Improving Writing Outcomes for P3/4 Learners

Courtney Stewart, Class Teacher, Newburgh Primary School

Stretch Aim: By May 2025, 90% of P3/4 pupils will be on track in first level writing benchmarks. Baseline: 71% on track.

Teaching Aims:

Aim 1: By October 2024, 90% of P3/4 pupils will be able to use openers* in their writing. Baseline: 14% *Openers: First, Second, Finally.

Aim 2: By December 2024, 80% of P3/4 pupils will be able to use connectives* in their writing. Baseline: 14% *Openers: and, because, but, or.

Method

- Established an Improvement Team.
- Attended Fife QI Improving Writing Programme (Wave 9).
- Carried out a baseline assessment against CfE benchmarks.
- The baseline assessment was used to create a **pareto chart**.
- The biggest challenge for the majority of the children was using **openers** in their writing. The second biggest which formed aim 2 was using **connectives** in their writing.
- The pareto chart informed the teaching aims..

First Level Pareto - Writing Benchmarks not met

Process Change

Fife Improving Writing Outcomes
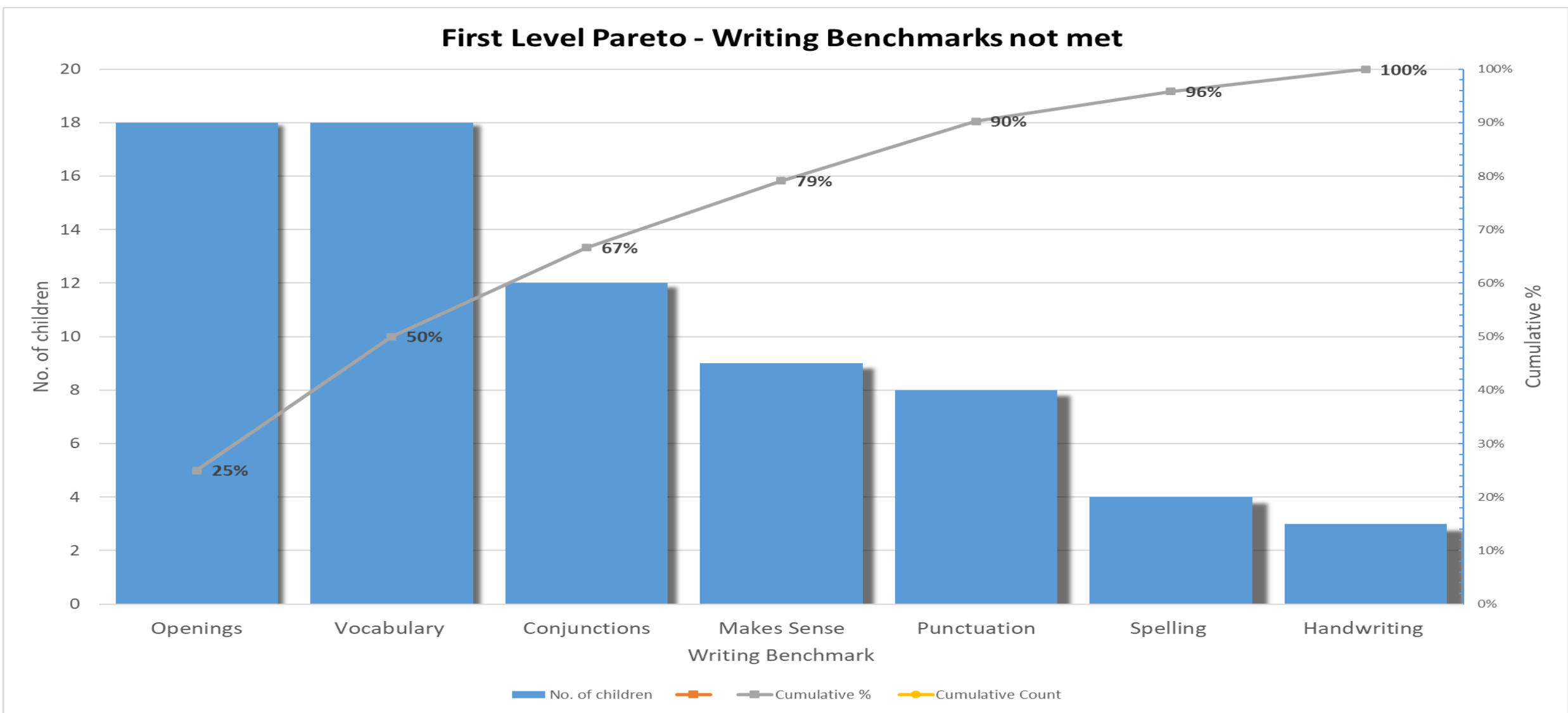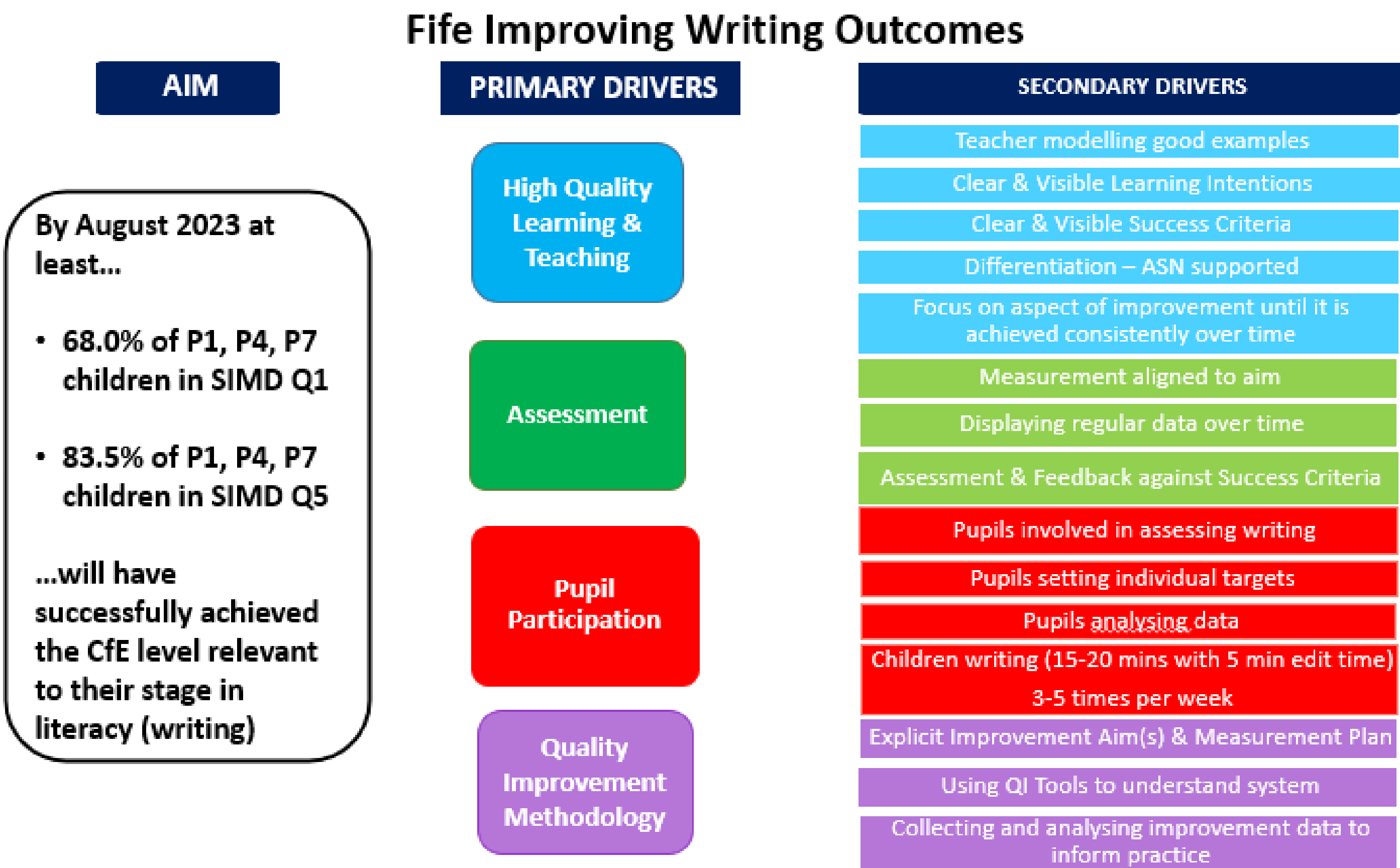
Implement

