

# Our School Context

*We are a two form entry primary school in Cheltenham **Warden Hill Primary School** is a co-educational Foundation school for children aged 4 to 11 years spread over 15 classrooms in separate infant and junior blocks. Our PSC scores have been in the high 90s for the last 4 years and as a school reading proficiency is excellent and our statutory data shows this to be the case. We create accurate readers but **were we doing enough to harness the love, the passion for reading?** So, in 2017 we started to make some big changes...*



# Changes already implemented since 2017 to profile reading

As a school we have been on a reading journey since I became Head. If you were to ask any child in the school what I love – they would say reading. My staff are acutely aware of this too! The changes we have brought about since 2017 have been immense:

- 2017: New libraries for KS1 and KS2 – chosen and designed by the school council
- 2017 onwards: Assemblies based on books - allows for book PR
- 2017 onwards: A reading book is bought for every reception child and for our Y6 leavers
- 2018 onwards: A huge influx of new books – carefully selected to encourage a revived thirst for reading.
- 2018: class novels displayed outside the classrooms on leaf shelves
- 2020: Librarian badges specially designed
- 2020: Book club run by 2 staff for Year 5 and Year 6
- 2020: Assemblies based around books
- 2020: KS1 Reading scheme overhauled to be fully decodable



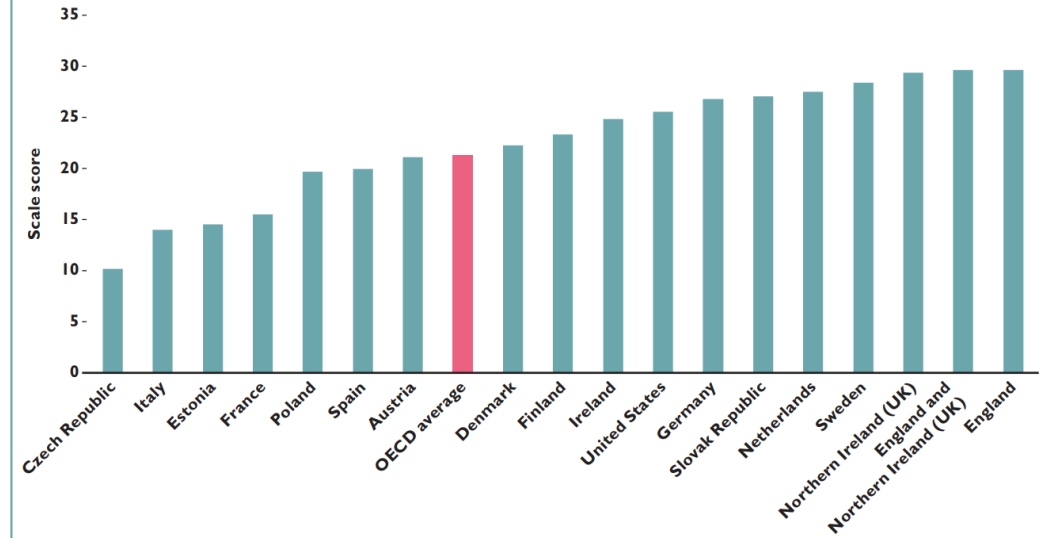


# Our OU Reading for Pleasure- Research Evidence

**Reading for pleasure** has social benefits and can make people feel more connected to the wider community. Reading **increases a person's understanding of their own identity, improves empathy and gives them an insight into the world view of others** (The Reading Agency 2015).

