



Context

Our school St. Ann's Catholic Primary school is a voluntary Academy.

- 4 full time teachers, 4 teaching assistants
- 3 split (Rec/Yr1, Yr3/4 & Yr5/6) and 1 single year group (Yr2).
- 98 Pupils (smaller than average)
- 22% of pupils with special education needs (above average).
- % of disadvantaged pupils (above average).
- Large majority of children are white British and from a working class background.

Explore

Intention

A survey was conducted from Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 to establish the children attitudes and behaviours towards RfP

- Key findings –
 - Overall the majority of children expressed that they preferred form of reading was **online**.
 - The majority of children **didn't really like reading**, or find the right book to read.

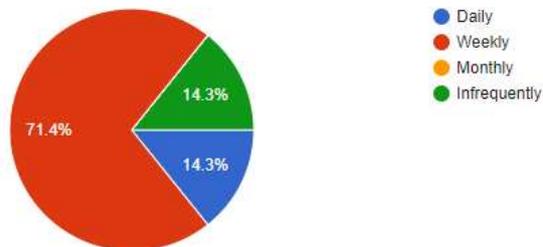
A survey was conducted for all adults in the school community to gather information related to knowledge and current practice surrounding RfP

- Key findings -
 - The teachers as readers' survey highlighted that our teachers' knowledge of children's literature was **limited to fiction** written by **well-known authors**.
 - Furthermore, the value our teacher put upon RfP was **minimal** allocating reading aloud to once a week if they could fit it into their overloaded timetables.

Due to Covid 19 and lockdown, this brought new challenges so we have decided to continue the project time line being from January 2021 to until December 2022.

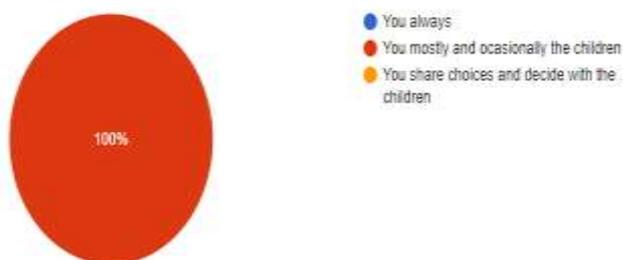
Staff Surveys

Reading for pleasure pedagogy: Reading Aloud



The data gathered from the staff questionnaire pointed to a clear starting point. A large proportion of our staff allocated time weekly where they read aloud to their class

Who chooses what you read aloud?



We also found that all the staff at our school chose what story to read at story time and none shared that choice with the children.

Teachers' knowledge of children's literature

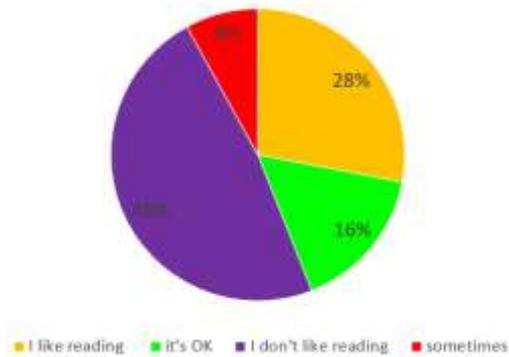
We found that teachers' knowledge of children's literature was restricted to that of well-known authors and lacked the knowledge and depth of modern-day authors. This impacted on staff confidence and how they could tailor specific recommendations to particular children because of their lack of knowledge the staff had on texts they could recommend.



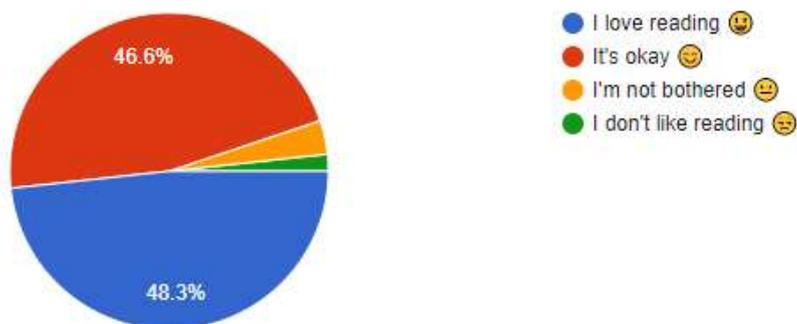
Pupil surveys

Do you like reading?

