A stack of several open books is shown in the lower-left corner, with their pages fanned out. A white silhouette of a hand is reaching over the books from the right side. The background is a dark teal color with a white curved shape on the right side.

" Look Mrs. Trotter it's Julia
Donaldson. Look Mrs.
Trotter Fussy Freda, we
have read that one!"

Reading for Pleasure at Dunn Street

CHRIS MACKLEY

Context

Dunn Street Primary School is a smaller than average primary school located in Jarrow, in the borough of South Tyneside. The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium funding is well above average and the proportion of pupils with SEND who receive additional support is higher than the national average.



In September 2021, Dunn Street Primary School became part of the Blue Skies Federation. At Dunn Street, reading is a key focus and we endeavour to develop a strong culture of reading across the school.

As a result of closures due to the Covid19 pandemic, we are focused on narrowing gaps in learning in reading across school due to disruption in learning. We feel that embedding a culture of 'Reading for Pleasure' will help aid in improve reading skills.

OU Research inspiration and rationale

The research by Cremin et al 2014, gave us an insight into the importance of reading for pleasure, highlighting the need for **reading communities that are reciprocal and interactive, 'social reading environments'**. These communities were physically engaging, with successful environments providing opportunities for children read a wide variety of texts and offered spaces to relax, browse, and read for pleasure.

At Dunn Street, we wanted to create a strong culture of reading for pleasure and when discussing with staff, we collectively felt that building reading communities in and around school that are engaging would be our main focus.



Aims

- To boost children's confidence and independence in choosing their own book and finding a range of books they enjoy reading for pleasure beyond their usual repertoire of reading.
- To create opportunities for children to access a variety of reading communities.
- To increase children's range of authors and books explored.



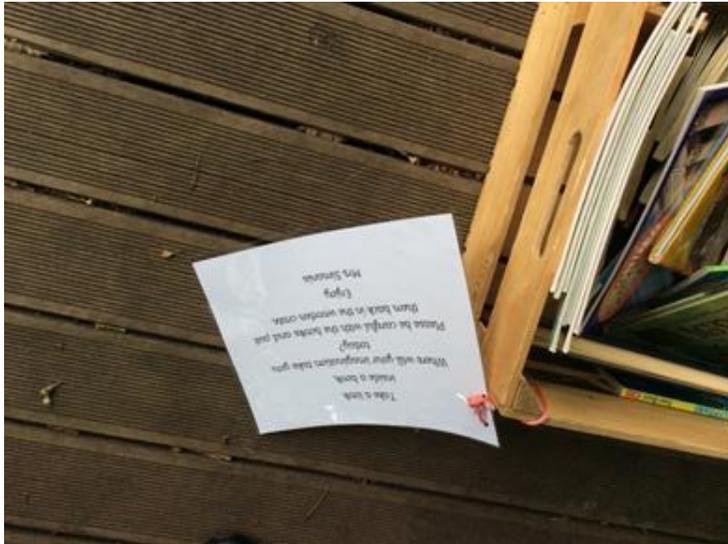
Outline

'Reading communities that are reciprocal and interactive'

We wanted reading for pleasure to be fully embedded into the every day life in our school and sustainable. The children's desire to 'read for pleasure' is a long-term outcome and, in order for future projects to be successful, we felt as though, we initially had to highlight the current reading communities we have and then gradually expand.

Book Swap

A number of '**Book Swap**' boxes were set up around school to encourage children to swap and share books. Children discussed and reviewed books that they enjoyed and disliked. Book swap allowed the opportunity to read a variety reading materials, like comics, poetry and user guides.



Hot Chocolate Reading Club

'Hot Chocolate Reading Club' was set up to provide the opportunity for children to share the pleasure of reading with their peers and staff. Opportunity to listen and read aloud.



Buddy Reading

Year 3 and Year 6 teamed up for '**Buddy Reading**' and this enabled the opportunity for peer to peer support in reading.



