

## Chapter 9: Inspiring a love of reading:

### Professional learning to develop a culture of reading for pleasure

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#### Introduction

Whether children read for pleasure - that is choose to read – within and beyond school matters. Not only because ‘the will influences the skill’ as research repeatedly reveals, but because reading for pleasure, for exploration, relaxation, imagination and making connections, is a worthwhile activity in its own right. It is mandated in England, Ireland, is expected to be required in the new Welsh curriculum and is central to the First Minister’s Reading Challenge in Scotland.

Teachers and schools across the UK are working to enhance children’s desire to read, and most schools participate in a myriad of book activities, including Book Week, World Book Day, author events, and literacy parents’ evenings. Many have also refurbished/reclaimed their libraries; purchasing reading sheds and double decker buses and adding cushions and sofas to enrich classroom reading corners. Such activities and spaces demonstrate to families, governors, inspectors and the children that the school values reading. But is this institutional positioning of Reading for Pleasure (RfP) enough?

To avoid being sucked into ‘performing RfP’, some schools and teachers draw on research to underpin their pedagogic practice; they move away from ‘doing’ reading activities and instead they engage in serious Continuing Professional Development and Learning (CPDL, Cordingley, 2015). They review their professional knowledge and understanding about what counts as RfP and develop research-informed, sustained and embedded practice- creating a RfP ethos that runs through the school. Some schools also document the difference their new practices make to children’s identities as readers and their desire to read.

This chapter demonstrates the value of schools embarking on such research-informed reading for pleasure journeys, and the salience of staff exploring research and practice in collaboration with one another and evidence-based resources. Initially we explore the benefits of RfP, and the challenges and tensions involved, then we turn to relevant research and ways to mediate this through professional development. We focus on a CPDL course run in one school for local teachers as an example of the road travelled, highlight the new research-informed understandings developed, the pedagogic and community consequences, and the impact on children’s (and teachers’) identities as readers. We also offer ways to get involved.

#### The challenges involved in fostering reading for pleasure

There is strong evidence from multiple international studies that will to read influences the skill and vice versa. For example, drawing on the large data set offered by the British Cohort study, researchers have shown an association between childhood reading and increased attainment in literacy and numeracy in adolescence, with marked progress in vocabulary (Sullivan & Brown, 2013). In addition, other studies have shown, somewhat unsurprisingly, that RfP has other benefits such as wider general knowledge, enriched imagination and narrative writing, and that when children choose to engage in reading in their leisure time beyond school, they have opportunities to explore who they are or might become, and to develop an empathetic awareness of others.

Yet despite these benefits, reading in school tends to be framed as a cognitive activity and teaching children to decode and comprehend texts is prioritised. Yet whilst necessary, this is not enough to develop confident readers who not only can but *do* choose to read. Reading also encompasses behavioural and motivational characteristics which deserve professional attention if we are to develop readers for life. In England however, in the recent PIRLS study, it was

evident that children’s attitudes to reading are comparatively low compared to their skills (McGrane, 2017) and in English speaking countries, England had the lowest ranking for enjoyment and the lowest for pupil engagement in reading (except Australia) (McGrane, 2017). In such accountability cultures, the backwash of assessment places pressure on teachers, reducing the time available to support RfP. This often constrains the experience of struggling readers, particularly boys (Hempel Jorgensen, Cremin, Harris and Chamberlain, 2018). With the best of intentions, the teachers in this study of ten-year-old boy readers, prioritised skills practise and consequently the boys’ experience of reading focused solely on technical aspects. Their reader identities, habits and interests beyond school were neither known nor built upon and their teachers’ perceptions not only of them as ‘boy readers’, but also of their social class and ethnicity further constrained their engagement (Hempel-Jorgensen et al., 2018). Arguably they were trapped in a circle of underachievement and poor pedagogy.