**Exclusive: Only a quarter of pupils get recommended reading for pleasure time**  
'Biggest-ever' literacy study in UK of more than a million children shows reading for pleasure has a direct bearing on attainment - but not enough are doing it

FIGURE 1 DIFFERENCE IN LITERACY SCORE BETWEEN THOSE EMPLOYED FULL TIME AND THOSE UNEMPLOYED



Source: National Literacy Trust analysis of OECD PIAAC data; *Literacy Changes Lives 2014: A new perspective on health, employment and crime*.  
For source data see [http://skills.oecd.org/documents/OECD\\_Skills\\_Outlook\\_2013.pdf](http://skills.oecd.org/documents/OECD_Skills_Outlook_2013.pdf)

**Reading for pleasure** has been associated not only with **increases in reading attainment** but also with **writing ability, text comprehension, grammar, breadth of vocabulary, attitudes, self confidence as a reader, pleasure in reading in later life, general knowledge, a better understanding of other cultures, community participation, a greater insight into human nature and decision-making** (Clark & Rumbold, 2006; Howard, 2011; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997).

What has really struck me reading the different research on Reading for Pleasure is the fact the same message keeps coming out from the findings...**so what could we do as a school to further enhance our pupil's life chances?**



# Research Evidence: Only a quarter of pupils get the recommended reading for pleasure time

More than 5,000 schools in the UK and Ireland were part of the study where they looked specifically at the reading habits of than a million children. From the report it also stated that more schools are being urged to timetable reading for pleasure to grow this love for reading – to make lifelong connections to books – to improve adult life job prospects.

“The big message that is coming out of this report, and in other studies, is that when kids are reading for at least 15 minutes a day - and understanding what they are reading - you begin to see accelerated growth and you get optimal growth at thirty minutes a day.”

***James Bell, of literacy and assessment provider Renaissance UK, which produced the *What Kids Are Reading 2019* report***

The research carried out by Renaissance UK in 2019 struck a chord – just 15 minutes a day is all it takes to make accelerated growth but up to 30 minutes for optimal – basically the more time you can dedicate to reading for pleasure the better overall impact and outcomes it’s going to have for your child. Now as Head I’ve always been aware of the power of stories and vocabulary – my mantra when in the classroom has been ‘we read as writers and write as readers’.

**How could we improve the ‘love of reading – the want to read a certain book - and make it accessible to all pupils?**

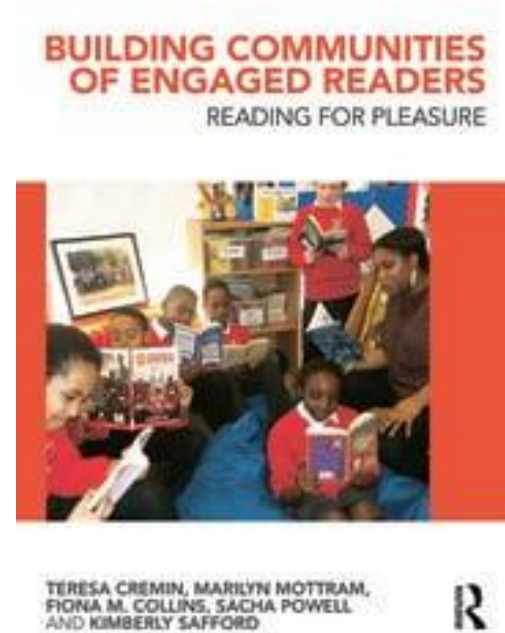


# Research Evidence: Reading for Pleasure

In the book *Building Communities of engaged readers – reading for pleasure*, Cremin et al. (2014) make the point that **“Reading for pleasure urgently requires a higher profile to raise attainment and increase children’s engagement as self-motivated and socially interactive readers.”** They go on to describe “Reader teachers” who are not only knowledgeable about books, but are **“aware of their own reading identities and prepared to share their enthusiasm and understanding of what being a reader means.”**

“Importantly it provides compelling evidence that reciprocal reading communities in school encompass:

- a shared concept of what it means to be a reader in the 21st century;
- considerable teacher and child knowledge of children’s literature and other texts;
- pedagogic practices which acknowledge and develop diverse reader identities;
- spontaneous ‘inside-text talk’ on the part of all members;
- a shift in the focus of control and new social spaces that encourage choice and children’s rights as readers.”



# Warden Hill Primary Reading for Pleasure Aim

So with all the evidence pointing towards reading for pleasure enhancing life opportunities it seemed that we needed to continue with a whole school approach to this project – all our pupils mattered.

