



Jervoise Primary School 2020-2021 Shelley Anderson (English Lead)



Context

Jervoise Primary school is a one form entry school with a total of 209 pupils. The large majority of the pupils are White British and speak English as a first language. Mobility of families moving into and out of the area is high. In part this is due to the nearness of the local university and the hospital. As a result, most pupils in the older classes did not start at the school originally. The number of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average.

Reading at Jervoise

Reading has been a priority at Jervoise but with a focus on the teaching of reading skills. The school did not have an English lead until January 2020 and the Open University's Reading for Pleasure (RfP) project was seen as an opportunity to launch Jervoise as a 'Reading for Pleasure' school.

The Change Team

Our change team this year has consisted of myself (Y5/6 teacher and English lead) plus the teachers in years five, one and reception and our headteacher. However, all staff have taken on this initiative and steered it in their own direction. The change team are a group of teachers who love reading and are particularly interested in driving reading forward within the school. Unfortunately, due to the limited numbers of support staff, we didn't have any teaching assistants as part of the team for this academic year however this is something we would hope to change as we continue forward with the project.

Explore

Establishing a Baseline

At the outset of the project all pupils and staff completed Open University attitudinal [surveys](#) and reflected on the school's current RfP practices. This would provide us with a baseline from which we could identify clear priorities for our work over the year.

Key Findings from the Teacher Surveys

| Strengths | Areas for Development |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency of reading aloud to children across school. • Staff felt they shared their love of reading with pupils. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers were 'Dahl' dependant. When asked to name children's authors, the obvious authors came up, including David Walliams, Roald Dahl, Julia Donaldson. • KS1 teachers reported allowing pupils to read independently weekly whereas KS2 staff reported they occasionally or never allowed children to read independently. • Teachers felt their children would see them as avid, enthusiastic readers. However, they all reported that they rarely or never talk about themselves as readers or discuss what they are reading for pleasure. |

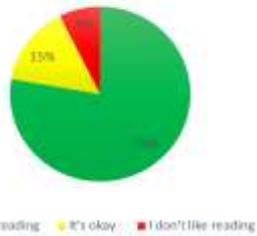
| Authors | Picture Fiction | Poets |
|--|--|--------------------------------|
| Roald Dahl David Walliams Michael Morpergo David Baddiel Enid Blyton | Julia Donaldson Oliver Jeffers Jill Murphy | Benjamin Zephaniah Dr Seuss |

Key Findings from the Pupil Surveys

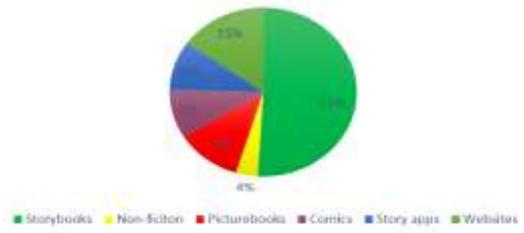
| Strengths | Areas for Development |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoyed reading. • Children are read aloud to frequently in school. • Throughout KS1 and KS2 pupils reported that they are supported with their reading at home. • Pupils could name some of their class novels. • Children could name the titles of books they liked but not authors/illustrators. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils' ability to name a variety of authors/book titles (particularly current literature) was limited. • Pupils reported they preferred to read at home because it was quieter, and they are asked less questions. • Pupils claimed to read storybooks/fiction but rarely read anything else including non-fiction, poetry or magazines. |

