



Mill Hill Community Primary School

Context

Mill Hill is a one form entry school of 173 children, who are predominantly White British. We are located in a market town in North Yorkshire, with a high percentage of pupil premium children. We also have a number of refugee children from Afghanistan, Syria and a number of additional children with EAL from Eastern Europe. School is located just behind the high street and next door to the Police Station. Many children from our local catchment area do not attend our school but rather attend other schools that are located on the other side of the high street. The majority of our children, come from single-parent families with low income/low-skilled jobs who live in local authority housing. We pride ourselves on the level of pastoral care that we offer and provide for our children and families, and have very good relationships with Early Help and Social Services as a result. Our children require a high level of social and emotional support from all members of staff in order for them feel safe and secure and thus begin to be ready to learn. For a lot of children, getting to school on time and consistently attending school, is a challenge.

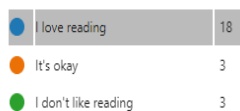
Explore

Intention: define the problem and establish a baseline

- We used surveys for both children and staff to identify their attitudes towards reading and their knowledge of authors and illustrators etc. The data showed that the majority of children said they enjoyed reading and regularly read at home. Staff surveys showed that they were not comfortable with recalling recent and current authors and that our knowledge of authors was quite outdated. We also recognised that we don't promote our own love of reading as many of us don't read for pleasure during term time. The flexibility of timetables also impacts our mind-set to feel that we can spend time just sharing and enjoying books without their being a curriculum focus.

2. Do you like reading? (0 point)

[More Details](#)

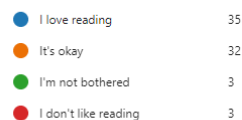


KS1



1. Do you like reading? (0 point)

[More Details](#)



KS2



- We also used staff observations as we were surprised at the amount of children who said they enjoyed reading and read regularly. Reading records showed that the majority of children who are below ARE, are not reading regularly at home although they said they did. We also took into consideration reading behaviours seen in school and how there was little care taken in looking after books, selecting new books and keeping reading areas inviting. There are also only a few children in each class who regularly choose to change their reading books without prompting. During IRT, there is a high percentage of children who quickly lose interest, often want to change their book because 'they don't like it' and will repeat this process in a day or two. Staff are aware that this is usually done as an avoidance tactic. We have a high percentage of Pupil Premium children in school who are not from a literate background and therefore do not have access to texts of any kind at home. Children will tell staff that they don't have books at home, but no one said this on their survey. Lots of children seem overwhelmed by the amount of books available in the library/reading corners as they are not able to choose a book that they enjoy for a sustained period of time. Perhaps they are aware of how to choose a book that suits them.



Prepare

Intention: creating a clear, manageable plan for achieving your RfP aims

*The children need to opportunities to read in an inviting and engaging environment that meets their needs. This will tempt our children to read and motivate them to want to become a part of our reading community. Because many of our children do not have opportunities to read at home with an adult (many parents are illiterate and / or have negative attitudes towards reading and school) we have decided that **it is our responsibility to provide children with the time and environment in school that will encourage a love of reading**, in the hope that that this will inspire them to choose to read in other environments and situations.*

- **Aim 1 - Pedagogy: Social reading environments** (To improve children's reading behaviours by developing social reading environments)
 - Creating social and engaging reading environments around school both inside and outside as many children said they preferred to read at school
 - Promoting high quality texts in a variety of genres
 - Improving our staff knowledge on texts and authors for at least the ages of children who we teach regularly
 - We want to see children choosing to read
- **Aim 2 - Knowledge: To improve teachers knowledge of authors and texts**
 - By the end of the project, **we want our staff to feel empowered to help children to make more informed book choices** that will hopefully break the cycle of children constantly changing books that they are not interested or invested in.
 - We want our children and adults **engaging in book talk together** building a shared interest, strong relationships and voicing their opinions. This is really important for our children so that we can empower them and increase their self-esteem. Success for us isn't about being able to reel off a list of authors for children but rather **be in an informed position to talk to a child about the book they're reading and be able to recommend books more easily** – this is still an area that we need to work on. To help us we enlisted our change team which consists of a range of adults across year groups, two of whom are parents and have children in the school.
 - One of our support staff had expressed quite a negative attitude towards RfP so we decided to try and change this by including her on the team.
- **Our Action Plan:**
 - All classes to develop inviting reading corners
 - Reading ambassadors to do a learning walk to suggest ways we can improve our areas
 - Recommended read books to be bought for each class to reignite reading
 - Staff to begin to build time into their timetable where RfP can happen without other constraints impacting this
 - Staff discussions with children about book choices, supporting them to make decisions that are more informed and has the potential for them
 - We want all our children to see themselves as readers. We would like our children to choose to read as a source of enjoyment and to see reading as a community of which we are all a part of.
 - **Our main priority for all children is to get them excited about reading time with their friends and identifying how it is that they like to read.**



