

Developing Social Reading Environments



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Context

Temple Sutton is situated in the centre of Southend, Essex in an area of deprivation. There are currently approximately 698 pupils. Historically, EYFS and KS1 reading at the end of the year is just below national expectations. 75% of year 1 children pass their PSC, which obviously means that some children have to retake this in year 2.

In September 2019 14.5% of pupils had SEN ,26 pupils with EHCP.

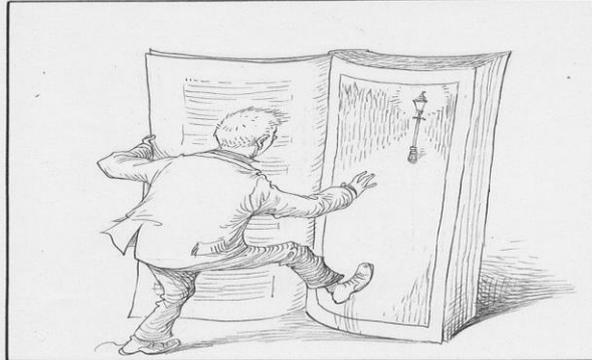
32% are eligible for Pupil Premium 13% EAL

Quote from Temple Sutton SEF:

'School leaders have placed a sharp focus on improving reading and ensuring it is prioritised as a key skill for learning; standards in phonics have been consistently below the national average and whilst there has been an upward trend in attainment at KS1, this has not been matched by the progress in KS2 which has been more variable. Reading has been identified as a key priority on the School Improvement Plan 2019-20, with the introduction of the Read Write Inc. phonics programme (Elmhurst Literacy Hub) and development of whole class reading and reading stems.

- Reading for enjoyment is developing, and pupils are encouraged to read for a range of purposes. Pupils are given a termly recommended reading list which encourages them to read a range of books by different authors, however, there are not sufficient books in classrooms and book corners do not yet provide an equitable range of fiction and non-fiction books for children to choose from. '

I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT BOOKS BECAUSE...



BOOKS ARE LIKE DOORS. YOU CAN OPEN THEM AND
STEP INTO ANOTHER PLACE...OR TIME... OR
WORLD

OU Research inspiration and rationale

I decided to look at social reading environments, as we need to develop book areas in each classroom and a library area that the children can freely access either as a whole class, small groups or individuals.

Previously, some classrooms had reading areas and some did not. Some staff felt that their rooms were too small, so we have spoken about Pinterest and looking for ideas for reading areas in small spaces.

Also, in the past the library area was in a room that the children could not access without an adult. The children were able to borrow books on a weekly basis, but couldn't return them until the following week. Some children enjoyed looking at their books, but it was run like a library in silence, or at least quietly.

I have decided to work on Reading for Pleasure across the school and look at ways of how to develop this with the children.

Social reading environments were seen to be key to creating richly reciprocal reading communities in the Teachers as Readers research project by Teresa Cremin (2014). Physically engaging, the most successful environments tempted children into texts and offered spaces to relax, browse, and read for pleasure.

Critically they were also interactive and included considerable book talk, recommendations and other forms of informal book promotion. The environments were influenced by teachers' knowledge of children's texts

and their children as readers and by the complementary practices of reading aloud, book talk and independent reading time.

Aims

My aim is for children to want to visit our social reading spaces, not just because they are being asked to by staff, but because they enjoy the comfortable spaces we are developing. I would like children to begin to develop a love of reading, choosing to read materials, both independently and sharing a variety of reading materials with adults. We will develop the areas to be comfortable places with a wide variety of reading material. I will also add some reading material around the school environment.

The TaRs (Teachers as Readers) research showed that 'space and time for relaxed reading and creating physically engaging reading areas and environments that tempted and enticed children to read, borrow books, get to know new authors, talk about texts and see themselves profiled as readers' were crucial.

'These environments promoted reading as a richly positive experience and promoted sharing and significant book talk and inside-text talk.'

As a school, we will also start to work on teacher's knowledge of children's literature. I feel that staff know about their own year group's reading materials, but could widen their knowledge by informal book talk amongst themselves and opportunities to recommend texts to colleagues.

Teresa Cremin (professor of Education at OU) says

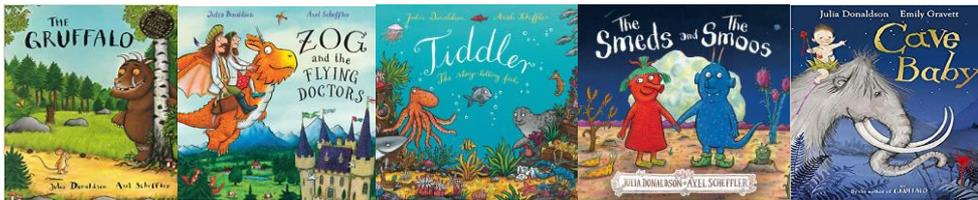
"Teacher's knowledge of children's literature and other texts is at the heart of reading for pleasure in school. Without rich repertoires we cannot pump passion around the system, nor ensure textual diversity is offered, let alone foster children's determination and desire to read on, read more widely and enjoy the ride."