The *Teachers as Readers* (Phase 1) research also showed that teachers’ knowledge of children’s literature is dominated by Dahl and other ‘celebrity’ authors and is arguably insufficient to support reader development (Cremin et al., 2009). This finding was underscored by a later National Literacy Trust survey (Clark and Teraveinen, 2015). Despite the six-year difference in these surveys, the results were very similar. Teachers’ relied upon their own childhood favourites and were over-reliant on narrow range of children’s authors. Roald Dahl was the unrivalled favourite in both surveys. In addition, as only 4% of the 9115 children’s books published in the UK in 2017, featured Black or minority ethnic characters (CLPE, 2018), it is particularly important that teachers seek such texts out and widen their repertoires. Without such subject knowledge teachers cannot cultivate children’s personal preferences and practices. Furthermore, the new digital library systems which are very popular in primary schools, tend to position teachers as librarians, curators and monitors of children’s reading. This significantly undermines their potential roles as listeners, mentors and co-readers (Kucirkova and Cremin, 2017).

In sum, there are tensions and challenges for time-poor teachers who wish to nurture children’s RfP, they may feel obliged to keep reading skills centre stage, may have limited knowledge, and may be positioned as monitoring children’s reading not supporting them as co-readers. Arguably the goal of reading instruction is for each child to achieve the reading level deemed appropriate by current policy. Whereas the goal of RfP is not only for each child to develop positive attitudes and dispositions towards reading, but for them to become lifelong readers (see Figure 1). This conceptualisation, whilst visually creating a dichotomy between RfP and reading instruction, does not seek to polarise, rather it recognises the significance of these different orientations, the interplay between the skill and the will and the vital necessity of working towards a balance between them.

<b>Reading Instruction</b>		<b>Reading for Pleasure</b>
<b>is oriented towards:</b>		<b>is oriented towards:</b>
Learning to read		<b>Choosing to read</b>
The skill		<b>The will</b>
Decoding and comprehension		<b>Engagement and response</b>
System readers		<b>Lifelong readers</b>
Teacher direction		<b>Child direction</b>
Teacher ownership		<b>Child ownership</b>
Attainment		<b>Achievement</b>
The minimum entitlement:		<b>The maximum entitlement:</b>
The “expected standard”		<b>A reader for life</b>
The standards agenda		<b>The reader’s own agenda</b>

Figure 1. Distinctions between Reading instruction and RfP (Cremin et al, 2014:157)

### Reflect on Figure 1.

Look at your timetable for reading, to what extent is your curriculum provision balanced, enabling both the will and the skill to develop?

Plan four specific planned reading activities, and be clear about the intended orientation of each, plan two for RfP and two for reading skills instruction.

### Research focused on fostering RfP in school

The *Teachers as Readers* (TaRs) Phase II research, undertaken with 43 teachers from 27 primary schools in five areas of England focused on RfP across a school year (Cremin et al., 2014). The research team tracked teachers' knowledge and practice, the impact on children's identities as readers and later observed the creation of RfP pedagogy, the development of Reading Teachers and communities of engaged readers (See Figure 2). Each of the findings from this work is now addressed in turn, as these were the basis of the RfP CPDL work discussed later in the chapter.

The research identified that teachers need a wide knowledge of children's literature and other texts, and a working knowledge of the reading practices and identities of those young people in their classrooms to effectively nurture RfP. The young people benefitted from having teacher who could tailor their text recommendations to different individual's interests and who as role models voiced their passion and pleasure in reading. Such focused support not only increases the chance of young readers finding books that satisfy them, but also leads to significant 'book blether'- critical text conversations between readers that helps sustain and nourish readers.