KS1



KS2



We found that a large proportion of pupils either loved reading or thought it was okay which meant that before the children were very enthusiastic about reading. Many of the children commented on their favourite books which again were based around well-known authors.

Reflecting on our findings we thought about the children who had said they didn't like reading? What was their reason for saying this? When looking at the written response to the question the children voiced that they did not always know what books to choose. This connection between both the staff challenges and the pupil challenges flagged for us a need to develop teachers knowledge of children's books and authors to broaden the spectrum and awareness of different genres, in order for them to make recommendations and develop their knowledge of the children in their class as readers.

Prepare

Intention -to create a clear and manageable raising attainment plan for our reading for Pleasure aims.

Our first intention for the project was to develop a raising attainment plan for the project to outline what our RfP project would look like and how we were going to achieve our aim. We decided that our aims for the project would support and build a reading community of keen and avid readers.

1. To expose staff to a wide range of authors so they feel they can make recommendations to children
2. To value the importance of informal book talk
 - To develop in each classroom a teacher's library of special books containing different genres.
 - To expose the children to different genres and authors and share books/ magazines/comic/ newspaper/ nonfiction/recipes from home with the children to tempt the reader.
 - To place a high value on RfP within the timetable to allocated read aloud teacher choice of book.
 - To have a structured time during the day to engage in informal book talk.

Implementation

The starting point for our project was to broaden the staff's knowledge of children's authors which would help the staff to know their children as readers.

We created success criteria for what we hoped this would look like by the end of the project

- To develop in each classroom a teacher's library of special books containing different genres
- To expose the children to different genres and authors and share books/ magazines/comic/ newspaper/ nonfiction/recipes from home with the children to tempt the reader
- To place a high value on RfP within the timetable to allocated read aloud teacher choice of book
- To have a structured time during the day to engage in informal book talk.

Aim 1 - To expose staff to a wide range of authors so they feel they can make recommendations to children.

We looked at the research evidence for reading for pleasure by the department for education looking at the strategies we could use to promote reading for pleasure. We questioned whether our teachers should first have a broad knowledge of children's authors before we found out about our children as readers, as the research suggested that an important factor in developing reading for pleasure is choice; choice and interest are highly related and relationships between teachers and children, and children and families.



As a staff we discussed what was needed to become a reading school, the outcome was

- Good knowledge and understanding
- Full range of children's literature
- Knowing our children's reading choices, tastes and preferences
- How to be an enthusiastic and positive role model of reading

The Teachers as Readers survey highlighted that our teachers referred most commonly to the more well-known authors such as Roald Dahl, Michael Morpurgo, Jacqueline Wilson and J.K. Rowling.

The effectiveness of any teacher in the encouragement of their reading habits, vary according to the proportion of the teacher's depth of knowledge of children's books. The teacher who read avidly, and who know and read children's books, invariably fosters a similar interest in a high percentage of their children. (Aiden Chambers)

With this in mind, we joined together three aspects of reading for pleasure which thought would have the most impact.

Active - To use active approaches to reading

The teachers modelled with another adult the importance of book talk to challenge lines of enquiry so the children can witness firsthand how to argue a point and use counter evidence to strengthen their suggestions and conclusions.

Impact of using active approaches

- We found that the more the children invest in reading with a switched on excited mind the more they will benefit and see the gains of working and thinking this way.
- During read aloud sessions strong habits of discussion were fostered to build resilience in dealing with opposing views and taking on board reasoned arguments from different view points.

Our aim was to develop an active reading classroom which is buzzing, drenched in talk, and this is beginning to dominate our practice on a daily basis.

Understanding - To understand the children's preferences in reading

During the initial survey we asked the children -What stories do children like? We found out that the majority of the children like computer games social media and watching clips on youtube. We decided that Reading needs certain conditions to be appreciated a bit of peace and quiet, a comfy spot and the right book. Our community of children are true digital young people.

One of the questions we asked ourselves were

- Are the children getting to the heart of the matter when reading on screen?

We researched this question and essentially the crucial aspect of reading is going beyond the words to find personal meaning. Internet information is quick- practically instant and there are constant temptations to be lured away from one piece of reading material towards the next hot story.

Children's voice

- The children expressed that the right book was hard to find.

