However, Learners who spoke English as an additional language read fewer non-words than their peers at each time-point.

### Perceived reading ability

The perceptions Learners who had English as an additional language had of their reading ability, reading enjoyment and comprehension were also compared to the rest of the cohort at each time-point.

No statistically significant difference in perceived reading ability was found between both groups over the main effect found over time ( $F(2, 48) = 4.4, p < 0.02$ ). However, the mean trends signify that the Learners who had English as an additional language rated their reading ability higher than the rest of the cohort at each time-point as they progressed through the manuals.

No statistically significant difference in perceived reading enjoyment was found between both groups over the main effect found over time ( $F(2, 48) = 4.6, p < 0.01$ ). However, the enjoyment ratings were higher for those with English as an additional language in comparison to their peers at each time-point, suggesting that they did enjoy their reading despite reading fewer words and non-words as a general trend.

For either group, their perceived reading comprehension ratings did not appear to improve by much over the six-month period ( $p > 0.05$ ). This was especially so for Learners who reported having English as an additional language, who rated themselves as 5 at each time-point. Despite this, no differences in perceived reading comprehension were found between groups at each time-point ( $p > 0.05$ ).

### Gender

- None of the female Learners formed the six-month phase.
- No statistically significant difference on manual progression, number of sessions attended or word/non-word reading were found with male and female Learners at the three-month stage ( $p > 0.05$ ),
- No difference in the perceived reading ratings was found across male and female Learners ( $p > 0.05$ ).

None of the females that formed the baseline group formed part of the six-month period and so no further analysis could be computed for this sub-group at this time-point. However, inferential analysis was performed on gender in relation to reading at baseline and at the three-month period, which contained only two female Learners.

No significant differences were found in relation to gender on either manual progression or the number of sessions Learners attended ( $p>0.05$ ).

### Word reading scores

As a whole group, the descriptive trend shows that males were performing better on the word reading test than the females during the first three months of Turning Pages and showed more improvement over time but these differences were not statistically significant ( $p>0.05$ ).

### Non-word reading scores

Both groups improved over the first three-month period of Turning Pages ( $F(1, 65) = 20.7, p<0.00$ ) and despite males performing better overall on the non-word test during the first three months, this difference was not statistically significant ( $p>0.05$ ). This is probably due to the small sample sizes that formed the female sub-group.

### Perceived reading ability

Perceived reading ability did not appear to change much over the three months for either gender group and no differences in perceived reading ability were found between genders at each time-point ( $p>0.05$ ).

Reading enjoyment for both groups improved over the six months ( $F(1, 64) = 9.6, p<0.00$ ) especially for the females (although sample sizes are very small) but despite females rating themselves higher in ability at both time-points, this difference was not significant statistically ( $p>0.05$ ). As mentioned, this is likely to be due to the extremely small sample size.

Perceived reading comprehension ratings increased slightly for both groups, especially for males during the first three months, but this main effect of improvement over time was not significant statistically ( $p>0.05$ ). Additionally, no statistically significant difference was found over the three months for either gender group ( $p>0.05$ ), despite males rating themselves much higher six months later.

### Participation in functional skills classes

- At six months, 10 of the cohort were enrolled on functional skills classes predominately for literacy and 7 of this sub-group reported a diagnosed Learning disability.
- No difference in the number of sessions attended for Learners who were enrolled in functional skills classes compared to their peers was found ( $p>0.05$ ) but Learners enrolled in functional skills classes were progressing through the manuals at a significantly slower rate ( $X(4) = 13.5, p<0.01$ ).
- Learners enrolled in functional skills classes were reading significantly fewer words ( $F(1, 23) = 18.4, p<0.00$ ) and non-words ( $F(1, 21) = 6.8, p<0.05$ ) than their peers at each time-point and reported lower ratings for perceived reading ability ( $F(1, 24) = 17.3, p<0.00$ ) and enjoyment across the six months ( $F(1, 24) = 17.3, p<0.00$ ).

- Lower reading scores and perceived ability ratings for Learners attending functional skills classes could be due to the finding that they were progressing through the manuals at a much slower rate. It could also be due to additional learning needs that were affecting the sub-groups' reading progress and progress through the manuals, especially as a large proportion reported having a diagnosis of dyslexia.

### Learning Disability

- Of the six-month cohort, 15 Learners reported a Learning Disability of dyslexia but this had no significant effect statistically on manual progression, word/non-word reading ability or perceived reading ratings provided at any of the time-points ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Of the six-month cohort of Learners, 16 (53%) reported to have had a diagnosis of a Learning Disability. For all but one of the 16 Learners, the diagnosis reported was of dyslexia and the other Learner reported having visual disability. Since baseline data was collected, the percentage of Learners with a reported diagnosis of a Learning Disability had increased from 27% ( $n=45$ ) at baseline to 43% ( $n=28$ ) at the three-month phase. Since baseline, 36% of Learners who reported a diagnosis of a Learning Disability had continued with the evaluation up until the six-month point and 62% of this baseline sub-group continued to the three-month point.

Of the learners at six months who had reported a Learning Disability, 7 of these (44%) were enrolled in functional skills classes and 6 (44%) had previous Toe By Toe experience.

No statistically significant difference was found on manual progression or the number of sessions attended for Learners who reported having a diagnosed Learning Disability compared to their peers ( $p > 0.05$ ).

### Word reading

The questionnaire contained an option for Learners to indicate if they were unsure they had a diagnosed Learning Disability. As none of the Learners in the six-month stage selected this option, the below analysis shows mean reading scores of Learners with a reported Learning Disability compared to Learners who reported not having a diagnosed Learning Disability.

Both groups improved significantly in their word reading over time as they progressed through the manuals ( $F(2,46) = 19.4, p < 0.00$ ) but no difference was found between Learning Disability groups ( $p > 0.05$ ).

### Non-word reading scores

Both groups improved significantly in their non-word reading over time as they progressed through the manuals ( $F(1.5, 31) = 9.6, p < 0.00$ ) but no statistically significant difference was found between Learning Disability groups ( $p > 0.05$ ). However, the mean scores show that the Learners who reported having a Learning

Disability, read fewer non-words across each time-point. This could be due to the fact that all but one of this group reported dyslexia as the type of Learning Disability and as this is associated with problems in word decoding, it may explain the difficulty they have reading the non-words in comparison to their peers.

### Perceived reading ability

Analysis was also conducted on the sub-group of Learners who identified themselves as having a Learning Disability compared to their peers on their perceived reading ability, reading enjoyment and reading comprehension.

Both groups increased their perceived reading ability over time as they progressed through the manuals ( $F(2, 48) = 14.4, p < 0.00$ ) but no statistically significant difference on perceived reading ability was found between the Learning Disability groups ( $p > 0.05$ ). However, the Learning Disability group rated themselves as less able readers in comparison to the rest of the group at each time-point.

Both groups increased their perceived reading enjoyment over time ( $F(2, 48) = 10.0, p < 0.00$ ) but no statistically significant difference was found between Learning Disability groups ( $p > 0.05$ ). However, the Learning Disability group were not enjoying their reading as much as the rest of the cohort across each time-point.

Both groups increased their perceived reading comprehension over time ( $F(2, 48) = 14.5, p < 0.00$ ) but no significant difference was found between Learning Disability groups ( $p > 0.05$ ).

### Speech Language Impairment

Of the Learners who reported a diagnosis of Speech Language Impairment (SLI) at baseline, 2 (0.7%) had continued with the project up until the six-month period and another 2 (0.7%) who formed the unknown sub-group had also continued up until this point. This small percentage is similar to the proportion found at earlier time-points, but a reduction in numbers of Learners with a reported SLI was found as time progressed.

No further statistical analysis was conducted due to the small sample size. Learners with SLI were reading fewer words than their peers at each time-point. No obvious differences or trends were found in relation to non-word reading, perceived reading ability, enjoyment or comprehension. Of the Learners who had reported an SLI, both had previous experience of Toe By Toe and were participating in other functional skills classes. One of them also reported a diagnosis of learning disability.

### Summary and discussion of Phase One findings

- A consistent level of attrition was found of Learners during the six-month period.
- Learners were progressing through the manuals, with most reaching the final stages by the six-month period.
- Perceived reading ability, enjoyment and comprehension all increased over the six

months, with larger increases found during the first three-month stage and this was partially affected by manual progression.

- More Learners were reporting improvement in their reading, enjoyed their reading and perceived it as being above average as they progressed through the manuals.
- Significant improvements in word reading and non-word reading were found for Learners, which was associated with manual progression.
- Turning Pages was providing Learners with the transferable skills to be able to phonetically decode and to read real words that they had not encountered before.
- Learners reported confidence reading a wider range of texts, which included those that they were less confident reading at baseline, such as legal letter and application forms.
- As Learners progressed through the Turning Pages manuals, they realised how much reading was required in the prison system and Learners reported reading more for functional purposes as well as for enjoyment and social reasons.
- Turning Pages was shown to enhance perceived ability of Learners, which was associated with the increase in actual reading ability found in Learners over the first three months.
- Learners who were participating in functional skills classes (predominately for literacy, of which most also had dyslexia) were progressing through the manuals at a much slower rate compared to their peers and read fewer words and non words. However, this sub-group had still improved their reading scores and perceived ratings over the six-month period.