Our Aim:

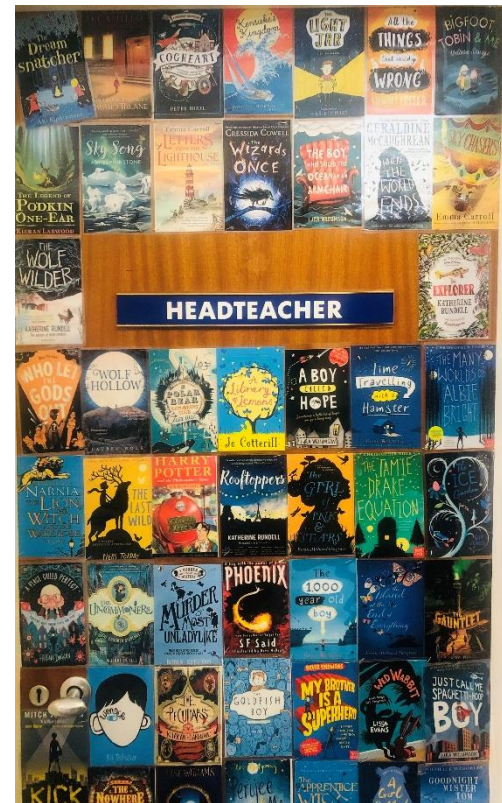
*To drive reading for pleasure initiatives to increase the opportunities to: engage, read, discuss and continue to embed life long habits and a love of reading within our pupils.*





# Leading by Example

We really started to push book PR. We became 'Reader Teachers' and **we created a display to capture what we were reading.** This really started to generate book talk with our pupils. I managed **to talk about or use a book in most of my assemblies** and the children loved hearing about new books I'd read. I'd been a member of the amazing @PrimaryScoolBookClub for a few years and would always have the book of the month displayed outside my office and it kept me up to date with all the amazing new books and authors out there. **We'd made real inroads to our infant and junior libraries** and the children loved coming and choosing new books each week, but in this case we were really 'preaching to the converted'. **How could we encourage and inspire all readers even the reluctant ones to get into a good book?**





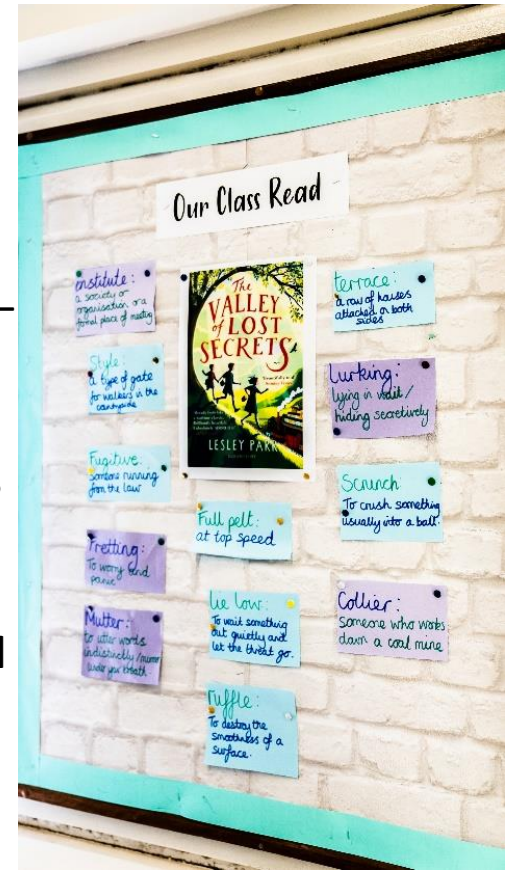
# The Introduction of the Class Novel

We sat together as an English team and pondered this question. We knew from our research that if we could read to our children daily and ensure that the time spent doing this was to be between 15 – 30 mins we were onto a winner. Thus the introduction to the class novel was born.