- Children writing 3 times per week.
- Write for 15 mins (20 for some pupils), 5 mins to self check. Sometimes an extra 5 to peer assess (children's choice).
- Teacher input aligned to aim (stimulus, dialogue, model)
- Share Learning Intention and make Success Criteria explicit.
- Assess and feedback against Success Criteria.
- Involve Children in the process!
- Highlight openers in one colour, connectives in another.
- Check in with run chart before each session (this sometimes turned into checking in after break on the same day as children were too excited to wait!).
- Stamp own work with green 'for growth' or blue 'target met' stamper.
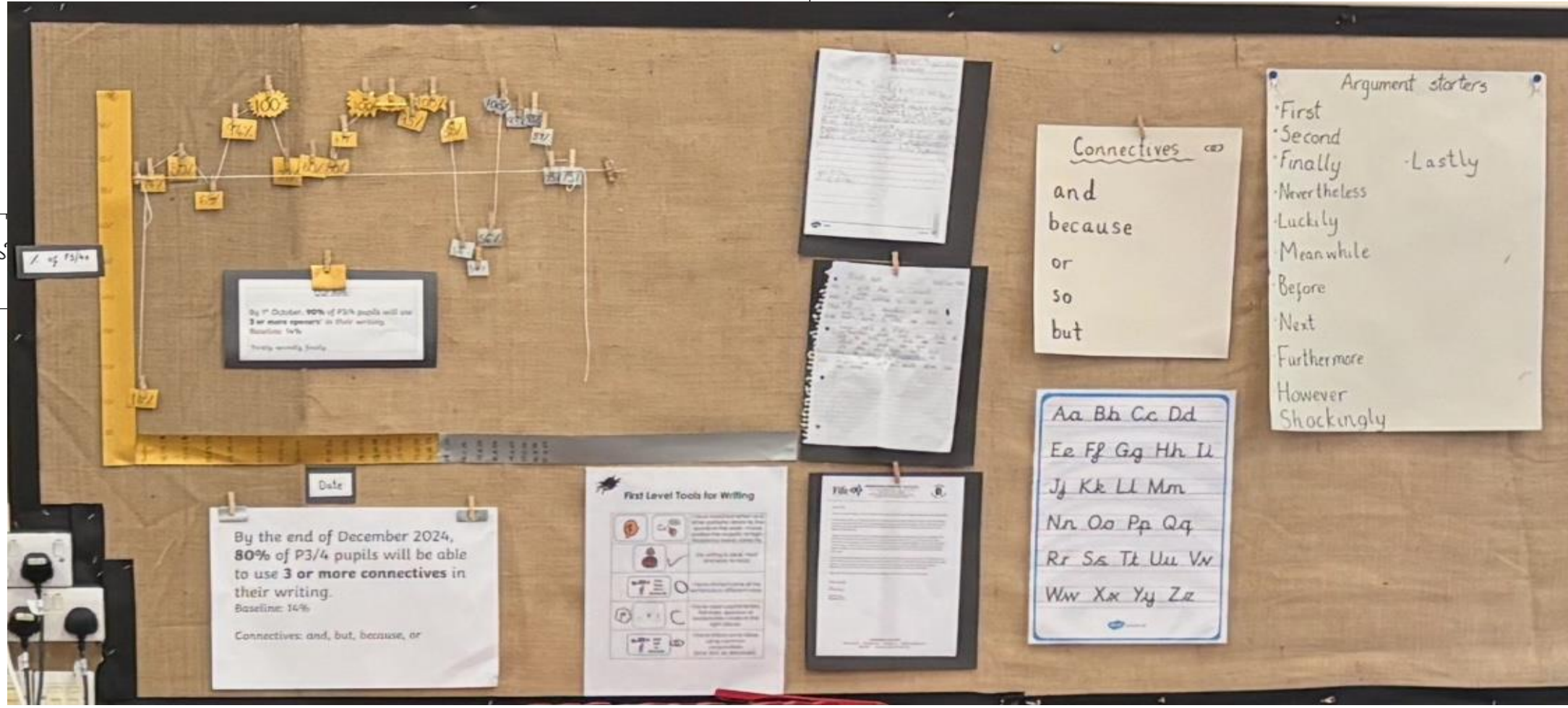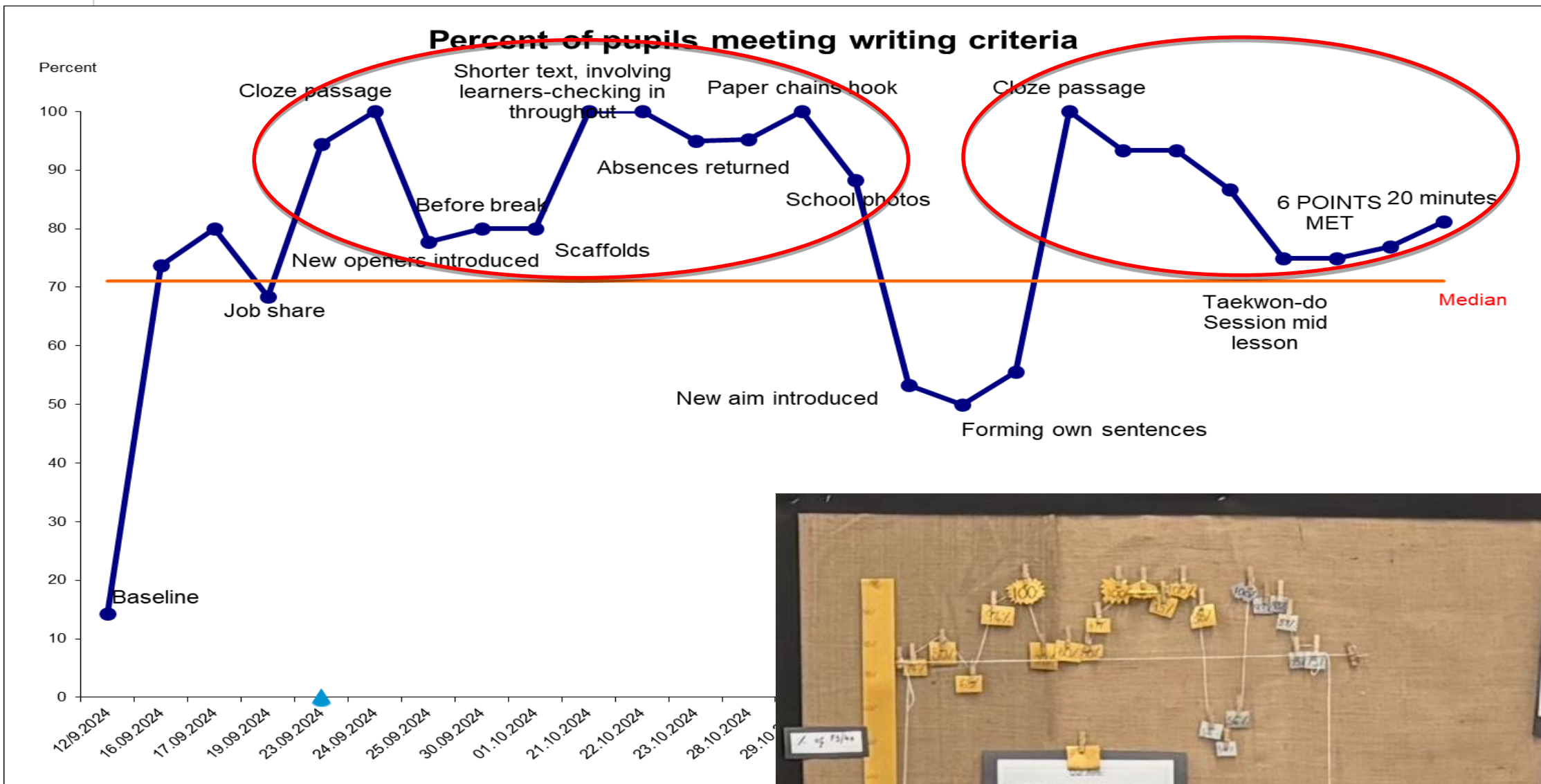
Achievements