#### Attrition and manual progression

The number of Learners who engaged in the project reduced every 3 months but at a consistent rate of around 40%. Whilst the number of Learners that formed sub-groups such as Learning Disability or of English as an additional language also reduced significantly at each time point, this reduction in response rate was also at a similar rate. A significant difference was found in the manuals Learners were studying at the six-month period in comparison to the three-month period, showing that Learners were progressing through the manuals. However, two Learners were still on the first manual at the six-month stage with one of them receiving fewer than 3 sessions per week and both were enrolled in functional skills classes, which also suggests that they had additional learning needs associated with literacy that would have affected manual progression.

#### Perceived ratings and manual progression

The perception Learners had of their own reading ability, reading enjoyment and their reading comprehension increased significantly over the six-month period, with larger increases seen during the first three months. It could be that the restricted

scale of 0-10 prevented larger variance in ratings, especially for the final three months, when Learners were already rating themselves above average. Despite manual progression not significantly affecting perceived ratings over the whole six months, it did have an effect for perceived reading ability and enjoyment ratings at the three-month stage and manual progression in the final three months also significantly increased perceived reading ability scores. It is likely that small sample sizes for analysis that considers Learners engaged in the evaluation for the whole six months reduced the likelihood of potential statistical effects from being obtained. The finding that perceived reading comprehension was not affected by manual progression at any stage, confirms the fact that only the last manual fully addresses reading comprehension ability.

### Learners' descriptions of their reading

Learners' response to the open ended questions on the questionnaire showed a similar trend over the six-month timeframe. More Learners enjoyed their reading, referred to their reading as being average and also mentioned an improvement in their reading at the six-month stage in comparison to baseline but this dipped slightly during the final three months. Fewer Learners described their reading as being below average as they progressed through the six months of Turning Pages. These descriptions show that Learners perceived their reading ability as having improved since starting Turning Pages, and as they progressed through the manuals. The slight opposite trend found in the final three months could be due to the studying of slightly more advanced manuals but may also be due to the after effects of participating in a novel experience. It is difficult to establish the cause for this without additional data that addresses the issue specifically.

### What Learners read and why they read

Over the six month period as Learners progressed through the manuals, the majority stated that they read for enjoyment, to obtain knowledge and for social reasons. However, during the final three months, more Learners stated that they read as a need to meet functional purposes within prison. The fact that the latter theme was of more importance for Learners later on in the evaluation could suggest that as Turning Pages supports the progress of their reading ability, Learners realise how much reading is required within the prison system.

Learners stated reading a wider range of texts after the six months of Turning Pages than they stated before, including items that Learners were less confident reading at baseline, such as application forms, books and information leaflets. Learners rated themselves as more confident reading these items after experiencing six months of Turning Pages. Canteen sheets and letters to family and friends were also examples of items that Learners stated reading and were confident reading over the six months, emphasising the point that Learners read for social and functional purposes.

### Word reading and non-word reading scores

To further validate the self-perceived reading abilities Learners reported Learners also significantly improved their word reading and non-word reading scores over the six-month period. This improvement was also linked to the level of manual progression Learners had experienced over the six-month period, with more improvement found in Learners who had progressed further into the manual stages. The fact that the Learners also increased their non-word scores suggests that the Turning Pages programme was teaching Learners the skills to phonetically decode. In addition, the word test used included words that were not contained in the Turning Pages reading programme, also showing Learners were able to transfer what they were learning to other real words they had not encountered, some of which were low frequency words. The finding that smaller increases in word and non-word reading were found during the final three months may be explained by the difficult words that were present in the reading assessments. These words did not fully match the level of difficulty of words and phoneme blends that were introduced in the final manuals of Turning Pages.

### Correlations

The significant correlations found between perceived reading ability, enjoyment and comprehension on word and non-word reading scores during the first three months, emphasises the importance of an adult reading scheme that targets Learners' perceptions to enhance their actual ability, something that Turning Pages was shown to achieve in this evaluation.

### Learner demographics

No significant differences in the reading abilities (both in the self-perceived scale and the word and non-word test), number of sessions attended or rate of manual progression were found between the sub-groups of Learners separated by those who had prior Toe by Toe experience, had English as an additional language, by age and by those who reported having a learning disability or SLI. This shows that Turning Pages positively benefits the reading ability of Learners of varying demographic factors and educational experience. A greater increase in non-word reading was found in males during the first three months compared to females but this analysis was based on extremely small sample sizes. Learners who were participating in functional skills classes read fewer words and non-words than their peers and felt less able and enjoyed their reading less than their peers. In addition, this sub-group was progressing through the manuals at a much slower rate despite attending the same number of weekly sessions as their peers. These Learners may find reading programmes such as Turning Pages especially difficult as they form a specific sub-group of less able readers having been identified as requiring further literacy support. This is especially as a significant number of this sub-group also reported a diagnosis of dyslexia. However, the fact that all Learners improved their word and non-word reading over time shows how Turning Pages is still able to support the reading progress of this sub-group.



### Triangulating findings with Shannon Trust snapshot data

An additional way in which the Shannon Trust monitor the impact Shannon Trust Reading Plan has on Mentors and Learners and obtain reasons for their decision to engage with the Reading Plan is through an annual snapshot evaluation. The snapshot questions have been developed over years of input from experts in literacy and accessibility. There is a version for Learners and another version for Mentors. The survey is sent out to all Learners and Mentors engaged in the Shannon Trust Reading Plan across the whole secure estate once every twelve months for completion over a specific fixed two-week period. A total of over 700 Mentors and just over 600 Learners responded to the most recent survey in February 2016 and results were accumulated and shared across the prison network.

A large percentage of Learners stated they started Turning Pages to support them through the prison system as well as for social reasons, such as reading letters and reading to their children, as found from this evaluation. Learners also aimed to use Turning Pages to improve their reading as did the Learners in this evaluation and Learners found that it improved their own self-confidence; a theme that was also obtained from each of the Learner interviews.

Supporting the qualitative themes obtained from this evaluation, Learners responded positively to the private one-on-one mentor model that formed the Reading Plan and that this was viewed as independent from formal education. Learners also perceived that the Reading Plan was set at the right learning pace, which was mirrored by Learners involved in the evaluation interviews.

Over half of the Learners from the snapshot sample stated that they believed Turning Pages encouraged them to access further education, and many of the Learners in this evaluation reflected on future identities and opportunities that they believed reading enabled them to inspire to achieve.

For 14% of Learners in the snapshot data, they were unable to pick Readers themselves with some Learners stating this was due to them not being accessible with limited Readers available at the manual stages they were in. For the vast majority, this was because they had not yet completed the first manual, as the associated Readers begin at the start of the second manual. Despite this, a similar theme was obtained from the interviews, in which Learners and Mentors felt they needed better access to the Readers that accompanied the manual stages.

The same reasons Mentors gave for deciding to become mentors were provided in the snapshot and from Mentors interviewed in the evaluation. This was in relation to wanting to help others as well as doing something positive with the time they had in prison. Other similar themes that were obtained from Mentors in the snapshot data matched those extracted from the interviews, such as helping them to understand others better, providing them with new skills and self-confidence. Overall Mentors were very positive about the whole experience and believed the training prepared them for the role.



## Reading effectiveness through a social practice lens

A combination of individual, paired and focus group interviews were conducted across eight prisons from which at least three-month data (some had already sent six-month data depending on the date the interviews had taken place) had been obtained from Learners and these Learners (and Mentors involved) were still engaged with the evaluation.

A total number of 20 Learners and 37 Mentors were interviewed. Of the Learners who were interviewed, one was an individual interview, another two consisted of focus groups involving three Learners per group and an additional focus group made up of seven Learners was also conducted. The remaining three interviews were paired interviews. Of the Mentors who were interviewed, one consisted of a paired interview and the rest (7) were focus groups. Three of these focus groups consisted of six Mentors, two consisted of five Mentors, and the other two involved a group of four and a group of three Mentors.

Analysis of qualitative data focused on exploring Learners' and Mentors' self expressed perceptions of how working with Turning Pages had impacted on their capacity to act in and on the world both in relation to their experience of life in prison and their aspirations for the future. Two key themes were identified. The first related to the nature of the interactions described by Learners and Mentors as they worked together on Turning Pages. These collaborations were characterised as high-trust, mutually respectful and often sensitively 'safe-guarded' in recognition of the potential risks and vulnerabilities for a Learner making public a 'developing reader' identity in the context of a prison community – this seemed particularly pertinent in male prison settings. Both Learners and Mentors spoke of working together in highly contingent ways, and without recourse to formal teacher 'expertise', to build collaborative, bottom-up pedagogical experiences, what we've called grounded pedagogies, that fulfilled a purpose for both participants rooted in the commitments described above. The second theme relates to Learners' and Mentors' perceptions of the impact they felt Turning Pages and the Shannon Trust Reading Plan had already had on their lives or might have in the future. In their evaluations both Learners and Mentors reflected thoughtfully on the role that the Turning Pages scheme had played, and continued to play, in helping them to exercise some form of agency in relation to their experience of prison and their hopes and aspirations for the future. In their talk participants often mobilised discourses of change representing the success they achieved with Turning Pages as a catalyst for building new narratives of self, identity narratives, that enabled them to be different or imagine a future self differently: a better parent; better prepared for work; or more capable of making independent choices.

