

Evaluation of Lexonik Advance

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Lexonik is a reading and vocabulary company that supports teachers globally to raise attainment through transformational programmes and training. Based on research and experience in phonology, literacy and dyslexia, Lexonik's programmes aim to give all school staff and students the skills they need to improve their reading, spelling and vocabulary. Lexonik Advance is delivered by school staff and provides a unique approach that leverages metacognition, repetition, decoding and automaticity to help learners develop phonological awareness, making links between unknown words using common prefix, root word, stem, and suffix definitions. Delivered in six one-hour lessons, the programme is suitable for all learners, regardless of age and ability.

In September 2021, Lexonik commissioned the National Literacy Trust to help them evaluate the impact of Lexonik Advance on children and young people's reading. To do so, a decoding subtest of a standardised test called Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT5) was used to assess changes in students' skills and a staff survey was conducted to explore their perceptions of the benefits of the programme for their students and for their own practice. This report presents the findings of this evaluation, focusing on changes in students' reading attainment alongside changes in school staff's teaching and classroom practice.

Key findings

Changes in students' decoding skills

- The programme successfully improved students' decoding skills:
 - The average score on the test used is 100, with students scoring within 15 below or above this having an average score for their age. On average, students who took part in Lexonik Advance had a standardised score of 94.5 before taking part. After taking part in the programme, the average score had

increased to 106.0. The changes were sustained long after the programme ended as students scored on average 105.8 several months after taking part.

- The percentage of students who were decoding below the national average decreased four-fold, from 23.7% at the start of the programme to 6.9% at the end. At the same time, the percentage of children who were decoding above the national average saw a more than five-fold increase, rising from 4.5% to 24.0% at the end of the programme.
- The programme was particularly beneficial for students who began with decoding skills below the national average (n = 89). Their standardised scores increased from 78.0 before the programme to 91.5 afterwards, a slightly greater increase than we saw for the cohort overall (13.5 points vs. 11.5 points). Indeed, more than 2 in 3 (67.4%) had started decoding at the average level after taking part in the programme.
- There were no statistically significant differences in students' standardised decoding scores over time based on their gender, whether they receive pupil premium, or whether they speak English as an additional language. However, older students benefited from the programme more than younger students. On average, standardised scores increased by 7.8 for those aged 11 to 12, by 11.5 for those aged 12 to 13, and by 15.4 for those aged 13 to 14.
- The analyses also show that the median increase in reading age for participating students was 24 months over a 2.2-month period. However, findings based on reading age should be treated with caution (see p. 6 for more details).
- These changes are also reflected in findings from the staff survey. When asked to compare the reading progress of participating students to students of the same reading level who did not take part, over 3 in 4 (77.4%) felt that participating students made more progress than their peers.
 - 4 in 5 (79.2%; n = 19) staff who were able to assess changes for students throughout the academic year said they had seen the impact continue.
 - More than 2 in 3 (67.4%) staff indicated that they had noticed students having a larger vocabulary after taking part in the programme. In addition, nearly 2 in 3 (64.0%) had noticed students being more confident readers and 3 in 5 (60.5%) said that their phonics skills had increased. 1 in 2 (50.0%) also said that students seemed more fluent in reading, while nearly 1 in 2 (45.3%) had noticed a positive change in students' comprehension skills.

Changes in students' learning outcomes overall

- Staff noticed some changes in students' overall learning outcomes following the programme:

- More than 1 in 2 (54.7%) had noticed a change in students' overall confidence, while more than 2 in 5 (44.2%) felt students' independence had improved. 1 in 3 (34.9%) also felt that students were more resilient following the programme.

Changes in staff practice and confidence

- Staff members also benefited from the programme in terms of their own practice and confidence supporting students' reading: 9 in 10 (90.2%) felt that the programme increased their confidence to support struggling readers effectively, and nearly 9 in 10 (89.0%) thought the programme was valuable for their professional development.
- These outcomes were true for all staff, regardless of their job role or how long ago they trained.

We also explored the outcomes for staff's own understanding, knowledge and confidence for those who had personally attended the training provided (n = 91):

- More than 9 in 10 felt that they had a better understanding of how to support students' vocabulary development (95.6%) and increased confidence to support their phonological awareness (93.4%). 94.5% also felt the training improved their own understanding of morphemic analysis and vocabulary etymology (i.e., analysing parts of words and the origin of words).

The programme was also successful in creating a wider change in how reading is now taught in the schools:

- More than 9 in 10 (91.3%) felt that their school was better equipped to support students' reading overall after taking part in the programme and nearly 3 in 4 (72.6%) told us they had shared what they had learned in the training with their colleagues. This indicates that learning and strategies are being cascaded within the school, creating the potential for systematic change in teaching practice.

Data used in this report

Several approaches were used to evaluate the outcomes of Lexonik Advance. Firstly, student data was collected using a decoding subtest of a standardised test called Wide Range Achievement Test ([WRAT5](#)), which provided standardised scores and reading age based on students' decoding ability before and after taking part in the Lexonik Advance programme. All schools were asked to share student data before and after they took part in the intervention during the academic year 2021/22. Overall, data were collected from 375 students¹ who had attended at least four sessions. On average, students attended 5.5 sessions.

¹ 45.1% students were in Year 7, 15.5% in Year 8, 28.8% in Year 9 and 3.2% in Year 10. Year-group data were missing from 7.5% of students. 42.4% students were identified as female and 57.6% as male. 37.3% of the students were recorded as receiving pupil premium and 13.6%

In addition, schools were asked to share data collected from students four weeks before the start of the intervention as well as five to six months after the intervention ended. We therefore had a sub-sample of 68 students for whom we had data from four weeks before they started the programme, in addition to their pre- and post-programme data. This was compared with students' pre-test scores to ensure these were not affected by the unfamiliar test situation. Finally, we had data from a sample of 348 students collected on average eight months after completing the programme to assess the longer-term impact of taking part.

