



Miriam Lord Primary School OU RfP School Improvement Journey Case Study

2023 – 2024

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School Context

Miriam Lord is a two-form entry primary school with Nursery to Year 6 provision. We have 409 children on roll with mixed-aged classes in years 3 and 4 and 5 and 6. Our pupil attendance is currently 94.6%. The school serves as an area of poor socio-economic background with higher-than-average levels of pupil premium (29%). We have a higher than national average number of SEND pupils (47) of which 29 have an EHCP (7.2% of the school). Out of these pupils, 19 receive SEND support, this is 4.9% of school, which is lower than the national average.

Reading and phonics have been a priority for us as a school over the past 3 years. After starting the Essential Letters and Sounds scheme, we have focused on embedding this throughout EYFS and Key Stage 1 with interventions running, where needed, into KS2. Whilst our consistency of approach around phonics has improved through these changes, children choosing to read for pleasure has declined.

We have held reading competitions, reading challenges, and reading incentives and adopted the CLPE Power of Reading scheme for English lessons. Using high-quality texts to support writing, combined with creative strategies, to engage children within a text, has provided pupils with greater experience to draw upon in their writing. This scheme has also enriched the breadth of literature that teachers use in their lessons. Whilst this has improved our writing outcomes, children and teachers were not 'choosing' to read outside of the texts used in lessons.

We are aware of the invaluable impact reading for pleasure can have on a child's future opportunities as the single most important indicator of a child's future success (OECD, 2002). We were committed to reevaluating our 'reading offer' to improve how we embody and encourage reading for pleasure in our school.

Explore

Establishing a Baseline

To identify our focus aims around reading for pleasure, all staff and pupils completed baseline surveys. These took place in Autumn term 1 (staff surveys week commencing 20.9.23 and KS1 and KS2 surveys week commencing 22.9.23).

This information, alongside learning walks and conversations with staff and children, provided us with a clear picture of the school's current Reading for Pleasure practices and attitudes enabling us to identify clear priorities to work on throughout the year.

Findings: Pupil Attitudes to Reading

KS1 Children's Reading for Pleasure survey

Do you like reading?

September 2023

	I love reading ❤️	51%
	It's ok 🙄	27%
	I'm not bothered 🙄	4%
	I don't like reading 😞	12%



KS2 Children's Reading for Pleasure survey

Do you like reading?

September 2023

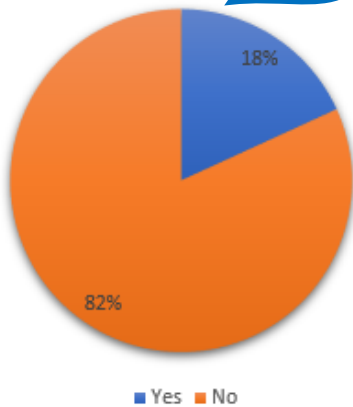
	I love reading ❤️	44%
	It's ok 🙄	42%
	I'm not bothered 🙄	4%
	I don't like reading 😞	10%



The data from the pupil surveys illustrated that whilst many children loved reading, there was a large proportion of children who did not (particularly in KS2).

KS2 What is it you don't like about reading?

books are too easy
actual book
book you get that feeling
media books
big books
type of book
Picture books
words
bit boring
no pictures
books are boring
Reading aloud
information books
stuck on some books
long book boring with some books
baby book
poetry books
boring books



OU RfP Survey (KS1) – Do you have a favourite book?

When asked about their favourite authors, children's responses were very limited: 25 out of 165 pupils in KS2 were able to name a favourite author, and 18 children out of 81 children surveyed in KS1 were able to name a favourite book. Out of the books and authors that were mentioned, many were celebrity authors.

This helped us to identify that children's attitudes towards reading was a key area for improvement.



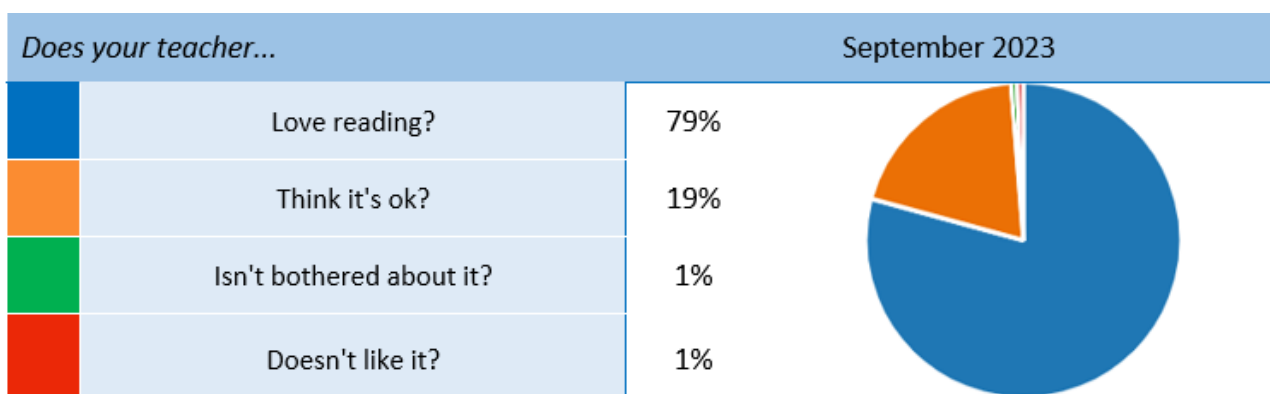
Top 5 authors in KS2

Aaron Blabey
Dav Pilkey
J.K. Rowling
David Walliams
Roald Dahl

Pupils' Perceptions of Teachers

In line with this, when asked how their teacher feels about reading, only 79% said that their teacher 'loves reading' (KS2). This data illustrated that pupils were not always seeing their teachers as reading role models; something that we are aware is a key factor in determining how much children value literature and a huge factor that determines their motivation to read for pleasure.

OU RfP Survey (KS2)



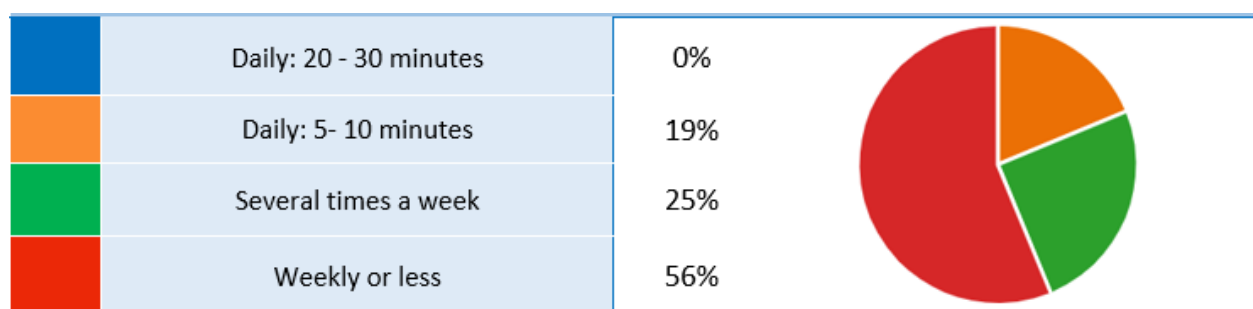
Read Aloud

During pupil interviews with LKS2 children, when asked when they usually have story time, they said, “We sometimes read at the end of the day, but the teacher always says we will do it tomorrow when we have more time.” Children also mentioned during pupil interviews that they do not always use their weekly library session. This identified that teachers were not prioritising reading aloud sessions in their daily timetable. It also highlighted that planning reading sessions at the end of the day often meant these were left undelivered if the teacher ran out of time. It is also important to note that the books that many children mentioned their teacher was reading in the surveys were texts used to teach writing lessons and not texts that were being read aloud for pleasure

