

EXAMPLE OF PRACTICE

Developing a culture of Reading for Pleasure
School Reading Journey: Session 2021-22

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@StMarysML9





CONTEXT

I am currently out of class for a year as a Recovery Teacher. I have been teaching for 20 years within South Lanarkshire Council. Since 2010 I have worked in St Mary's Primary in Larkhall. It is a small school with just over 70 pupils spread across 4 classes. Improving engagement in reading and creating a reading culture that raises attainment and closes the gap for our most disadvantaged pupils is one of our priorities this session on our school improvement plan. We began our RfP journey in August 2021 when the school library was re-launched and I became a TRG member in October 2021. I planned to **reintroduce the lending library** to the children and develop a culture of reading for pleasure in every class and in the wider school community. Staff are highly motivated to develop a culture of reading for pleasure and have engaged in new initiatives and routines throughout the school.

OU Research Inspiration and Rationale

I used the 5 key areas central to developing a culture of reading for pleasure as outlined by Cremin et al in 2004, as part of the Teachers as Readers research:

- Teachers' knowledge of children's literature and other texts
 - Teachers' knowledge of children's reading practices
 - Reading for pleasure pedagogy, which includes: *social reading environments, reading aloud, independent reading and informal book talk*
 - Reading teachers: teachers who read and readers who teach
 - Reading communities
- 

SURVEYS

Staff, learners and parents/carers completed surveys about their attitudes towards reading from the OURfP website. It was evident from the results that **most staff did not use their local library or read contemporary children's books**, however they were keen to be able to recommend interesting and enticing books for children to read. Of the parents who completed the survey, 81% said they felt it was very important that their child read for pleasure and 76% said they would like to read with their child more often. 57% of parents did not use the local library, for a variety of reasons including the opening times clashing with working hours, distance to travel and preferring to purchase books rather than handing them back. 31% of our learners who participated in the survey said they read for pleasure every day and 100% have books at home. 21% said that they visit the local library in person.



AIMS

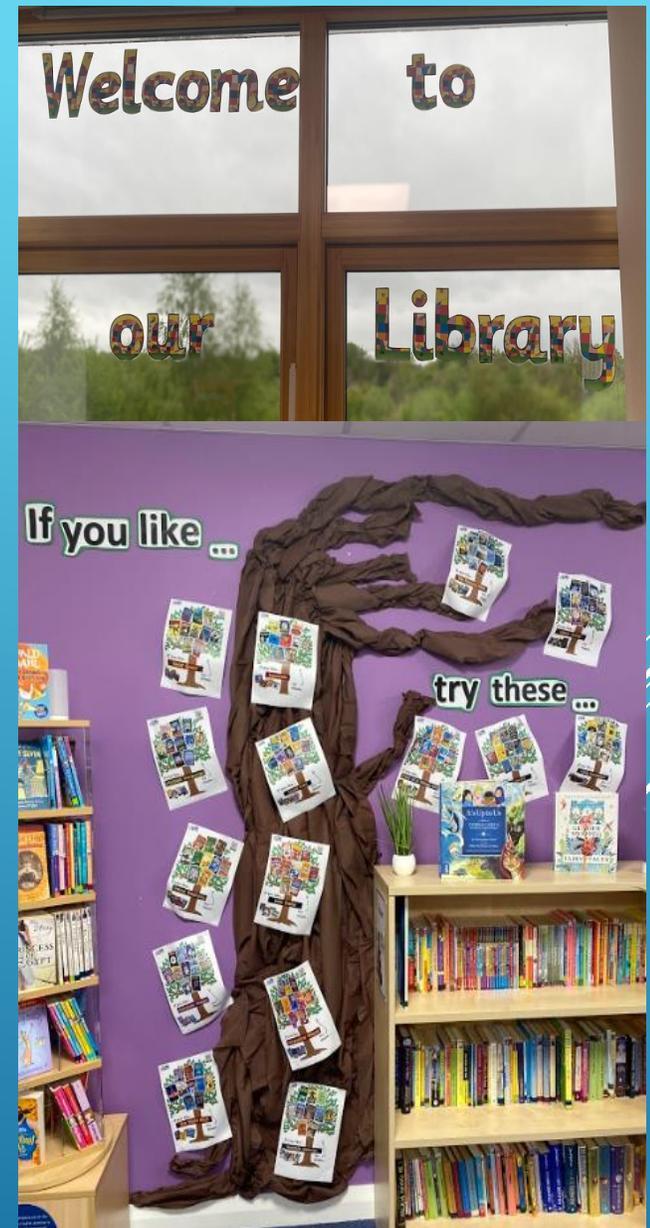
We decided to focus on the following as part of our journey to developing a culture of reading for pleasure:

- develop our school library into a relaxing and inviting space for our learners to read and borrow books from
- develop comfortable, social reading areas within our classrooms/learning spaces
- establish a Reading Leadership Group comprised of pupils and staff
- incorporate daily time for reading for pleasure in our timetables (TREE Time)
- develop teacher knowledge of children's contemporary literature
- be able to make recommendations to our learners based on their interests

OUTLINE

SCHOOL LIBRARY

Our existing school library was in an awkward space within the school ICT suite. The books were cluttered and needed to be carefully curated. We asked parents for donations of good quality books and were very lucky to receive a varied selection. Money raised from a sponsored school event was also put towards purchasing new titles. As I had recently become a TRG member, I was constantly looking for book recommendations from fellow members and Twitter. Once established, our Reading Leadership Group also helped to create a book wish list after talking to their classmates. Our library was successfully relaunched and pupils are now able to borrow books on a fortnightly basis. Along with our Reading Leadership Group, we create a **monthly book focus display**, such as 'Celebrating Female Characters' and 'Step into someone else's shoes' and have a related question on our 'Book Talk' wall to generate informal book chat when pupils visit the library.



DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF READING FOR PLEASURE

Relaunching our school library. The aim was to create a relaxing and enticing environment within the school, where children are offered a wide variety of texts to enjoy.

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Room 1 choosing books on their first visit to our school library. They loved relaxing while reading!
[#readingforpleasure](#) [#aplacetoGROW](#)



5:53 pm · 25 Oct 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

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@StMarysML9

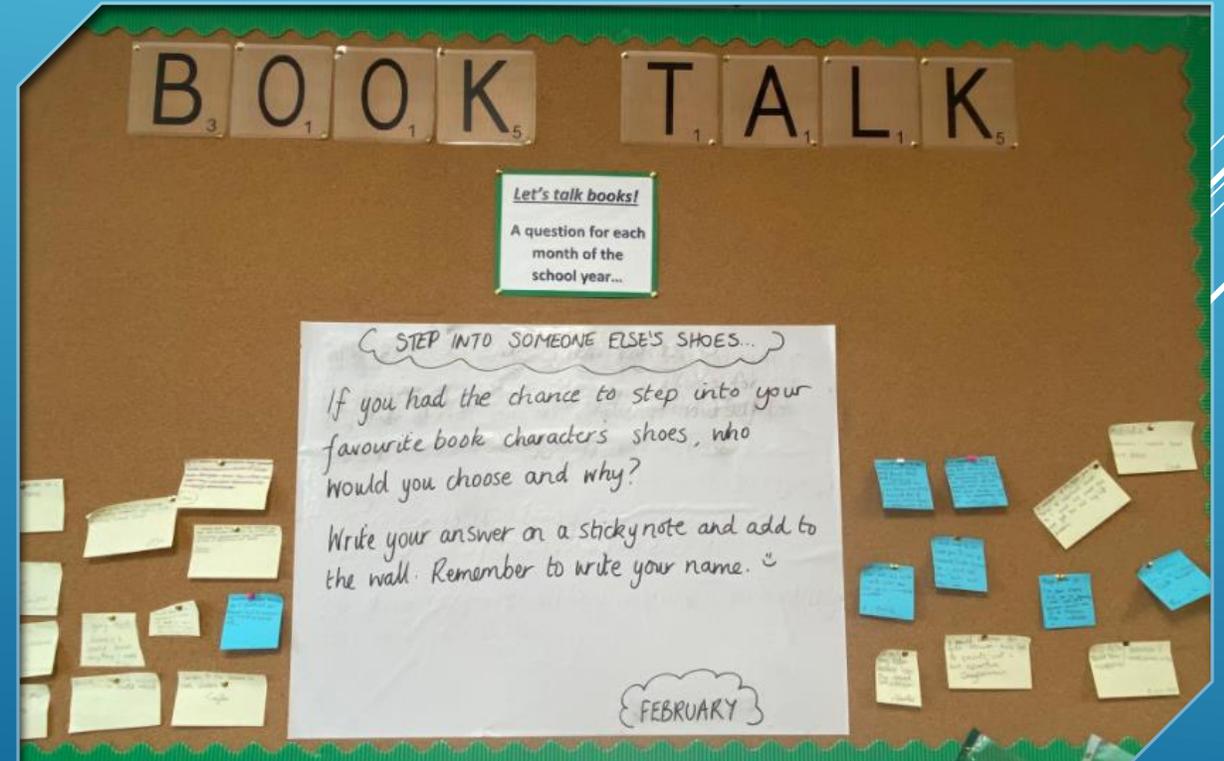
What a fantastic way to spend Monday morning 📖
P6/7 picked new books to borrow and spent time chatting about their choices [#readingforpleasure](#)
[#OURfP](#) [@FMReadChallenge](#) [@scottishbktrust](#)
[@SLCLiteracy](#)