We also asked staff from schools delivering the programme to complete a post-programme survey providing insight into their perceptions of the benefits of the programme for their students as well as for their own practice. In addition, the survey asked them to feed back on their experience of the programme. Overall, 92 members of staff from 69 schools provided their thoughts:

- 93.4% of the staff were from secondary schools and 5.5% were from primary schools. One participant was from an all-through school.
- Staff came from a variety of roles within the schools, including teachers (13.2%), teaching assistants (29.7%), literacy specialists (including literacy coordinators, tutors, leads and reading intervention roles; 14.3%), librarians (9.9%), senior leadership roles (including heads of departments and assistant heads; 15.4%) and specialist support roles (SENCOs, SEND teaching assistant, EAL specialists; 17.6%).
- 93.5% had already delivered the programme with students. Those who had not were excluded from analyses exploring changes for students.
- 35.9% of staff said they or their colleague received training this academic year (2021/22). 21.7% had received training in the last academic year (2020/21) and 42.4% before the last academic year.

All data in this report were analysed statistically using SPSS. The level of statistical significance was set to .01 to reduce the chance of a false positives. This means there is only a 1% chance that the differences observed occur randomly.

Changes in students' decoding skills

Students completed a decoding test before and after taking part in the programme, which were an average of 10 weeks apart. This provided a standardised score for their ability to decode words and letters, as well as estimated reading age in terms of their decoding skills.

Overall, students' decoding skills increased over the course of the programme. Before taking part, students scored on average 94.5 (SD = 13.1) on the test. After taking part in the programme, the average score had increased to 106.0 (SD = 15.8). This difference in scores

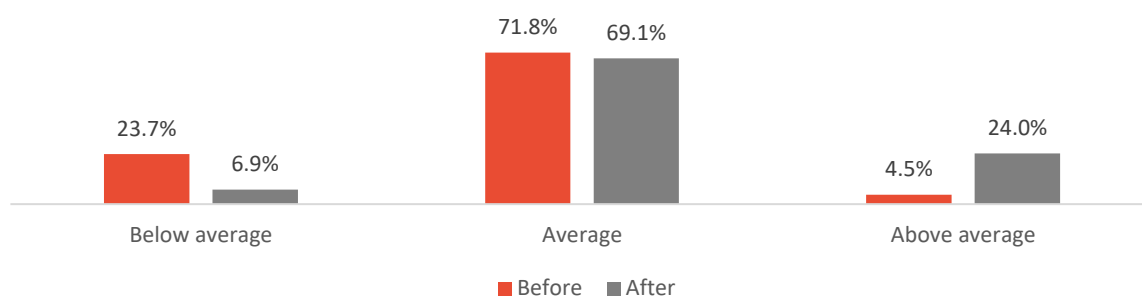
as speaking English as an additional language (EAL). Please note that all students who were known to have received another reading intervention simultaneously with Lexonik Advance were excluded from all analyses.

was statistically significant², suggesting that the programme was successful in improving students' decoding skills.

A closer look at the data indicated that there was no significant difference in students' scores four weeks before and immediately before the programme (students scored on average 96.5 four weeks before starting³), suggesting that we can be confident the scores immediately before the programme were a true reflection of students' decoding skills and were not affected by their level of confidence in an unfamiliar test situation. Moreover, there was no significant difference between students' scores immediately after the programme and several months later when they scored on average 105.8 (SD = 15.9), indicating that the changes created by the programme were sustained in the longer term.

We also explored whether there had been changes in the percentage of students whose decoding skills were below, at or above the national average⁴ before taking part. Figure 1 shows that nearly 1 in 4 (23.7%) students were decoding below the average at the start of the programme. However, this percentage dropped to 6.9% at the end of the programme. At the same time, the percentage of children who were decoding above the average saw a more than five-fold increase, rising from 4.5% to 24.0% at the end of the programme.

Figure 1: Students' decoding levels before and after taking part in Lexonik Advance



Focus on those who started the programme with poor decoding skills

Looking specifically at the quarter of students (n = 89) who started the programme with decoding skills below the national average, we see that the programme has been particularly beneficial for them. On average, their scores increased from 78.0 (SD = 4.8) to 91.5 (SD = 11.7) over the course of the programme⁵. This means that their scores increased slightly more than for the cohort overall (by 13.5 points vs. by 11.5 points). As with the cohort overall, there is

² $t(374) = -19.991, p < .001$

³ SD = 11.3

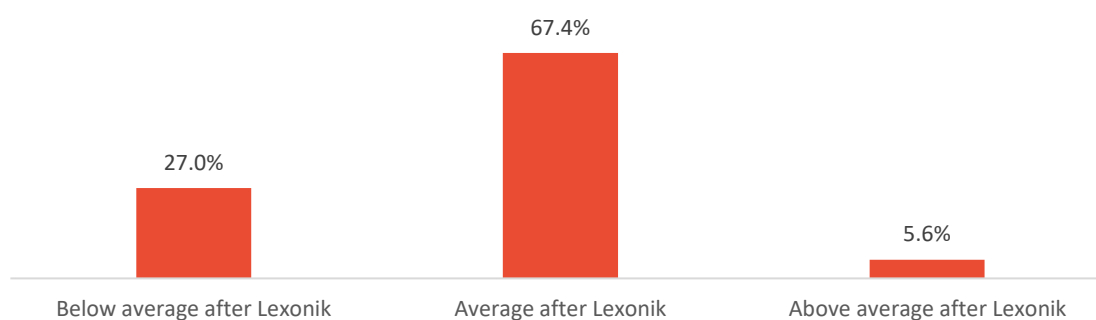
⁴ As the test scores are standardised to an average score of 100, with a standard deviation of 15, those who score below 85 can be considered to be below the national average, while those whose scores are between 85 and 115 can be considered average and those with scores above 115 as above average

⁵ $t(88) = -12.501, p < .001$

no difference in students' scores after the programme and several months after, indicating that the scores are sustained long term⁶.