### Getting started with Shannon Trust Reading Plan and Turning Pages

Both the Shannon Trust Reading Plan and Turning Pages were well regarded by both the prison governor group who facilitated Phase two of the study and the

participants who took part in focus groups, and both shared a common confidence in the capacity of the programme to secure benefit for Learners:

*I've heard about all different girls who come in and they can't even write a letter or use the pod but now they can, they can read books they can read magazines all sorts now from doing the Shannon Trust (L)*

As such, buy-in for the study was easily won from all groups and recruitment of both prisons and participants was good.

Learners reported coming across the Shannon Trust Reading Plan in relatively contingent ways, for example, through word of mouth or ad hoc mentor intervention.

*I was in a double and my pad mate was doing Toe by Toe this was a few years ago now and I knew her from [another prison]...and yeah I see how she was doing and so I erm put I erm put in for it as well with the same lady it was [name of Mentor] and that's how I started.*

*I didn't know about it until XX (other Learner) told me about it and then I thought this is interesting so I joined.*

*I was introduced to XX one of the Mentors and then I enrolled. I asked the [name of Mentor] if could she help me fill my induction form in right cos I said I couldn't read it and she said yeah and she went oh we do the Shannon Trust here right and she explained what it was yeah and I said yeah I would look forward to doing that and she set me up on to it so that's how I found out about it...but you don't hear any other inmates talking about it.*

Some felt that more systematic 'advertising', for example a standard briefing about Shannon Trust Reading Plan at induction, might make the opportunity more visible to a wider group of Learners who might otherwise miss what was considered to be an invaluable opportunity.

Participants across focus groups, Learners and Mentors, were uniformly positive about their experience of working with the framework. They described the programme as both purposeful and motivating, enabling them to identify and pursue small personal goals. This seemed to have a special resonance in the context of the highly structured, tightly controlled regime that framed the rest of their day to day experience:

*you get yourself out of bed in the morning...you get yourself ready...and you get yourself a coffee and that and you think half ten comes and I'm doing that...you look forward to it everyday...it's a new day and you learn a bit more, bit more, bit more so by the end of the week you've learned so much you know what I mean...you want to reach that goal by the end of the month you want to reach that goal you want to get to the end of the next week, the next week the next week...(L)*

*When you are in prison you trying [sic] not to think too much and [I] spend my time improving my English (L)*

*I don't need to do any of the courses in here but I would still like to do something productive with my time so helping other people seemed like the logical choice (M)*

*You take what you can from prison, like being able to read. It's something I would never have achieved outside (L)*

For both Learners and Mentors purposefulness was framed in relation to 'doing something useful', either in the future or more immediately, either for themselves (becoming a better reader), or for the benefit of others (helping others to become better readers):

*...it's just the fact that I'm learning...so obviously I'm feeling better about myself for learning instead of sitting inside doing nothing you know what I mean...it's an investment for the future (L)*

*Help my mates with reading and spelling as got mates who don't like reading and can't spell so I can help them with it (L)*

*Yeah and now I'm happy for myself about myself cos I can see that there are people there and I get that good goodness of them (L)*

*For me it's about helping other people and taking their struggles on board (M)*

*I've always like helping people and wearing the shirts around the wings really helps you to stand out so a lot of people come up to you asking you for help with their applications for work HTC applications...any problems they've got with the prison they generally come to me for advice or help on their forms, it makes the time go a lot faster, made a difference to my day to day life, keeping positive, you feel useful (M)*

As the quotes above illustrate, for many participants getting involved with Shannon Trust Reading Plan represented a way of exercising a degree of agency over their lives by providing unique opportunities for action and decision-making, related particularly to using and managing time and doing something 'useful' for themselves or others. This was perceived to have significant benefit in terms of raising self-esteem and improving personal well-being, or as one participant put it, working with Shannon Trust "calms me down".

*I enjoy my reading now, before I got angry and frustrated (L)*

### **Becoming a better reader**

Learners shared, and were motivated by, a common understanding that becoming a better reader would enable them to act in and on the world in new ways. For male participants this was most often related to aspirations relating to work:

*If you can't read you can't get nowhere in life you know, you'll just be on the dole for the rest of your life, I don't want to be like that, I want to do something with my life now, I want to change for the better not for the worst you know, I'll take as much of this as I can whilst I'm in jail and it's better for me, I don't care what people think about us I just wanna better myself you know and this is a step in the door sort of thing you know what I mean?  
Progress (L)*

*[I want to] read forms and stuff like that, like going for a job and filling out a form or putting in for my driving licence. That's the main thing in life you know getting close to getting a licence, if you've got a licence the world's your oyster (L)*

*It will help me fill in application forms for work and get my CV done (L)*

Whilst female participants identified a much wider range of perceived benefits relating to developing parenting roles, maintaining relationships with friends and family on the outside, intellectual challenge and increased independence:

*Now I can help my kids with their reading because before when they asked me I wouldn't have known how to and obviously for me to get jobs and that it's helped me really a lot (L, female)*

*That's what I want to do, help my kids read you know, stage by stage because I'm only the first book like and it's basic letters at the moment but harder it gets it's going to be more challenging and I'm looking forward to that (L, female)*

*To...read my own letters from family because I don't have phone calls really and it'll help me to read my own letters and not depend on someone else to read my letters for (L, female)*

However, some male Learners also identified with the perceived benefit learning to read would have for their parenting and the relationship with their children:

*I've got a daughter and I can use this to sit down with her, just sit with her read to her and actually help her with her homework (L, male)*

The idea of not having to “depend on someone else” extended beyond the purely practical and, whilst the number of female Learners in the study was very small their conceptualisations of independence are worthy of further exploration in terms of the insights they offer about reading, identity and social interaction and the magnitude of the personal, social and emotional investment Learners might be making when they sign up to Shannon Trust Reading Plan. Contributions made by one particular learner, Alice, illustrate this. Alice had recently completed all five Turning Pages manuals and brought her certificates to the focus group. She was relatively young, in her mid to late twenties and a mother. She indicated elsewhere

in her contributions that this was not her first experience of prison:

*Erm work obviously helping children with their homework and day to day things, like there's a lot of things you've got to read before you can do it so like cooking instructions erm say if you're travelling...you need to be able to read right from wrong really*

In the first quote the Learner moves quickly from the practical benefits of negotiating and participating in the world more efficiently, helping with homework, following recipes, travelling around, to a more fundamental idea of reading the world that she describes as “read[ing] right from wrong”. For Alice the idea of interpreting the textual world directly without the mediation of others seemed like something that had become, perhaps relatively recently, important to her.

*Yeah I think independency [sic] is one of, like a good word for it as well because it's good to have your own independence not rely on other people and that's what I've had to do quite a bit, rely on other people helping me when I need it which now I still have to make sure I'm right but I feel a lot better in myself cos I ain't gotta keep asking other people because I'm quite an independent person.*

For Alice working successfully with Turning Pages represented opened up opportunities to act agentically and to recognise and represent herself as the independent person she felt herself to be, to make claim to an independent identity. Here she talks about how her growing confidence around taking decisions and acting on her own initiative, albeit tentatively, had changed not only the way she worked but the nature of her interaction with colleagues at work;

*I work in Stitch in Time and we have to make bags but when we work at lunchtime we can make other things and you have to read the instructions and how to do it and next steps and I have to still ask for help, but that's because I don't want to read it and [find out] I'm doing it wrong because it's a lot of work otherwise but erm yeah but otherwise if I didn't know how to read and I haven't done none of this I would have took up a lot of their time by having to ask them 'what's it saying there' but now I just read it myself and then go to them and say am I doing it right?*

*so I still have to get a bit of help to make sure I'm right but it's made my confidence a lot better [which is] why I'm doing reading*

Alice's new experience of agency and independence was echoed by male Learners with one describing the pleasure of reading his own letters and another referring to his ability to travel to new locations:

*It's not so embarrassing because before I used to go and ask people if I had a letter can they read it for me...since I've been doing Turning Pages I can read it, I can read it to meself so it's private, it's not shared*

*If I'm in an unknown place I'd panic and get someone else to take me there.  
Now I'm not scared about finding that certain place.*

In addition, male Learners often referred to an increase in self-confidence after participating in Turning Pages and one specifically described how he would now go to the library independently and take out a book:

*I feel more confident now, I can go to the library and get a book out, I never thought I'd go there.*

As a result of working with Turning Pages both participants appeared to have accrued new resources (cultural capital) that enabled them to make new meanings for themselves, independently and in 'private', and generate new possibilities for personal and social action and interaction (social capital).

### **Previous experiences of formal education**

Alice's assessment of the gains she had made with Shannon Trust contrasted starkly with participants' accounts of learning in formal adult education. The quotes below exemplify the way Learners described these experiences:

*You feel isolated in big groups, just sat there like looking at a piece of paper thinking I can't do this*

*I've been to college, outside college, but they put you in a room there and tell you to get on with the work they don't do like one to one and it's easier when you've got one to one work it's better you know you need more time;*

*Certain people don't like working in groups either;  
Cos you feel embarrassed working in, well I feel embarrassed working in big groups and they give you a piece of paper and forms to fill out and you can't read em.*

Learners described feeling lost, isolated or exposed in big groups, ill-equipped to navigate the literacy requirements of completing forms for college and felt they had gained very little from the experience of formal education. Some felt they had never had a positive experience of education whilst others felt they had wasted opportunities in the past:

*...teachers at school didn't have time for you...I need a one on one...with a big class I couldn't really learn...;*

*I done 14 years of education and I haven't really learnt nothing from education;*

*...when I was in school I thought I'd be the jack the lad I'd do this and I'd do that and I didn't want to learn but now I look back and I think I just wasted all that time when I could have learned and I wouldn't be in the position I am in now stuck in here with nothing...you know what I mean...*



*I've learnt more in four months (of Turning Pages) than what I have the whole time in school.*

As an outcome Learners drew heavily on deficit discourses to describe how education had left them feeling inadequate, “stupid” or “dumb”.