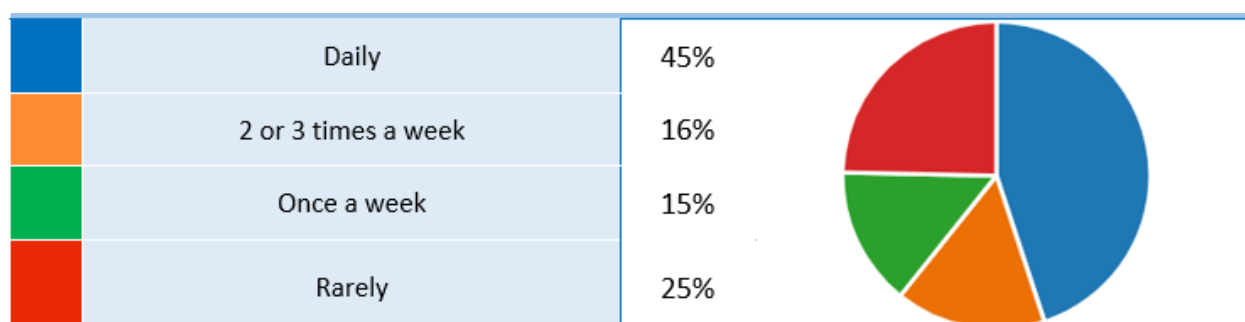
“We sometimes read at the end of the day, but the teacher always says we will do it tomorrow or when we have more time.” – Year 4, pupil interviews, September 2023.

Whilst staff said they understood the value of reading for pleasure, conversation during our RfP conference day (31.10.23) highlighted that they were unaware of the value of reading aloud to pupils. Our school expectation is that we read aloud to our pupils daily, but 0% of the staff surveyed (other than EYFS) said that they were reading to their class daily for 20-30 minutes, with 56% of teachers saying that they read aloud to their children ‘weekly or less’. Conversation with teachers also highlighted that they found it difficult to engage their reluctant readers in class story time sessions.

OU RfP Review Your Practice Survey (Primary) - On average, how often do you read aloud to your class for pleasure (rather than for instructional purposes) stories or other texts?



OU RfP KS2 Pupil Survey - How often does your teacher read aloud to the class?



Teachers' Knowledge of Children's Literature

The data from our Teachers Review of Practice illustrated that teacher knowledge of contemporary children's literature was limited: teachers could only name a small number of 'celebrity authors' such as David Walliams and authors from their childhood, mirroring the authors mentioned in many other studies with teachers exhibiting "*Dahl dependency*" (CLPE, 2021).

This lack of literary knowledge raised the question, if they do not have a strong knowledge of children's literature, how can our teachers recommend suitable books to children that are going to tempt them? Through further discussion during the OURfP Conference and subsequent CPD meetings, most teachers openly admitted that they did not read children's literature outside of the texts they taught from because they had not previously considered the value of this. They also did not realise that teaching the 'skill' and encouraging the 'will' of reading, were two very different practices.

Top 5 named authors

J.K. Rowling
Michael Morpurgo
Julia Donaldson
Phillip Pullman
Anthony Horowitz



OU RfP Review Your Practice Survey (Primary):

How often do the children in your class see you reading for pleasure?

Regularly	6%
Sometimes	13%
rarely	63%
never	19%



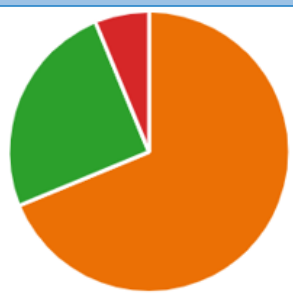
How do you think the children in your class view you as a reader?

As an avid, enthusiastic reader who loves reading	12%
As a keen reader who reads when time allows	25%
Someone who is required to read because they are a teacher	56%
I don't think they will have considered this	6%



How often do you and the children recommend texts to each other?

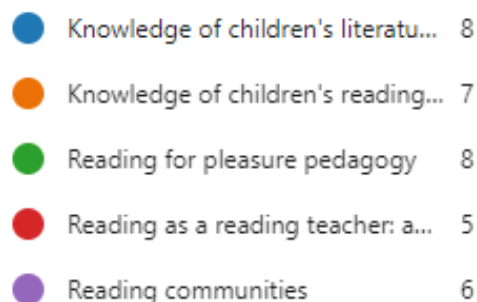
Regularly	0%
Sometimes	69%
rarely	25%
never	6%



“It has long been argued that teachers who share their enthusiasm for reading enhance children’s engagement as readers. Studies ...all underscore the significance of teachers as reading role models.” - Cremin et al (2024, p. 834).

The teachers' review of practice aligned with the pupil's perception of their teacher mentioned earlier, affirming that teachers were not adequately sharing a love of reading with their children.

OU RfP Review Your Practice Survey: looking back across this survey, which area/s do you want to personally develop to support your children’s reading for pleasure?



Whilst teachers highlighted many areas of practice they would like to develop around reading for pleasure, we knew that a strong teacher knowledge of children’s literature, and an understanding of how this can be utilised to support reader motivation in the classroom, was an essential starting point for our school. When equipped with wider ‘*knowledge reservoirs*’, we knew teachers would be better equipped to model a love of books.

“We argue teachers ...need to recognize their professional responsibility to be knowledgeable reading partners with rich repertoires of personally relevant, contemporary, and diverse children’s texts” (Cremin et al., 2009, 2022; Hartsfield & Kimmel, 2020).

Summary of Findings

Key Findings from the KS1 Pupil Surveys

Strengths

- 51% of children said they loved reading
- 55% of children viewed themselves as good readers
- 40% of children chose to read outside of school every day

Areas for Development

- 12 % of children said they didn’t like reading.
- 12% of children said they are not very good at reading yet.
- 16% of children said they did not choose to read at home.
- Only 18 out of 81 children said they had a favourite book.

Key Findings from the KS2 Pupil Surveys

Strengths

- 44% of children said they loved reading
- 46% of children viewed themselves as a good reader.
- 46% said they choose to read outside of school every day.
- 79% of children said their teacher loves reading

Areas for Development

- 10% of children said they did not like reading.
- 25% of children said their teacher rarely reads aloud to the class.
- Children named a very limited range of authors that they enjoy throughout school.

Key Findings from the Teacher Surveys

Strengths

- 63% of teachers set aside daily time for children to read independently their own choice of texts.
- Most teachers mentioned taking their class to the school library regularly.
- 19% of teachers read to their class daily (5-10 minutes) in KS1 & KS2
- Class libraries and the school libraries all contain a range of authors.

Areas for Development

- Teacher knowledge of contemporary authors was limited: teachers could only name a small number of celebrity authors and struggled to name any poets.
- Most teachers openly admitted that they did not read children's literature outside of the texts they taught because they had not previously considered the value of this.
- 56% of teachers say that they read aloud to their children 'weekly or less'.
- 44% of teachers said that their pupils never see or hear them chatting about what they are reading with other teachers/ adults.

The survey findings reaffirmed that, as a school, we needed to find ways of promoting reading for pleasure to improve attitudes around reading in both children and staff.

It is important that, as a school, we look to address various areas of knowledge: knowledge of contemporary children's literature; knowledge of theory and research, and also knowledge of strategic approaches to utilise in the classroom when reading aloud (Reading and Motivation: Focusing on Disengaged Readers, Prof. Teresa Cremin, 2023).

The findings from the survey show that both teachers and children do not always know the difference between reading aloud to children for pleasure and reading aloud to children to teach the skill of reading. Whilst both the 'skill' and the 'will' of reading are important in the development of readers, we must support teachers to identify the difference between these and strengthen teacher knowledge of how to cultivate a climate for reading for pleasure throughout school.

