

## St Marie's School, A Catholic Voluntary Academy



### Context

St Marie's School, A Catholic Voluntary Academy is an average-sized primary school in the southwest of Sheffield with 242 pupils. It is a wonderfully inclusive Catholic Academy, where children from a wide variety of backgrounds come together to learn, grow and flourish in a supportive, nurturing community. We have just over 50% of pupils whose ethnicity is described as white British, and the rest of the pupils are from 15 other ethnic groups. 37% of our pupils are EAL. Approximately 10% of our pupils are on the SEN register, and 13% of our pupils are Pupil Premium.

St Marie's converted to become a Catholic Voluntary Academy and a member of the Our Lady Seat of Wisdom Umbrella Trust of three Sheffield Catholic Voluntary Academies in October 2012. The school's catchment area is very wide, admitting pupils from five Catholic parishes across the city of Sheffield.

### Explore

*It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education. National Curriculum*

We have a well-established phonic programme in place to teach the children in our school to read. Regular assessments of phonics are undertaken by the KS1 Read Write Inc lead to track progress and to ensure the children are grouped according to their particular learning needs. All the staff who deliver the phonic teaching have appropriate training and are proficient in their teaching skills. The phonic screening results at the end of Year 1 show that the vast majority of pupils are on track to becoming fluent and confident readers.

Pupils in year groups Y1 to Y6 are assessed each term for reading and comprehension skills with a published scheme, and standardised scores are obtained for each pupil. The school has a range of interventions in place to support any child falling behind with their reading ability. These interventions are carefully monitored by the SEN teacher to ensure the outcomes are being met.

KS2 Reading SAT data show that the pupils at St Marie's make above average progress in reading, and the reading SAT scores are above average for both the local authority and the country as a whole.

Our staff has always had a clear understanding of the reading ability of their pupils, but knowledge of their reading habits and reading preferences was an area we knew little about.

Staff provided opportunities for independent reading, but these were not regularly timetabled.

In too many schools there is no coherent policy on reading overall; schools put in place numerous programmes to support reading, especially for weak readers, but do not have an overall conception of what makes a good reader... there is not enough curriculum time to focus on wider reading or reading for pleasure. *Moving English forward, Ofsted*

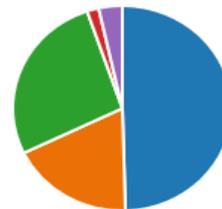
At St Marie's we had everything in place to teach our children **how to read**, but we could not confidently say that our pupils have a passion and enthusiasm for reading. Most teachers felt they knew little about individual reading habits or reading preferences.

At the start of the RfP course, we asked the children to complete a reading survey to provide us with a baseline for our project. The children were asked their opinions about reading, their reading habits, both in and outside school, their reading preferences, and the reading opportunities provided by their teachers. We found that approximately half the pupils enjoy reading and read regularly at home.

### 3. Do you like reading?

[More Details](#)

<span style="color: blue;">●</span> I love reading	57
<span style="color: orange;">●</span> 3-4 times a week	21
<span style="color: green;">●</span> It's okay	31
<span style="color: red;">●</span> I'm not bothered	2
<span style="color: purple;">●</span> I don't like reading	4



### 9. Do you read with anyone at home?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

<span style="color: blue;">●</span> Yes	57
<span style="color: orange;">●</span> No	58



Pupils should be taught to: participate in discussions about books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views courteously. *National Curriculum*

We found that the majority of children didn't discuss what they were reading with others.

20. Do you ever chat about what you've chosen to read at school?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

● Yes	41
● No	74



22. Do you ever chat about what you've chosen to read at home?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

● Yes	47
● No	68

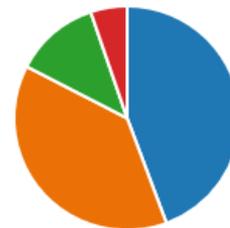


There was no consistency throughout the school about the frequency of reading to the pupils in school.

25. Does your teacher read aloud to the class?

[More Details](#)

● Every day	51
● Several times a week	44
● Once a week	14
● Less than once a week	6

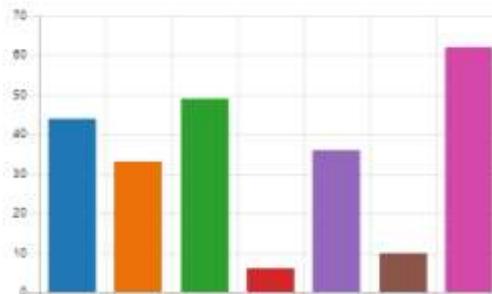


The children read for a wide range of purposes.