### **Working with Turning Pages and the Shannon Trust Reading Plan**

Evaluations of formal learning contrasted dramatically with their assessments of working with Turning Pages and the Shannon Trust Reading Plan. Learners described Turning Pages as a unique learning programme that they felt to be adult focused, designed and paced to suit individual needs and crucially discrete, private and physically belonging to them (Learners get to keep each manual they work on). The Shannon Trust Reading Plan peer-mentoring programme, through which Turning Pages is delivered, was highly regarded and Learners' understood their one-to-one working relationship with their peer mentor to be absolutely fundamental to their individual successes.

Learners valued the structured synthetic phonics approach of the Turning Pages manuals and felt this helped them to make progress with their reading:

*Helped me very...a lot...the long o and long u sounds...(L)*

*...you learn how to break words down so that it's much easier...can understand what the book's about...now learning how to break word down and it makes sense to me...(L, English as an Additional Language)*

*There's things in the books that help you do the harder things like breaking words down (L)*

Those who self-defined as beginner readers or lacking confidence with reading welcomed this approach and enjoyed quick wins with the complementary reading books as this exchange illustrates. Learner A has completed all 5 manuals and Learner B is in their first week of working with manual 1:

*A: When I started I had to break words down, I could read like 3, 4 letter words but now I know how to break down letters and I'm quite good at reading now whereas before I couldn't read properly at all*

*B: I have to get [mentor] to write out and read the letters to me because I can't break them down but I've just started the book only recently not even a week...but it's the, just the basic little words and then you go on to the big words and just break them down that's what she said to do*

*AK: So are you on the first manual?*

*B: The first manual yeah...I read my first book today*

*AK: Did you? Well done, was it a Shannon Trust book?*

*B: Yeah, Shannon Trust book Fish and Chips*

*AK: I know that one, what did you think about that?*

*B: Yeah I thought it was alright, that's the first book I've ever read you know all the way right to the end, it's only short though*

*AK: How did you feel about that?*

*B: Proud of myself because it's only a little short book but I still read it and I didn't think I could read books*

*AK: So even just one week in you're starting to feel more confident*

*B: Yeah yeah*

This positive account of the value of Shannon Trust reading books was shared by participants in both the Mentor and Learner groups. Learners appreciated the opportunity to practice what they'd learned with the manuals and the content was felt to be appropriate to adults, "it's not like kids' stuff". The option for more titles was warmly welcomed although participants made a request for more sophisticated, 'grittier', story-lines that adult reader might find more interesting, relevant and appealing. Some Mentors felt Turning Pages focused too tightly on de-coding, providing insufficient opportunities for comprehension practice and were therefore especially keen to see the number of reading book titles expanded.

Without exception Learners reported that they enjoyed working with and owning the Turning Pages manuals ("...another good thing you get to keep these books as well and I find that pretty pretty good") and got a real sense of achievement as they progressed through the series. This was illustrated through their enthusiasm for the completion certificates, which they felt gave visibility and transferability to their achievements both within prison and to friends and family on the outside, "...you've got proof haven't you...you feel like you've done something."

At the heart of the success of the programme was the Shannon Trust Reading Plan Mentor pair. A complex picture of highly nuanced interactions emerged that Learners perceived to be notably contrasting, or 'other', to previous experiences of formal education where Learners perceived that "teachers didn't really know you". All the Learners interviewed in Phase Two held their Mentor in high regard and attached significant value to the mentoring relationship and its impact on their learning. Being treated like an adult, working at a pace tailored to their needs and receiving one-to-one support, were identified as defining characteristics of the mentoring process.

*...you're taking in things better than you would if you were stuck in a classroom with 10 or 12 other people*

*...the mentor I've got now sits with me 20 minutes in the morning and*



*20 minutes in the afternoon, it's better for me that way, no one judging me*

Learners felt that this approach helped them to redefine themselves as learners, rejecting the pejorative labelling of the deficit models they had been referenced to in the past (and in turn often recognised themselves by) and re-imagining themselves as adults with different needs but the capacity and capability to develop as readers.

*I'm not as thick as what I thought I was, you know what I mean?*

*You're just like a slow learning adult, that's all it is, you're just slow at learning, you're not different anyway, you just can't read and write, do you know what I mean, they just try to progress in the stage that's good for you;*

*I didn't know about this until I went on my induction and [mentor] said you that we can help you through the Shannon Trust and she explained because it feels embarrassing you know and people think you're stupid and they know you can't read your own letters and that but it's not that we're stupid we're just learning different things.*

For one Learner Shannon Trust Reading Plan offered a catalyst for thoughtful reflection on how he had previously self-identified as a reader, “all the other people in the class...think you're stupid and that but it's not them thinking that it's me thinking that they think that,” whilst another saw Shannon Trust Reading Plan as an opportunity to “start afresh” felt like “a big weight off your shoulders”. This was especially the case for Learners' who self-identified as dyslexic:

*You will improve and you will get somewhere...courses and colleges for people with dyslexia but with this it's one to one you're not stuck in a class and you're actually getting that one to one support you know that you actually need...so it helps you more...it progresses you more because you're taking things in better than you would if you were stuck in a classroom with 10 12 other people you know what I mean;*

*I've got dyslexia – it's better now though – the lady here is saying it and you're reading at the same time.*

This identity shift that Learners related in their self-perception of their capabilities and capacity as readers is well illustrated by the quote below in which a Learner describes how his experience of working with Turning Pages in prison has got him thinking about what strategies and resources he could use in future to help friends on the outside to develop as readers:

*...I started doing a lot of my first book in pencil....and then I started doing it in pen...but what I'm thinking keep doing them in pencil...keep them you know pristine...when I get out, if I know someone that can't read or anything you know like a friend... I could scribble it out and I could teach them...like I'm giving my knowledge on to someone else. (L)*

## Learners on Mentors

In contrast to Learners' descriptions of teachers they had worked with in the past Mentors were characterised as patient, understanding and trustworthy.

*They've got time...don't rush at it and always time to listen...I need a one to one...with a big class I couldn't really learn (L)*

*You gotta trust him because you can't read and write very well (L)*

That Mentors were non-judgemental, discrete and trustworthy seemed to be of central importance to Learners who recognised their own potential vulnerability as prisoners who were also literacy learners. As such, many guarded the privacy of their Shannon Trust Reading Plan sessions "yeah because it's private, you know."

The 'peer status' of the Mentor was also important to Learners who felt that they were 'on the same side' with Mentors proactively willing and able to see things from the perspective of the adult Learner learning in a prison context:

*If you're doing it by yourself you haven't really got the willpower to do it... having someone there gives you that little... (L)*

*They can see that you're a bit stressed... (L)*

*My mentor is dyslexic...obviously he's a lot better at reading and writing than me...but he understands what you're going through how hard it is mentally and physically for yourself (L)*

*I actually suffer from dyslexia myself and if I can learn to teach, he can learn to read and that's what I've built on and he's doing pretty well now (M)*

As such, many Learners reported that working in Shannon Trust Reading Plan pairs was a transformative experience - "[My] confidence is much better...when I come in here [to the prison] I'm really bad [sic]..."(L, EAL) - that enabled them to imagine new possibilities for the future:

*I don't want to be in me fifties and think I could have been something... I actually wanna be something...I wanna be like Del Boy, I wanna be a millionaire (Laughs)*

*When I first came in to jail I was depressed and I thought what's the point in learning...this is the time to do it...to progress with me reading and writing in jail as well not just for them so that I can get a job in here, because if you can't read the signs in the workshop or cant fill in the forms or this that and the other you cant get nowhere even in jail, it's hard isn't it.*

Learners' enthusiasm for their Mentors and the quality of the mentoring process were matched by the effort, energy and commitment Mentors seemed to invest in the Shannon Trust Reading Plan programme. The picture that emerged from

Shannon Trust Reading Plan interactions was a of a sensitive, often generous, informal pedagogical experience negotiated proactively between Learner and Mentor according to their unique blend of need, knowledge, skills and concept making around what constitutes a good learning experience. We have termed this 'grounded pedagogy', to capture the inductive, intuitive way Mentors described the way they approached the mentoring process, determined how best to respond to individual Learners and designed pedagogical encounters without recourse to formal teacher education or existing theory.