4:35 pm · 7 Feb 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

OUR SCHOOL LIBRARY

Our 4 classes visit the school library once a fortnight to borrow a book. We also have a monthly book focus and 'Book Talk' wall. Our senior pupils help decide on our monthly book focus and help to select suitable books and create the questions for our Book Talk wall.

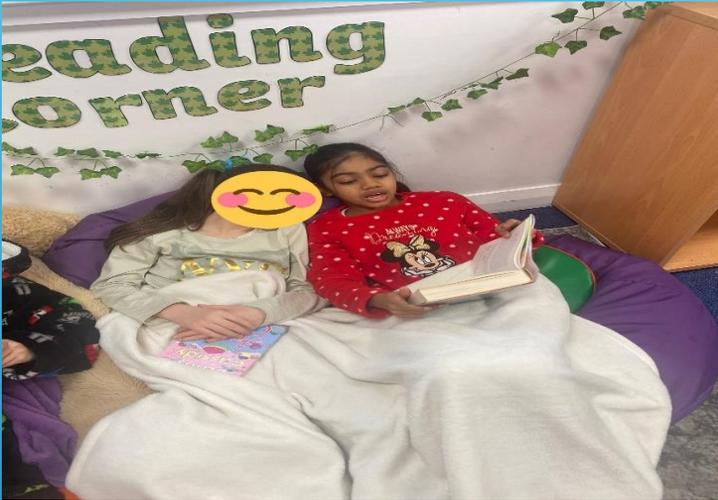


“ I FEEL LIKE I’M IN A BOOK JUNGLE. I LOVE THE LIBRARY BECAUSE IT FEELS SO NICE TO BE IN!

Primary 4 pupil



SOCIAL READING AREAS



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Some P6/7 pupils decided to create a book focus for their class library and made a Michael Morpurgo display to encourage their classmates to choose his books during the month of February #aplacetoGROW #OURfP @SLCLiteracy



5:59 pm · 8 Feb 2022 · Twitter for iPhone



Our 4 classes have all revamped their class libraries and made their reading areas more inviting with the addition of comfy pillows, blankets, rugs and tepees. In the infant open area there is a large reading den created by branches collected from our Forest School project. Teachers often have pupil recommendations/themed books/author focus on display for children to select.



SCHOOL READING SHED

We had an old shed in our school grounds that was painted and decorated by our senior pupils. This became our Reading Shed! Each class has a box of books that are regularly rotated by our Reading Leadership Group. Our children can choose to read during breaks if they wish to do so.



St Mary's @StMarysML9 · 3 Sep 2021

Our reading shed is getting there! New roof and flooring in this week.