16. Do you do lots of different sorts of reading at home ?

[More Details](#)

● Book apps	44
● e-books	33
● comics	49
● blogs	6
● websites	36
● social media	10
● online games	62



Analysis class by class showed that these responses varied with the different year groups. Online games were the most popular type of reading, and this made us question the quality and value of reading with this genre. Observations of the pupils playing games showed that the children skip past the written instructions or quickly scan the information to continue

with the game. Instead, they worked out what to do during the game or learned from their peers.

Maryanne Wolf (Reader Come Home) has expressed her concern that when children read all the time on various games, apps, and social media sites, this leads to fragmented attention spans and it can hinder the ability to concentrate on an extended text. Staff needed to find out more about individual reading habits to identify those pupils who were not engaging in extended texts.

Children need to have both time to think and motivation to think for themselves, to develop an expert reading brain, before the digital brain dominates the reading. Maryanne Wolf

The staff completed a reading survey to identify strengths and areas for the development of our reading curriculum. It was clear from the information that the majority of the staff have limited knowledge of children's literature and different authors. The list of authors was mainly limited to well-established authors (Michael Morpurgo, Julia Donaldson, Roald Dahl, JK Rowling) and celebrity authors (David Walliams). Few KS2 staff was able to name five authors of picture books, and no member of staff could name five poets.

The staff was able to talk about the reading habits and preferences of pupils who were already keen and confident readers. **Their knowledge of reluctant readers was far less secure.**

Each class has a core 'reading spine' of quality texts which they read throughout the year with their class. All these books were chosen solely by the class teacher. These books are often linked to class topics. The vast majority of the books on the class reading spines were published over five years ago. The range of diversity in many of these books was quite limited. They mirrored the results of the staff reading survey.

**It was clear from this information that improving staff knowledge of quality texts was essential to promote a love of reading across the school.**

### Prepare

Before we joined the RfP project, I attended three training sessions (Closing the Reading Gap) led by Theresa Cremin. After each session, I emailed staff with the information covered and how it relates to our school. I identified a few easy changes and improvements that we could make immediately, and I made suggestions for staff to read books from their class library that they are unfamiliar with.

**The first day of the new school year was an INSET training day and the focus was on developing reading for pleasure. I revisited information from the three training sessions, and I encouraged staff to reflect on their understanding of reading for pleasure. We discussed why we teach reading, what reading opportunities we provide, and what the benefits are of these activities.**

Teachers were then asked to think about what information they will have to find out about their new class to address their needs.

**We needed to know which pupils:**

- enjoy reading and read regularly at home
- read well but don't like to read- we need to find out why

- read well but don't comprehend what they read
- don't read at home
- struggle with reading -we need to find out what specific skills they need to develop
- scored low on KS1 phonics test
- needed additional RW inc or other support/intervention in previous class to achieve expected level in reading

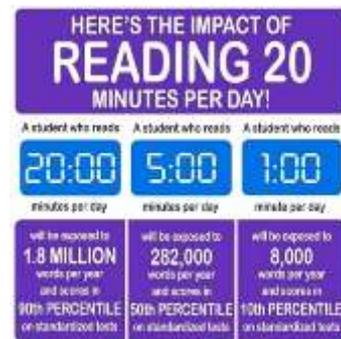
### Action Plan

**We created a change team of enthusiastic teachers and teaching assistants to drive the RfP project. Staff members were chosen to ensure we had an appropriate representation of different year groups.**

We discussed the initial findings from the staff and pupil surveys, and we identified the aims for this project. For each of our aims, we identified the actions required to achieve them. We then created a list of success criteria for staff to achieve to show that we have achieved the aims. From this information, we identified the intended impact on the children. The action plan was shared with staff and discussed at a staff meeting.

It was clear from our initial findings that we needed to engage with our pupils more to foster a love of reading among our school community. We needed to strengthen staff knowledge of the reading preferences, behaviour, and attitudes of our pupils. To do this we needed to improve the provision of reading materials in school, improve staff knowledge about books, improve accessibility to these materials, and provide sufficient curriculum time to engage with these materials.

The Reading for Pleasure project was explained to parents in the weekly newsletter, and further information about the project was shared with parents by class teachers at the September Information Meeting (on Zoom). Regular posts on the school newsletter gave additional information and guidance to parents about encouraging reading for pleasure.



The RfP project was discussed in class with the pupils and the purpose of the initial survey was explained to them. Reading displays were created in an area visible to the whole school to remind both staff and pupils about our project.



The message on the boards read **'Learn to Love to Read'**



Information for staff about reading was displayed in the staffroom, and quotes about the importance of reading for pleasure were displayed at various places around school.