Prepare

The Change Team

The role of the 'change team' was first introduced during our RfP conference day. This opportunity was advertised to all teaching and support staff throughout school. From this, the leadership team selected a range of staff across key stages, leadership positions and experience levels. Half-termly meetings were scheduled with the Change Team to allow for the dissemination of responsibilities, reviewing the ongoing impact of changes and making adaptations when required.

Change Team:

Project lead, Assistant headteacher, Year 5/6 teacher & English lead

Executive Headteacher & School Improvement Leader

Deputy headteacher & SENCO

Assistant headteacher, Year 5/6 teacher & Maths lead

Year 1 teacher & phonics lead

Year 3/4 ECT

EYFS lead and Reception teacher

Nursery Teacher

The Focus Children

To measure the impact of our actions across the school, two focus children were selected from every year group. Teachers were asked to select these pupils based on their attitudes to reading as opposed to their reading ability, as children who can read but choose not to.

As we had not surveyed children in EYFS, we decided against selecting focus children for these year groups. Teachers were instead asked to record notes of how any changes impacted these children throughout the project and regularly feed back to the project lead verbally.

Survey Responses September 2023

FC	Year	M/F	Do you like reading?	Why do you think this is?
A	1	M	I don't like reading 😞	
B	1	M	I don't like reading 😞	
C	2	M	I'm not bothered 🙄	
D	2	F	I don't like reading 😞	
E	3	M	I'm not bothered 🙄	"I like it at morning."
F	3	F	I don't like reading 😞	"Because I don't know how to do it."
G	4	M	It's ok 🙄	"It makes me laugh."
H	4	F	I love reading ❤️	"I like it because it helps me."
I	5	M	I'm not bothered 🙄	"Sometimes I struggle with words."
J	5	F	I don't like reading 😞	"Because I never find a book I like."
K	6	M	I don't like reading 😞	"Because I am not interested in a lot of books."
L	6	F	I don't like reading 😞	"Because they are too long."

Focus Children Attainment Data

Year	M/F	Class	Phonics Phase	Book Band	Working At	Reading Mark	
1	M	Ahlberg	3D	3 yellow	EXS	11	Phonics
1	M	Donaldson	3D	2 red	WTS	21	
2	F	Hughes	5D	5 green	EXS	98	
2	M	Browne	5S	6 orange	WTS	80	
3	M	King-Smith	6	8 purple	EXS	102	NTS
3	F	Wilson	5D	6 orange	WTS	79	
4	F	Fine	6	10 brown	EXS	90	
4	M	King-Smith	6	12 lime+	EXS	106	
5	F	Rowling	6	13 grey	EXS	98	
5	M	Rowling	6	13 grey	EXS	95	SATS Practice paper
6	F	Morpurgo	6	16 dark blue	WTS	92	
6	M	Pullman	6	16 dark blue	EXS	89	

Aim 1: Broaden staff knowledge of a range of children's texts and authors for them to present themselves as reading role models.

Whilst teachers said they valued reading through discussion, our surveys highlighted that teachers had a limited knowledge and relied on a 'limited canon' of childhood authors in the classroom (Cremin et al., 2008a). Research, such as the Teachers as readers: building communities of readers research (Cremin et al, 2009), shows that a strong teacher knowledge of children's literature is fundamental when building a community of volitional readers in school. We therefore decided to make staff knowledge a priority.

Intended Outcomes:

- Staff can easily name three contemporary texts that they would recommend to the children in their class.
- Staff are aware of contemporary texts from a wider range of genres.
- Contemporary texts are available to children and teachers on class bookshelves and in the class library.
- Visual displays will reflect a growing knowledge of contemporary literature among staff.
- Staff can make recommendations to pupils based on their knowledge of contemporary authors.
- A larger proportion of children view their teachers as readers and say their teacher 'loves reading' in the end-of-year surveys.

Aim 2: Develop children as motivated readers by establishing read-aloud sessions in the classroom that promote reading for pleasure.

Trelease (2013, p. 8) explains that "*reading aloud enables all children, regardless of their reading ability, to experience the joy and benefits of books and stories.*" We know from our survey data, that many of our teachers are not regularly reading aloud to their children for pleasure. It is important that not only is this happening consistently throughout school, but that teachers receive training and support to fully understand the research and pedagogy that underpins effective read-aloud practices.

"Teachers who read aloud for pleasure not only demonstrate the joys of reading but also foster a love for literature among their students" (Cremin, 2023, p. 22).

Intended Outcomes:

- All staff in school will understand the importance of reading aloud to children for pleasure.
- All staff will have considered how they can develop their knowledge and practice to contribute to this whole school priority.
- Staff will be able to explain the impact that their developing knowledge of read-aloud has had upon the children they work with.
- All children in school will be read to daily by a member of staff.
- More than 45% of children will say that their teachers read aloud to them daily on the end-of-year teaching surveys.
- More than 50% of children will say that they enjoy their teacher reading aloud to them.
- All teachers will say they read to their children daily on the end-of-year teaching surveys.
- More children will say that they 'love reading' throughout school.
- The focus children will have a more positive attitude towards reading compared to their responses on the initial surveys. This will be evidenced by more children saying that they 'love reading' in the repeated surveys at the end of the year.

Overarching aim: improve pupil attitudes to reading

Whilst we pinpointed two aims from our baseline findings: reading aloud and improving teacher knowledge of children's texts, our overarching aim was to ultimately improve pupils' attitudes to reading to encourage volitional readers. We chose these aims as we know, from research, how fundamental these are when cultivating a reading-for-pleasure climate throughout school. We hoped the actions outlined would increase the number of pupils who say they 'love reading' on the end of year surveys.

"Teachers with a rich and wide knowledge of children's literature and other texts...are best placed to help their pupils unlock the many and varied benefits of reading for pleasure" (Scottish Book Trust, 2019).

"Teachers who read aloud for pleasure not only demonstrate the joys of reading but also foster a love for literature among their students" (Cremin, 2023, p. 22).

Aim 1: Broaden staff knowledge of a range of children's texts and authors for them to present themselves as reading role models.

Aim 2: Develop children as motivated readers by establishing consistent read-aloud sessions in the classroom that promote reading for pleasure.

Overarching Aim:

Improve pupil attitudes around reading for pleasure.



Deliver

The table below summarises the most effective strategies that were put in place across school for Aim 1.

Aim 1: Broaden staff knowledge of a range of children's texts and authors for them to present themselves as reading role models.

Baseline Finding	Action	Impact	Next Step
The surveys highlighted that teacher knowledge of contemporary authors was limited: teachers could only name 'celebrity authors' and authors from their childhood.	The introduction of a Teachers' Power of Reading Collection: a selection of contemporary, award-winning children's texts to broaden their knowledge and to read and share with their children.	Staff can name (surveys and during staff meeting discussions) contemporary texts from a wider range of genres. Lending record shows many staff have read each title available.	To continue to build on this growing collection of contemporary children's literature as a resource to share and enjoy between staff and children.
The pupil surveys highlighted that the children did not always see their teachers as readers. The 'review your practice' surveys also evidenced that teachers did not feel their pupils viewed them as readers.	The teacher's reading collection was displayed in a central location so that it is visible to all pupils. Teachers have their record cards on display in their classrooms to promote discussion. The books on the teacher collection were selected to link with the updated classroom collections in each year group.	Teachers are acting as reading role models. Staff and pupils are developing 'texts in common' and can recommend texts to one another. A larger proportion of children said their teacher 'loves reading' on the end-of-year surveys.	To create a 'teacher recommendations' area in the school library. To encourage teachers to continue to share their reading journeys with their pupils next year.
Through discussion, most teachers openly admitted that they did not read children's literature outside of the texts they taught.	All teachers were given a performance management target to widen their knowledge of children's texts. Training sessions were delivered to share reading for pleasure pedagogy and research behind why this is important.	Staff have prioritised and taken responsibility for developing their own knowledge of children's literature.	To continue to share relevant research and training with all staff to support the continual development of this area of their practice.

