

Name: S

Age: 5

Gender: Male

Ethnicity: White British

S is a child with a complicated home life. He has witnessed domestic violence in the past (for which he receives counselling) and his mother has recently recovered from a long period of severe ill health. S joined Year 1 with a reputation for being an 'angry' and 'aggressive' child. His aggression was always directed at other children and he also showed other attention seeking behaviours such as lying and swearing. S is a low ability child (working within P levels), well below what is average for his age. At home S lives with his mum who along with her recovery has recently started working. Mum would regularly tell school that she was struggling with S's behaviour. Mum uses computer games to keep S occupied when she 'cannot cope' and S can talk in depth about games (many with violent adult content).

When I introduced Henri Le Worm, I spoke about the character a little then allowed the children a whole lesson to explore the app. S was excited but sceptical. 'When do we do our work?' he asked me. 'You are doing it,' I said. But he kept looking for some kind of catch. We use ipads a lot in Year 1 and often play interactive games, but there is something about Henri, with its bright colours, advanced animation and graphics, that looks more like a 'real game' rather than something made for schools. S loved the app straight away and happily engaged with it for the whole lesson. When I watched him I saw that his eyes were moving along with the words of the story as they lit up. We looked at Henri for two weeks and for each lesson Henri appeared whether for a numeracy, literacy or art, S was enthused. He was, for the first time, positive about his learning and he did not even realise he was doing it. On one occasion another child got stuck in the place of darkness and complained of no longer liking Sheldon and the Henri game because it was scary, but S went over to the child and showed them the shortcut of how to move to another part of the story. S enjoyed being able to show another child, especially one S perceived as being smarter than him, how to do this. Also for the other child it was good to interact with S in a positive way, a huge step away from S being known only as the child that hurts others. After this incident I noticed S was keen to help others with problems in their work even when it was not directly to do with the app, if Henri was present in the lesson S automatically saw himself as the expert. On one occasion I overheard S tell another child that you can see the words at the bottom, that's what the man is saying. I asked S if his computer games at home had words too and he said he did not know but would look. The next day he came in and told me that yes, he could see words on his computer games. He said that if he learns how to read the words he will get better at the games and then he can show other children how to play these games too.