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

New displays with a reading focus began to appear throughout the school.



Aim 1

To broaden staff knowledge of children's literature and other texts so that staff can use growing expertise to promote a love of reading across the school.

We recognised that we are not in a position to make book recommendations to foster a love of reading if we do not know enough texts and literature. It is our professional responsibility to read the books that our young people want to read.

'Teacher's 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)

The change team identified some of the actions necessary to achieve this aim. Further actions, in addition to the ones listed below, were undertaken by individual staff members as the project developed.

- Each class to receive a £100 donation from the HSA to research and purchase new books from new authors. Staff encouraged to refer to specific websites recommended to them including Booktrust.org.uk to support book choices.
- Staff asked to sign up for the monthly OU newsletter and use RfP website for further guidance
- Staff to find time to read books they offer to the children in class libraries and to remove any books that were not engaging or quality texts
- Staff encouraged to meet informally to discuss books and recommend books to one another (both adult and children's texts)
- The school library needs to be updated with new books, and old/tatty books should be removed. We need to decide if the current library system is addressing our needs.

## Aim 2

To expand staff knowledge of children's reading preferences, behaviours, and attitudes to strengthen reader relationships at all levels across the school.

'Knowledge of children's literature and of individual children and their reading interests is essential in order to develop young readers who can and do choose to read for pleasure'.  
Fiona Collins

Staff was asked to consider their current class reading provision on their timetable in terms of both time allocated and how this time was to be used by both staff and children. Several staff members had previously mentioned that reading time is fitted in around timetabled lessons, and it does not have regular slots on the timetable.

In Reception and KS1 there is a large amount of time dedicated to teaching the children to read. Once they can read, we need to continue to provide the same amount of time for reading because learning to read for pleasure is just as important as gaining the skills. Children only benefit from being able to read if they actually do read.

Several necessary changes were identified by the change team.

- To ensure reading for pleasure is given priority on the weekly timetable
- Each teacher should keep a log of what the children are reading in school and at home.
- Teachers should allow time for the children to have browsing time to make an informed choice for their next book.
- Staff should interact with children before, during, and after the reading sessions to show an interest in what they are reading, and to discover more about their reading preferences and habits.
- Staff should identify a focus group of children who do not read regularly/do not enjoy reading, and have open discussions with them about their interests, authors they like, books they have previously enjoyed, and what their general attitude towards reading is.

### Aim 3

To ensure the provision for independent reading is offered throughout the school and is consistent with the Reading for Pleasure guidance of being Learner led, Informal, Social and with Texts that tempt. It should include book talk with and between all members of our school community- staff, children and parents.

The change team identified different strategies to achieve this aim.

- Teachers should look at the whole school survey findings and the individual responses from children in their class to see what the positive issues and barriers are for reading for pleasure.
- Teachers should identify a focus group of children to work with, selecting from children who do not read regularly or do not enjoy reading. Teachers and teaching assistants should work regularly with these children to ensure they are reading texts that are appropriate for their interests.
- Reading for Pleasure is made a key part of our whole school development plan.
- A performance management objective is set for all teaching staff related to this project. *“To raise the profile of reading so the children read for pleasure across the school”.*
- Parents are provided with regular information via the newsletter about supporting their children to develop a love of reading.

- Teachers share ideas about changes to their reading provision and the impact it is having on the class.
- Teachers provide more opportunities to observe reading habits more carefully in a range of situations.

### Deliver

Our Reading for Pleasure initiative had a positive response from all staff, and there was great enthusiasm throughout the school for making changes to the reading curriculum and trying out new ideas. After the whole school INSET, all staff completed a pledge documenting what they would do to develop reading for pleasure among their pupils.

With the aims clear for everyone, and the action plan in place, Reading for Pleasure initiatives started to grow and spread across the school. *It is difficult to identify the most effective strategies employed as these varied between year groups. Also, children responded differently to the various strategies employed.*

#### Aim 1

**To broaden staff knowledge of children's literature and other texts so that staff can use growing expertise to promote a love of reading across the school.**

All staff began by looking at their reading corners with a critical eye. We all came to understand that reducing the number of books available and improving the quality of the books available was the way forward.

All classes benefitted from the purchasing of new books. These were introduced to the class in a variety of ways. Some teachers chose to read the first few pages of the books or read the first chapter, which prompted discussion and interest in the books. Other teachers shared the whole book with the class before adding it to the class library. Older children were involved in making suggestions about which books to purchase, giving their reasons for the books they suggested.