Engaging Reading Communities

'**Bookflix**' display was created to promote the reading material being shared in classes. 'Save a date with a book' stimulated conversation and discussions about books.



'**Vote for a Book**' in Year 1/2 allowed children the vote for which book would be read by the class teacher on a Friday. Children became more engaged with the reading options and researched reviews of the books to find out the content of the books before choosing.



Reading environments that are engaging

With help from Sooper Books, we now have an **online library to support reading at home for parents** and in school. This aided reading for pleasure at home and allowed parents and carers to engage with their child's reading.



We provided the children with **questionnaires to find out about their views of reading in school**. Evaluating the responses, we found out that children wanted areas in and around school to read. Therefore, we converted an unused cupboard as a reading area and set up engaging reading areas in classes and around school.



'Our Lives' reading area

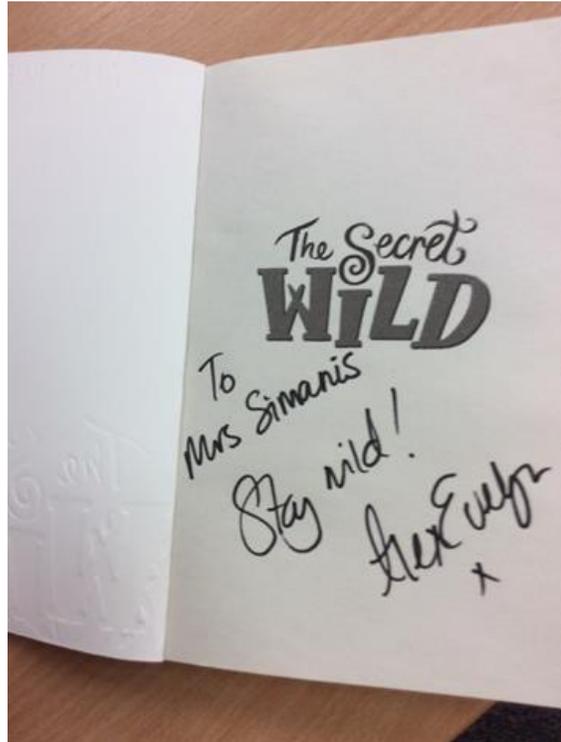
Linking to the schools RSE curriculum, we invested in books which help children understand sensitive topics, feelings, thoughts and contexts through stories. This has been very beneficial to all children and staff. It has also allowed the opportunities for children to discuss how some of these themes have affected them in their lives.

" Because Humpty got up after the fall, it made me think that just because you're broken you can do anything." (Robbie)



Authors and Illustrators

Our Y4 teacher was fortunate to attend a book launch and then discussed different authors with the children.



Reception / Year 1 watched a live workshop by Axel Scheffler and listened to Axel explain how he engages early readers with illustrations.