Even as adults with a fair idea of what we like it can still be challenging some of the

Children's comments were -

- The front cover looks interesting but the first two pages are boring
- I've read something by this author before I think I'm going to like it... but oh no! I don't!
- I like these types of books but this is different... I'm not sure.
- This looks good ... ummm, maybe not but my mum would like it.

Teacher voice

- It looks so beautiful and makes a lovely coaster.
- I just can't find anything that is as good as the last book I read.
- I've found the perfect book, but now I don't have time to read it.

We concluded that children need help finding their own loves in reading. They often need permission to read cheeky material, such as 'Dirty Bertie' or 'I am not a loser' littered with poo and wee some pupils need more non-fiction linked to their interests e.g. Sheffield united football club or nearly extinct species many children simply need help to achieve their first buzz from a book. If they can fall head over heels in love with an author or the first book in a series, it can often ignite a love of books.

Experience - To experience a range of texts

As a school promoting a love of reading we needed to encourage the quality of our non-fiction texts. It was identified that as a school we have a shortage in our school library of quiz books, and general knowledge books.

One teacher expressed that we needed a copy of the classic Guinness book of records

These books may give the spark we are looking for to ignite a child's reading preference.

As a school we encourage our children to bring in their favourite non-fiction book to share with their friends, this gave their teachers a good understanding of the topics the children found interesting so they could point them in the right direction to continue to extend their knowledge and pursue their interests. As well as develop a wish list for new titles linked to the children's interests.

Impact

The 2 most successful strategies were

Teachers book of the week - Daily Jackanory

Outside the classroom on a little shelf with twinkling lights you will find the teachers book of the week this is the teachers recommendations for the children, who are invited to write a short note as to why they might want to read it, their responses can be posted in a secret ballot box which is labelled it could be you and the teacher can

then consider all the entries and decide which child deserves to be the first to read the book.

This has proven both a valuable strategy for both teachers and children. Supports the teachers to deepen their knowledge of children's literature and creates excitement amongst the children as they wait to find out who will be chosen to read the book first.

Staff meeting book blather

Throughout the RfP project, we began each staff meeting with a book blather, which is now becoming firmly embedded into our practise and all staff member are enthusiastic to share their increasing knowledge of books and different authors.

Staff meeting book blather

Aim 2 – To value the importance of read aloud and its crucial link to RfP

Enthusiasm – To foster reading loud and teacher modelled sessions

As a staff we decided that we need to hold children's hands, open their eyes and steer their imagination to delightful worlds waiting to be discovered and explored within different books. Reading enthusiasm was modelled by all teachers and teaching assistants. As a school we engaged in and celebrated world book day and national poetry day to build on the enthusiasm of the children who are excited about books.

Read aloud regularly - To listen to variety of texts read aloud

We allocated time within our timetables to make regular opportunities for reading aloud to our children because we believed as a staff that it was important to demonstrate to our children that a story has different rhythm, tone and intonation to nonfiction and is different again to poetry.

The children needed to experience language and let it wash over them so they can hear the differences and begin to connect with writer styles and tones.

Listening to all types of genres read by the teacher 10 minutes everyday between FS and Y6 proved to be an essential part of fostering a love of reading for pleasure. This time within the timetable was relaxed and calm. It was made clear that the teacher didn't need a learning objective and this session would not be a time to quiz children with probing questions or an opportunity to deconstruct the text for features or language. This reading slot would be a chance for the children to engage with the words and let language wash over them.

We placed a high value upon Story time demonstrating a love and a passion for wonderful books, inserting life into words and bringing the books to life through expression gestures and rhythm.

Importance – to develop expressive reading in class

As an SLT we encouraged the teachers and teaching assistants to show some passion when reading loud. We discussed the best ways to show some passion when reading aloud.

- we concluded at the beginning of a longer section of oral reading or starting up after a break for discussion.
- Reading the first few sentences yourself models expressiveness and helps engage and sustain interest in the text by getting it off to an exciting start.
- We encouraged the teachers to bring energy to reading aloud to excite and hook the children in.

Children in EYFS and KS1 the children began to practice reading aloud, especially to their peers this has helped to develop their confidence as well as helping them to improve their articulation.

Role playing and Reading like a teacher has also helped their reading personality grow.