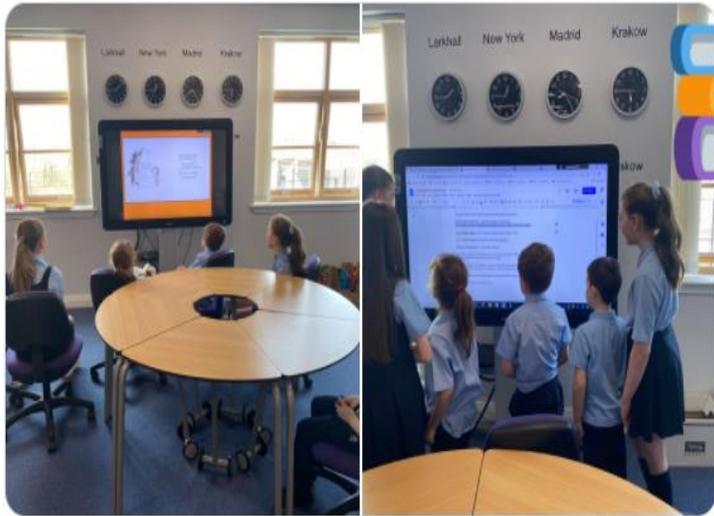
READING LEADERSHIP GROUP



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Our Reading Leadership Group met today to discuss plans for our very first reading assembly!

#aplacetoGROW #readingforpleasure
@scottishbktrust @SLCLiteracy



12:23 pm · 23 Mar 2022 · Twitter for iPhone



The idea of our 'Reading Leadership Group' was launched at an online assembly. Application forms were issued to those pupils across Primaries 2-7 who were interested in applying. Our newly appointed school librarian is our staff representative. The successful applicants were informed and our team met to contribute to our Reading School action plan and to gather ideas from their class about what we could do to improve the reading culture within the school. The RLG are responsible for the Weekend Book Bags and ensure these are prepared each week. They also help to host assemblies.



TREE TIME

It is important to us that our learners (and staff) have allocated time on a daily basis solely dedicated to reading for pleasure. As our school motto is 'A Place to GROW' we developed this theme further and introduced daily **TREE Time**, which stands for **Together Reading Excites Everyone**. This takes place immediately after lunch time. Children can choose to read independently, listen to the teacher or a classmate read, or share texts together. Pupils are also encouraged to share extracts of what they are currently reading and make recommendations to their peers.



4:25 pm · 29 Nov 2021 · Twitter for iPhone



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Voting for our favourite book to read at TREE time and snuggling up to enjoy stories together are some of the ways primary 1/2 love to engage with books. 📖

[@SLCLiteracy](#) [@FMReadChallenge](#) [#aplacetoGROW](#)



4:22 pm · 13 Dec 2021 · Twitter for Android

TREE TIME



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During TREE time some pupils shared extracts from books they are currently reading. It encouraged lots of discussion about the genres we are drawn to and how we can recommend books to our classmates 📖 More volunteers are lined up for tomorrow! @SLCLiteracy @OpenUni_RfP