### Developing 'grounded pedagogies'

Mentors recognised that establishing trust with Learners was fundamental to the success of the Shannon Trust Reading Plan programme:

*If a learner can't trust you then they're not willing to do the work, they won't open up, they won't let me in. They need to have that absolute trust that you're their friend or buddy and that you're not there to take the piss out of them (M)*

Mentors were also sensitive to the fact that Learners might be vulnerable to the judgements and ridicule of the wider prisoner community, where dominant eduecentricities might couple a willingness to learn with adherence to institutionally preferred identities and eduecentricity;

*I've got one chap who's very, very good now and is doing extremely well in the reading programme but if someone else is at that table with me he just shuts up and he just can't...he doesn't like the idea of someone else knowing what level he's at because he thinks he's struggling.*

Mentors talk suggested that this might be more of a risk in the context of a male prison environment:

*In general it's (Shannon Trust Reading Plan) quite respected because it's a predominantly adult prison so there's less of that stigma against knowledge but it does er leave some people thinking you're like a screwboy, you're on side with them you're not one of us, but that's very rare, it has happened in the past where people have thought that. Yeah I've been called that once but that was by a very closed minded young guy who was just angry because I was trying to tell him not to destroy something.*

As outlined above Mentors understood that structuring each mentoring session to suit the needs of the Learner was a crucial aspect of mentoring role and responsibility. Participants discussed their decision making in relation to the words they use around assessment and they instead refer to the progress checks that are central to the Turning Pages manuals and how these checks challenge previous negative connotations that surround assessment. The way Mentors choose to tailor feedback also illustrates this:

*They get scared of the word test so we never call it a test we always call it an assessment...just to see that we're understanding what we're reading... to make sure we're understanding what we're reading as well as being able to decipher what we're reading. We can use it basically as a footstep to say, well we've learned this but... (M)*

*it boosts their confidence as well...one of my guys is quite well in to the reading manuals but he's always putting himself down because he doesn't think he's progressing and when he gets to one of these (checks) and realises he can actually read these things and he's understanding what he's reading... (M)*

*The checks are useful to refresh you on what you've done in the chapter and it's quite amazing what you can learn in such a short amount of time (L)*

Mentors also discussed what they referred to as the “comprehension problem”, their perception that whilst Turning Pages supported Learners to de-code effectively supplementary work on comprehension was required. They reported acting under their own initiative to “add comprehension ourselves” in pursuit of an enhanced Learner experience.

Mentors' rationales for paying close attention to comprehension shared some of the characteristics of a social practice perspective. Their accounts made distinctions between different sorts of activities and the different purposes and actions that might be associated with each, for example the practice of reading for “pure enjoyment” was contrasted with the more ‘schooled’ assessment practice of doing a “set of comprehension questions”. Differences were expressed as a “difference of technique”. They also recognised reading to be an active process requiring some effort on the part of the reader to engage and make meaning, “As readers ourselves, I will sit and read a book and I sometime think did that actually sink in?”

Whilst Mentors spoke at length about their concerns with providing high quality support for Learners they were equally keen to assert that they did not want to foster a culture of dependence. They offered perspectives on Learner development that appeared to be highly attuned to Learner's self-expressed quests for achieving greater independence. They recognised and respected that Learners were heavily reliant on their mentor for all the reasons discussed above:

*They moan and groan about various Mentors for whatever reasons...on a couple of times, “I've got to do something I'm going to give you another Mentor I'm not having another Mentor”...there's a lot of resistance not because I'm possibly any different to any other mentor but because they've got used to me and they feel comfortable with me and they don't relish the possibility of having this strange person digging around in their mind as far as they see it and uncovering their inabilities*

But Mentors were equally as keen to ensure that Mentors supported Learners to adopt an independent mind-set in Learners both in relation to who mentored them and how they approached their learning:

*You've got to get people used to the idea that this is something that they can continue with regardless of who's teaching them kind of thing sort of thing:*

Learning to facilitate Shannon Trust Reading Plan in this way was understood to be an important aspect of learning how to be an effective Mentor.

### Benefits to Mentors

Mentors were very clear about the benefits they perceived for themselves of contributing to the Shannon Trust Reading Plan programme. These were in equal measure altruistic and strategic: simultaneously providing a sense of self-worth, moral value and status and the opportunity to demonstrate behaviours and mobilise identities that would be useful in the longer term.

*Down the line it should look good on my HTCF applications and everything but in the meantime it's plenty of feel good credits...it's a good thing to help people and when you're in a place like this you're not...you're peer group is not encouraging you to help people it's encouraging you to do wrong by people so it's good to hold on to whatever you can to maintain the humanity as it were*

*I've always like helping people and wearing the shirts around the wings really helps you to stand out so a lot of people come up to you asking you for help with their applications for work HTC applications...any problems they've got with the prison they generally come to me for advice or help on their forms...it makes the time go a lot faster...made a difference to my day to day life...keeping positive...you feel useful*

*I just wanted to help out as much as I can and help other people as much as myself*

*Obviously I'm doing a diploma and it links to that in a sense obviously to help people but also it gives me a better kind of portfolio for when I get out of prison and do what I want to do*

### Resilience

Whilst many Learners were very positive about the impact they felt Shannon Trust and Shannon Trust Reading Plan were having on their lives it is important to caution against over-statement of the impact a reading development intervention might deliver in isolation. Castleton warns us not to background or obscure the kinds of social and economic complexities that researchers often notice in the lives of adults and young people who have not previously been successful in schooled literacy (Castleton, 2001). Her work reminds us that literacy 'deficits' are likely to be deeply

entangled with wider structural (social and economic) inequalities and suggests that the nature of schooling, the state of the labour market, opportunities for retraining, perceptions and treatment of mental health and issues related to housing and accommodation for low earners are among the many contextual issues likely to have impacted on Learners' lives and access to and success in education previously. She argues therefore that attending to literacy development alone will not resolve the structural inequalities that may have contributed to Learners' trajectories to prison and suggests that these contextual factors may continue to frame their experience beyond the prison gate.

As discussed above, Wilson shares similar concerns and asks 'how do we validate prisoners' abilities without necessarily drawing them back in to the educentricities of policy and practice' (Wilson, 2007: 198) which often position them, through a discourse of deficit, as failing/failures. The answer Castleton suggests is to focus on 'change', by which she means

how people can and want to use literacy to bring about change in their lives, then literacy, and consequently the people looking for support, can be viewed in a far more positive light. Emphasis is then given to what clients have, what contributions they can make, and perhaps are making already within their networks, rather than on what they lack. Such a framing allows for recognition of the ways in which people use literacy as a resource shared by members of communities of practice in which participants assume different roles for different purposes. Castleton (2001:66)

The evaluation evidence shared in this report suggests that working with the Shannon Trust and Shannon Trust Reading Plan provides Learners and Mentors with starting points for change orientations. The quantitative analysis above indicates that working with Turning Pages enables Learners to quickly make modest but significant gains in relation to de-coding and to build confidence about their ability to engage purposefully with a variety of reading practices, including both those that enable them to navigate prison life more successfully (reading canteen menus, legal letters and information leaflets) and those that support links with the outside (reading letters from friends and relatives). The outcomes of Phase Two of the study illustrate how important these gains are in terms of opening up opportunities for reflection on being (who am I?) and doing (how do I want to be in the world?) which in turn lead to new possibilities for action: being more independent, exercising agency through decision making, working towards a future goal. Whilst these new capacities will not resolve the structural relations that will inevitably continue to position Learners and Mentors in social and material ways on release they may have the potential to support greater resilience, the beginnings of desistance identity building and a re-adjusted educentricity.

In this respect it is possible to suggest that Turning Pages and the Shannon Trust Reading Plan, whilst no panacea for the range and complexity of challenges

Learners and Mentors face, may begin to facilitate the kind of education (with a small 'e' to connote the 'grounded' informal, un-schooled experiences identified above), at the meeting point of 'educentricity' and 'third space', that Wilson argues to be a necessary condition for prisoners to reconnect with learning. Turning Pages and Shannon Trust Reading Plan do this by enabling Learners to re-identify as learners by stepping back from deficit accounts of what they can't do, de-familiarise the 'norms' of formal Education about to how, where and when to learn, and recognise instead the conditions within which they can be successful.



## Conclusions

The final conclusions of the evaluation are framed in relation to the research question that this evaluation aimed to address.

### **How effective are the Turning Pages teaching methods in improving reading ability in adults?**

Significant gains in word reading and non-word reading scores were found for the group of Learners involved in the Turning Pages evaluation during the first three months and from baseline to the final six-month period. This finding suggests that Turning Pages was able to promote the word decoding skills and sight word reading of adult Learners through the application of a synthetic phonics based approach.

Reading improvement was also dependent on the level of manual progression Learners had made during the six months, suggesting that this was an important factor in improving Learners' reading ability.

The evaluation also found a significant increase in the self-rated reading attainment, enjoyment and reading comprehension ability over the six-month period and this was also partially dependent on the level of manual progression. However, despite small increases found in reading scores and in self-perceived ratings during the final three months, this difference was not statistically significant. This may be a result of the small scale used to measure perceived ability, limiting the amount of potential variance obtained in ratings during the final three months when Learners already rated themselves above average for each element of reading perception.

Significant improvements in word and non-word reading scores were found for all Learners including those who performed below their peers at baseline and six months after, suggesting that Turning Pages improved the reading skills for all adult Learners who struggle to read regardless of initial reading ability. In addition, almost all of the additional Learner demographics obtained in the evaluation, such as previous Toe by Toe experience, English as an additional language, age, or a reported learning disability, had no impact on the main effect of improved reading ability over the six months, suggesting that Turning Pages was able to improve the reading of adult Learners with a wide range of learning needs and educational experience.

Finally, Learners reported an increase in being able to confidently read a variety of different sources over the six-month period of doing Turning Pages, including sources that they rated themselves as not being confident at reading initially, such as legal letters or information leaflets. This also suggests that Turning Pages was able to improve Learners' functional reading in prison.