Deliver

Intention: implementing your development plan and ongoing documentation of impact

<u>Aim 1 – Social reading environments</u>	<u>Aim 2 – To improve teacher's knowledge of texts and authors</u>
- Reading ambassadors – learning walk	- ***ERIC across all classes for at least 10 mins a day –
- Recommendations area in reading corner	- ***Recommended read boxes of ARE and mixed in each class
- ***Book cases/ladders to display books in exciting ways	- Staff lanyards – “I am reading...” promoting book talk
- ***Allowing children to move in reading for pleasure time (laying on the carpet, sharing a book with a friend or group, reading corners)	- Staff room reading area – change team and RL looking through books at lunch to promote book talk about authors and texts
- Teacher promoting a book and sharing with a group	- ***Teacher promoting a book and sharing with a group

- This has been added to further by providing a range of texts that are above and below the year group. Eg in the Year 5 class we have RfP 3, 4, 5 and 6 ARE texts. Once children have finished their ‘phonics reading journey’ they then enter the RfP. Children aren’t necessarily told what number they are to read, we are trying to support them in making informed choices on the type of book, and what kind of challenge they want from their next text. We know that as adults, you don’t always want to read the hardest book, sometimes a picture book is really enjoyable so we wanted to try and mirror this without restricting children’s progress. **In some cases, children may have two books: a reading for pleasure book that they are sharing with adults or friends, and a reading book that they are reading that is at their level but still challenging.**
- Staff have been encouraged to read texts from their age group box. There has been much more book talk in the staff room amongst staff’s personal reading choices **and staff have begun bringing in their own books and swapping between each other.** We still need a focus for staff to be on children’s texts too and despite their being a book shelf with inviting and beautiful books on display, the same staff go into the staff room (and the same staff don’t) so these are still not being engaged with.

pleasure time love school
got more books quieter fun
reading corner reading
peaceful at home people



Review

What we did that worked really well:	Impact on the children/staff/focus children:
Book cases/ladders to display books in exciting ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Easy for children to access *Not overwhelming *Books on 'display' changed regularly to reignite books
Allowing children to move in reading for pleasure time (laying on the carpet, sharing a book with a friend or group, reading corners)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Wasn't silent: laughing, whispering about their books and sharing their favourite facts. *Wanting to share with adults too. *Relaxed
ERIC across all classes for at least 10 mins a day –	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *All children listening to someone read an ARE text *Engaged and invested in class novels *FC requesting sequels to be ordered and other texts by the same author
Recommended read boxes of ARE and mixed in each class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *FC in Y5 requested a sequel from independent choice book. *FC and other children reading at any given moment – keeping books on desk for easy access *All children able to choose a book for them – beginning to see themselves as readers
Teacher promoting a book and sharing with a group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Building a community of readers *Lots of boys choosing to do this – not focus children *Book talk between that group of children *Children wanting to continue that book recommendation or re-read/share *Children who were not choosing appropriate level books were beginning to