Teachers' Knowledge of Children's Literature

"Readers who teach, teachers who read: the identity and practice of being a reader and a teacher are intertwined and mutually reinforcing" (Cremin, 2014, p. 120)



We chose to display the teacher collection in a central corridor to allow as many pupils to see it as possible. We wanted them to know that our teachers valued and were enjoying reading children's books. This was available for any staff member in school to use.

Teachers often took their classes with them to help them choose a book which the children were very excited to participate in.

Teachers had the option of keeping their own record card (the same format as the children) to keep track of the books they had read with a space to review these. Many teachers chose to display them in their classrooms and share these with their children.

"This created a real buzz with the children who became interested in looking at their teachers' reading cards. The children in Reception were especially interested in noticing the books that their teachers were reading, and finding out which teacher was reading the most books."
 –Miss Lister, EYFS Lead and Reception. teacher.



Teacher Collection
Book lending list



Teacher	Date taken	Date returned
Ms Jagger	09.01.2024	10.01.2024
Razia Bi	09.01.2024	10.01.2024
Kelly Bradley	17.1.24	18.01.24
Azra Mehid	18.1.24	19.01.24
Miss Lister	24.1.24	25.1.24
Russell	25.1.24	29.1.24
Bushra Ayub	26-1-24	26-1-24
Bryan Harrison	29-1-24	30-1-24
E. Hansen	31.1.24	1.2.24
Anisa Hussain	09.02.24	
S. Young	19.2.24	23.2.24
Zahida Ayub	21.02.24	23.02.24
Jessica Short	16.04.24	22.02.24

We kept a lending record on display so that the teachers could sign out the books they had taken and when they had returned them. As we had multiple copies of each text, some teachers even used them as their read aloud text. Many teachers kept their copies in their classroom which encouraged informal book talk and a growing awareness that the staff in school valued reading.

"The teacher collection has got me reading again! It's been great to read books alongside pupils"
 - Mrs Sherras, UKS2 teacher.

Reading Role Models

Many teachers also took it upon themselves to share their reading journey on social media, sharing their reflections with other colleagues and building reading networks. Several teachers were able to use social media platforms to connect with authors and enter competitions. They shared these interactions with their pupils which they found very exciting.



Sarah Jagger @sarahjagger76 · Feb 3

Another lovely spot to read 🥰 Wouldn't normally choose a graphic novel but the teacher's collection curated by @MrsRLSaunders is broadening my reading choices. Really enjoying this, thank you @Aoife_Dooley



Bryan Harrison @BryanPHarrison · Mar 9

I wouldn't usually choose a book like this, but it is in our Miriam Lord teacher library, and it was absolutely fabulous! Made me laugh out loud a few times @OpenUni RfP @sarahjagger76 @MrsRLSaunders



Our headteacher, Mr Harrison, also created a book snug in his office, filled with his favourite children's books. Children were very excited to read from his collection and talk about these books with him.



"It's wonderful to see so many different pupils visiting Mr Harrison's office during the day to borrow and talk about books. This is completely unprompted and is happening more and more throughout the day."

"I love being able to share the books I love and the joy they bring me with children in different year groups"

- Mrs Short, HLTA.

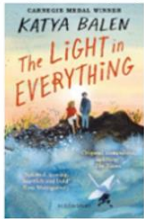
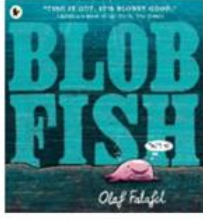
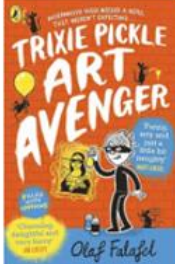


Linking our Teacher Collection with Pupil Collections



Research illustrates the value of reader-to-reader-networks between teachers and pupils on children choosing to read for pleasure (Cremin et al. 2014). With this evidence in mind, we selected linking texts between the teacher and pupil collections to encourage 'texts in common' to develop. We wanted to make sure that, as teachers widened their 'reading repertoires', children in school also had the resources available to do the same.

An example of how texts link across both the teachers' collection and the Year group collections:

Teachers	Year 6	Year 5	Teacher collection	Year 4 collection
The Light in Everything  UKLA Book Awards 2023 Winner 7-10+	The Space We're In  Illustrated by Lauren Carlin	Foxlight  Carnegie Medal-winning author	Blob Fish  Children's Book Awards 2023 Books for younger children	Trixie Pickle Art Adventure  Olaf Fafafel

“By sharing their pleasures in reading, offering connections, recommendations and opportunities to debate meanings in relaxed non-assessed contexts, adults and peers can influence the attitudes of our least engaged readers.” (Cremin et al., 2014; Merga, 2017).

Aim 2: Develop children as motivated readers by establishing read-aloud sessions in the classroom that promote reading for pleasure.

Baseline Finding	Action	Impact	Next Step
The pupil surveys in KS2 and the 'review your practice' surveys identified that read-aloud for pleasure sessions were not consistently taking place throughout school.	CPD sessions outlined the difference between teaching the skill of reading and delivering reading-for-pleasure sessions to children. The English lead designed a pupil reading entitlement document that outlined all the elements of reading practice that each child in school should receive each day.	Teaching staff have a clearer understanding of what reading sessions should look like and recognise the school's expectations. Most teaching staff are prioritising read-aloud sessions in their timetable daily.	To regularly monitor read-aloud sessions to ensure they are taking place. To introduce read-aloud cinema events and themed read-aloud sessions in the next academic year.
Teacher discussions evidenced that they were unsure how to engage their reluctant readers in story time sessions.	CPD sessions shared the research behind pupils having choice and control over books read, through voting systems. A range of read-aloud approaches were modelled to staff (book blankets, doodle reading)	A larger percentage of pupils say they enjoy their teacher reading aloud.	To continue to share approaches to read-aloud sessions with staff that promote pupil choice and autonomy.
Pupil interviews showed that children did not think their teachers always valued read-aloud sessions.	'What are we reading?' signs are displayed outside each classroom to showcase their read aloud text.	Children see that each classroom in school values read-aloud sessions. The signs promote informal book talk between pupils and teachers.	To continue to monitor that 'What are we reading?' signs are being regularly updated.

Read Aloud Pupil Entitlement

The English Lead created a reading entitlement document to ensure all staff knew exactly what reading sessions each child in school was entitled to. This was then presented to staff across several staff meetings. Evidence-informed approaches were shared with staff to support their understanding of how RfP sessions and teaching the skill differ from one another, distinguishing between the "skill of reading," which involves technical ability, and the "will of reading," which pertains to motivation and desire (Cremin, 2014, p. 47).

Focus	Nursery	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	KS2
The mechanics of reading (decoding, fluency, prosody)	Daily phonics sessions (ELS) 45 minutes			Phonics interventions where needed. Weekly spelling lesson	
	Learning to read books changed weekly (pre-reads for target pupils) and sent home.				
			1:1 reading with an adult (fortnightly minimum) 1:1 reading every week for target pupils.		
Reading skills	2 x group book talk sessions per week on PoR text	Group reading lesson around a PoR text	Whole class reading skills lesson (daily)		
Reading for Pleasure	Group story time/ class read-aloud sessions (daily for a minimum of 15 minutes)				
	Library session for 30 mins (weekly)				
			Weekly read-aloud assemblies		
Reading for writing		Daily whole class lesson around a PoR text.			

Reading Entitlement Document

Read Aloud – Daily Entitlement

We have an inclusive approach to story time sessions and ensure every child is read to each day, whether this in the classroom setting or in small groups.



