

Raising Attainment in Literacy

Improving Punctuation and Story Structure



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Stretch Aim

By June 2018, 94% of pupils (P6) will have achieved CfE first level literacy (writing) and will be progressing within CfE second level (baseline: 73%).

Aim 1

By 01st December 2017, 94% of pupils (P6) will be consistently writing three sentences including **correct punctuation*** within pieces of independent writing (baseline 53%).

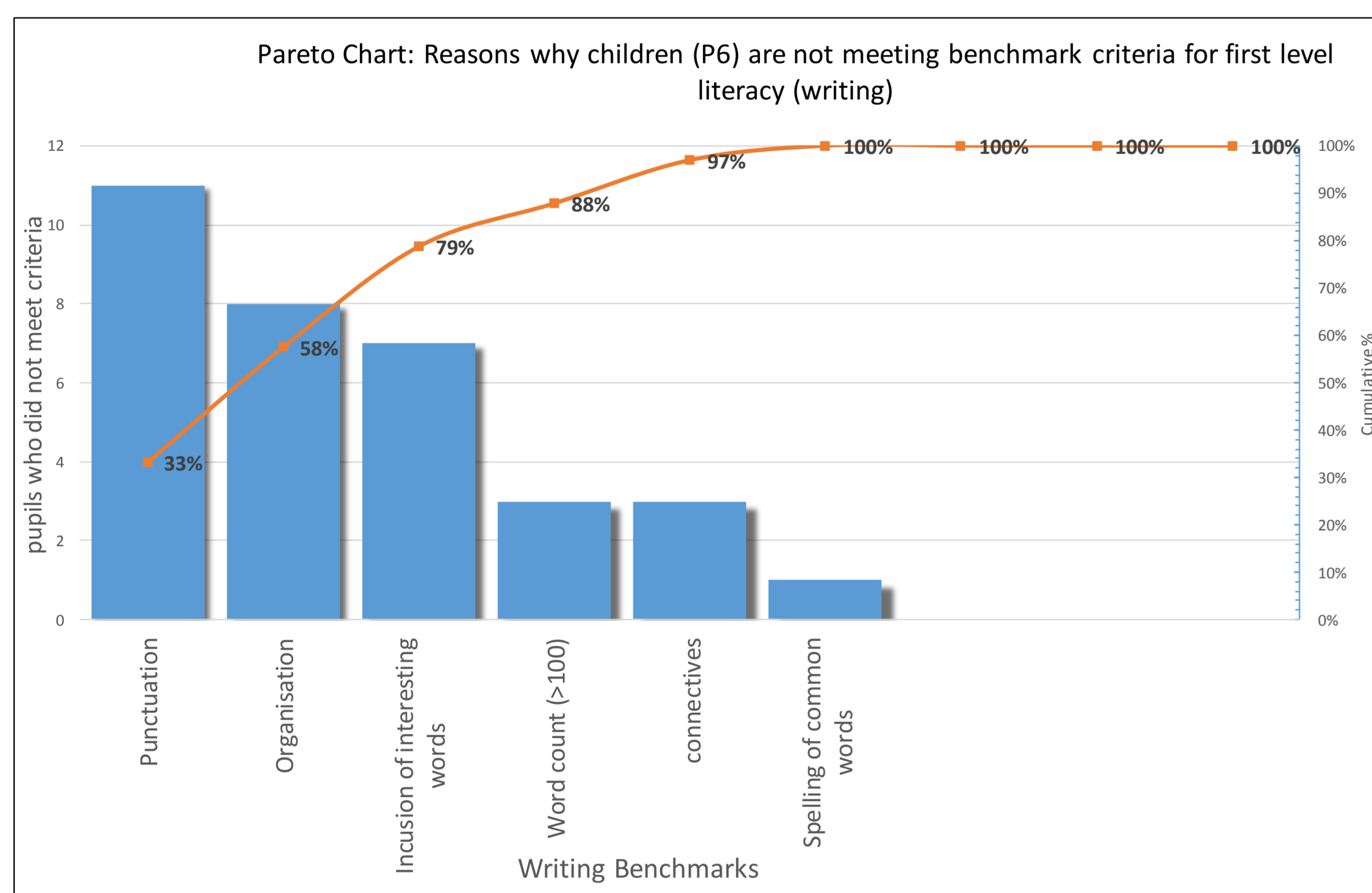
Aim 2

By 01st February 2018, 94% of pupils' (P6) independent writing will have **good* story structure** and flow (baseline 33%).

Method

Class tracking data highlighted that we needed to focus our improvement efforts on children's writing.

The classroom teacher carried out a baseline assessment against benchmark criteria, the results were used to create a pareto chart identifying that **'punctuation', 'organisation' and 'robust vocabulary'** were key challenges for children. The Improvement team agreed to focus on punctuation in the first instance with a shift to story structure and robust vocabulary thereafter.



At the outset of our project operational definitions aligned to Aims 1 & 2 were agreed:

Correct punctuation*: Can use basic sentence punctuation including full stops followed by capital letters. May be experimenting with other punctuation although use may not be accurate e.g. question marks, exclamation marks and commas.