Key Stage One

1. Do you like reading?

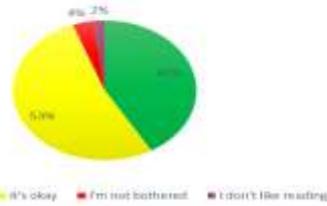


7. What do you most like to read?

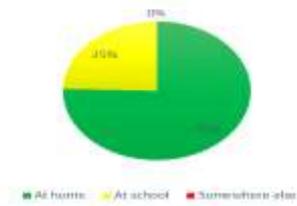


Lower Key Stage Two

1. Do you like reading?

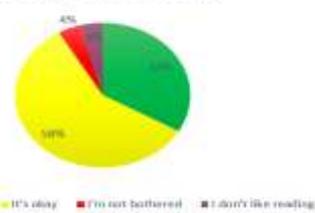


3. Where do you prefer reading?

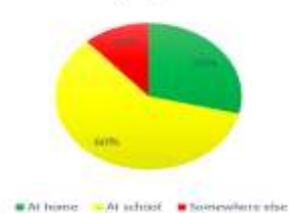


Upper Key Stage Two

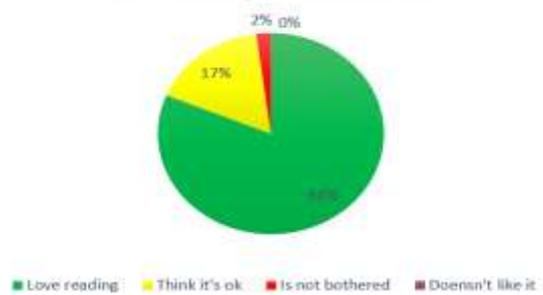
1. Do you like reading?



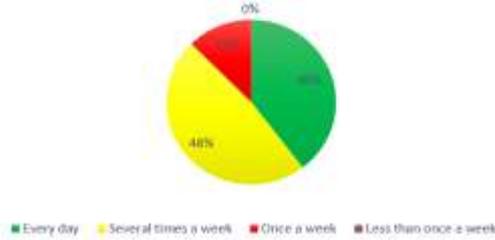
3. Where do you prefer reading?



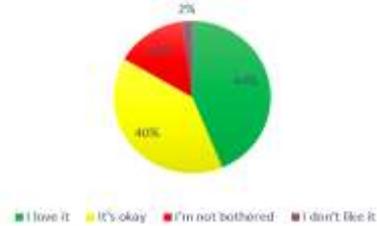
12. Does your teacher?



13. Does your teacher read aloud to the class?



15. Do you like it when you teacher reads aloud?



Focus Children

Our focus children were taken from the bottom 20% readers from years 6, 5, 2 and EYFS (change team members' classrooms). In order to monitor the impact of RfP initiatives, we would focus on these children, engaging them in conversations and approaches and observing their progress.

From our analysis of the survey data, **we identified the following aims for our RfP work:**

- 1. to improve teachers' knowledge of current children's literature**
- 2. to expose children to a wider range of books during informal book talk**
- 3. to ensure pupils are given opportunities to read independently.**

We drafted a clear RfP action plan (part of the English action plan) to help outline our aims, actions and impact measures.

Prepare

As we embarked on our year-long research and development project, Professor Teresa Cremin and Rebecca Kennedy, from the Open University helped us to lead an INSET day for all staff including TAs. Research evidence was shared, and staff participated in workshops exploring aspects of teacher subject knowledge and pedagogy.

'Teachers' knowledge of children's literature is dominated by Dahl and 'celebrity authors and is insufficient to support reader development' (Cremin et al., 2009; Clark and Teravainen, 2015). As our staff surveys reflected this, we felt as a change team that we needed to focus on this aim as a priority. Aiden Chambers (1985, 1993) states, *'teachers of reading need to: suggest reading material to individual children in order to motivate them as readers; have a secure knowledge of a range of texts in order to have in-depth discussions with children; identify books which read aloud well and that the class would enjoy.'* If our independent reading sessions were to be successful and teachers were to engage with learners in informal book talk, we needed to inspire our staff to enjoy finding new authors and stories to share. This needed to be our starting point.

'You can't teach pleasure: you have to share it' (Frank Cottrell Boyce, 2013).

Survey data showed that KS2 teachers did not have independent reading time timetabled, but research has shown that opportunities for frequent independent reading as a *'planned pedagogic routine'* (Cremin et al., 2014) can support other aspects of RfP, including informal book talk. Block and Mangien, 2002 found that just *'15 minutes of*

independent recreational reading significantly improves children's reading abilities' (in Cremin et al., 2014). This time for reading, where children have choice and ownership, the opportunity to browse, engage with texts and talk about their reading with peers and adults would be vital to our work. We aimed for this time to become *'an active opportunity for learning and teaching, rather than a passive 'holding' strategy'* (Cremin et al., 2014). This would include informal opportunities to talk about reading and make book recommendations, all of which requires teachers to have strong subject knowledge.