We created a book corner in the staffroom with donations of quality adult texts. This encouraged informal discussions between staff about books, and staff members began making recommendations to one another about particular books they have enjoyed reading and authors they particularly like.

**Year 1- The books are well organised, appealing, and accessible to the children** We have simplified our reading corner. We have fewer books out but all of the books are on display with their front cover showing rather than their spine. This has meant more time has been spent with the fewer books rather than children having more books to just flick through.



Impact - The children are more respectful of the books and it is always an area that is kept tidy. We are also making sure that there is a range of books that are phonically decodable for everyone.

**Year 2** We slimmed down the choice of books and we ensured there were quality texts on our topic. These were both fiction and non-fiction. The reading area was given greater importance in the classroom by relocating it we made it more exciting for the children to use and we provided comfy cushions. We also have reading area monitors who look after the books. We purchased some new topic-based texts and the children loved hearing these stories. Some were chapter

books, by well-loved authors. The children were involved in choosing the books. We also managed to acquire some magazines and newspapers suitable for the children to read.

Impact: the children loved reading a variety of books and enjoyed the new range of stories.

**Year 3** The class teacher researched new books and purchased a wide range of texts for the class library. She set herself a challenge to read at least one children's book per week until she was familiar with the vast majority of books available to the children. Several books were removed from the library and discarded. After several sessions of discussing the books with the class, the children worked in small groups to decide which books they wanted to keep in the library. The children began to donate their own books to the class library that they had enjoyed reading, recommending the books to friends with similar interests.

"I think that it is fun to get books recommended so that I know what to read next." Year 3 pupil.

**Year 4** promoted their favourite books to one another with their 'Bookflix' display.

**Year 5** I found that staff involvement has really encouraged the children to read more. The children seem engaged when we talk about the books we enjoy. They have also LOVED having the opportunity to suggest books for the reading area (HSA budget). I try to promote these when I add them to our bookshelf and read the blurb or first page etc. The children have also loved sharing their favourite authors and books. There are now numerous children who are so keen to read. They even try to read when we begin teaching a lesson or try and hide their book under the table!



**Year 6-** Limiting the books on the class bookshelf and getting rid of duplicates and books that no one in the class reads. I

took all the books off the bookshelf. I found that many were duplicates, books by the same author (David Walliams and Michael Morpurgo mainly), or books that had found their way

onto the shelf and stayed there untouched. When I asked the class, they didn't know what books were on our shelf. They had no ownership of the shelf. I chose around 10-15 books to display on the shelf, using book stands to display the front covers, not just the spines. I also made room for some magazines and newspapers. The books I chose to display were some that children had brought in from home and they were happy to share, and some books that I had bought using our Year 6 book allowance. I tried to make sure that there was a mixture (genre, diversity, reading ability, etc.) I tried to find time to talk to the children about each book so that they became familiar with the books on our shelf.

Impact-Children are more interested in the class bookshelf. They spend more time looking at the books as it looks more inviting (more recently published books, more of a range of books, books that they haven't heard of). They have a bit more knowledge about what books are available in the classroom, who brought them in, where they have come from, etc. They look after the bookshelf and keep it tidier because a lot of the books are theirs and not from the school library. I feel like it's easier to manage the bookshelf and it doesn't look as much of a 'dumping ground' for books!

During the INSET training sessions, staff shared their knowledge of different books with one another and inspired one another to read a variety of texts.

During Black History Month, a group of parents put together a box of suitable multicultural texts of their own to lend to the school. The box was passed around the classes and the books were shared with the children. Some of these books were then purchased for the school.

## **Aim 2**

**To expand staff knowledge of children's reading preferences, behaviours, and attitudes to strengthen reader relationships at all levels across the school.**

There is always a time pressure felt by staff to undertake 1:1 or group reading interventions during reading sessions. Instead, staff was encouraged to spend some of this time observing behaviour to identify the children who were not engaged in reading. Staff was discouraged from interrupting children who were engaged in reading to talk about what they were reading but were asked to engage with those who found it hard to settle to reading independently or with a partner. This time for teachers to stand back and 'observe' was powerful. It led to professional discussions about the children 'as readers' - something quite new for us to do.

Traditionally, especially in older year groups, the expectation during reading sessions was for the children to read quietly and independently at their desks. Talking was discouraged. Now, the children were able to share a book with a partner, find somewhere more comfortable to read and spend more time browsing the book corner before selecting a book. This time was given to discussing books as well as reading them.