**We emphasised the importance of this ringed fenced time during the day** and the staff took it on board. They already knew how important it was to read to the children, but what we didn't have was a progressive carefully selected set of books for each class for the year. So in the end we completely overhauled our school reading curriculum.

**We now have in place a diverse reading curriculum where the children will be able to be immersed in different cultures and experiences, but above all of this, every child should now be able to 'see' themselves in the books too.**

The class novels have all been chosen for their high quality and high interest to a range of readers. The fact that the class teacher is reading it to them means that even the lowest 20% of each class is whisked away and immersed in the stories between the pages. **The impact has been huge – children asking parents to buy them the books or to use birthday money to buy the class novels too – and yes – even our hardest to reach children have been part of this book love!**



## Year 2

Silver Lanterns by Mary Hoffman

© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd *Journal of Internal Medicine* 270: 103–111

[illegible]

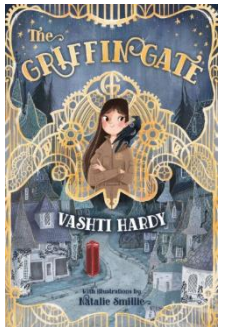
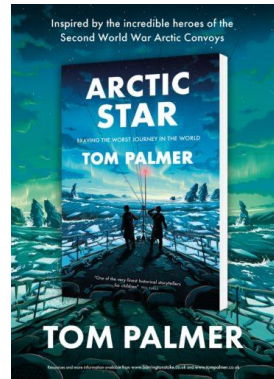
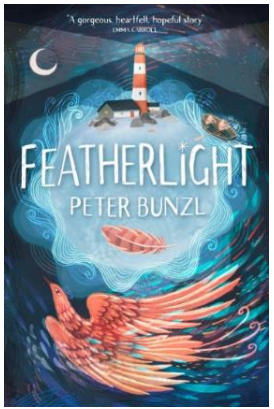
# Reluctant Readers in Year 3 – Pupil voice matters...

We noticed that there was a drop off in reading progression in Year 3. We held some pupil conferencing to ask the children what they thought about the books they were reading.

In essence **the lower 20% and SEND readers did not like the reading scheme books. They felt embarrassed to read them in class in front of their peers because they didn't look like 'normal books'.**

So we investigated different avenues about what we could do and came across the **Barrington Stoke Books**. We bought a few examples in and asked the same children to come see what they thought of these books.

We carefully selected the books so they would match their current 'book band colour'. **The children LOVED them! They felt like real books and looked like real books and they were proud to read them.** The impact is that we have our lower end of children inspired to read again – they have made progress through the books and most importantly they see themselves as readers.





# A chance conversation... and we have another Book Club!

I was talking with one of my Y5 team and they were really concerned about a boy in their class. Apart from the class novel he didn't engage with books. He's one of those drifter types (up and down to the bookcase at any opportunity to 'change his book' – I think we've all taught one child like this). So, I said I'd read with him in the mornings. In fact at **I ended up with 3 boys across the year group and rather than reading with them I read to them. They chose the book** (The Highland Falcon Thief) and they have hung on my every spoken word during these sessions. Anyone could have carried this out and had the same impact with the boys – they just needed 'hooking in'. It's just like the class novel but on a much smaller scale. They are now willing to take turns to read – there's no pressure on them at all as it's about me reading to them and it just works.

*"Before the book club I wasn't really interested in books, but since the club I know that there are loads of books out there to read and I'm really interested now. Y5 Pupil*

*"Really enjoy the club because of the time together, it's fun – really like the fact it's only 3 of us.  
Year 5 Pupil*