Good story structure*: Writing flows with a beginning, middle and end (where time permits). Using paragraphs correctly where appropriate.

Process Change

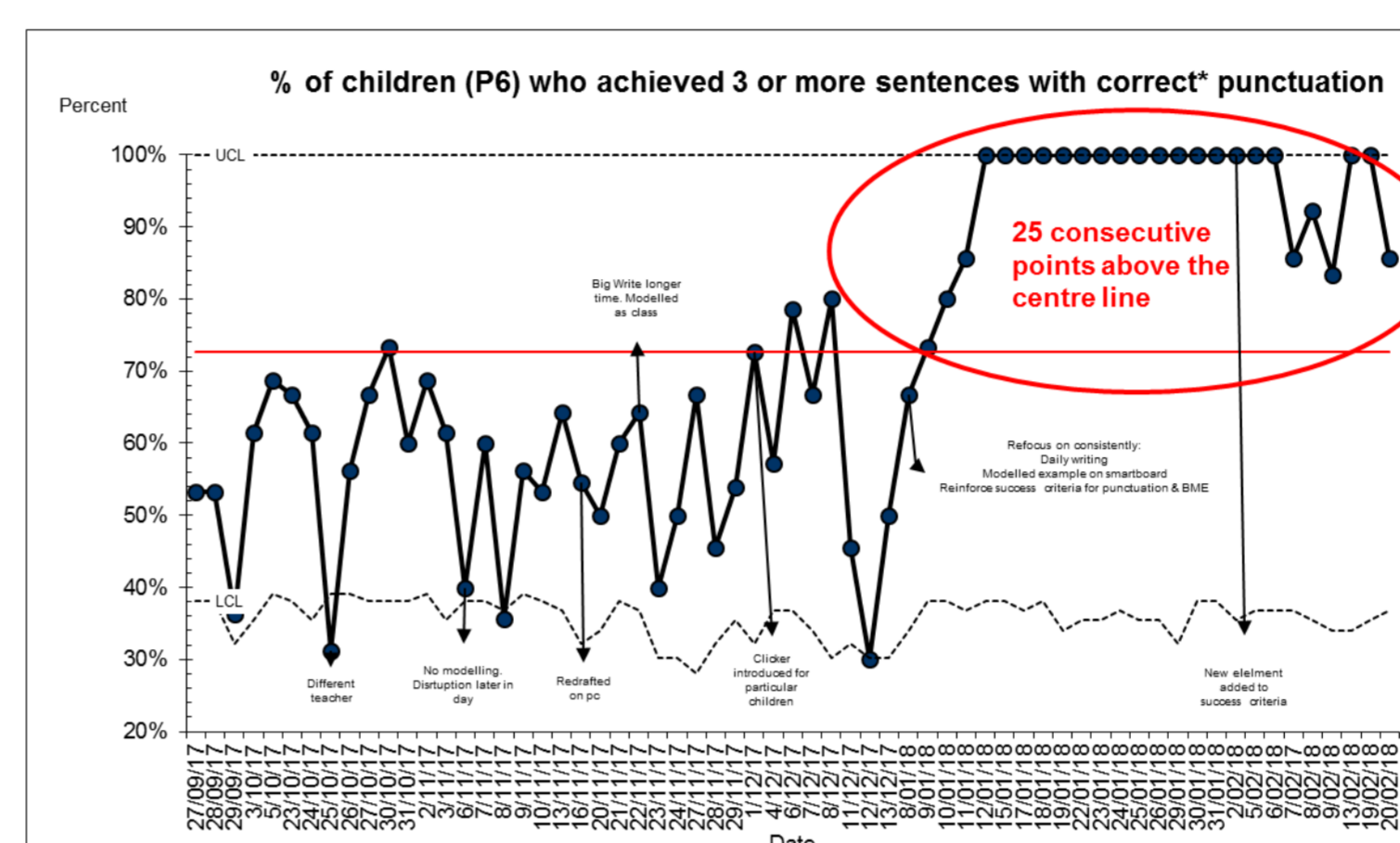
Improvements and Learning from Warout and Carleton primary schools was shared and tested:

- Daily Writing (maximum of 30 minutes).
- Teacher modelling on whiteboard.
- Reinforcement of success criteria.
- In addition, 'Clicker 7' was introduced for identified children.

Achievements

- **The number of children who have achieved CfE first level literacy increased from 73-81% from August 2017- March 2018.**
- All children were consistently achieving 3 correct sentences by January 2018.
- Children had consistently improved the organisation of their independent writing by 01st February 2018.
- Despite behavioural challenges, improvement gains were achieved in key aspects of writing.
- Increase in teacher's understanding of measurement and confidence to apply the Model for Improvement at classroom level.