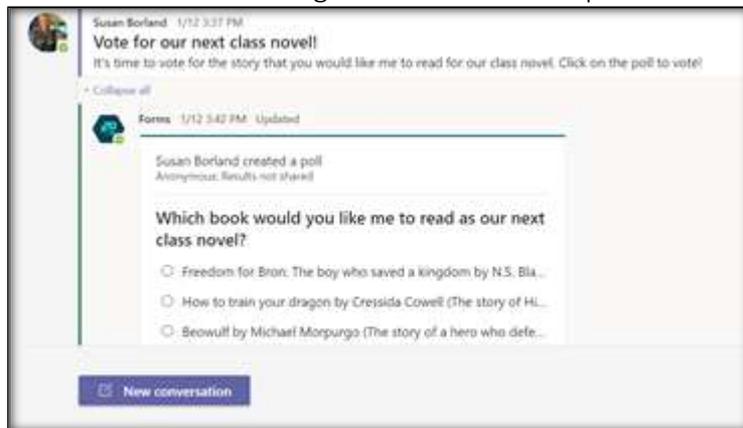
**"I like book chat because you get to know about other people's books, and other people will make recommendations to you." Year 3 pupil.**

The children began to make suggestions for future activities to encourage book chat.  
“I would like to get in a circle and when in it you tell the other people about your book.” Year 3 pupil.

Teachers in KS2 made a class book with one page per child for them to record the books they have read in class. This is used by the teacher to see not only what the children have read, but how many texts they have read. Children are encouraged to refer to it when deciding what to read next if they enjoy similar texts to someone else in the class.

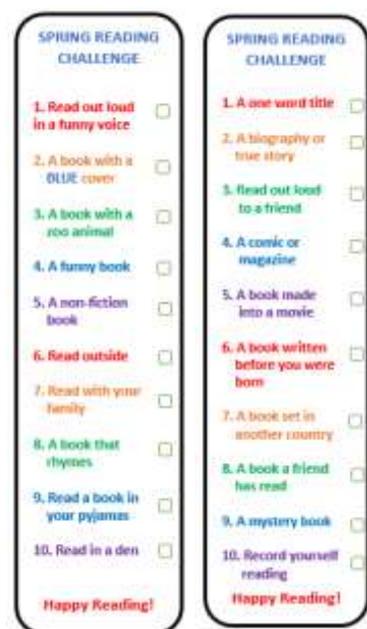
“I like it because I get to tell my friends about my book. It’s fun!” Year 3 pupil.

Staff began to listen carefully to the children about texts they enjoy. They started to ask the children to vote for the books they would like for their class reader. Reception children voted for their class story each morning, and the story from the previous day was made available in the book corner. The older children were given more ownership of the class reading spine.



We created a KS1 and a KS2 Spring Reading Challenge for all pupils, launched on World Book Day. Each child was provided with a bookmark with ten challenges to complete by the end of the Easter holiday. We created a large display at the school entrance to promote the challenge, and prizes were awarded to children who completed it. Photos of these children were displayed in school and in the newsletter to parents. Further reading challenges are planned for next year.

**Year 5** The children loved the reading challenge. Lots of children in my class got involved and parents even spoke to me about this too saying they saw a change in their child's reading during the challenge. We also drew our favourite book cover weeks ago and 'wore' these. However, that did not work too well so these we stuck to the backs of their chairs instead.





**Year 1**-Recommendations from staff and children in the class about books to read have had a positive impact. This is on a display in the classroom and it is changed regularly. The children can choose this book. Staff will have either talked about the book with the children, read it whole class to them or there will be a post-it note with emoji on it to let the children know more about this book.

Children have the opportunity to recommend a book using the mystery book bag where they will give the others clues about what this book is and then it is read later in the day when possible.



### Aim 3

To ensure the provision for independent reading is offered throughout the school and is consistent with the Reading for Pleasure guidance of being Learner led, Informal, Social, and with Texts that tempt. It should include book talk with and between all members of our school community- staff, children, and parents.

**Year 1** - Reading for Pleasure is always an activity in Provision (providing this at least 3 times per week) The children always have access to the reading corner during provision. On occasions, this is changed into a den to make it more appealing to read a book and there are teddy bears and toys to read to as well. Sometimes the play in this corner will be made book-related too. We are now also setting up areas to support a book. E.g. a table and tea set are put out with the book 'A tiger who came to tea'. The children used the book to re-enact it and take the story further with their play.

**Impact** - The children have more time to access the books and to access the book that they want. Often children will read the same book more than once which shows they have found a book that they found appealing. This time also gives them independent time to access the recommended books or books that have been read to the whole class.