4:00 pm · 9 Feb 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

TREE TIME



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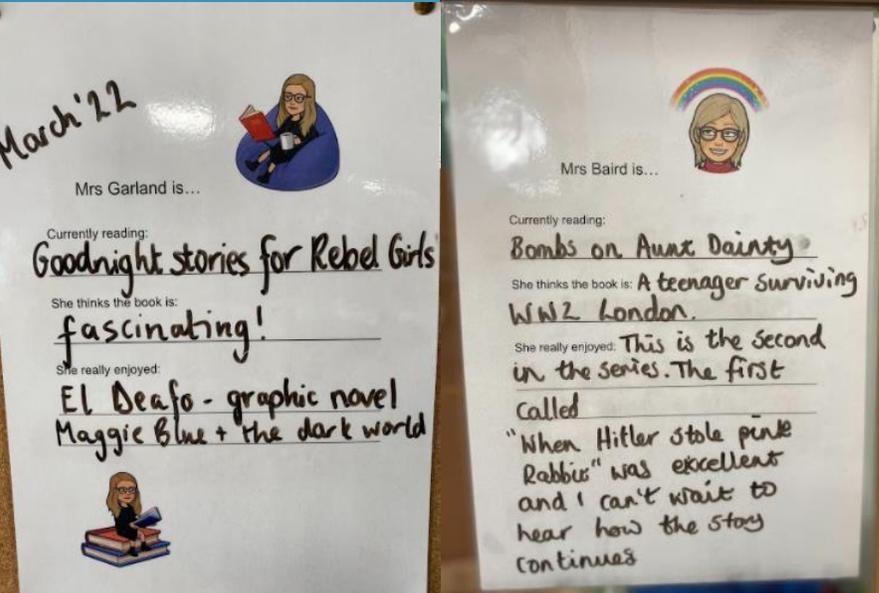
During TREE Time (Together Reading Excites Everyone) these Primary 5 pupils shared with the class what they are currently reading and which genre their books would fit in to [#OURfP](#) [@SLCLiteracy](#) [@FMReadChallenge](#)



2:12 pm · 25 Mar 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

DEVELOP TEACHER KNOWLEDGE OF CHILDREN'S CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE

Staff display 'Currently reading' posters with children's literature so that our children can see what we are enjoying.



We work hard to raise the profile of reading within our school. Positive posts on social media keep our families informed. Tagging authors and receiving a like or a response always creates excitement!

As part of her homework, this Primary 5 girl drew the main character of Mia Tang from 'Front Desk' by @kellyyanghk and showed how she thought Mia might progress through her life. Amazing work 🌟 #aplacetoGROW #readingforpleasure @SLCLiteracy @OpenUni_RfP @scottishbktrust



9:59 am · 10 May 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

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Primary 2 are drawing the wonderful Luna from 'Luna Loves Art' with @fionalumbers 🎨 #BBCAuthorsLive 😊

11:20 AM · May 12, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

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P6 & 7 enjoyed watching the live event by #ElleMcNicol as part of #FMReadChallenge. They were set a challenge to create a setting for a story and followed all the advice and hints and tips on how to do that. #aplacetoGROW #itsSLCabc

6:02 pm · 9 Dec 2021 · Twitter for Android

Our learners take part in interactive author events.

We continually add new titles and genres to our school library so that our learners have texts that tempt and entice them.



DEVELOP TEACHER KNOWLEDGE OF CHILDREN'S CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE

This Primary 7 would regularly say that he 'couldn't read'. His visits to the school library have allowed him to discover a newfound enthusiasm for reading for pleasure. He is always asking for more of his favourite books to be added to our library and he now considers himself to be a reader!

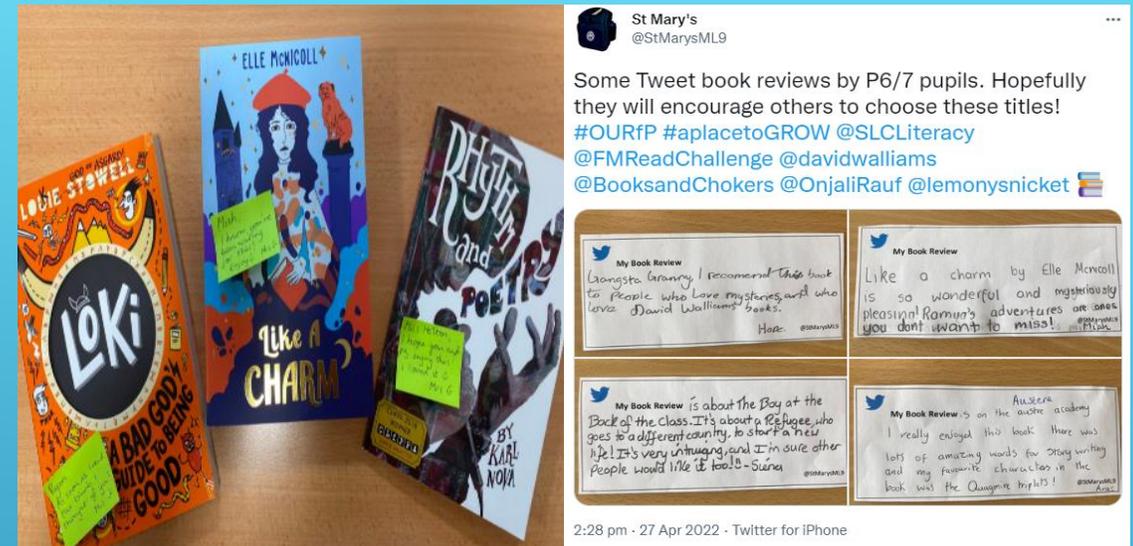
Teaching staff regularly share their current reading at CAT sessions. This encourages informal book chat among staff and by sharing this on social media allows families to see our commitment to reading children's literature.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Since beginning our reading journey, it is apparent in all 4 classes that informal book chat is being encouraged. Our learners are growing in confidence when talking about books they enjoy and very often when they come to the school library to return and borrow a new book you will see friends swapping titles and 'recommending' them to each other.