### **How important are the delivery methods in prisons, quality of provision and the impact of the one on the other?**

Mentors recorded the number of sessions Learners had with their Mentors at each time-point. The number of weekly sessions ranged from around 3-5 showing that not all Learners were meeting the required number of 5 sessions set out by the Shannon Trust. However, this had no effect on reading performance based upon test scores, suggesting that number of sessions did not impact on reading progress. It could be argued therefore, that Turning Pages may still be appropriate for Learners who choose to not have as many reading sessions with their Mentor, without negatively affecting reading improvement. This is particularly important, as allowing Learners this choice creates the notion of agency and independence that forms a valued part of their learning experience.

Whilst Learners who were attending functional skills classes were attending the same number of sessions a week as their peers during the six months, it was found that this sub-group read fewer words and non-words than their peers and they were also completing the reading manuals at a significantly slower rate. In respect of the need for providing Learner choice in and an individually tailored approach to the learning process, it may be that this sub-group need more weekly sessions and might be expected to take longer in acquiring reading skills and in turn to complete the reading activities within the manuals. This could be because of any potential additional learning needs this group may have, based on their participation in additional literacy skills classes but also based on the finding that most of this sub-group reported having a diagnosis of dyslexia. Without a control group for comparison or information on the specific duration of each session it is difficult to pin-point reasons for this finding, and the fact that this analysis is based upon a very small sample size also warrants caution to this interpretation and any relating to sub-group analysis.

Most Learners had reached either the second manual or stage two of the first after the first three-months of receiving Turning Pages, and after six months, most Learners had either completed Turning Pages or had reached the final manual. This difference was a statistically significant one and suggests that the duration of six months at the intensity of around 3-5 weekly sessions was enough for Learners to reach the final stages of the reading programme, especially as Learners who did manage to complete Turning Pages did so within five months of receiving the intervention.

Manual progression was found to significantly contribute to the increase found in word and non-word reading as well as in the increases found in perceived reading ability and enjoyment. Learners who had reached the final manuals were able to read significantly more words and non-words and perceived themselves as being better readers and enjoyed reading more. This highlights the manuals as being an important contributing factor to the success of Turning Pages as a reading

programme that supports the development and acquisition of reading in adult Learners.

Reading ability also correlated with perceived ability, reading enjoyment and comprehension at their respective time-points both at baseline and at the three month stage. This suggests that some importance should be weighted to the promotion of reading enjoyment, reading comprehension and reader confidence in the reading sessions for Learners engaged in Turning Pages.

The peer review pairings between Learners and their Mentors are understood by all parties to be fundamental to the success of Turning Pages. Learners valued the 'un-schooled' nature of mentoring sessions and welcomed the tailored, bespoke 'grounded pedagogy' approach taken by Mentors.

### **What are the wider benefits/outcomes to Learners and Mentors of involvement in Turning Pages?**

Phase One data revealed that after three and six months of receiving Turning Pages Learners reported reading a larger number of different sources of information that they had not read previously. This also included reading materials that Learners had reported a lack of confidence reading prior to their engagement with Turning Pages, such as legal letters. Findings show that after the six-month intervention, Learners were reading more for functional participation within prison and for social engagement.

Evidence from Phase Two of the evaluation suggests that Turning Pages and Shannon Trust Reading Plan provide important opportunities for both Learners and Mentors to reflect on their lives and to imagine new possibilities for the future. For Learners this meant using the programme as an opportunity for reflecting on their existing 'educentricities' and building new narratives about learning and identity that better reflected their future aspirations as parents, workers and community members both inside and outside prison. For Mentors, Turning Pages provided an opening for community participation and an opportunity to be useful and productive, which, in turn, fed in to positive action in the form of the development of grounded pedagogies that facilitated Learners' re-appraisal of their educentricities. Phase Two data suggests that working with Turning Pages provided important opportunities for Learners and Mentors to exercise a degree of agency in an otherwise highly regulated environment and in so doing to build new identity narratives that might contribute to rehabilitative concept-making.

## Limitations

### Establishing effectiveness

The ability to adequately measure effectiveness of an intervention depends largely on study design and methods used to assess or measure change (Portney & Watkins, 2009). In this evaluation, Learners who enrolled in Turning Pages were assessed over a six-month period using standardised quantitative assessments and by using subjective qualitative interviews. The aim was to obtain data that demonstrated improvement on reading decoding based on the autonomous model of literacy, as well as through data reflecting the impact reading had on the individual on a wider social scale. However, the fact that this evaluation formed a single pre-post intervention study without a control comparison group limits the extent to which the effectiveness of Turning Pages can be established. It is widely recommended that control comparisons are used to ascertain an intervention's effectiveness, as designs such as this control for the effect or influence other possible confounds have on an intervention as well as controlling for the possibility of natural progression over time (Portney & Watkins). The gold standard approach to research design used to measure effectiveness is to randomly obtain and assign participants to either control or intervention group. This equally spreads individual variance across groups and further minimises the influence bias or confounds have on any possible intervention effect (Sullivan, 2011).

With respect to the above literature on establishing effectiveness through intervention research, this research evaluation could be considered as being at an early stage in establishing the effectiveness of Turning Pages as an adult reading intervention, with the future aim of comparing findings to a control comparison group of Learners receiving an alternative education or literacy programme. Learner allocation to group should be randomised but implementing a design like this may prove to be difficult in a prison context and will have significant implications on resource. Adopting a 'gold standard' approach to research design would require additional staffing at a national scale to ensure efficient participant allocation, accurate data management and data collection of a sufficiently large sample size. To avoid the pitfalls associated with the arm's length approach to data collection, the project would have to be successfully communicated to all staff of varying levels within each prison and managers would need to be in place to oversee the process and they would need to be in constant communication with the research team. In addition, the implementation of such a design also highlights the ethical concern of removing the choice adult prisoners have in accessing educational support. It may be that a more pragmatic approach to research design is required that still incorporates a comparison group but also reduces the demand on resource (Sullivan, 2011).

### **Assessor bias**

There are also further limitations associated with the research design of this evaluation that may limit the extent to which these findings demonstrate the effectiveness of Turning Pages. In order to maximise the sample of Learners involved in the evaluation and due to limited resources, it was decided that the Mentors would administer the reading tests and the questionnaires to the Learners at each time-point. This procedure raises the possibility of bias on behalf of assessor, especially as Mentors were assessing their own Learners and therefore may have perceived such results as a reflection of their own performance as Mentors. However, all Mentors were provided with intense training delivered by staff from the Shannon Trust, which included sessions on how to correctly administer the tests and questionnaires to Learners, and Mentors were encouraged to continuously ask questions and check any uncertainty they had about test administration with Shannon Trust staff and Mentor leads.

### **Small sample size**

Further limitations with small sample sizes also restrict the extent to which findings can be generalised and account for the lack of statistical differences, particularly in the final three months. High attrition rates are common with research in the prison context, but are to be especially expected with longitudinal studies that aim to obtain data across multiple prisons such as this, and the complex logistical barriers to access led to an 'arm's length' approach to data collection that resulted in further complications. As part of this evaluation, Mentors were required to pass completed tests and questionnaires to their Mentor leads who in turn would pass this data on to Shannon Trust Reading Plan Leads during monthly meetings. The Reading Plan Leads would then send the data via confidential post to the research staff at BCU in order to meet the strict ethical guidelines for data handling required of NOMS ethics committee and the university ethics panel. This complex lengthy approach to data collection resulted in a delayed response rate and in some cases the loss of data. Some data was not passed on in the relevant time frame meaning it could not be used for the evaluation and this was often due to poor communication across the different parties within the prisons involved and to limitations in staff resource. This was especially so for any Learners who transferred prisons, as it was the intention of this research to track Learner data in the likelihood of prison move, yet obtaining data from such Learners was extremely challenging. Prison staff across the different prisons were not always aware of Learners who were engaged with the evaluation and did not have adequate access to information on when their next data was due, the progress they had made on the Reading Plan or even where they had been transferred to.

### **Ethical requirements**

As part of the strict ethical guidelines, access to adult prisoners required governor approval, particular for the interview phase in which digital recording equipment had

to be agreed upon and the safeguarding of the field researcher had to be ensured. Gaining confirmation of this required constant communication with each prison, especially in order to be sure that this information had been effectively communicated across the different prison staff. This had not been effectively managed by some prisons and delayed the data collection process further. One prison visit that had been initially agreed upon required additional ethical approval at a local committee level, despite receiving approval from NOMS and the university ethics panel. This process led to an extensive delay that resulted in cancellation of the planned visit.

### **Administering assessments**

Other reasons that may have contributed to the lack of data obtained primarily during Phase One of the evaluation relate to the large amount of paperwork that formed the reading tests and Learner questionnaires, putting Learners off engagement. This may have been a particular barrier to recruitment when the requirement for completing complex assessments before starting Turning Pages is contrary to the ethos of Shannon Trust and also supports the negative perception Learners and Mentors already have of education assessments. Suspicion involved with the research agenda and its intention was also expressed by Learners in response to being asked to provide prison id numbers, which was required for monitoring any prison transfers, and to match Learner data obtained at each time-point. Finally, Learners expressed a dislike of non-word tests being unable to see the relevance or rationale behind the inclusion of such tests, and because of the difficulty associated with reading non-words.

