

Ministry of Education

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## Point Hill Diagnostic Reading Centre Assisting Students with Learning Difficulties



Unit Director of the Point Hill Diagnostic Reading Centre in St. Catherine, Felma Morgan (right), seems very pleased as Nathaniel Davies, an eight year-old grade three student of the Point Hill Primary and Junior High School reads from a book. Occasion was the observance of Read Across Jamaica Day at the Diagnostic Centre on May 5.

The Point Hill Diagnostic and Learning Centre located in rural St. Catherine is reporting success in assisting children with learning challenges.

Speaking at a ceremony held at the centre on May 5 to mark 'Read across Jamaica Day', Unit Director, Felma Morgan, said that the success rate of the centre has increased each year since its establishment in 2004.

"Each year, we have many of our students showing an increment of at least one or two grade level improvement. Often, we have four or five, who will move two or more grade levels in a year," she informed. "In fact", she added "we have 11 students who have already moved one grade level and the rest of our students have moved within the level," she stated.

Miss Morgan, who is a special education teacher, pointed out that it is important to recognize the special needs of children and it is important to keep in mind that some children will not learn as fast as others.

"So, we have to qualify what the results are and even though (some) children have moved within a level, the fact is they have made progress and for them, it's a lot of progress," she noted.

The Point Hill Diagnostic and Learning Centre, located adjacent to the Point Hill Primary and Junior High School, was built at a cost of more than

\$9 million through funding from the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), the Bank of Nova Scotia (BNS), the Ministry of Education, and the Point Hill community.

Since inception, it has assisted students in areas such as literacy education and reading workshops. The children are also taught basic elements of information technology.

The diagnostic centre also hosts teacher training and parenting workshops and prepares residents of the community for the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) tests.

Read across Jamaica Day is an observance of the Jamaica Teachers Association.