Introducing the game 'Book Jenga' for our older pupils has encouraged exciting and interesting conversations around books and reading. When we celebrated World Book Day this year, our classes all hosted a Book tasting in order to try our new out new authors and genres. This allowed our learners to get a taste for new texts and promoted lots of informal book chat among our pupils and staff. **A Book Swap Shop also allowed pupils to make recommendations and give another child the chance to enjoy a pre-loved book at no cost.** As a school, we are keen to expand on our selection of graphic novels within our school library and have also involved the Parent Council by getting them involved In purchasing comics for class comic boxes, something we hope to introduce in the near future.



WORLD BOOK DAY

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Rooms 1 and 2 had a great time at their book tasting
#WorldBookDay 📖 #IAmAReader @SLCLiteracy
@scottishbktrust



4:46 pm · 3 Mar 2022 · Twitter for Android

St Mary's
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What a super morning in Room 4. Our book tasting was a huge success and the children got to experience a huge range of genres and share their reviews with each other! #WorldBookDay 📖 #IAmAReader @SLCLiteracy @scottishbktrust #aplacetoGROW



4:33 pm · 3 Mar 2022 · Twitter for Android

In March 2022 our school celebrated World Book Day. Our main focus within all of our classes was a book tasting event, along with a Book Swap Shop. This was very successful and we are hoping to hold another book tasting in the summer term.

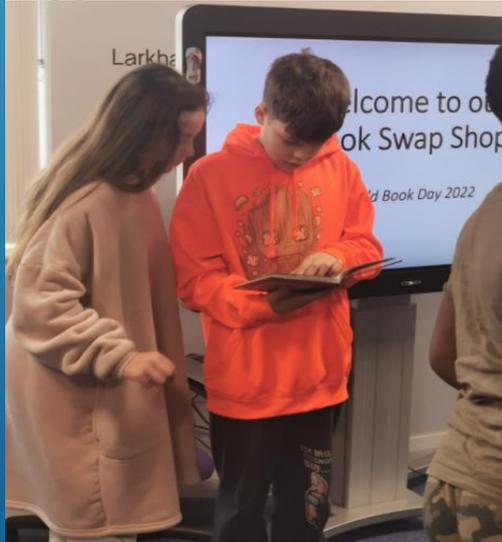
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@StMarysML9

P3/4 visited our Book Swap Shop and chose a pre-loved book to take home and enjoy 📖
#WorldBookDay 📖 #IAmAReader @SLCLiteracy
@scottishbktrust



2:41 pm · 3 Mar 2022 · Twitter for iPhone





WORLD BOOK DAY



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Our Weekend Book Bags were launched this morning by the fantastic Reading Leadership Group at our assembly for #WorldBookDay 📖 #readingforpleasure @SLCLiteracy @OpenUni_RfP 📚



10:03 am · 3 Mar 2022 · Twitter for iPhone



We also launched our Weekend Book bags on World Book Day. One child in each primary gets to take the book bag home and enjoy it with their family during the weekend. The Reading Leadership Group helped to host a whole school assembly to introduce these.