**Year 3**- In addition to reading in class, we now visit the school library every week, half the class at a time. The children have access to many picture books, and several children enjoy revisiting and discussing stories they enjoyed when they were younger. Others enjoy sharing non-fiction texts in groups of two or three. Some children take the book they are reading in class up to the library and find a quiet place to read it. The children enjoy finding new books

from an author they have enjoyed, and they like to find books they have read previously to show me and tell me about them. This isn't a particularly quiet session, but all the children are fully engaged and enjoy looking at, discussing, and reading books. Feedback from the children during library sessions was very positive.

"It is even better than watching TV sometimes!"

"I read this book in Year 2 and I really enjoyed it so I want to read it again."

"Fiction makes me relax."

"I enjoy looking at the pictures. It is fun finding out what the characters are doing."

Throughout the school, the provision of inviting reading areas has grown.

**Year 6 - Extended reading for pleasure time**- I used to try and squeeze reading for pleasure (quiet reading) time into short sessions. I'd find that some children would get into it and read quietly, but many would waste the time and spend so long choosing a book or pottering around that by the time they had settled into their book, I had to stop them to start another lesson. When doing 'reading for pleasure' time recently, I've tried doing it for much longer because I think that it takes time for children to settle into reading time and become immersed in their books.

After a while, the chattering and whispering stops, and I look up and see everyone reading and fully engaged. Those that struggle to do this by themselves sometimes go into the library and do reading with an adult or peers. Even after a long period, when I need to stop them to begin a new lesson, I find that I don't want to because the children are so engrossed- they don't want to put their books down. The classroom feels so calm and relaxed during these sessions. Children have commented on how it makes them feel relaxed and how it feels nice to have that moment of calm in the busy, usually noisy classroom. The children can read more pages in a reading session and can 'get into it' more as it isn't interrupted. It is also helping to develop their stamina for reading.

## **Review**

### **Aim 1**

**To broaden staff knowledge of children's literature and other texts so that staff can use growing expertise to promote a love of reading across the school.**

Staff members have all improved their book provision in their classrooms. Book collections include new authors. Old books have been removed from the shelves in classrooms and the school library. Many classrooms now have fewer books for the children to select from, but the quality of the books available has improved. This has made it easier for the children to select books appropriately. Teachers are more informed about the books they provide for their class and they are promoting the books with their children.

**From the staff survey- How often do you talk about books -that are not being studied in literacy or guided reading sessions- with your class?** The responses from teachers who had previously ticked *rarely* or *never* changed their response to *sometimes*, and those who had initially ticked *sometimes* changed their response to *regularly*.

The same was true for the questions: How often do you provide opportunities for children to talk informally about reading and their preferences as a reader? and How often do you make tailored recommendations to particular children?

**Responses from the staff survey include:**

**“I have developed a wider knowledge of children’s reading material”**

**“I feel I know what the children are reading and like to read.”**

**“My strengths include reading aloud to the class, encouraging the children to make decisions about the books we read, and giving time for reading for pleasure”**

In September, 36% of children said they discussed books they are reading in school, and this rose to 44% in May. This is only a slight increase, and further investigation has revealed that many of the children who discussed books before now discuss them more frequently and in more depth. They are more actively involved in ‘Book Chat’ sessions. Several children who said they do not chat about the books revealed that they did talk about them when questioned individually about their reading habits.

Several teachers have read many different children’s books this year, and the reading spine for each class has been adjusted to include new books. The staff members who have read many books this year are enthusiastically talking to the children about them. Children have been allowed to decide from the new books which ones to include in the reading spine and which ones to make available for individuals to read.

There have been recommendations of suitable books between teachers of different classes, and we are hoping to develop this further when we no longer have to work in separate bubbles.

The range of authors included in the staff survey has increased to include several authors not mentioned in the initial survey. These include Kate DiCamillo, Michael Foreman, Vivian French, and Robin Stevens. Popular authors like Michael Morpurgo, David Walliams, and Julia Donaldson are still very popular authors, but they no longer dominate the bookshelves.

A further injection of cash is necessary to ensure the books we are providing are interesting and relevant to our pupils. This is particularly true with graphic novels in upper KS2.

## **Aim 2**

**To expand staff knowledge of children’s reading preferences, behaviours and attitudes to strengthen reader relationships at all levels across school.**

Teachers have listened to children’s opinions about how to organise reading sessions, and they have tried to cater to individual needs. Some children like it to be silent while they are reading, and they do not like distractions. Others enjoy sharing a book with a friend, discussing the content, and taking it in turns to read aloud. Teachers have tried to make the best use of different spaces inside and outside the classroom to cater to individual pupil needs.