Deliver

Aim: To Improve Teachers' Knowledge of Current Children's Literature

Weekly staff book recommendations

During staff briefing, every Friday morning, teachers and TAs took it in turns to recommend a children's book to the rest of the staff. They were expected to share the book, talk about it and discuss who they would recommend it to and why. These recommendations then went on a display board in school so children could also see what teachers were reading and recommending. This encouraged all staff to find new texts and enabled the children to see that the staff were readers of children's literature (role models). It sparked incidental conversations between children and staff and between staff members and staff lent their recommendations to the children.

Reading displays with teachers' suggestions



Teachers were asked to create engaging, interactive, and changeable displays that promoted reading but also included their reading recommendations. Teachers generated displays that highlighted book award winners, personal recommendations, different genres and a range of authors. Children referred to these boards to help them in their selections.

Current literature



During staff INSET, we explored the importance of browsing and displaying children's literature carefully. Teachers were asked to display new and exciting literature they had read around classrooms, with the intention that staff and children then talk about and promote these books. The importance of front facing books was discussed with staff and pupils were taught about taking care of them and having an appreciation for books. Displaying a range of tempting books in this way encouraged the children to spend time browsing and choosing reading material and discussing it. Knowing that the teachers had read the books encouraged book talk and recommendations were made.

Review

We repeated the initial surveys with staff and children in June 2021 and these were our findings.

Key Findings from the Teacher Surveys

2020

| Authors | Picture Fiction | Poets |
|--|--|--------------------------------|
| Roald Dahl David Walliams Michael Morpergo David Baddiel Enid Blyton | Julia Donaldson Oliver Jeffers Jill Murphy | Benjamin Zephaniah Dr Seuss |

2021

| Authors | Picture Fiction | Poets |
|--|--|--|
| Nathan Byron Katherine Rundell Phillip Pullman Ross Mackenzie Anthony Browne Benji Davies Neal Layton Sandra Dieckman | Tuesday The Journey The Watertower Because The Rainbow Fish The Invisible Wild | Joseph Coelho Michael Rosen Daniel Gray-Barnet David Wiesner Roland Harvey Spike Milligan |

As you can see, staff responses to current authors, poets and picture books improved greatly. The weekly book recommendations, staff meeting time, book talk sessions and monthly book updates developed staff knowledge of children's literature and staff were now able to name many more poets and current authors and books.