- **Focus children:**

- *Our observations showed that amongst our focus children, reading behaviours had improved greatly. There were a number of children in UKS2 who have requested sequels or additional titles from an author that they have enjoyed. This was pretty much unprecedented in our school before the programme! **Children, including our focus children, have a more positive attitude to reading now as their behaviours have changed:** children are now choosing to read at times throughout the day such as transition times, or when other adults are reading aloud. They also have an opinion on what class book they would like to read... or wouldn't!*



- **End of year monitoring:**

- *Our surveys showed that more children are choosing to read when other options are available. This was confirmed at times such as indoor play when there are other activities such as Chromebooks or games on offer.*
- *Our investment in books has probably been our biggest success and this has shown in the children's surveys, but also in their behaviours: Books are in a better condition and children are creating lists of names for who is next in line to read popular book titles.*

Which reason is closest to why your opinion of reading has changed? (0 point)

[More Details](#)

- We have better book choices now 30
- Our reading corners are comfy 17
- We can share our books with ou... 12
- People recommend books now ... 14
- None of these - write your ans... 5



When you have spare time, do you choose to read?

[More Details](#)

- Always 7
- Often 19
- Sometimes 37
- Not very often 16



- *Teacher surveys have also been useful to summarise our journey. 100% of staff who completed the survey confirmed that they feel more knowledgeable about children's authors and now feel more empowered in supporting children make informed book choices.*
- *Their surveys also confirmed along with the children's, that there is not just one aspect of what we're doing that explains why we have made progress; rather a culmination of different strategies have appealed to the different readers in school.*
- *Members of staff also commented that they believe that reading being more visible in school has helped to promote and build our community of readers.*

Which do you think has been the most influential change to improving our children's reading behaviours at school?

[More Details](#)

- Recommended read boxes 5
- Reading corners 2
- Timetabling RfP (if you do this) 0
- Book talk between staff and chil... 1
- Allowing children to move in Rf... 0



Sustain

Intention: review and plan for embedding implementation and impact in future years

Taking part in the OU whole school RfP programme, has highlighted to us **the importance of how a culture of reading needs to be offered if we want children to enjoy reading.** We can't just expect children to enjoy reading because we do, especially if they don't *know* that we do, or *why* they might like it too. **We need to engage our children in positive reading experiences that can help them understand what aspects they like and how they like to read.** We feel that it is really important for us (as teachers) not just to assume that a love of reading will develop naturally; we need to facilitate and be a bigger influence over children's reading experiences. The whole reading for pleasure project stems from the notion that reading is the path to success. At Mill Hill we all feel it is really important



for everyone to have their own understanding of what 'success' is for them: this will look differently for everyone and we need to be able to accommodate this so that all of our children are successful in a way that means something to them.

Next year we are aiming to place a focus on supporting all staff in having knowledge and confidence in supporting children to make an informed book choice without demolishing their self-esteem: "No you can't have that because it's too hard" is a phrase that we want to avoid using at all costs. **We are aiming to continue embedding the reading practices and behaviours that have been introduced this year,** and consolidating these within both staff and pupils. As a starting point, we are planning on mirroring the success we have had with other rigorous reading practices introduced in KS1, and promoting more emphasis on ensuring that staff timetable RfP into their week where it allows for informal book talk, sharing, and getting caught up in our stories. **We are planning on keeping a change team in school,** with the potential to reduce the numbers so that it is easier for us to meet. We are hopeful that this will keep RfP in the forefront of our minds and be motivated to keep up to date with our progress.

One of the main challenges from this project has been managing staff's poor attitudes towards the importance and impact that RfP has the potential to have. In the classes that we have had the most impact, **it has been where members of staff have been enthusiastic and have been putting into practice strategies that we have put in place.** It is our goal in the coming years, to continue to raise the profile of RfP in all classes around school.

Our next steps:

Staff focus:

- *How can we continue to include/motivate/encourage members of staff who may not see the value in RfP?*
- *Timetabling RfP 'time' in all year groups*

Children:

- *Developing outside reading areas so that we have more opportunities to read*
- *Building on the foundations from this year: continuing to focus on including our disengaged children in RfP*
- *After school 'Coffee and read' sessions for parents and children so we can share and promote the importance of reading with families at home.*