## Recommendations

### Linking outcomes to the Coates review (2016)

The Coates (2016) review prioritises aspects of adult education in prisons that are reflected in the benefits highlighted in this evaluation of Turning Pages. This evaluation highlights the benefits Turning Pages has in not only improving the reading skills of adult Learners through a phonics based approach, but it has also shown to have the wider psycho-social benefits to both Mentors and Learners. Coates (2016) emphasises the importance of implementing a cultural change that promotes positive learning in adult prisons. Despite the fact that the findings from this evaluation suggest Turning Pages creates such a positive learning experience for adult prisoners, one of the aspects that make this reading plan unique and separate from institutionalised education is that participation is not compulsory. Instead, Learners volunteer to the scheme and many are encouraged by peer Mentors and Shannon Trust Reading Plan Leads. It is recommended that this model of participation remains separate from formal compulsory education to maintain the unschooled, social approach Turning Pages has to adult learning, which based upon responses in this evaluation has been shown to attract Learners.

### Embedding Turning Pages into prison routine

To enable the Shannon Trust Reading Plan to grow in strength, it must work closely with staff across the prison, such as prison governors, library staff, education staff and prison officers to ensure that a more formal holistic structure is in place across the prison service and that all are doing what they can to support the management of sessions and the recruitment of new Learners. One way of achieving this could be to incorporate the programme within other services and to include it as part of the daily prison routine for adult prisoners. Mentors could privately meet with their Learners during part of their education or employment skills workshops for example. This would allow the weekly sessions to continue in time other than the Learners' own social time, a problem that was expressed by some Learners in this evaluation. Embedding learning into the prison routine as described above, is also a recommendation expressed in the recent Coates (2016) review.

### Supporting Learners with additional learning needs

From the quantitative results obtained from this evaluation, it seemed that Learners who were participating in functional skills classes were progressing at a slower reading rate in comparison to their peers both through manual progression but also based on their lower word reading scores. It is unclear as to why this might be, but the finding that most of this sub-group reported a diagnosis of dyslexia suggests that this was a sub-group of Learners who exhibited additional learning needs that may have affected their participation through Turning Pages and their overall reading ability. Through close collaboration with education staff in prisons, Shannon Trust RPLs and Mentors can fully monitor and support the additional learning needs

of such adult prisoners. It is recommended that information on literacy support that Learners may be in receipt of as well as any known learning disability (especially that of dyslexia) is obtained and used to indicate where additional or alternative support is warranted. It could be that Mentors are provided further information on dyslexia and how it could impact on Learners' reading progress and Mentors may be encouraged to adopt additional creative approaches that accompany and reinforce the learning of phonics and sight words established in the Turning Pages manuals and Readers.

Some Mentors reported addressing the learning needs of their Learners by creating and developing the use of their own learning aids and resources to accompany sections of the Turning Pages manuals. Support tailored to the individual is encouraged by the Shannon Trust and forms part of their Mentor training. Through the development of Turning Pages and its manuals and Readers, it now works as a stand-alone provision for supporting the reading development of adult Learners and so it may be that Shannon Trust wish to state in this training that whilst use of complementary material by Mentors is encouraged, other resources from services such as education should not be used as a replacement. In addition, if prisons as a whole decide to adopt the use of wider resources, this could have a negative impact on the consistent delivery of Turning Pages at a national level.

### **More Readers**

Whilst Learners and Mentors responded favourably to the resources used in Turning Pages, themes obtained from the interviews show that Learners and Mentors enjoyed the different Readers that accompanied the manuals and perceived them as relevant to an adult Learner and wanted more of them and better access to them.

### **Introducing reading comprehension and written literacy**

Reading comprehension is also an aspect of Turning Pages that Mentors and Learners felt needed more focus on within the manuals and Readers that formed part of the programme. In some cases, Learners did not always feel confident understanding what it was they were reading and would have liked support on this. Some Mentors reported including their own comprehension questions in relation to the Readers; a good example of a learning approach applied to the programme that was still tailored to their individual Learner. In addition, some Mentors and Learners also felt that other aspects of literacy could have been emphasised more in the interactive tasks that formed the manuals. This included aspects of spelling, writing and punctuation, which some of the manuals do cover briefly. The challenge this represents is acknowledged; however, whilst written literacy and reading comprehension are both theoretically and practically linked to reading acquisition, it may be too broad a programme to attempt to incorporate into Shannon Trust Reading Plan. This is precisely why only the final manual of Turning Pages explicitly addresses reading comprehension. However, including more activities that assess and support the development of reading comprehension throughout the manuals,



linking them to the Readers may be beneficial to Learners. The fact that participation in Turning Pages was seen to increase Learners' perceived reading comprehension suggests it may have been tapping into this area of literacy partly already, but this may be due to the creative input from Mentors. With this in mind, it is recommended that the value of incorporating more reading comprehension elements in Turning Pages be considered.

### **Recommendations for NOMS and the prison service**

This evaluation therefore contains recommendations that Shannon Trust themselves can actively change, such as the inclusion of more Readers and learning activities that target reading comprehension. There are, however, also recommendations that need implementing at a higher organisational level and are therefore regarded as more of a prison/NOMS issue. These relate both to the creation and maintenance of a culture that embraces the positive learning environment for adult prisoners but also to the implementation of an efficient record keeping system whereby adult Learners on Turning Pages who are transferred to different prisons are able to continue with their progression in Turning Pages shortly afterwards. Currently, there are variations in how Turning Pages is supported across the prison sector and whilst there is provision to share Learner and Mentor information through the Prison NOMIS case management system, many Learners who are transferred have to start the process again due to the lack of adequate record keeping. These are structural issues that would need addressing to enable more Learners and Mentors to access the Shannon Trust Reading Plan.

### **Increasing awareness of Turning Pages**

One aspect of this approach that may need addressing is the recruitment of Learners to the scheme. Currently Learners are often recruited by Mentors and are sometimes referred to them by officers as they enter the prison system. However, this is not consistent across all prisons and there seems to be no formal standardised system in place across the prison system. Some prison officers take a more proactive role in supporting the introduction of new Learners to the system and encourage the smooth running of the programme by helping with access to appropriate space or allowing time for sessions to take place. It appeared through responses from both Learners and Mentors in this evaluation that this was not always the case, depending on the prison and prison officer. In addition, in some prisons, Mentors and Shannon Trust Reading Plan Leads had strong connections built with the library and education services, which also resulted in a greater awareness of Turning Pages across the prison and this also enabled smooth running of sessions and additional support to resources to encourage a positive learning experience most adult prisoners had never benefited from.



## A recommended agenda for future research

To fully assess the effectiveness Turning Pages has on adult Learners reading ability, it is recommended that research compare the reading outcomes of a sample of adult Learners participating in Turning Pages, to a comparison group of Learners who are participating in other educational sessions. Whilst implementing a strong research design that incorporates randomised control approach to recruitment and allocation is favoured (as discussed), a more pragmatic approach to this may be required in a context where random allocation may not be appropriate. The inclusion of a comparison group would make it possible for any effective outcomes to be associated with the many aspects that are unique to Turning Pages, such as the peer mentoring and the creative manuals and Readers.

In addition, it would also be useful to monitor the extent to which Mentors tailor the learning approach to their individual Learners and gather information on the creation of any additional resources that complement the Turning Pages manuals. This would provide insight into the additional benefit, if any, this creative individual tailored approach has when implemented in conjunction with the stand alone provision of Turning Pages (manuals and Readers).

It may also be useful for research to capture the awareness staff have of Turning Pages and its associated benefits for adult Learners and Mentors both at a reading level and at a wider psycho-social level. The views staff have across the prison sector could be useful in informing Shannon Trust on the limitations that occur at the organisational/structural level and how best to respond to this under the current economic climate.

Longitudinal research that seeks to understand the impact of Turning Pages in relation to Learners' and Mentors' on-going journeys would help to establish the long-term effects of the programme giving a broader sense of return on investment and value for money.

Finally, any elements of reading comprehension that are incorporated into Turning Pages could be evaluated in order to assess the benefits Turning Pages has in also improving and supporting the reading comprehension abilities of Learners in addition to the decoding of words.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Semi-structured interview schedule

Abbreviations:

Shannon Trust Reading Programme (STRP)

Turning Pages (Turning Pages)

**Learner questions:**

### 1. Questions about you as a learner

#### Perceived improvement and confidence

- 1.1 How would you have described your reading/yourself as a reader before you joined STRP/Turning Pages?
- 1.2 What sorts of things did you feel confident reading?
- 1.3 How do you think being involved in Turning Pages helped you to develop as a reader?
- 1.4 How would you describe your reading/ yourself as a reader now? [elicit particularly issues to do with increasing confidence/participation]
- 1.5 If change is reported – what affect has this change had on you?

#### Functional outcomes

- 1.6 To what extent has Turning Pages helped you with reading in prison (letters, instructions, other documents)?
- 1.7 How much will it help you with other things that you do in prison? What sorts of things do you read now that you didn't read before?
- 1.8 How do you think the skills you've learned through this scheme will help you in the future?
- 1.9 What would you say you have learned about yourself through participating in Turning Pages?
- 1.10 Would you recommend the scheme to other prisoners? Why? Why not?

### 2. Questions about becoming involved in a STRP scheme

- 2.1 Why did you decide to volunteer for Turning Pages?
- 2.2 What if anything were you hoping to achieve?
- 2.3 What difference, if any, has being involved in Turning Pages made to you?