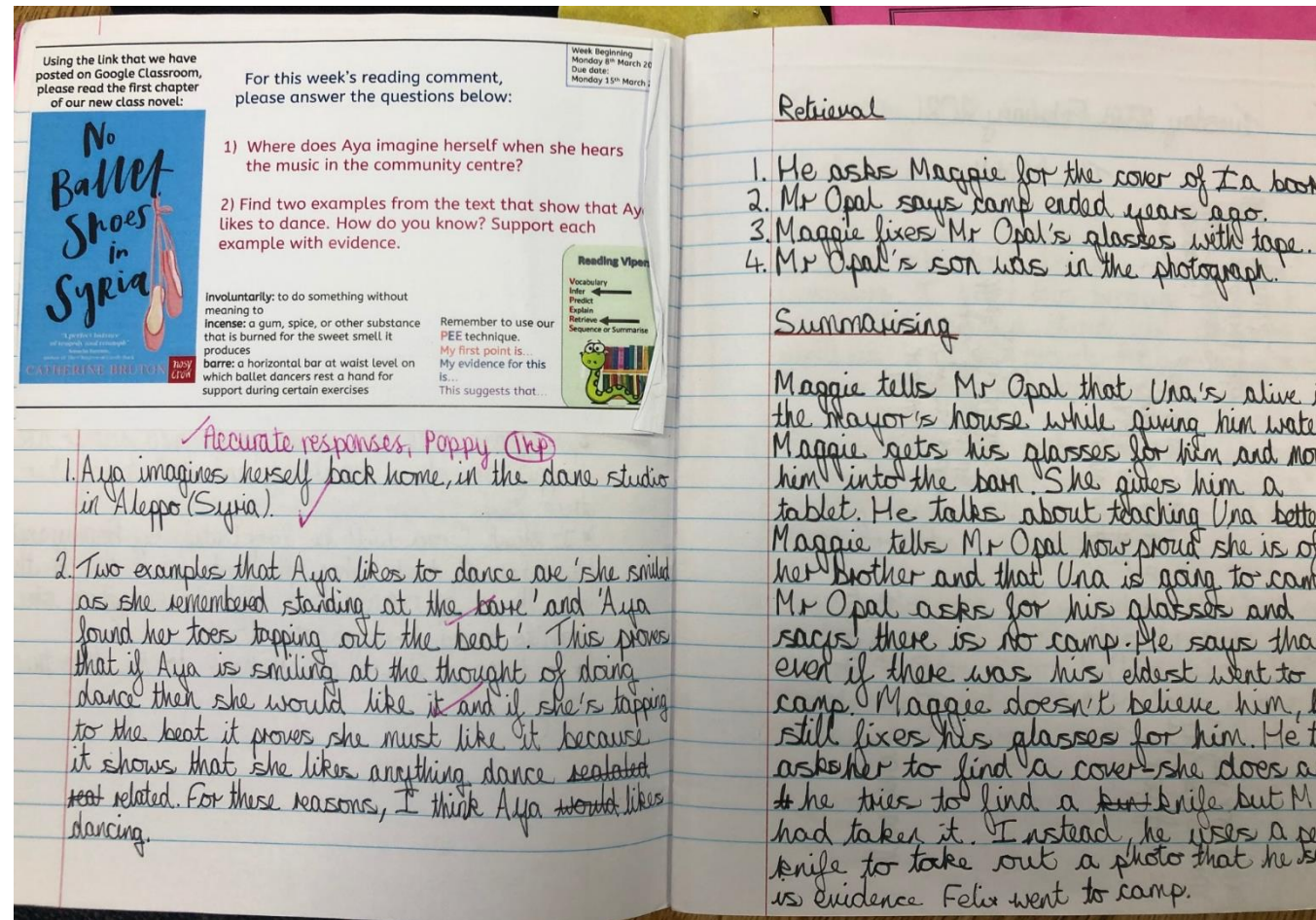


*"I wasn't really into reading I'd read about 4 pages of a Horrid Henry book and put it back. But reading the blurb of the Highland Falcon Thief I was really interested. I love this reading group and having a recommended book and Mrs Flooks really helped me"  
Y5 Pupil*