The findings also indicate that while over 1 in 4 (27.0%) of the students who started below the national average were still below the average after taking part in the programme, more than 2 in 3 (67.4%) had moved up to the average level during the programme (see Figure 2). Encouragingly, a few students (5.6%) had even moved to the level above average.

Figure 2: End-of-programme decoding levels for the group of students who started the programme below the national average



Which students benefited in particular?

There were no statistically significant differences in students' standardised decoding scores over time based on their gender, whether they receive pupil premium or whether they speak English as an additional language, indicating that students benefited from the participating in the programme regardless of their background.

There were significant differences over time by age, suggesting that the older the students were, the more they benefited from the programme⁷. However, the data showed that the group who started the programme below the national average includes more students aged 13 to 14 than younger students⁸ and thus the differences by age could simply reflect the greater gains for those who started the programme with poor decoding skills, as discussed in the previous section. We therefore repeated the analysis of the change in scores based on age group for those who started the programme at average level (n = 245) to remove the impact of simply larger gains for those who were below average.

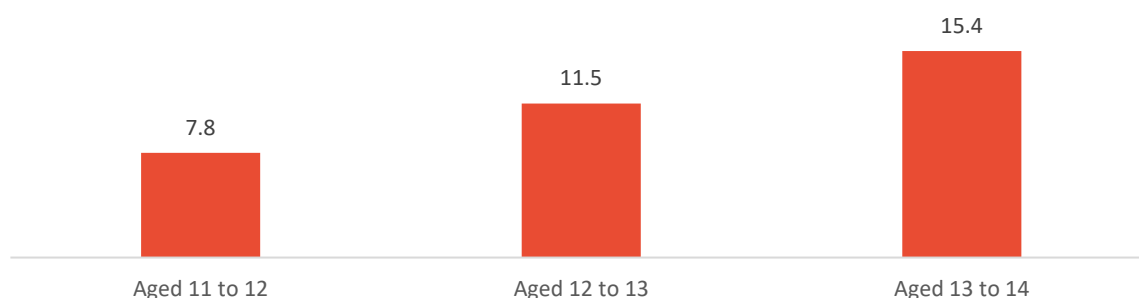
⁶ Unfortunately, we were not able to compare the scores 4 weeks before and immediately before the programme for this group of students as there were only 7 students in this group for whom we had data 4 weeks before the programme

⁷ $F(332) = 17.120, p < .001$; average gain for students aged 11 to 12 was 7.8, for those aged 12 to 13 it was 11.4 and for those aged 13 to 14 15.0. Please note that Year 10 was excluded from the analysis due to a small number of students (n = 12).

⁸ 54.7% aged 13 to 14 vs. 22.7% aged 11 to 13 and 22.7% aged 12 to 13. This might be due to the fact that schools treat the programme as a targeted intervention for their older students who struggle while it is offered more universally to the younger students at the start of the secondary school.

These findings indicate that we do indeed see greater gains as the students get older⁹. As Figure 3 below shows, while scores for those aged 11 to 12 increased on average by 7.8 points (SD = 9.8), the scores for those aged 12 to 13 increased by 11.5 points (SD = 10.1) and by 15.4 points (SD = 11.0) for those aged 13 to 14.

Figure 3: The average increase in students' standardised decoding scores before and after taking part in Lexonik Advance by age group for those who started the programme decoding at the average level



Changes in students' reading age

The analysis of students' progress based on changes in their reading age corroborates the findings based on standardised scores by showing that, on average, students' reading age increased as part of Lexonik Advance¹⁰. The findings show that the median increase in reading age was 24 months¹¹ over a 2.2-month period. It is notable that this is very similar to the gains in reading age found in a historical data set collected from 26,178 students who completed the programme between 2013 and 2020, which indicated a median increase of 25 months. In addition, findings published in 2015 found that "the average gain across all cohorts, as measured by reading age, was 27 months"¹².

We also explored the data based on students' reading age relative to their chronological age at the start of the programme by dividing students into three groups: those who started the programme with a reading age more than 12 months below their chronological age, those who were within 12 months of their chronological age, and those who were more than 12 months above their chronological age¹³. The findings show that both those who started more than 12 months below their chronological age and those who were within 12 months of their

⁹F(242) = 12.582, p < .001

¹⁰t(374) = -20.911, p < .001

¹¹Please note that the changes in reading age ranged from -35 to 126 months and we thus used median as the average rather than the mean in order to mitigate against the influence of those who made extreme progress. The mean increase was 29.8 months (SD = 27.6)

¹²<https://lexonik.co.uk/assets/documents/Northumbria-University-Study-Lexonik-Full-Data-Analysis.pdf>