WHAT'S THE IMPACT?

'During daily TREE Time, I am enjoying reading aloud to a small group of reluctant readers who feel more at ease being read to. We discuss genres that we are drawn to and as a result they are more likely to choose from a wider range of texts rather than sticking to the same authors.'

P5 teacher



'Book Jenga has been a big hit with pupils from P5-7. Children have used the game to generate conversation about all things literature. As a school we plan to gradually introduce the game to younger pupils, using the older children to teach them how to play.'

Recovery teacher



'It was very encouraging to see so many parents attend the BookBug gifting event and engage in reading activities with their children.'

P1/2 teacher



'I like the fact that I can recommend other books to children. I know not everyone enjoys reading but some people don't know what genres they like. We can help with that! I also like the fact that we can run assemblies. It gives me responsibility along with my house captain role.'

P7 pupil

'I always choose picture books that make you laugh. I love to take them home and share them with my wee brother. I choose them from the school library and I love relaxing on the couch in the library to read.'

P4 pupil

'I love seeing the pupils so enthusiastic about stories and reading because it is my most favourite thing to do EVER!'

School librarian



WHAT'S THE IMPACT?

'Since becoming part of the Reading Leadership Group in school I see how much my son has been enjoying reading for pleasure. He loves his role and is so proud of it. When we are out and about I see him reading signs and plaques and he has the confidence to attempt really tricky words.'

P3 parent



'My daughter used to be so reluctant to read. But now at bed time she can't wait to choose a book. Her reading has improved so much. She reads with so much expression now and is excited by reading.'

P4 parent



'As a keen reader, I now find myself reaching for children's books rather than adult books. This demonstrates my commitment to the children and allows me to make personalised recommendations.'

P6/7 teacher



'It was great to enjoy time reading with my son at the BookBug event and see all of the excitement around reading.'

P2 parent

MORE OF OUR JOURNEY...



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Primary 3 spent time in the school library today exploring their @Bookbug_SBT bags. We read 'The Last Wolf' together and can't wait to share our bags with our families! #ReadWriteCount #BookWeekScotland @SLCLiteracy



2:29 pm · 19 Nov 2021 · Twitter for iPhone



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...

Fantastic afternoon with parents and carers of Primary 1 and 2 pupils who attended our @Bookbug_SBT book bag gifting session as part of @BookWeekScot. Everyone enjoyed a book scavenger hunt then shared what was inside their bags @SLCLiteracy #ReadWriteCount



2:55 pm · 18 Nov 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

Families joined us in school as part of our 'Book Week Scotland 2022' celebrations. Due to restrictions, we held our family book sharing event outdoors. It was wonderful to see parents and children sharing stories together as they are an integral part of our school reading journey.

BOOK BAG GIFTING EVENT



We are a
**Reading
School**

In May 2022, we achieved Core accreditation in the Scotland Reading Schools programme. Our collaborative approach is led by myself and our Reading Leadership Group, supported by Mrs Gordon as school librarian.



NEXT STEPS ON OUR SCHOOL READING JOURNEY...

- ▶ So far it is evident that our learners (and staff!) enjoy TREE Time immensely. It is so encouraging to see our children completely engaged in books and talking about them with others. St Mary's is only at the very beginning of our reading journey. Here are some of the ongoing and future projects we have going on...
- ▶ Now we have achieved Core Reading School Accreditation we will put our action plan together as we move towards Silver Accreditation.
- ▶ For our Reading Leadership Group to hold regular whole school reading assemblies complete with Book Wave!
- ▶ To develop the graphic novels section of the school library and create a comic box for each class.
- ▶ For more of our learners to enjoy the weekend book bags that have recently been introduced.
- ▶ To create class recommendation shelves within our class reading areas.
- ▶ To hold a summer book-nic and invite parents and carers to join and share texts with their child.
- ▶ Continue to develop a love of reading for ALL of our learners, staff and school community.

ST MARY'S LOVE READING!!!



#aplacetoGROW





GOODBYE FROM ST. MARY'S!