"Reading out loud every day to the class is a special time we can enjoy and look forward to" Miss Drake, UKS2 teacher.



Our SENCO, Mrs Jagger, reading with a small group of children from KS1.

The Power of Choice!



Book blankets, voting systems, doodle reading, cosy reading and peer reading were some of the strategies shared with teachers around how to engage their children in read aloud sessions.

“Voting for the class story time book has helped all the children engage better with reading” Mrs Butt, UKS2 teacher.



Examples of peer read-aloud sessions: KS2 reading aloud in groups of their choosing in the library and Year 1 sharing stories during ‘cosy reading’.

“Allowing children to doodle whilst listening to me read aloud really helped reluctant readers to focus and immerse themselves in the story. They were begging me to carry on!” Mrs Saunders, UKS2 teacher.



Samples of pupils’ responses during a ‘doodle reading’ aloud session.

"Voting for the class story time book has helped all the children engage better with reading" Mrs Butt, UKS2 teacher.

"Allowing children to doodle whilst listening to me read aloud really helped reluctant readers to focus and immerse themselves in the story. They were begging me to carry on!" Mrs Saunders, UKS2 teacher.

Samples of pupils' responses during a 'doodle reading' aloud session.

Storytime in EYFS and KS1



The class giant read-aloud record and some of their book collection on display in Reception.

Teachers in EYFS and KS1 decided to use their updated class book collections for read aloud time. These texts were also available for children to browse on their bookshelves. Rather than pupils having a reading collection card each as they did in KS2 and the Teacher Collection, we felt it would work better for each class to have a giant copy that they completed as a class.

Teachers made sure to still offer choice to pupils for these sessions. Classes often took the selected book with them to their library sessions and completed their reading challenge record as a class. For some of these sessions, parents were also invited to join.

“The decision to read these books weekly as part of our library session, talk about them, rate them, as well as prominently displaying and making these books available in the classroom has been highly successful. Children regularly return to and share these books individually or with one another. They often ask teachers to re-read the books they enjoy again. Children see themselves as readers and love looking at their own giant version of the reading catalogue available in the book corner to check the books they have read, and other books on the list.”- Reception teacher.



Nursery story time with parents.

Focus Children



The focus children were invited to a weekly 'Star Books' reading group lead by the project lead. Prior to this taking place, this member of staff spent time talking with each child and their teacher about their current view of reading and their wider interests. They used this information to select books that linked with their personal interests and hobbies (i.e. baking, football, superheroes, animals) in an effort to tempt these pupils.

These sessions were very relaxed and involved book blankets, listening to stories read aloud by both the teacher and members of the reading club, and of course, biscuits!

Once children began to find books tailored to their interests, the project lead gifted them their own book to keep.



A book gifted to each focus child based on their individual interests.



A member of reading club reading to the focus children a book of their choosing.



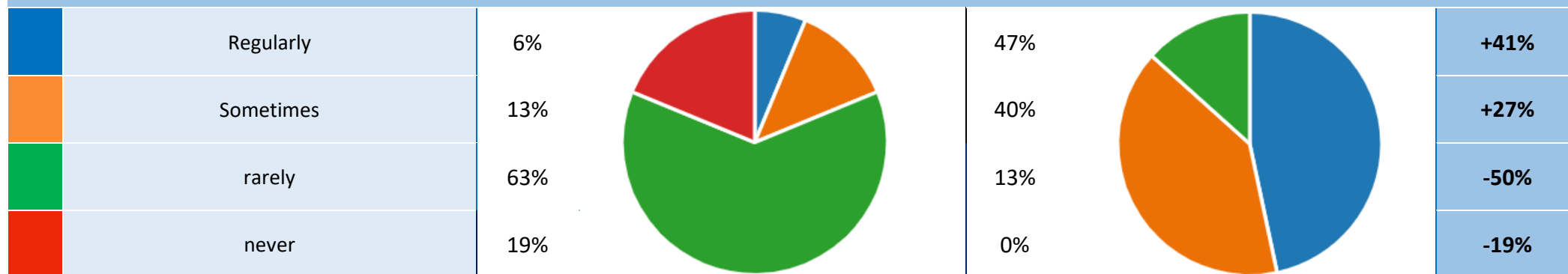
Focus children enjoying stories during 'Star Books' club.



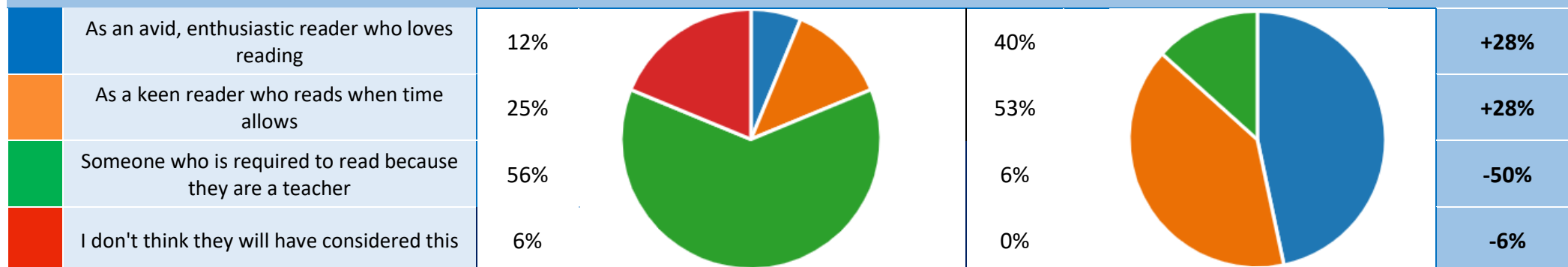
Review Impact on Staff

OU RfP: Review your practice		September 2023	June 2024	Impact
<i>On average, how often do you read aloud to your class for pleasure (rather than for instructional purposes) stories or other texts?</i>				
	Daily: 20 - 30 minutes	0%	33%	+33%
	Daily: 5- 10 minutes	19%	40%	+21%
	Several times a week	25%	20%	-5%
	Weekly or less	56%	7%	-49%
<i>How often do you informally chat about books with children (not including reading scheme/ phonically decodable texts that are being studied in literacy/English lessons)?</i>				
	Regularly	19%	40%	+21%
	Sometimes	56%	53%	-3%
	rarely	25%	7%	-18%
	never	0%	0%	0%
<i>How often do you and the children recommend texts to each other?</i>				
	Regularly	0%	27%	+27%
	Sometimes	69%	60%	-9%
	rarely	25%	13%	-12%
	never	6%	0%	-6%

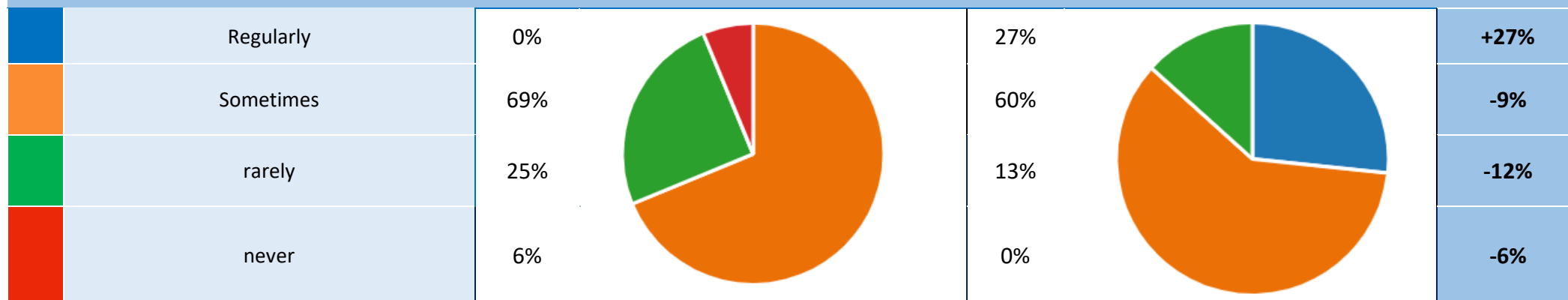
How often do the children in your class see you reading for pleasure?