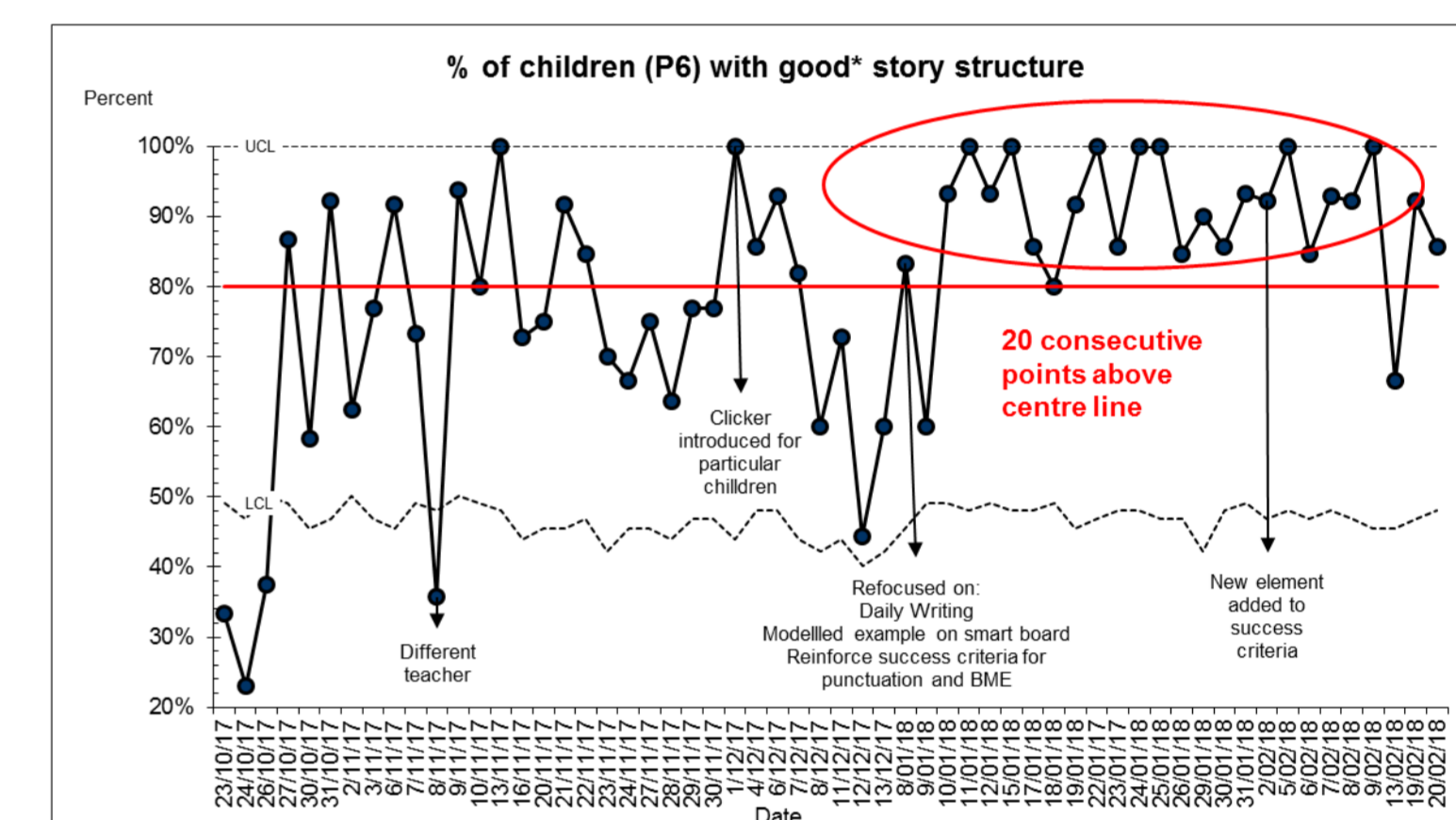
Results



"I feel like daily writing improves my writing as I get a chance to practise all the things we have been learning." (pupil)

"I am getting better and more confident at punctuation." (pupil)

"I feel an improvement in my writing. I can use full stops correctly now and I use Clicker to help me." (pupil)



Conclusion

- Daily writing, modelling and reinforcement of success criteria demonstrated improvement in children's punctuation and story structure.
- The learning spread from other primary schools mirrored improvement at St Serfs.
- Once daily writing, modelling and reinforcement of success criteria were done consistently every day (08/01/18 onwards) improvements were made.
- Children who were expected to struggle have gone on to master punctuation and good story structure.

Deep understanding of where children are in their learning and what they still need to conquer.

Consistency is Key!



Key Learning Points

- Pareto chart was key in prioritising improvement focus.
- Children needed continuous reinforcement of success criteria.
- Children achieved consistent improvement in punctuation over 10 academic weeks.
- Teacher reported that had she not measured progress it is likely she would have moved onto another aspect of writing prior to deep level understanding being achieved.
- 'Clicker 7' proved a useful support for struggling writers - An opportunity for pupils to hear back their work and actively self correct resulted in success for pupils who found independent writing challenging.
- Children adapted well to new success criteria being introduced.
- Children appear to have grasped subsequent criteria quicker i.e. (good story structure mastered in 8 academic weeks). Daily writing appears to have had beneficial impact on several aspects of writing e.g. vocabulary and use of tense improved.