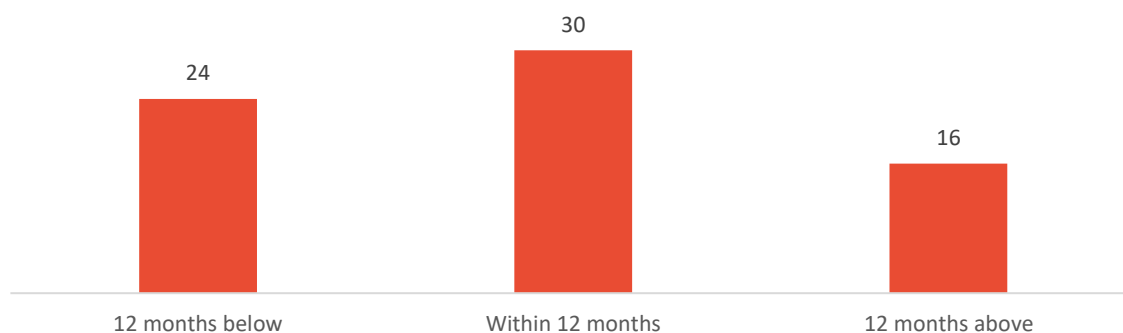
¹³39.8% of students started more than 12 months below their chronological age, 33.2% within 12 months of their chronological age and 27.0% more than 12 months above their chronological age

chronological age benefited from the programme more compared with those who started the programme more than 12 months above their chronological age¹⁴.

As Figure 4 shows, those who started the programme more than 12 months below their chronological age saw a median increase of 24 months during the programme while those who started within 12 months of their chronological age saw an increase of 30 months. At the same time, for those whose reading age was more than 12 months above their chronological age at the start of the programme, the median increase was 16 months.

However, caution is needed when interpreting the results based on reading age. Some commentators have highlighted that within any age group there are a range of abilities that can be considered 'normal', but this is not reflected in reading ages¹⁵. Perhaps even more importantly, the use of the term 'age' may be confusing because reading ability does not follow the same continuous progression that developmental age does¹⁶. Therefore, having a reading age of five at age six is not necessarily equivalent to having a reading age of nine at age 10, although in both cases the child would be considered to be a year behind. This means the findings based on reading age should be treated as 'at-a-glance' suggestion of changes as part of the programme but not a definitive indication of student improvement.

Figure 4: Students' reading-age gain in months based on their reading age at the beginning in relation to their chronological age



Staff perceptions of students' reading as a result of the programme

The insight from the staff survey also confirms the findings based on reading tests. Overall, nearly all (98.8%) staff felt the programme was beneficial for their students. When asked to compare the reading progress of participating students with students of the same reading level who did not take part, almost 4 in 5 (77.4%) felt that participating students made *more*

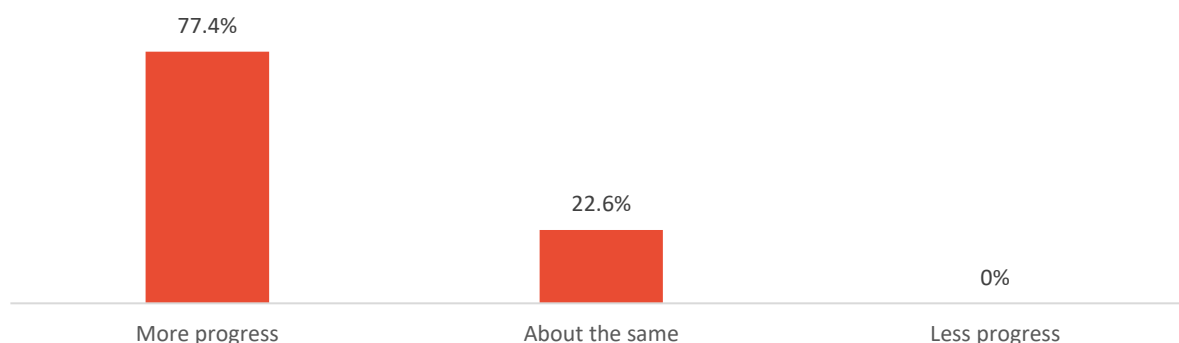
¹⁴ $\chi^2(2) = 13.107, p < .001$

¹⁵ <https://www.tes.com/magazine/teaching-learning/general/teachers-should-be-wary-taking-reading-age-read>

¹⁶ <https://www.sess.ie/dyslexia-section/understanding-reading-test-scores>

progress than their peers, while only 22.6% felt that they made about the same progress (see Figure 5).

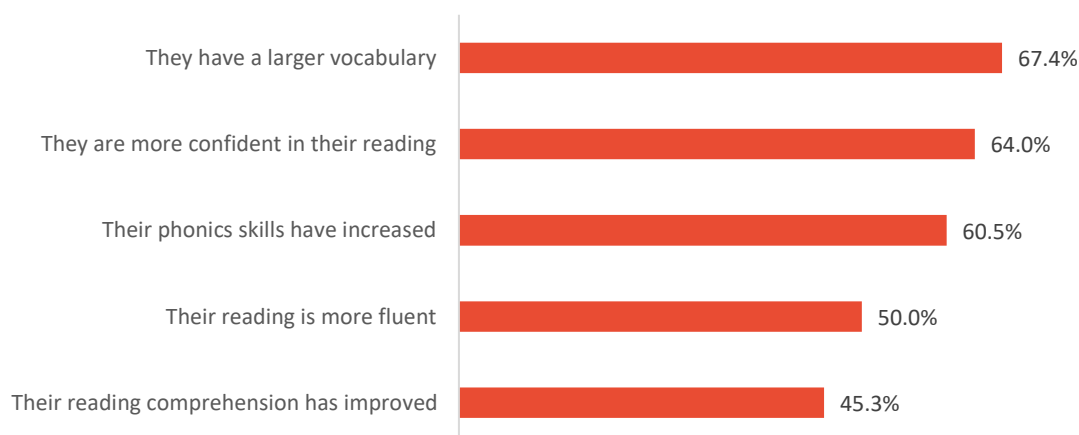
Figure 5: Staff response to ‘Compared with students who started the year at the same level, would you say that students who participated in Lexonik made...’