### 3. Questions about Turning Pages resources

#### 3.1 Thinking about the manuals

- 3.1A What did you like about the Turning Pages manuals?  
How could they be improved in your view?
- 3.1B How useful were the progression checks (check name)?
- 3.1C Did you find the certificates motivating?
- 3.1D Was there enough time for you to go through the stages and learn to read the words?

3.1E What did you find easy/difficult?

### 3.2. Thinking about the accompanying books

3.2A What do you think of the books? How useful were they?

How did you relate to the story lines? What new books would you like to see developed?')

3.2B How did you feel about reading on your own?'

### 3.3 Thinking about how you've worked with your mentor

3.3A How useful was it to work with a mentor?

3.3B How important was it to read everyday?

3.3C What reading did you do when you weren't with your mentor?

3.3D Is there anything your mentor particularly helped you with?

3.3E What was your mentor good at?

3.3F What could your mentor have done differently or better?

3.3G Will you be volunteering to become a mentor? Why? Why not?

### 3.4 Thinking about Turning Pages overall

3.4A Overall how did Turning Pages compare to other reading schemes you've experienced?

3.4B How would you describe/rate your experience of Turning Pages overall?

#### Questions for mentors:

Mentors will be asked the questions from section 2 and 3 (in relation to their perception of learner support) with the additional questions below:

Other questions that will form part of the mentor profile and will be asked at initial meeting only:

#### Structured demographic information:

1. Were you a Toe by Toe Learner?

YES/NO (Please circle)

2. Were you a Toe by Toe Mentor?

YES/NO (Please circle)

3. Is English your first Language?

YES/NO (please circle)

4. Can you speak any other language apart from English?

YES/NO (please circle)

5. What age range do you fall under? (please circle or underline)

18–25

25–30

30–40

40–50

50+

6. What is your gender? (please circle or underline)

Male

Female

7. Please provide your ethnic background:

#### Addition to Section 1:

1. How would you describe your reading?
2. How good a reader do you think you are (1 not very good 10 excellent)?
3. To what extent, if any, has being a mentor also helped you to improve your reading?

#### Addition to Section 2:

4. What skills, if any, do you think you've developed through mentoring?
5. Would you recommend mentoring to others? Why? Why not?
6. In what ways will mentoring help you in the future?

#### Addition to Section 3.3

To be asked as a self-reflection –

How useful do you think having a mentor is for learners?

What aspects did you help learners with?

What do you think you were good at?

## Appendix 2: Summary of the theoretical debate that concerns the study of literacy

Perspective	Key ideas	Signature approaches to the teaching of reading	Common assessment approaches	Student progress	Measuring effectiveness
<b>Autonomous model</b>	<p>Literacy is a <b>toolkit</b> that can be acquired and put to work across a diverse range of contexts</p> <p>Skills can be isolated from context – reading is understood primarily as a process of <b>‘de-coding’</b> and <b>‘pronunciation’</b></p> <p>‘Literacy ladder’</p> <p>Learner as initially ‘illiterate’ or <b>deficit</b> in terms of literacy skills</p> <p>Learners must be taught by <b>teachers who have a full set of literacy skills and are highly competent</b> users across contexts</p>	<p>Strong focus on <b>systematic phonics</b> particularly <b>synthetic phonics</b> – sounds are taught in isolation and then blended together</p> <p><b>Learning can be de-contextualised from practice</b> because the practice of generic skills is more important than the context within which they are applied</p>	<p>Testing of <b>phonological awareness</b> and ability to <b>pronounce and de-code</b>.</p> <p><b>Norm referenced</b></p> <p>Provides <b>quantitative outcomes &amp; descriptions</b> i.e. x % of students achieved x % of ‘tools’/skills at x level</p> <p>Controls progression between levels and pace of learning</p> <p>Is often tied to institutional funding metrics, allocations and models</p>	<p>Primarily understood <b>quantitatively</b></p> <p>Progress is more likely to be understood through <b>comparison of pre and post ‘intervention’ scores</b> in norm-referenced tests that assess the skills of pronunciation and de-coding.</p>	<p>Readers are able to demonstrate a developing capacity to apply phonic awareness towards de-coding text effectively</p>
<b>Multi-literacies/ social model</b>	<p>Literacy is best understood as a set of social practices; these can be inferred from events which are mediated by written texts.</p> <p>There are different literacies associated with different domains of life.</p> <p>Literacy practices are patterned by</p>	<p><b>Mixed methods</b> approach. Phonics may be used but more likely in combination with <b>whole language</b> approach that makes use of real life and <b>user generated</b> text.</p>	<p>Functional use of learning to learner in <b>real life scenario</b>. Learning starts and ends with <b>learners expressed priorities</b>.</p> <p>Learner and teacher collaborate on agreement of outcomes of and priorities for learning and any</p>	<p><b>Primarily qualitatively or mixed methods</b></p> <p>Progress may take in to account the kind of test performance described above but this information is more likely to be understood in relation to a <b>learners participation in real world</b></p>	<p>Prison is a specific context for literacy. As such prisoners need to use reading and writing in new ways to do new things such as: participate in aspects of the prison regime; maintain relationships with those outside; imagine new identities for</p>



	<p>social institutions and power relationships, and some literacies become more dominant, visible, influential than others.</p> <p>Literacy is historically situated.</p> <p>Literacy practices change, and new ones are frequently acquired through processes of informal learning and sense making. (Barton and Hamilton)</p>		<p>assessment of learning.</p>	<p><b>practices, experiences and events</b> and their relationships with other people.</p>	<p>themselves that will support desistance and rehabilitation.</p>
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## Appendix 3: Extended discussion of the autonomous and new literacies (social) approach to studying literacy

### Autonomous model of literacy

This account of literacy positions teachers as well as students in very specific ways. The teacher, who must have already demonstrated their expert position at the 'top of the ladder' guides the inexperienced student towards the goal of 'literacy' – a shared position towards the top of the ladder. Within this narrative the learner is construed as an 'anonymous, decontextualised, degendered being whose principal distinguishing characteristics are 'personality' and 'learning style' (Malcolm and Zukas 1999a: 4; Malcolm and Zukas 1999b), the learners 'responsibility' is to acquire 'skills' which are atomised and ordered by hierarchical and linear arrangement. The teacher's job meanwhile is to assess a learners' needs, plan and prepare an appropriate teaching and learning programme with identified learning outcomes, determine a range of suitable teaching and learning techniques, manage the learning process, provide support to ensure the student meets the desired outcomes, assess the outcomes of learning. Zukas and Malcolm refer to teachers as the 'psycho-diagnostician and facilitator of learning' (1999). That is to say that the responsibility of the teacher/lecturer is to understand the student in terms of their deficit in relation to the desired identities and values implicit in the curriculum outcomes and to facilitate a 'fix'.

'Teacher' and 'learner' identities here are defined by their difference. Street (see also Barton) has called this the 'great divide theory':

...illiterates are fundamentally different from literates. For individuals this is taken to mean that ways of thinking, cognitive abilities, facility in logic, abstraction and higher mental operations are all related to the achievement of literacy: the corollary is that literates are presumed to lack all these qualities, to be able to think less abstractly, to be more embedded, less critical, less able to reflect upon the nature of the language they use or the sources of their political oppression. (Street, 1999: 21)

Learners are seen as in deficit, as needing 'help' (Pember, 2001) and in short are identified as having problems that professionals have a responsibility to solve.

### Social model of literacy

Literacy is about how we produce and make texts, or what Lankshear and Knobel (2006) call 'literacy bits', but these "do not exist apart from the social practices in which they are embedded and within which they are acquired. If, in some trivial sense they can be said to exist (e.g. as code), they do not *mean* anything. Hence they cannot be meaningfully taught and learned as separate from the rest of the practice" (Lankshear and Knobel 13:2006). Acceptance of these ideas signals a movement away from the singular 'literacy' to the plural 'literacies' (Cope and

Kalantziz, 2003; Barton, 2005) and an acknowledgement that it might be possible to take up multiple 'literate' positions within the wider possible field of literacy. That is to say that it opens up the possibility of varied and divergent 'literacy portfolios' that develop and emerge through participation in different domains, communities and practices over time. Taking this paradigm to the educational context has significant implications for our understandings of 'teacher' 'learner', 'curriculum/knowledge' and our ideas about in/expertise.

Teachers similarly are sometimes expert and sometimes not. Teachers will not, cannot and neither is it desirable that they should seek to, 'know' all that it is possible to know about the broader field of multiple literacies and thus they must become researchers and learners within this field, acknowledging and exploring the literacy profiles of learners and the ways in which they may be expert in their life-world literacy domains. Zukas and Malcolm refer to this kind of teacher as a 'critical practitioner', a model that contrasts with the practitioner as psycho-diagnostician referred to above:

The educator as critical practitioner...adds a critical, social, political or ideological dimension on the process of reflection. In this sense it takes the process beyond the psychological and interpersonal, locating the practitioner in a social and, to varying degrees, political context. (1999:2)<sup>1</sup>

Indeed the two models can be seen as the two ends of a continuum of 'ways of knowing' (Malcolm and Zukas 1999b: 2) about educational processes/practices and thereby, of what it means to be literate. Zukas and Malcolm (1999:2) argue that the educator as Critical practitioner 'takes the process [of teaching and learning] beyond the psychological and interpersonal, locating the practitioner in a social...and political context'.

<sup>1</sup>It is noted by Zukas and Malcolm that 'adult education-orientated contributions have been influential' (1999:2) in shaping this particular discursive position.

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