**“I need it to be silent when I am reading because I can’t concentrate if there is any noise”  
Year 5 pupil.**

**“It is fun when a friend is reading with me. You get to look at the pictures together.” Year 1  
pupil.**

**“I’d like to read inside at playtimes sometimes.” Year 6 pupil.**

Promoting Reading for Pleasure looks different in different classes at different times of the day. No one formula works with all children in a class or all classes in a school. The detail of what reading for pleasure looks like in each class has become the responsibility of individual class teachers, teaching assistants, and students. This means that RfP is bespoke for each age group. All staff members are involved in driving the project forward and this means that many different initiatives have been implemented- far more than if teachers were all introducing the same initiatives suggested by the change team.

Working with Covid restrictions did bring challenges for leading this project. We were rarely able to meet as a staff throughout the year. The content of each OU training session was shared with the staff via email to ensure all staff members received the information. Specific articles and videos on the OU website were pinpointed for staff to access independently to support the work towards achieving our aims. The role of the change team was to ensure we were all working towards the same aims in our own parts of the school. The details of how this was to be achieved was up to individual members of staff.

Giving ownership to individual teachers increased enthusiasm for RfP throughout the school. Teachers have adapted their timetables and the use of other adults to address the needs of the children in their class. It is difficult to say which individual initiatives have had the most impact as different initiatives suited different children.

The children have become more involved in developing the reading areas in the classrooms and these are being used more regularly. Class libraries have been replenished with good quality books donated by the children and families after they have finished reading them. The children have been able to make specific recommendations to other children in the class from the books they have donated to the school.

Individual class teachers have developed systems to record what the children are reading, both at home and in school. The older children take responsibility for recording books they have read, while this is still the responsibility of an adult lower down the school.

Children who are seen to be reading the same book over a long period are questioned about the reason for this, and they are often encouraged to try different reading materials of a more suitable level or content. Children who tend to choose the same type of books e.g. Diary of a Wimpy Kid are challenged to read different authors. Stereotypical assumptions are not made, and children are questioned about their interests more when helping them to choose suitable books. Teachers listen more carefully to the children before making recommendations about books.

"I like playing football, but I don't like reading about it." Y6 pupil

The staff reading survey asked teachers to rate their knowledge of pupil reading habits. In the Autumn term, many teachers scored themselves as 3/6 for knowledge of reading habits in school and at home. The latest survey shows that most teachers scored themselves as 5/6. Knowledge of reading at home was slightly lower for some teachers who rated their knowledge at 4/6.

### Aim 3

To ensure the provision for independent reading is offered throughout the school and is consistent with the Reading for Pleasure guidance of being Learner led, Informal, Social and with Texts that tempt. It should include book talk with and between all members of our school community- staff, children and parents.

All teachers have made sure reading for pleasure is timetabled regularly, and is not just used at the start of the morning or afternoon session or when work has been completed. The library is used throughout the day as an extra reading space, and teachers and other adults can be seen in there, reading in small groups at different times of the day.

Several teachers commented on the survey that providing reading time was a strength.

"I regularly provide reading opportunities, both individual and shared"

"...lots more time spent researching new books and authors. Lots more books tailored to the children"

"I have given regular opportunities to read independently."

Displays promoting books have appeared throughout the school prompting informal discussions about them. An interactive Bookopoly display allowed staff and children throughout the school to share book recommendations and see what was popular in different year groups.



Several teachers noted that some children who had previously struggled to complete timed reading tests, now had the stamina and fluency to complete the test.

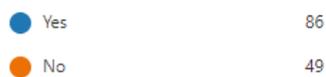
Throughout the project, parents were informed about the Reading for Pleasure initiative via the weekly newsletters. The benefits of reading for pleasure were explained, suggestions of how to engage their child in reading were shared, and reading successes both in school and at home were shared with the whole school community. This included book recommendations and reviews from individual children, and photos of the children who completed the Spring Reading Challenge.

During Parent consultation meetings, several parents commented that the impact of the Reading for Pleasure initiative had changed behaviours and attitudes of their children towards reading. They were now choosing to read rather than being told to read. The number of pupils saying their parents read to them at home rose from 54% in the Autumn term to 64% in the Summer term.