The results of the staff survey also offered some indication that the changes in reading skills continued beyond the programme. While only 24 members of staff were able to assess whether the changes continued throughout the academic year, 79.2% (n = 19) of them said they had seen the impact continue.

Looking at improvements in reading skills more closely (see Figure 6), more than 2 in 3 (67.4%) staff indicated that they had noticed students having increased vocabularies after taking part in the programme. In addition, nearly 2 in 3 (64.0%) had noticed students being more confident readers and 3 in 5 (60.5%) that students’ phonics skills had increased. Finally, half (50.0%) indicated that students seemed more fluent in reading while nearly half (45.3%) had noticed a positive change in students’ comprehension skills.

Figure 6: Percentage of staff who had noticed changes in specific aspects of reading for their students



The benefits of the programme for students' reading skills are also evident from the comments in the survey. One of the themes emerging from the responses was progress in students' reading levels overall, and in particular the amount of progress achieved over a short time period:

"The increased progress for the students that have taken part in Lexonik have been excellent. The rates have continued to rise with the additional resources that Lexonik provide." – SENCO

"Lexonik has the power to rapidly increase students' vocabulary knowledge and understanding." – Literacy Coordinator

"Lexonik has had a fantastic impact on our students, the amount of progress they make over 6 weeks is amazing, and it has boosted confidence in reading, spelling and vocabulary knowledge." – English Teacher and Lexonik Lead

"We have seen a significant improvement in the reading ages of our students who have experienced Lexonik." – KS3 Literacy Intervention Mentor

In addition to changes in students' reading skills, results from the staff survey indicated that some had noticed changes in students' engagement with vocabulary:

"My absolute highlight has been on a school skiing trip, skiing next to a student (who struggles with confidence) telling me the definition of 'tion'. As others heard him, they joined in, and we ended the slope all reciting the definitions of prefixes and suffixes. Simply an incredible moment in my career where I could see the impact of something on a student so profoundly." – Deputy Headteacher

"One pupil stands out... very clever but does not readily engage in class and causes a lot of problems around school. She loved the challenge of being able to extract definitions from words and hadn't previously realised that words already contained their meaning. She attended every session and was totally engaged every time. She found the course really inspirational." – Teaching Assistant and Lexonik Lead

Similarly, several members of staff indicated changes in students' confidence in reading and vocabulary. They cited the small-group format specifically as helpful in increasing students' confidence and making them more willing to contribute to class discussion. Students were seen as having increased confidence in tackling unfamiliar and difficult vocabulary following the intervention, and they were more confident in reading aloud.

"Students who never had the confidence before volunteer to read aloud to their peers as they can sound out words and their spelling has improved as well." – LRC Manager/Literacy Coordinator

“We have seen a significant improvement in their confidence and ability to discuss vocabulary. Students are more willing to join in class discussions.” – Literacy Teacher

“Pupil did not know how to split up words to break them down to read them. This method gave her the tools to break the words down and read the texts. She now reads texts and books with confidence. Even though some words are still wrong, they are tackled with confidence and the knowledge of them to break down.” – English Literacy Intervention TA

“The small-group format allowed me to support and encourage less-confident students.” – Head of Literacy

“Their confidence in themselves and their contributions to lessons improved. They were more willing to have a go.” – Assistant Head of Upper School

While the decoding test did not indicate particular benefits in this area for students with English as an additional language (EAL), it was evident from the staff survey that many perceived the programme as particularly beneficial for EAL students’ reading skills. Staff responses where EAL students were mentioned suggest improvements in those students’ confidence and vocabulary in particular:

“Another student joined us with very little English, but through taking part in Lexonik, she said how many connections she could see with the prefixes and root words in her first language, which really helped to boost her confidence and rapidly improve her fluency.” – English Teacher and Lexonik Lead

“One particular EAL student’s confidence in reading longer words increased significantly over the course of the programme. He was able to apply the knowledge he had learnt during the subject words and definitions activity in weeks 5 and 6. After Lexonik we had really positive feedback from his English teacher. His attitude to learning was better, he volunteered to read aloud, and his comprehension skills had improved.” – Tutor

“A Colombian student (now in Year 10) who was struggling with the more nuanced aspects of English. She was also struggling with social and personal issues. The intervention allowed her an insight into ‘how words work’ and the small-group format allowed ample opportunity to bolster her confidence and support her sense of self. She now presents as a much more confident and comfortable student (whose English grades have improved).” – Head of Literacy

Interestingly, despite the skills data suggesting that the gains in students’ decoding skills are sustained months after completing the programme, some staff felt that some students did

not maintain the progress gained during sessions over time, and some were later referred back to the programme. To combat this, some comments suggested that the programme could include more resources that support application of the strategies students have developed after the programme has finished.

“As I have previously said, we have a high number of students who are re-referred to the programme as they don’t retain what they have learnt as they are not practising the skills outside of their Lexonik lessons.” – Literacy Coordinator

“I am not sure of the long-term benefits. Pupils seem to forget what has been taught once they stop the lessons.” – HLTA and Literacy Coordinator

“We have found that not all students retain the information and skills that they have learnt over a long period of time and often get students referred back again a year or two later where we find their reading age has dropped again.” – Literacy Coordinator

“I feel that once the programme is completed with pupils, they still do not readily apply the strategies when they are reading and can go back to ‘guessing’ words. It would be good to have some application activities to follow up with.” – Assistant Head of Upper School

“Longer programme than 6 weeks. More of a continuation for the pupils as some were finding their feet just as it had finished.” – English Literature Teaching Assistant

Changes in students’ learning outcomes overall

In addition to changes in students’ reading, we asked staff to what extent they had noticed changes for students in their overall learning outcomes following the programme. As Figure 7 shows, more than half (54.7%) had noticed a change in students being more confident overall while more than 2 in 5 (44.2%) felt students’ independence had improved. 1 in 3 (34.9%) also felt that students were more resilient following the programme. While it is encouraging that staff perceive positive changes in students’ learning overall as a result of the programme, it is also important to note that these changes are smaller than the perceived changes in their reading outcomes, reflecting the fact that, at its core, Lexonik Advance is a reading programme.