By Oct '24, 90% of children achieved teaching aim 1 (baseline 14%).

By Dec '24, 80% of children achieved teaching aim 2 (baseline 14%).

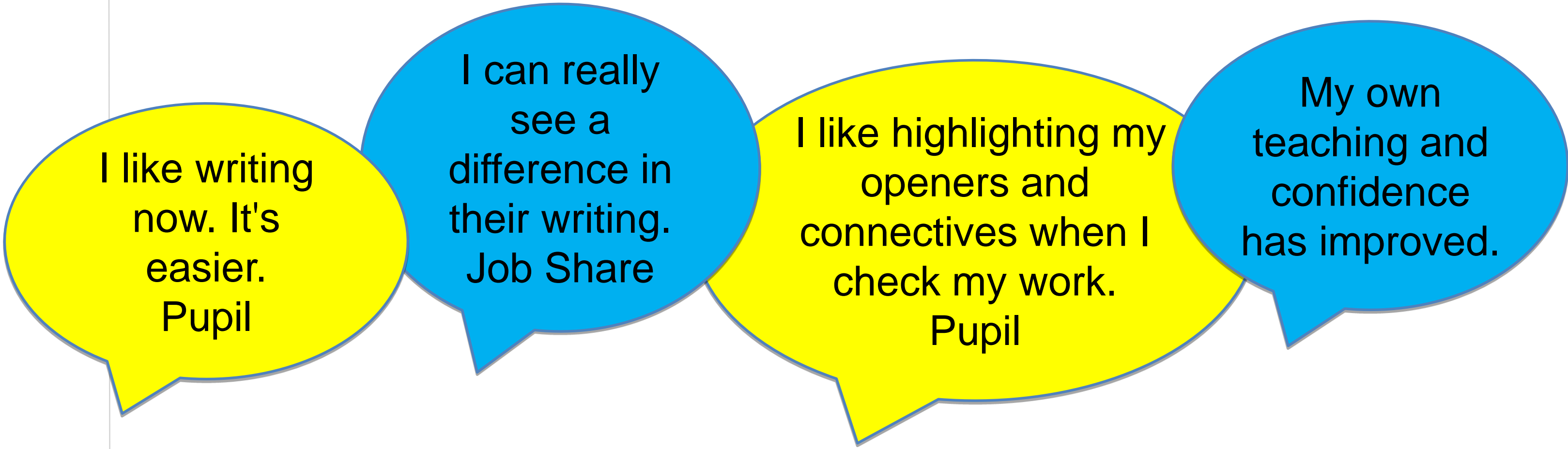Children began to assess independently as the SC was clear to them.

Results

Percent of pupils meeting writing criteria

Conclusions

Children were glad to have a short amount of time to write and used scaffolds well to support their writing. This gave huge amounts of confidence and eagerness.

Having our run chart displayed and celebrated each day motivated the children. They began to support each other through peer assessment without realising it in order to work together to meet the day's target.

> I like writing now. It's easier. Pupil

> I can really see a difference in their writing. Job Share

> I like highlighting my openers and connectives when I check my work. Pupil

> My own teaching and confidence has improved.

Key Learning Points

Favourite stimuli were usually based on animals. We also did our writing on paper chains one week!	Time of day matters, as well as children's moods or any disruptions to the day.
Clearly modelling and teaching what a good piece of work looks like was key to show expectations and how to meet differentiated SC.	Children enjoy being involved in the process. Stampers and highlighters were motivators, as well as giving choice.

Next steps

- Continue to implement bundle and record data daily.
- Continue using pupil voice and involvement to motivate and engage learners.
- I have recently held a collegiate meeting to share my findings with colleagues which has since encouraged them to take part in the next wave. I will happily support them with this if requested.