12. Does anyone read aloud to you?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)



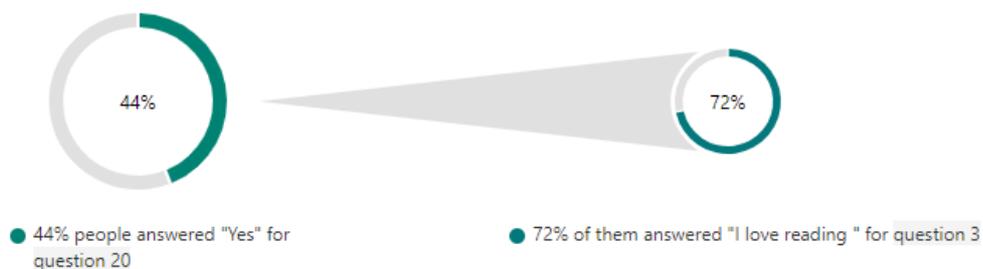
20. Do you ever chat about what you've chosen to read at school?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

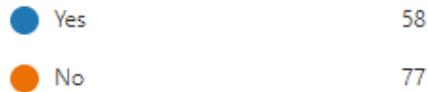


44% of people answered **Yes** for this question, and the majority answered "**I love reading**" for Question 3.



## 22. Do you ever chat about what you've chosen to read at home?

[More Details](#)



Each teacher selected a number of children to focus on throughout the year, but lockdown made it difficult to monitor or become involved in what some of these children were reading. Data was not available for all these children for both surveys. Of the data available for this focus group, no children changed their opinions about reading in Years 2, 5, and 6. This confirms that we need to continue to identify the children who most need additional support and encouragement to develop a love of reading. We have systems in place now to share information about children's reading behaviours and preferences and keep these children high on our radar.

Five out of 6 children from Years 3 and 4 said they loved reading in the autumn term, but parents and teachers had observed avoidance behaviour or lack of enthusiasm towards reading. They confirmed that they still loved reading in the summer term. 5 out of 6 children from Years 3 and 4 said their opinion about reading had improved. There was a 50% increase in the number of children who like reading in Year 1, and because of this, more children perceive themselves to be good readers.

"When you look at the blurb, you might want to read more and you might like to read the whole book." Year 1 child explained enthusiastically.

Almost all the focus children were more confident about recalling books they enjoyed, and they were able to talk more about authors or genres they particularly liked to read.

"In September I used to look at the pictures and I liked 'Where's Wally?' but now I get more into it. 'The World's Worst Parents' changed it for me." Year 3 child.

### Sustain

Throughout the Reading for Pleasure project, it has been stressed that this initiative is a permanent change in our practice. The changes we have made must be sustained and developed further in future years. It is too early to see the impact on reading levels with standardised tests, but this impact will be carefully monitored over the next few years.

Reading for Pleasure has been made a high priority on our whole school action plan this year. This was essential to ensure that the whole school community was involved in helping to achieve our aims. The action plan was agreed with governors initially, and information about this initiative will be shared with them at the end of the school year. Although it will not be given such a high status on the school action plan next year, we will continue to develop this

initiative with regular input during staff meetings, morning briefings, displays, and sharing of resources. We feel the momentum that the project has gained this the year will continue.

Performance management targets this year have included reading for pleasure, and feedback from these interviews will be used to help develop our next steps. **Pupil progress meetings will include a detailed analysis of the pupils we identified for the project. This information will be shared with the next teacher at transition meetings.**

We plan to use the information collected by the pupils in the summer survey as a baseline for next year. We will ask children to complete another survey next summer to enable us to continue to monitor attitudes, behaviour, and reading preferences within the school. Attitudes towards reading, and reading habits, will be shared with parents in the end-of-year school report.

A Reading for Pleasure bookstall and reading area was planned for the Summer Fair this year, but Covid restrictions have prevented this from happening. We will include it in future school fairs, and we will use the money raised purchase further books for school. This year, we have decided to use these book donations to provide book packs for pupils who do not have access to quality texts over the summer holiday.

We are hoping to give funding to each class teacher again to allow them to choose appropriate books for their pupils. In addition, we are hoping to have a regular subscription of comics to suit all ages. The children will be included in selecting the comics we subscribe to.

This year, we have been unable to meet together for whole school assemblies etc, but in the future we will hope to promote Reading for Pleasure with a range of whole school initiatives. We will continue to be involved in national and local initiatives to promote reading, including World Book Day, National Poetry Month, and the Summer Reading Challenge.

Looking at the staff surveys, several teachers have indicated a need to develop our knowledge and use of poetry in school.

Some staff members would like to involve parents more in school reading activities once restrictions are lifted, and others want to find more time in the curriculum to allow the children to read to each other and discuss books informally.

Our school senior leaders are planning to meet before the end of the term to discuss the timetable and to make decisions about curriculum priorities to ensure the curriculum is manageable in all year groups. Some current curriculum expectations will need to be removed to ensure sufficient time is available for Reading for Pleasure. Time is our biggest barrier to being able to successfully sustain provision for Reading for Pleasure, so we must address this problem before the new school year begins.