Figure 7: Percentage of staff who had noticed changes in students' learning outcomes overall



The improvements in students' overall learning outcomes are also reflected in comments from staff. For example, several members of staff indicated improvements in students' independence, resilience in the classroom, overall behaviour and confidence:

“Year 8 pupil was one of my first tester pupils for the programme and he had developed in confidence and his behaviour had improved knowing he was attending the session. He engaged in all sessions, including with eye contact and became more vocal towards the end.” – English Literature Teaching Assistant

“S has completed both Leap and Advance and has fully participated in the interventions. His reading age has improved vastly, and so has his confidence, and we have also seen an improvement in his overall behaviour around the college.” – Teaching Assistant

“Promotes independence – pupils may be able to define words they've never seen before, promoting independence, and also giving them an extra chance in exams of possibly being able to attempt exam questions that contain an unfamiliar word... it could allow them to pick up a few extra marks which could be the difference between one grade and the next.” – Teaching Assistant and Lexonik Lead

“Yesterday I scribed for a student during a GCSE exam. Both the words *respiration* and *photosynthesis* came up (two words the student came across during 'cut ups'). The student used prior knowledge to determine what the questions meant using strategies developed in Lexonik Advance. No way

would this student have been able to attempt the exam questions previously, but the student answered them confidently.” – Librarian

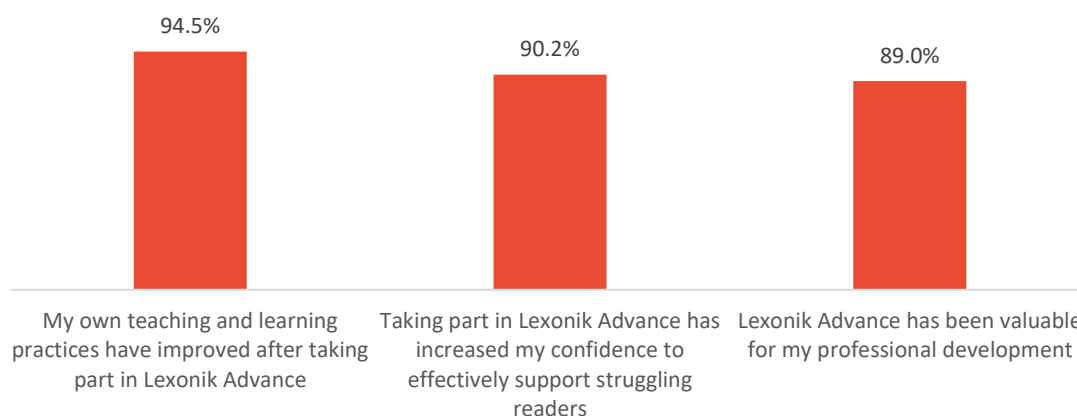
“We have a young man in Year 8 who took part in Lexonik Advance intervention in Year 7. As a result, he is significantly more confident, his reading age improved rapidly (28 months in 6 weeks) and as a learner he is now more resilient in all lessons.” – Associate Assistant Principal

“Lexonik Advance provides students with a systematic way of decoding longer words and rapidly extends their vocabulary knowledge. This boosts their self-esteem and confidence across all subjects.” – Tutor

Changes in staff’s practice and confidence

The staff survey also shows that the programme has been beneficial for staff members’ own practice, increasing confidence in supporting students’ reading, regardless of their job role or how long ago they trained. For example, as Figure 8 shows, nearly all staff members agreed that, as a result of Lexonik Advance, their own teaching and learning practices had improved. In addition, 9 in 10 (90.2%) felt that the programme increased their confidence to support struggling readers effectively, and nearly 9 in 10 (89.0%) thought the programme was valuable for their professional development.

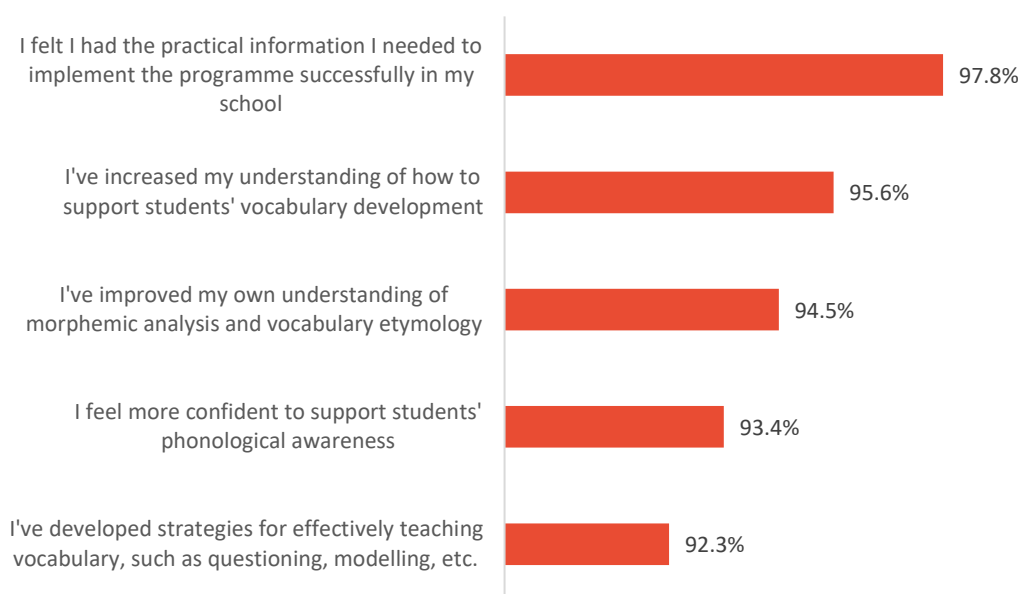
Figure 8: Percentage of staff who agreed with statements about the impact of Lexonik Advance on their own practice