Outline - What have we done so far.....

- Reading areas have been set up in each classroom and in two shared spaces across the school.



- I have put a selection of reading materials in the entrance hall, as we often have children waiting with parents there.



- Staff have put a golden ticket in the front of two books. The



children look through the books to find a golden ticket, to find a recommended book and then hopefully have a chat with the relevant staff member who has recommended the book.

- Pupil reading survey- one for KS1 and one for KS2. - This made me reflect on our current practices and what changes I would like to work on in the future.

Do you like reading? Are you a good reader? Do you read at home? Who with? How often does someone else read with you at home? Where do

you most like to read? What do you most like to read? What are your 2 favourite books?

- Non- negotiable- every class teacher reads aloud to class for 10-15 minutes a day.
- Reading exchange of books in the staff room for adults in school to read for pleasure.
- VLOG reading recommendations by children and staff (just getting up and running)
- Twitter account for school- staff can have links to reading research
- Reading areas on the playground with a variety of reading material.
- Usborne sponsored read so we can invest in some new books.
- School council priority- What sort of books would each year group like?
- Library club at lunchtime.
- Drama/story club- bringing books to life.
- In EYFS ensuring role play areas reflect fiction e.g. *Goldilocks and the 3 bears*.

Impact (unfortunately this has been limited due to the closure of schools because of Coronavirus on 20th March 2020. This work will continue at Temple Sutton during the next academic year.)

- The children have enjoyed changing their library books and using the shared reading spaces to look at books together. Some reluctant boy readers from KS1 are choosing to come in and share books at lunchtimes.
- There has been an impact on having books in the entrance hall as before all the children did was race about in there whilst waiting for siblings to finish extra- curricular clubs. The adults just chatted to each other. Now I am beginning to see adults and children engaging and sharing books whilst waiting.
- The children have enjoyed looking for Golden tickets and trying to get the chance to talk to the adult about why it is one of their favourite books. It is early days for this idea and I hope to develop it further in the summer term.
- In the summer term (now postponed until next year), I will ask the children to complete the reading survey again, as they only had it just after Christmas, so it is not enough time to see if all the priorities we have had for reading have had an impact on the children's attitude to reading for pleasure.
- I am assured that the reading aloud in classes is having a positive impact.
- We are trying to make the displays in the reading areas more interactive, but have not had time to develop this yet, however in the trial period of this, the children absolutely loved it.
- In my own classroom we started a 'waiting list' for a particular book that the children have enjoyed. The children enjoy sharing a special book that I have read to them at home with adults. They check the list every day to see when it is their turn to take the book home.

Some quotes from children.....

"I love reading because you can lose yourself in a story without having to watch a screen."

"It helps with my creativity and imagination." Cayley- year 4

"I love the fact that if I don't want to be on the playground, I can come in and read"

"I don't get bored now waiting for my sister to finish clubs coz I can read a book when I am waiting" Keven- year 1

"I love choosing books in our new library to take home and read with Mummy"
Isabelle- year 1

"It is good fun to look at books with my friends" Alfie - year 2

"I now know it's okay to read comics" - Boy- year 4

"I like looking for a Golden Ticket as it means it will be a good book to read
because the adults like it." Girl- year 2.

Reflections on impact the TaR's research had on practice

I feel this is the beginning of a journey for me and my school. It will highlight to staff the importance of reading for pleasure. We will continue to work on developing reading for pleasure pedagogy.

The TaR's research has made me think about how to develop my own practice within my classroom, by giving the children more ownership over what is read aloud to them. I would like to research this more extensively and share this good practice with adults in school.

I have many points that I would like to continue to work on in the next academic year in order to develop reading for pleasure further.

I would also like to see some investment in new reading materials to widen and replenish what we already have.

We will develop reading displays further by looking at ideas such as 'wonder walls' focusing on a particular author, maybe start a staff book club, discuss with children what they would like included as part of our reading displays

I would like to find ways of continuing to develop a teacher's knowledge of children's literature by having 5 minutes at the beginning of each staff meeting for an adult to recommend a read, something new they have read or an old favourite that others may not know about. Also, our Head of School will develop VLOG recommendations as it is something we were just beginning before the closure. I think it is important for all staff to have knowledge of their children's reading practices, so I hope to develop some research around this. Also, for staff to make time for informal book talk within the school environment.

I will hopefully get the opportunity in the next academic year to lead some staff meetings on Reading for Pleasure to stress how crucial it is and to share the research I have been guided by.

I will continue to develop Temple Sutton's reading community.