

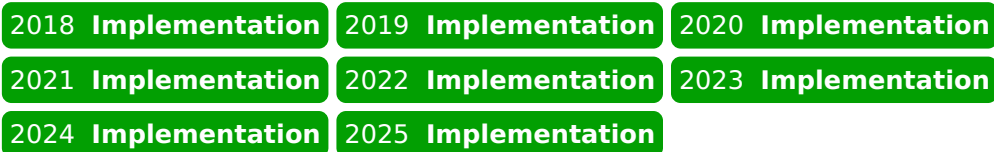
Reading recovery (RR) training programme

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 MALTA

Timeline



ID number 28427

Background

To provide the best opportunities so that that each child can acquire the required literacy skills. The results obtained by Maltese students in international studies had mean reading scores below the international average.

Objectives

To help young children (six-year-olds) with literacy problems reach the level expected of them in reading and writing.

Description

In order to improve basic skills in IVET, the National Literacy Agency (NLA) launched in September 2018 the Reading recovery (RR) training programme in collaboration with the university college London. The programme consists of 100 hours of individual sessions over 20 weeks. The sessions are provided by teachers trained specifically in the methodology of RR. The programme lends itself to adaptations to meet the individual needs of each student.

The programme includes the training of teachers in the RR methodology by the University College London. Two courses are available: a postgraduate course for teachers, and a master course for literacy support teachers and heads of the literacy department. Those attending the master course will be able to train other teachers. Some pupils from the first cohort are on their way out from the programme since they have reached the required level in reading (Level 17 of the PM benchmark literacy assessment) and new pupils are being enrolled.

2018 Implementation

The first cohort of 90 learners benefited from RR during the academic year 2018/19. By the end of that year, four of them dropped out, 86 finished the course; of these, 72

(84%) reached the expected level while the other 14 (16%) were referred for further assessment and other intervention programmes.

2019 Implementation

By June 2019, 15 complementary and literacy teachers completed the reading recovery (RR) teacher-training course while seven heads of department (HODs) and literacy support teachers finished the first year of the masters RR leader course.

During the academic year 2019/20, 32 new complementary and class teachers started the RR teacher course. The RR programme was offered in 33 primary schools and 220 Year 2 students have benefited from it.

2020 Implementation

From mid-March 2020 to June 2020, teacher training was delivered through synchronous and asynchronous online forums since schools closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the school lockdown that followed disrupted the implementation of the programme in the 33 reading recovery (RR) primary schools in Malta.

In December 2020, the NLA recommenced the RR programme. Only 33 RR teachers could be assigned to learners. The remaining 17 RR teachers were unable to implement the intervention programme as they were assigned normal teaching duties following a shortage of teaching staff in schools. The shortage reflected the COVID-19 mitigating guidelines issued by the public health authorities for schools.

2021 Implementation

Due to pandemic restrictions, RR teachers were deployed in classroom 'bubbles', limiting daily sessions. In 2021, 32 primary schools received some form of RR support, 187 complete RR programmes delivered, with 158 children successfully discontinued (achieved age-expected literacy levels, the term discontinued has a positive connotation in the Maltese context especially for the RR programme).

RR provision was included in the Ministry for Education's Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP), aiming to train 250 children annually (total of 1 000 by 2024), and certify 85 teachers in RR methodology.

2022 Implementation

COVID-19 restrictions persisted in 2022; many RR-trained teachers were teaching full-time classes or covering absences. 247 complete RR programmes were delivered, with 210 children successfully discontinued.

In terms of RR teacher training in March 2022, 15 teachers began RR training (certified in July 2023), in November 2022: 13 complementary education teachers started training.

Also in 2022, visits by RR National leaders (Dr Sue Bodman & Ms Glen Franklin) in May and October 2022 ensured compliance with RR standards.

2023 Implementation

In January 2023, 24 teachers enrolled in RR initial teacher training.

Also in 2023, 544 RR programmes were delivered, with 410 children successfully discontinued.

In terms of achievements 85 teachers were trained by end of 2023.

Also in 2023, RR National leaders visited schools in Malta and Gozo in May and October 2023 to ensure compliance with quality standards for quality assurance.

2024 Implementation

In 2024, a total of 760 complete RR programmes were delivered; 599 children successfully discontinued from RR.

Regarding achievements, 7 teachers completed initial RR training.

Also in April and October 2024, RR national leaders continued their visits to ensure compliance with quality standards.

2025 Implementation

In 2025, between July and September from RR 102 children were supported in 16 schools. Another group of 331 students enrolled, increasing the number of schools implementing RR to 65.

In October-December 2025, 331 new children enrolled in the RR programme.

Also in 2025, through the RR Continuous Professional Development (CPD) there were :

- (a) 100 trained teachers who have attended annual CPD (minimum 24 hours training spread over 6 sessions and receiving an on-site observation by their accredited RR Teacher Leader);
- (b) this CPD adheres to standards and guidelines established by RR Europe and includes lesson analysis delivered by colleagues, assessment administration, and data entry into the Reading Recovery Evaluation Database (RRED).

Bodies responsible

- National Literacy Agency (NLA)
- University College London

Target group

Education professionals

Teachers

Thematic categories

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Acquiring key competences

Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences

Systematic approaches to and opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of school leaders, teachers and trainers

Supporting teachers and trainers for and through digital

European and international dimensions of VET

Transnational VET initiatives, including joint VET programmes

Subsystem

Further reading

[National Literacy Agency information on the Reading recovery programme](#)

[National Literacy Agency](#)

[Information on PM benchmark literacy assessment -leaflet](#)

[Language Policy Unit](#)

[National Literacy Agency's policies and strategies](#)

“ ... ” **Cite as**

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Reading recovery (RR) training programme: Malta. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28427>