We also explored the outcomes for staff’s own understanding, knowledge and confidence for those who had personally attended the training provided (n = 91). Nearly all of them (97.8%) felt that after the training they had the practical information they needed to implement the programme successfully in their school (see Figure 9). Similarly, more than 9 in 10 felt that they had increased understanding of how to support students’ vocabulary development (95.6%) and increased confidence to support their phonological awareness (93.4%). 94.5% also felt the training improved their own understanding of morphemic analysis and

vocabulary etymology (i.e., analysing parts of words and the origin of words), and 92.3% felt it had allowed them to develop strategies for effectively teaching vocabulary.

Figure 9: Percentage of staff who agreed with statements on the impact the training provided had on their understanding, knowledge and confidence



Open-ended responses from staff indicated an increase in their confidence in supporting students' vocabulary development, as well as an increase in their own interest and understanding in vocabulary and where language comes from:

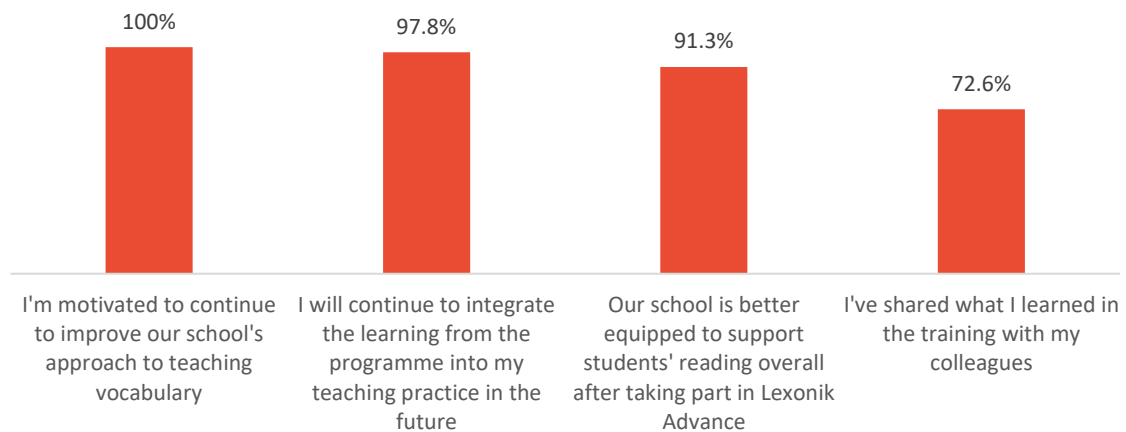
"The members of support staff who deliver it say they feel empowered and significantly more confident in teaching reading strategies to our young people." – Associate Assistant Principal

"Now that Latin is not on the curriculum, this is the next best thing in explaining where our language comes from." – Teaching Assistant

"I have used the resources to enrich my teaching and can see the way I teach vocabulary has changed for the better." – English Teacher

The programme has also been successful in creating a wider change in how reading is taught in the schools: all staff felt motivated to continue to improve their school's approach to teaching vocabulary and nearly all (97.8%) said they will continue to integrate the learning from the programme into their practice. More than 9 in 10 (91.3%) also felt their school was better equipped to support students' reading overall after taking part in the programme. Nearly 3 in 4 (72.6%) also told us they had shared what they learned in the training with their colleagues, indicating that learning and strategies are being cascaded within the school, creating the potential for systematic change in teaching practice.

Figure 10: To what extent staff agreed with statements about the future



Several staff also explained how the resources and strategies from Lexonik have been implemented in schools overall. Techniques from Lexonik were used in staff training, educating non-specialist teachers on the importance of phonics in the classroom, and, across the curriculum, staff have built strategies for vocabulary learning into lesson plans to support the learning of unfamiliar terminology:

“I have come to understand the process in depth and how phonics can develop a student’s learning very quickly. We have now implemented these techniques in staff training and across classrooms in literacy tutor groups, and students are aware of the word techniques used when reading, writing, and speaking.” – LRC Manager/Literacy Coordinator

“After my training, I felt passionately that (after completing the 6-week course) without a daily diet of vocabulary instruction in every lesson, Advance students would regress which is why we have designed and embedded a system across our school using the Lexonik vocabulary product to support non-specialist teachers.” – Director of Literacy

“Translates to their learning in the classroom and they have started building their lesson plans to incorporate some of the techniques when presenting new curriculum terminology to students at the start of a topic.” – LRC Manager/Literacy Coordinator

Staff experience with the programme

The overall feedback from the staff survey indicates that they had a positive experience with the programme. Indeed, nearly all (96.7%) rated the programme as excellent or good and 93.5% would recommend it to other schools¹⁷.