Pupil book talk - to have meaningful conversations about books

We have given young children frequent and rich conversations about books to support them to become skilled at both interpretation and the development of giving their own personal responses. As teachers we facilitated these discussions around reading, fostering the children's comprehension and questioning skills. By providing the children with the skills to gain correct information from texts so that they can follow the story and gain a deep understanding of the events evolving.

Fewer extracts - To look at whole texts

In KS2 it came to light that the children were engaging in extracts snippets and excerpts because the children expressed that they find the jump from a book such as 'Flat Stanley' to more challenging texts difficult.

Through discussions the change team concluded, that the children needed to get lost in a book cover to cover start to finish. But the children were shying away from doing this because they didn't accept the challenges of reading longer texts.

The teachers in KS2 began to scaffold this for the children to support them to embrace the challenges within the books targeted at ages 9- 11 and beyond.

We are just beginning to see some impact in this area we began to see some of the children who found these challenges challenging and who were not interested in reading because of these challenges these children are beginning to grow in confidence because of the books we recommended to them the books.

Sustained reading - To build reading pleasure stamina

During reading aloud the children have begun to make a distinction between actually experiencing something in real life and reading about it. In KS2 the teachers have expressed that online reading during lockdown didn't build stamina and found the children became easily distracted and the children often began skim reading. As a result we as a team have learnt that reading a book is more likely to engage children and support their development of reading for pleasure.

Impact

Teacher impact

The reading for pleasure culture at St Ann's is becoming a positive part of the daily timetable, especially within KS1. The teachers are placing a high value upon nurturing and developing a love of reading in the children.

Teachers' knowledge of children's literature is developing, and the teachers are becoming more confident in making recommendations to their children as a result of their developing knowledge and consistency of approach.

This has been enhanced through initiatives and teacher action to increase reading opportunities. The read aloud sessions have become more engaging so they capture the children's imagination, and teachers libraries have been developed over the last year to now become the 'beating heart' of each classroom.

Children impact

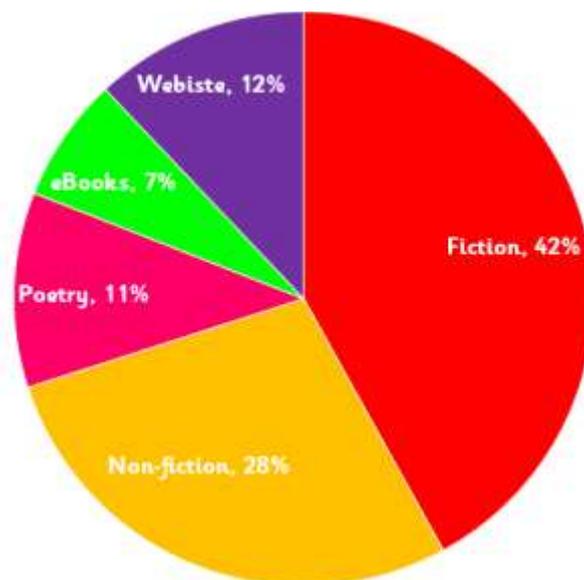
Initially the children demonstrated weaknesses in structuring their ideas and communicating their understanding of texts.

Although the majority of the children said they liked reading initially, observations carried out around school at the beginning of the project did not reflect this.

However, now during learning walks it is more evident that the children, especially in KS1, are engaging more in Reading for Pleasure as they can often be seen

- [Sharing books with their friends](#)
- [Bringing n ther fvourite book from home to share](#)
- [Engaging in vote for a story and offering explanations for their choices](#)

Now they are wanting to develop Reading for Pleasure areas within the outdoor spaces – as reported by the school council. The children are using different statements to express their preferences



The majority of the most vulnerable children at St Ann's did not enjoy reading, some even express that they did not have books at home. Through the reading for pleasure project we have learnt that children do not have to like all books but we as teachers have to help the children find the books that do appeal to them.

This has been so true when developing our reading curriculum to promote a love of reading for all children especially the most vulnerable. Developing a positive relationships with these children and engaging in discussion centered around them and their interests has opened many doors for these children and the world of books.

Next year

- Develop parental engagement
- Embed strategies deeper within KS2
- Continue to allocate specific time within the timetable for RfP
- Reading environments
- Budget for books
- Library

Reading for Pleasure will become embedded within the SDP each year from here on in!