How do you think the children in your class view you as a reader?



How often do you and the children recommend texts to each other?



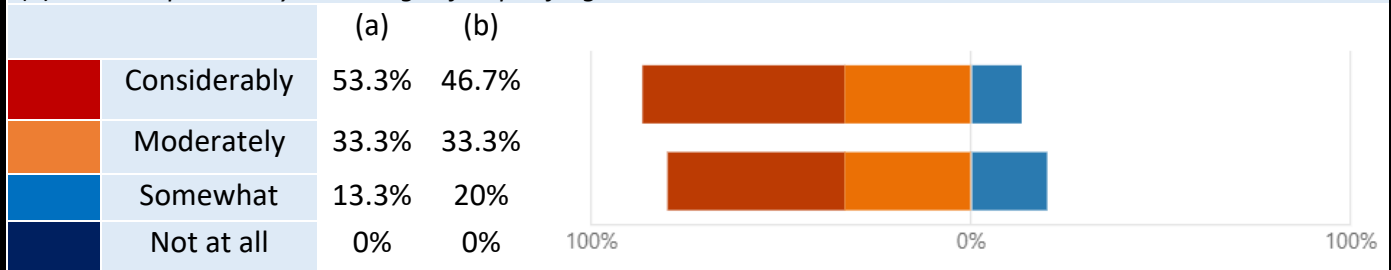
Impact on Teachers

OU RfP: Review your practice survey (end of programme)

Considering your knowledge of children's literature this year...

(a) I have widened my knowledge of children's literature

(b) I have improved my knowledge of a specific genre within children's literature



When comparing data from the baseline survey data to the end-of-year survey, it should be noted that four staff members who were initially surveyed have since left the school, four new staff members have joined, and one staff member was absent for the end-of-year survey, which may affect the reliability of the data. Despite this, the data from the 'review your practice' surveys show that all staff feel they have made progress in their knowledge of children's literature and their knowledge of genres within children's literature this year.

Evidence from the impact table shows that teachers are reading aloud more regularly to pupils with a 54% increase in the number of teachers saying they read aloud daily. The number of teachers saying they recommend texts to children and informally chat about books has also significantly increased. The data illustrates that a greater number of teachers are acting as reading role models. Subsequently, there has been a 56% combined increase in the number of children who say their teacher views them as an 'avid, enthusiastic' reader or a 'keen reader'.

"The teacher collection has got me reading again! It's been great to read books alongside pupils"- Mrs Sherras, Year 5&6 class teacher.

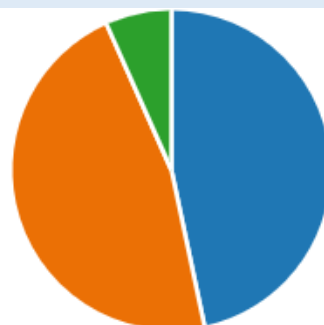
"There are some fabulous stories out there, real emotional rollercoasters, that I think everyone should read". - Mrs Jagger Deputy Headteacher.



OU RfP: Review your practice (end of programme) survey data:

During this year, what impact have you had on your children's attitudes to reading?

Considerable	7
Moderate	7
Somewhat	1
Not at all	0



Do you think your RfP focus has impacted on the children's reading attainment?

Positive impact	15
No discernible change	0
Other	0



The surveys indicate that all teaching staff feel they have had a positive impact on children's attitudes and in reading and all staff surveyed say they feel the reading for pleasure focus has had a positive impact on children's reading attainment. Whilst we were focusing on developing pupils' intrinsic motivation to read as 'volitional' readers, we know how much of an impact reading for pleasure can have on pupil attainment. It is important to also note that we have had some new teachers join our school community towards the end of the project, however, despite this, the survey shows they still feel they have been able to have a positive impact.

"Adults have a widening knowledge of authors and illustrators and are more aware of different genres of children's literature - not just young picture book fiction." - Miss Lister, Reception Teacher.





Impact on Pupils (EYFS)

“Children in the Nursery demonstrate a clear love of stories and books... Several children brought different books to me to read to them – these books were already familiar, and they wanted to hear the stories again because they loved them. This was so lovely to see a love of books and stories already embedded.” – Lisa Simpson, EYFS review day.

The Power of Reading Challenge in Early Years.

‘One exciting year!’

By Helen Lister (EYFS lead)

At the beginning of the Power of Reading Challenge in Early Years there was a question, ‘Would it make a difference?’ Early Years already valued books, we built our curriculum each half term on a book, we had a planned designated story time each day, book corners were prominent and used in the classroom. One year on and the answer to the above question is, the Power of Reading Challenge has supercharged the book and story entitlement we offer the children.

Discussions between adults around the books in the Teacher Collection took place in the classroom. This created a real buzz with the children who became interested in looking at their teachers' reading cards. The children in Reception were especially interested in noticing the books that their teachers were reading, and finding out which teacher was reading the most books.

Practitioners have also read some of the books from the teacher collection to the children in their class. Olaf Falafel's Blob Fish was a fun and thought-provoking way of leading children into thinking about ocean pollution.

Children in Nursery fully immerse themselves in books as identified as a strength in our Early Years Review. Children in Reception are responding to the extra read-aloud sessions practitioners have planned throughout the day such as reading a story at snack time.

At the end of the first year, we believe our children have enjoyed more high-quality, diverse and contemporary picture books across the year. They see themselves and their teachers as readers. There is more discussion around books and children can recall more book titles, author names and story characters. **Children are immersing themselves in books and choose to read books because they love doing so, rather than being told to read.**

There is still more work for us to continue, for example looking to introduce more high-quality picture books to our provision areas, planning more books to be read outdoors, looking at the poetry entitlement for our learners. But for a first year The Power of Reading Challenge has been an enjoyable and engaging start that has improved the book and story entitlement of the younger learners at Miriam Lord School.

Impact on Pupils KS1

KS1 Children's Reading for Pleasure survey

Do you like reading?