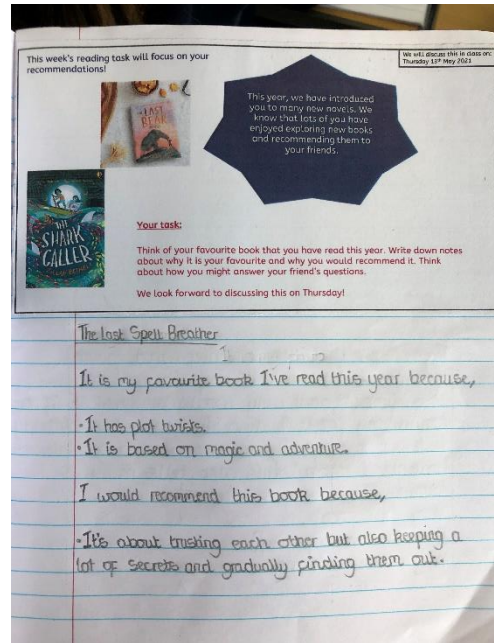
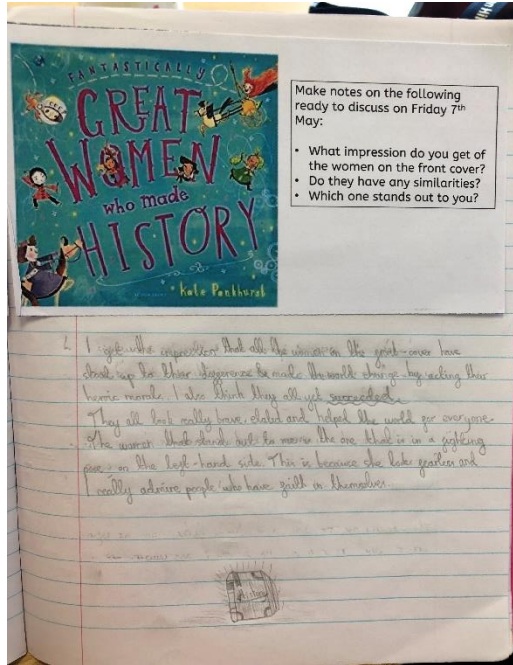
# No Comments Please...

As part of our homework we had always asked the children to record a reading comment which focused mainly in KS2 around the reading VIPERS. The vast majority of time it was fine but there would always be a few children who struggled. Talking to the children they also had mixed feelings – some loved completing the tasks, but **the majority were becoming switched off** – we were turning them against the books we were trying to promote. Really this type of exercise should be taught as part and parcel of the whole class guided reading sessions. So we made a change – one the children love and so do the teaching team! See the next slide...



Example of a KS2 Reading Journal – responding to VIPERS

# After the change to 'write your thoughts down for discussion'



The children now get a **Reading Journal task question** that is to be completed at home in note form, ready for a discussion in class. The purpose behind this is to motivate and inspire the children in reading snippets of texts from books that they may not have come across. Maybe they'll want to pick it up and read it! It's been a real success with the Friday book chat really engaging all the children – all voices are heard and yet again it promotes the love of books. It was a relatively simple change to make and certainly one for the better. In retrospect it looked like we were slowly switching children off books...

## High IMPACT:

- **Has generated book talk**
- **Has generated interest in the books** – children want to read them – they ask their teachers to buy them in for the class libraries
- All children have engaged with this (whereas previously they didn't all complete the comprehension task)



# Reading for Pleasure Reflections

Through the course of this project we have made 3 significant changes to our reading curriculum. The knock on effect has been huge! It forced us to have some honest conversations as a teaching team, in terms of what the purpose was, of certain aspects of our curriculum. With equal importance we have really listened this year. We listened to our pupils' voices. What they felt they needed in order to support them in continuing to read. For them to feel proud in the books they were reading, confident in reading their book and more importantly wanting to read their book...for pleasure.

It's been a huge team effort to implement all of our changes and I am ever grateful to my team, but we all know it's improving the life chances of all our pupils and what better outcome could you want? **We are very much a reading school, and I'm really proud of that.**