Overall, staff's comments also indicate that the programme was well received by students who engaged well with it:

“The students really enjoy the game aspect of the programme, especially in activity 1, and that it is great for facilitating discussion around new words and giving young people the knowledge to apply them in other aspects of school and life.” – KS3 Literacy Intervention Mentor

“The programme can be challenging but enjoyable. It's fast, which keeps pupils busy, motivated, and engaged in the activities.” – Reading Development

“The programme has been a great success; pupils really enjoy it. Some of our most resistant pupils have engaged well and now feel successful as learners.” – AHT SENCO

“When one Year 11 student turns around and says I wish we had this programme when we were in KS3 – that is when you know it is working!” – Head of English

Despite the skills data from students suggesting that older students made greater gains, some staff reported that they felt the programme might not be suitable for students in older age groups because they were harder to engage:

“I have found that the majority of KS4 students do not take well to the programme, and it has been a tough sell. In my opinion, the initial sessions are too basic (e.g., baby/adult vowel sounds) for KS4 students and lead to a lack of interest.” – EAL Coordinator/Intervention Mentor

“Some of the pupils find it very boring and that the repetition can be tedious.” – Teaching Assistant

“Some students find the sessions too boring. Having a bit more variety in the activities might also help, or some more activities that have a competitive element.” – Librarian

“Unsuited to targeted KS4 students – lack of interest has impacted on attendance.” – EAL Coordinator/Intervention Mentor

¹⁷ The remaining 6.5% were not sure whether they would recommend the programme

The staff comments also indicate that they valued the resources and accessibility of the programme in particular, and that many found the intervention easy to implement. Support resources for staff were found to be helpful and resources for students were perceived as well thought out.

“It can be easily implemented across the whole school and the website has excellent resources to help improve literacy and vocabulary understanding for any subject.” – Teaching Assistant

“The programme is well thought out, resources are available, and the programme of work has set activities to complete on a weekly basis allowing pupils to make steady progress. Support resources are also available with training videos etc to help refresh our practice.” – Teaching Assistant

At the same time, staff members also provided areas where further improvements could be made, such as more copies of resources being provided, and providing updated materials as well as materials for specific groups of students:

“It would be nice to have updated materials when they are updated.” – Non-Qualified Teacher

“If more than one person in a school is delivering, more resources should be available.” – HLTA

“More resources supplied within the packs i.e., originals of posters etc so that staff have them readily available instead of having to search the website.” – Trainee SENCO

“We have found that the more able pupils engage well with this, whilst lower-ability students can struggle. Especially those who are dyslexic.” – HLTA and Literacy Coordinator

“It would be helpful to have more resources tailored for EAL students within the programme.” – English Teacher and Lexonik Lead

“Maybe have something to help pupils with dyslexia as they struggle with the colours of the cards.” – Teaching Assistant

Some staff also indicated that they would like more flexibility in the tasks provided as time limitations meant many were unable to complete all those included in each session, potentially missing out valuable exercises. Others mentioned that time limitations also restricted the number of students they were able to support with the programme.

“When I did my training, I was told that all aspects of the programme had to be completed each week. However, a couple of years in, I have found that

this is not always possible due to outside factors. This can put additional stress on me to complete all the activities.” – SEN Teaching Assistant

“One of the drawbacks of the programme is that due to time limitations, my colleagues and I can only work with a small number of students.” – Teaching Assistant, English Faculty

“I think overall the programme is good, but find it very hard to deliver the lessons in the time provided, especially around week 4 where there are 7 activities.” – English Teacher

“More flexibility to fit in to different lesson lengths.” – Intervention Teacher, ECT

Feedback on the staff training

All of the 91 members of staff who had attended the Lexonik training personally rated it as excellent (82.4%) or good (17.6%). Their comments reflect this positive experience. Many highlighted that the training was comprehensive and valued how much was shared in such a short period of time. Several comments did point out that this made training quite intense and fast-paced, but they did not consider the intensity to be an issue.

“Training many years ago when Lexonik was in its infancy, the training was intense but really comprehensive and really enlightening.” – NQT

“Although the training was quite overwhelming and fast paced, Lisa and Erin were outstanding, and we learned so much in such a short space of time.” – LRC Manager/Literacy Coordinator

Several also mentioned that the trainers delivering the sessions were engaging and supportive. Some added that the information on the website was beneficial and provided continuing support.

“Engaging trainer, fast paced and challenging day, which made for a fun and interesting session – much better than death by PowerPoint!” – Teaching Assistant

“My trainer was fantastic. The support videos and website are great. I love that the trainer came back for follow-up training and to check I was doing okay.” – HLTA

The interactive nature of the training also seemed to be appreciated by many staff. They found that it made the experience fun and was helpful in gaining an understanding of how sessions should be run and what exactly was involved in delivering the activities.

“The training was fun and interactive. It was very helpful to be trained on Lexonik as though I was a student experiencing the programme, as it gave me

a much better understanding of how it worked and how it should be delivered.” – KS3 Literacy Intervention Mentor

“The way that they modelled the activities really helped us all to understand exactly what is required in each Advance session.” – Associate Assistant Principal

Conclusion

This report has shown that Lexonik Advance has been beneficial for the students who took part. Indeed, we saw improvements in students’ decoding skills that were sustained months after they participated in the programme. Staff also told us that the programme was beneficial for students’ reading as well as their learning overall, including improving their confidence. In addition, the programme has been successful in supporting school staff’s own practice and knowledge, as well as changing how reading is taught in the schools.

Staff had a positive experience with the programme and the students were generally engaged with it. Staff valued the resources and accessibility of the programme in particular, and many found the intervention easy to implement. The training was described as comprehensive and engaging.

Lexonik will reflect on the feedback contained within this report as they continually look at ways to improve their customer experience. Their professional-development offer to schools and other educational agencies, Lexonik Develop, continues to evolve, striving to support staff with all areas of literacy.