External reading communities

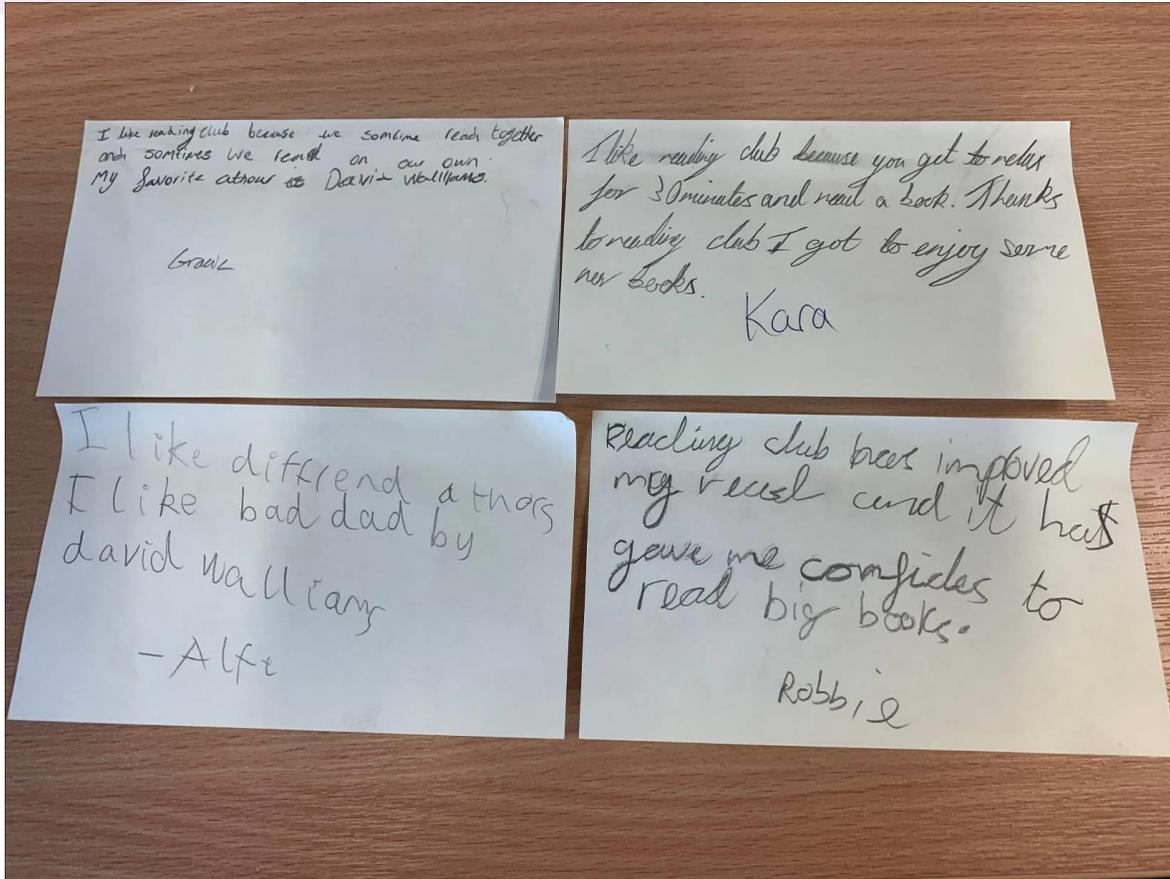
Children have **visited our local library** and have joined to ensure their love of reading can continue beyond school.

'What am I reading?' activity allowed children to identify the **mystery staff reader**. Children were able to browse through the reading material of staff and identify common likes in reading material and provided interesting conversations to take place about travel guides!



'Mr Mackley, where is Seoul?'

Impact



The 'Reading for Pleasure' project has had a positive impact on the school. Since the start of the project we've found children more willing to engage in reading, both children and staff have been eager to source different authors to share and read with one and other to engage and learn.

The 'book swap' has enabled readers across the school to access reading material which they may have not been able to access before. Staff have observed the positive peer to peer interactions and used these observations to inform their planning to 'hook' the listener or allow sensitive topics to be discussed in a supporting manner.

Through pupil voice, we have developed reading areas in and around school to stimulate reading communities. Hot Chocolate Reading club provided KS2 children the opportunity to share their love of reading and listen to a wide selection of books, comics and manuals. The club typifies the term, 'Reading for Pleasure', as staff have often commented on seeing children 'open up' through reading and gain a greater understanding of their reading habits.

Reflections

Having participated in the project, it has highlighted the importance reading for pleasure and its pivotal role it plays in developing young readers. Since the project has started, we as a school, have identified current good practice in school and shared this with our colleagues. As a school community, we have identified opportunities to improve and have done so in a sustainable way where we feel confident the positives from the project can continue and improve reading for all.

In the future we hope to develop our reading communities further, by creating a library area in school. We also hope to further engage with parents and carers, providing the opportunities for parents and carers to come in and share their reading material with children.