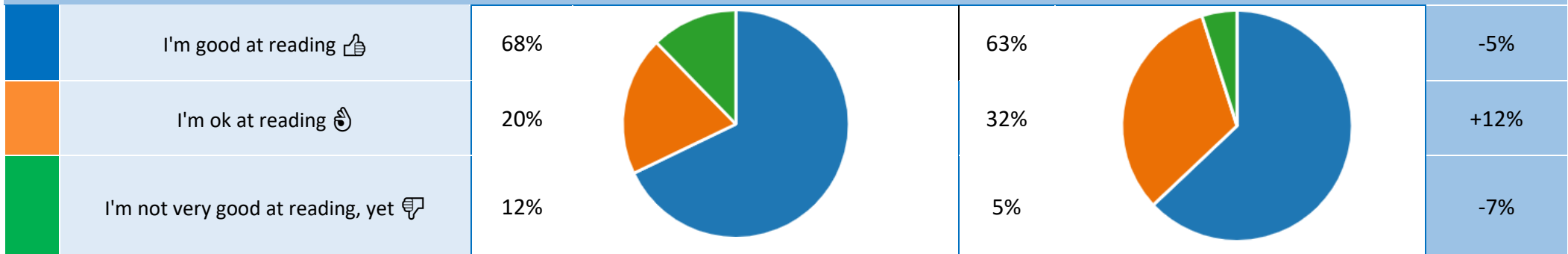
September 2023

June 2024

Impact



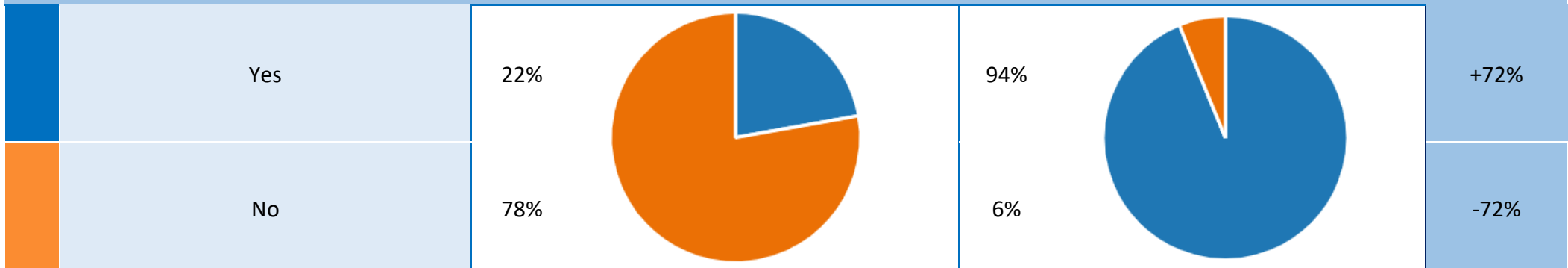
Are you a good reader?



Do you have a favourite book?

September 2023

June 2024



Impact on Pupils KS2

KS2 Children's Reading for Pleasure survey

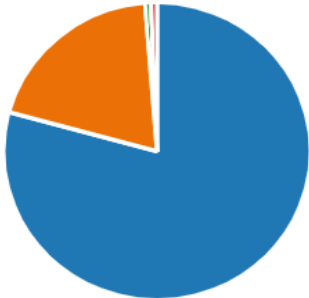
Do you like reading?		September 2023	June 2024	Impact
	I love reading ❤️	44%	60%	+16%
	It's ok 🤔	42%	35%	-7%
	I'm not bothered 🙄	4%	3%	-1%
	I don't like reading 😞	10%	3%	-7%
Are you a good reader?				
	I'm good at reading 👍	46%	64%	+18%
	I'm ok at reading 🤔	48%	34%	-14%
	I'm not very good at reading, yet 🙄	7%	3%	-4%

Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent, which may result in a total that is not exactly 100%.

Pupil attitudes towards reading drastically improved from the start of the year, with 16% more children saying they 'love reading' on the end-of-year surveys for KS2 and 15% more pupils in KS1. The number of children who said they did not like reading at the start of the survey reduced by 7% on the end-of-year surveys and was 0% in KS1. This illustrates that whilst we have only recently embarked on our reading-for-pleasure journey, the changes made in school are already having a positive impact on the way children feel about reading.

Impact on Pupils' Perceptions of Teachers as Readers

KS2 Children's Reading for Pleasure survey

Does your teacher...		September 2023		June 2024		Impact
	Love reading?	79%		94%		+15%
	Think it's ok?	19%		6%		-13%
	Isn't bothered about it?	1%		1%		0%
	Doesn't like it?	1%		0%		-1%
Does your teacher read aloud to the class?						
	Daily	45%		70%		+25%
	2 or 3 times a week	16%		20%		+4%
	Once a week	15%		6%		-9%
	Rarely	25%		5%		-20%
Do you like it when your teacher reads aloud?						
	I love it!	51%		68%		+17%
	It's ok	38%		29%		-9%
	I'm not bothered	5%		2%		-3%
	I don't like it	6%		2%		-4%

Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent, which may result in a total that is not exactly 100%

Impact on Pupils (KS1&2)

Taking part in the Reading for Pleasure project has significantly improved pupils' perceptions of their teachers' attitudes toward reading. More children now see their teacher as someone who loves reading, which has been a powerful motivator for the children to read themselves. The increased enthusiasm from teachers has had a contagious effect, fostering a more positive reading culture within the school.

"When teachers act as reading role models, their enthusiasm and practices significantly influence students' attitudes towards reading, fostering a lifelong love of reading in their students" (Cremin et al., 2014).

Additionally, the surveys evidence that children are aware that they are being read to more regularly, and they are showing a marked increase in their enjoyment of these sessions. We know from pupil interviews that this heightened engagement and enjoyment has contributed to a more vibrant and supportive learning environment, where the love of reading is shared and celebrated by both students and teachers:

"Reading takes me on a journey to new places." – Browne, Year 2.

"We have story time every day and I give it one hundred stars." Haya- Y1.

"I can discover anything I want to through a book." Deen - Y4.

"I like reading because it takes you to another world." Sharmeen - Y6.



Impact on the Focus Children

Focus Children- Impact Data

Focus Children- Impact Data						
			Survey responses September 2023		Survey responses June 2024	
FC	Year	M/F	Do you like reading?	Why do you think this is?	Do you like reading?	Why do you think this is?
A	1	M	I don't like reading 😞		I love reading ❤️	
B	1	M	I don't like reading 😞		I love reading ❤️	
C	2	M	I'm not bothered 🤔		I love reading ❤️	
D	2	F	I don't like reading 😞		I love reading ❤️	
E	3	M	I'm not bothered 🤔	"I like it at morning."	It's ok 🤔	"I like reading but I am not bothered about it."
F	3	F	I don't like reading 😞	"Because I don't know how to do it."	It's ok 🤔	"There's nice books and hard books."
G	4	M	It's ok 🤔	"It makes me laugh."	I love reading ❤️	"If I'm stressed, I will read a book and I will calm down."
H	4	F	I love reading ❤️	"I like it because it helps me."	It's ok 🤔	"Because some books are boring, and some are not."
I	5	M	I'm not bothered 🤔	"Sometimes I struggle with words."	I'm not bothered 🤔	"Because there's some books that look interesting but when I read them, they are not that good."
J	5	F	I don't like reading 😞	"Because I never find a book I like."	It's ok 🤔	"I think this because I found a book that I really enjoy and the books we have read in class are really fascinating."
K	6	M	I don't like reading 😞	"Because I am not interested in a lot of books."	I love reading ❤️	"I like finding things out in books."
L	6	F	I don't like reading 😞	"Because they are too long."	I'm not bothered 🤔	"this is because I don't read that much at home I just read twice a week."

Whilst it appears from the survey data that focus child H's attitude to reading has declined, their teacher selected them at the start of this project as someone who was a disengaged reader, with this teacher's judgment in mind, we must take this as an anomaly. At the start of the project, the baseline survey revealed that seven of the twelve focus children did not enjoy reading. By the end, none of these children expressed a dislike for reading in their survey responses. Additionally, five more children reported that they now 'love reading,' and three more children changed to say, 'It's okay.' This survey data highlights the positive progress we have made towards reading attitudes amongst our most disengaged readers.

Delving Deeper – Focus Child K

Child K profile:

Year 6 boy
EAL – Polish
Disadvantaged, FSM, Pupil premium.

Autumn 2 baseline data:

Reading level: Oxford 16
Working at: EXS
SATs Reading scaled score: 89

Survey findings:

"I don't like reading because I am not interested in any books."

Discussion findings:

Often spends time on games at home and looks after his younger brother. Doesn't own many books. Often takes books home from the library but does not choose to read them.

Interests: football, Manchester United, video games.

Actions:

- Targeted weekly reading group led by English Lead. Tasks to focus on exploring reader identity with focus children.
- Weekly timetabled visits to the school library to find opportunities to browse books.
- Daily read-aloud sessions facilitated by the class teacher.
- New year group book collections to be launched to add more contemporary texts for children to read in school and at home.
- Author visits based on children's developing interests.