Key Findings from the Pupil Surveys Key Stage One

2020

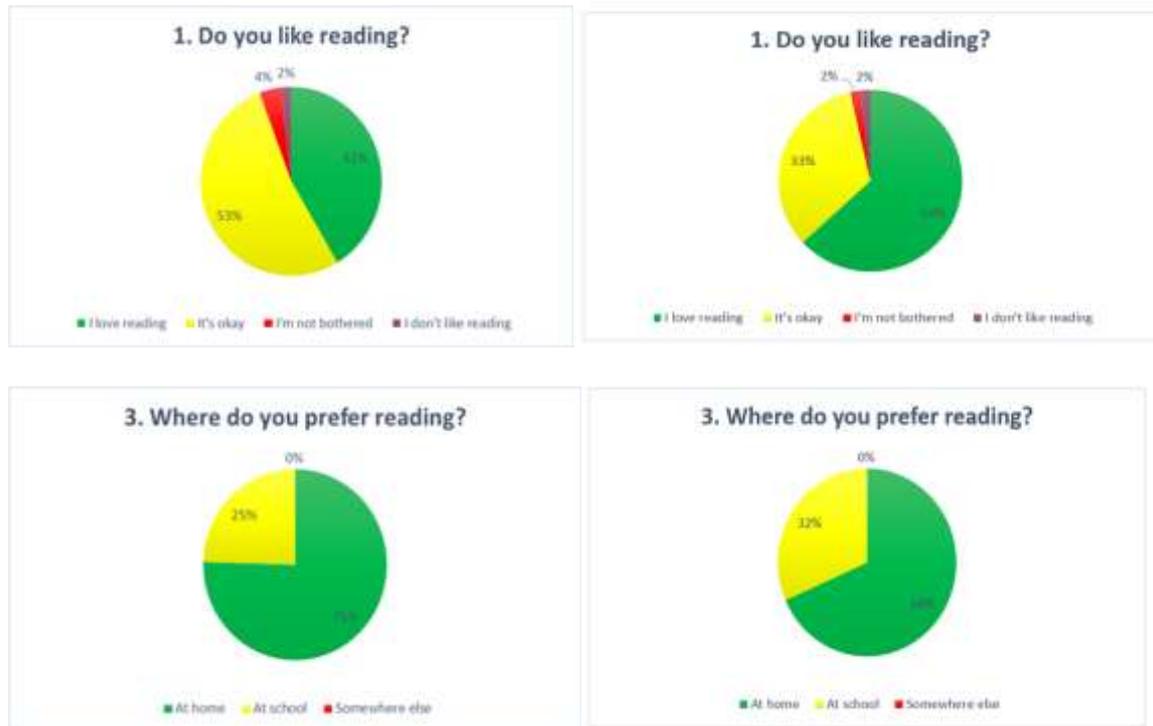
2021



In KS1 there has been an increase of 16% more pupils reporting they now 'love reading'. This data is also backed up by the pupil voice responses that were conducted in the summer term, where pupils reported: "I love it when my teacher talks about books." One child also said, "I love it when my teacher brings in books from her house – it is exciting!"

The range of books pupils are exposed to and enjoy reading has improved slightly although this is something that needs more work. Staff are still predominantly sharing fiction books with pupils, and it has been discussed with SLT that next year we have specific months where we focus on different genres to recommend, promote and share with staff and children e.g., poetry month.

Lower Key Stage Two



In lower key stage 2, there has been an increase of 19% of children who state they 'love reading' and although there has only been an increase of 7% of children reporting they now 'enjoy reading in school'. This is still an improvement and something we can build on. 'Independent QUIET Reading for Pleasure time' will continue to be timetabled and monitored in the next academic year and book talk will be encouraged as part of additional informal reading sessions, with the hope of this data continuing to improve.

Upper Key Stage Two



Upper key stage two has been our biggest success with an extraordinary increase of 46% of pupils reporting they 'love reading' now.

Interestingly, however, we have had a decline in pupils enjoying reading at school. This initially concerned us, but when conducting pupil interviews, it became evident why children had made comments. They said things such as, "I enjoy reading from home more than school because the books we are reading in school inspire me to go home and read again." Another child said, "Reading at school is fine but I want to go home and read the books again with my mum and dad to show them how good they are." These comments show the importance of digging deeper into the survey data and talking to the children individually about their reading habits and preference. They have delighted staff at Jervoise; we are thrilled that the school is actually encouraging children to continue this within their home too.

Sustain

We are aware we are still very much at the beginning of our RfP journey and with new staff in September as well, we will continue to develop what we have done so far and continue with the same priorities. Although our data is showing improvements, we are aware we still have a long way to go. *'Successful implementation happens in stages and unfolds over an extended period. It is not a single event that takes place when the decision to adopt a new teaching practice is made, or on the day when training begins. Schools' implementation processes begin before this adoption decision and last for a long time after'* (Education Endowment Foundation, 2018).

The staff survey, completed in 2020, showed staff were either unable or rarely able to name children's poets and illustrators however this was dramatically different in the 2021 surveys. Another powerful result was the staff choice of authors, which showed far more variety. We were less Dahl dependent. In discussion with the teachers, we had chosen to informally monitor throughout the project, and all felt that they had a better knowledge of children's literature. They could recall authors and texts and they all said that they enjoyed reading children's books, which for some of them was a new experience.

In the next academic year, we will place a greater focus on our focus children and engage in closer monitoring and interventions during the independent reading times and book talk sessions.

We also know that working alongside parents is critical to the success of any project and prior to lockdown, we had planned to begin reading workshop sessions however throughout 2021 parents were not allowed on the school site and our contact is limited to phone calls. This makes sharing the RfP experience even more challenging as parents are a vital part of our reading community so we hope we can begin these workshops in the next academic year.