Impact to date:

Reading level: Oxford 18
Working at: EXS
SATs Reading scaled score: 97
End of year survey – 'I love reading'

- When reading 'The Final Year' by Matt Goodfellow as a class, Child A said to the teacher, *"Can we carry on reading Miss? I really like this one"*.
- The English Lead organised an author visit with Matt Goodfellow to further inspire Child A's reading journey along with other children in the school.
- Child A enjoyed exploring different ways to listen to stories being read aloud such as 'doodle drawing'. He said this helped him to concentrate and imagine the story in his head.
- Child A said he wanted to read books about 'true stuff'. RS suggested he read '24 Hours in Space' by Rob Lloyd Jones. He spent time reading this at school and then asked if he could take this home to read.
- RS gifted Child A a book based on his interests. He kept this on his desk in the classroom and independently chose to read this whenever he had finished a task. When asked if he was enjoying it, he said, *"It's really good Miss, can you buy some like this? I've been reading it at home too."*

"I like books more now. The books I am reading now I actually find interesting. I've realised that I like books that tell me the truth - books that are about facts and history. I sometimes like to read things like Bad Guys too. I'm reading a bit more at home too." – Focus child A.

Mrs Rachel Saunders
Assistant Headteacher and English Lead
Miriam Lord Primary School



Impact on the Wider School Environment

Taking part in the Reading for Pleasure programme has had a profoundly positive impact on the wider school environment. This initiative has not only enriched the reading culture among students but also fostered a sense of community and collaboration among staff. Classrooms are now buzzing with enthusiastic discussions about books, and there is a noticeable increase in students' engagement and enjoyment in reading. The programme has encouraged teachers to share their own reading experiences, creating a more connected and supportive atmosphere. Moreover, the emphasis on reading for pleasure has contributed to a more inclusive environment, where every child's reading journey is valued and nurtured.

“Children are recommending books more confidently. They recommended a book for me to read from the teacher collection” Mrs Sherras, Year 6.

“Students take ownership of all the different books they are reading. They know their books well and can discuss other books that are similar. Their reading attitude is admirable” Mrs Akhtar, Year 2.

“Children are talking more about books and reading together. They are enjoying a wider range of books too”. Miss Maheen, Year 3&4.

Children and staff have enthusiastically celebrated reading through various events this year. We welcomed author Matt Goodfellow for a visit and hosted a Miriam Lord Masked Reader as part of our World Book Day festivities. While we have held marked reading events in previous years, the increased excitement about reading throughout the school led to staff and students embracing these events with even greater enthusiasm.



Author visit from Matt Goodfellow as part of our book collection launch day (15.1.24).



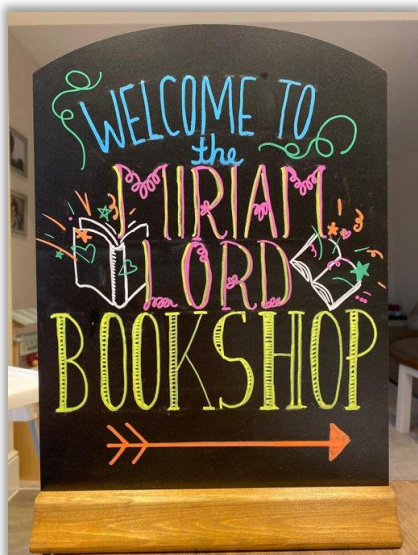
The Masked Reader and our 'characters on a roll' from World Book Day 2024.

Miriam Lord Book Shop



Due to pupil's growing interest in books throughout school, we decided to launch an UKS2 reading club in January 2024. These children act as reading role models and help to organise reading areas, reading events and support younger readers in school.

We have recently set up a Miriam Lord Bookshop that is run by the Reading Club. The children oversee pricing books, curating window displays, writing recommendations and carry out transactions. The bookshop sells second-hand books donated by staff members to help raise money to go towards new books for school. This also provides children throughout our school with affordable books to read at home.



Impact Summary

Participation in the OU RfP school improvement programme has inspired the Miriam Lord community and highlighted the vital importance of RfP in our school: As research has shown, "*reading for pleasure is the single biggest indicator of a student's future success*" (OECD). By showcasing this significant and positive impact reading for pleasure can have on children, we managed to engage staff and pupils throughout school. This initiative has enabled us to focus on not only children who struggle with or do not enjoy reading but also those who seem to be proficient readers but do not genuinely engage in volitional reading. Whilst there is still work to be done, collaboratively reflecting on our practice and extending our literary knowledge as reading role models, we have facilitated a positive shift in pupils' relationships with reading.

"We have story time every day and I give it one hundred stars!"
Haya, Y1.

Sustain

As we continue to move forward in our reading for pleasure journey, it is crucial to consider how we will continue to monitor and evaluate the pupils' and teachers' attitudes and knowledge around reading. This will support us in ensuring we can pinpoint areas for further development that align with our school improvement priorities. Whilst our end-of-year survey data provides us with a very useful starting point for next year, we will continue to regularly interview pupils, carry out learning walks and have discussions with staff when we return from the summer break in September. This will ensure the triangulation of data to accurately inform our RfP action plan. This will continue to be reviewed and adapted throughout the year and we will repeat the same end-of-year surveys in Summer 2025.

To maintain buy-in from staff, we will continue to remind staff to reflect on their success to date and the profound impact reading for pleasure can have on children's life chances. We will continue to share research that underscores the importance of our efforts to motivate us to keep fostering a love of reading. It is important that we also continue to model, acknowledge, support, recognise and reward good practice, (Department for Education, 2020). We will share further research and pedagogy during termly CPD sessions which will focus on sharing examples of practice and evidence-informed approaches to supporting reading for pleasure.

We must also remain attuned to children's attitudes and abilities. Staff should continue engaging in discussions about books with their classes, dedicating time and space to understand the children as readers, and expanding their knowledge of children's literature to make relevant recommendations. It is also essential that we continue to model positive reading behaviours by ensuring children see staff as readers who teach and teachers who read. By demonstrating our own love for reading, by continuing to model ourselves as reading role models, we can continue to inspire our children to develop a similar passion.

We will maintain the efforts of the change team and reading club to promote our core message: reading is essential for learning and **enjoying and sharing books together is a huge part of life at Miriam Lord Primary School**. Reading for Pleasure contributes to life changes and emotional well-being; therefore, we must ensure that pupils feel reading is accessible to them and to provide a school environment that values all forms of reading.



The following objectives for the coming academic year will help us maintain this momentum:

Strategies to build on and embed

- The addition of new children's texts to add to the teacher's lending library and pupil collections.
- Reviewing, updating and dividing class collections into termly collections to maintain reader interest throughout the year.
- Termly CPD sessions focusing on reading for pleasure pedagogy and practice.
- Continuation of the Miriam Lord Bookshop – themed events (spooky story sales, poetry party, reading café).
- Arrange author visits to inspire and motivate pupils to read.

Strategies to develop

- Redesign the layout of the school library to encourage children to 'branch out' and easily locate preferred genres.
- Update the library books on offer to include a wider range of literature in line with pupil interests (i.e. comics and graphic novels).
- Build connections with parents (family story time, workshops, newsletters, reading volunteers).
- Arrange local library visits for each year group.
- Arrange PAT reading groups for both pupils and teachers to continue to develop reading communities.

We are incredibly proud as a school of the progress we have made. The dedication and collective effort of our staff have significantly enhanced our reading culture, fostering a more inclusive and engaging environment for all our students. Witnessing the transformation in our pupils' attitudes towards reading and their increased enthusiasm has been immensely rewarding and we are excited to continue with our reading-for-pleasure journey.

Mrs Rachel L Saunders
Assistant Headteacher
Miriam Lord Primary School.