A coherent RfP pedagogy was also identified. This encompassed reading aloud; book talk, inside-text talk and recommendations; and the provision of quality time for independent choice-led reading, all offered in a social reading environment. However, these can become little more than routine pedagogic procedures (see Hempel, Jorgensen et al. 2018). The effectiveness of any pedagogy depends on teachers' subject knowledge and knowledge of their children, and in the case of RfP pedagogy professional understanding of reading, as social, relational and affectively engaging. With a richer understanding of reading and of themselves as readers, teachers can more sensitively shape their RfP pedagogy. This fourfold pedagogy, endorsed by the NUT (2016), needs to be embedded and sensitively sustained in order to foster children's autonomy as readers, readers who exercise discrimination and choice within and beyond school. Key to this pedagogy is the extent to which it is RIST, that is:

- Reader-led
- Informal
- Social and with
- Texts that tempt.

In planning reading aloud provision across a school for example, the research indicates that teachers need to consider the extent to which the time set aside is reader-led: Who makes the choices of what to read, who reads aloud and how often and are opportunities planned within English and across the curriculum? How might this vary across the primary years and to what extent are these opportunities informal and social? Research suggests with the pressure of time and curriculum coverage, reading aloud is often shelved, tends to be teacher-led and may be misappropriated as a space in which reading instruction is foregrounded reducing its potential to inspire (Hempel-Jorgensen et al., 2018). The social nature of reading can be supported through pairs of children reading aloud (Year 3 and Year 5 for example), the creation of Reading Buddies, time with volunteers, children reading aloud to friends and staff running 'You Choose Fridays' when children select which teacher's Read Aloud session to attend. Finally, the texts chosen must tempt readers to imagine, be curious, debate issues and want to hear more. The TaRs research indicated that reading aloud to young people, without attendant work, is a key pedagogic practice in fostering RfP (Cremin et al., 2014). It is not an optional extra, but every child's right to hear fiction, non-fiction and poetry read aloud with passion and pleasure.

In addition, if independent reading time is heavily constrained, by silence, formality, limited choices and ability-assigned texts, it is likely that indifferent or negative attitudes will be fostered. If the teacher requires children to sit in their assigned seats and uses the time for preparation of later lessons, this will further limit child volition, relaxed engagement and opportunity for critical conversations and reader to reader recommendations. It is clear the ways in which RfP pedagogy is shaped by practitioners can constrain or empower readers and will prompt different responses, impacting upon children's desire to engage as readers. The relaxed social nature of the reading environment and the extent which the pedagogy is RIST is critical.

Research also suggests that those teachers who develop as Reading Teachers (capital R, capital T) make a positive difference to children's identities as readers and their pleasure in reading (Cremin et al., 2014). Whilst all teachers are readers, only some develop as Reading Teachers, who are not only motivated and enthusiastic fellow bookworms (with a rich repertoire to draw upon), but are thoughtful and interactive reading role models. Such teachers do far more than share their enthusiasm for reading, they investigate their own experiences of reading and consider the classroom consequences in order to support children, they also develop new understandings of the social, relational and affective experience of reading. The project showed that new and highly productive relationships between such teachers and children were forged which impacted positively on children's attitudes to and pleasure in reading. If teachers are willing to position themselves as fellow-readers, share their own reading histories and experiences, and invite the children to share *their* everyday encounters with reading and their perceptions of themselves as readers, then it is possible for reciprocal relationships to emerge, and reading communities to be created (Cremin et al., 2014).

Through developing their knowledge of children and texts, a RfP pedagogy and as Reading Teachers, the practitioners in the TaRs research gradually built interactive and reciprocal reading communities in their classrooms (Cremin et al., 2014). In these new relationship strong communities, (see Figure 2) new spaces were created for children and teachers to participate and talk about their reading, and children were encouraged to bring their cultural knowledge and lived experience of reading to school and make more of their own choices as readers. This fostered more personal involvement and commitment and a shift in the locus of control around RfP.

Some teachers also blurred the boundaries between home and school reading and began to involve parents and community members more fully. However, this is not without challenge as recent research has shown once children can read, parents tend to stop reading to their children; reading may become 'an orphaned responsibility' (Merga and Ledger, 2018) such that both teachers and parents assume it is the others' role to provide sustained support and encouragement. Thus children are left to fend for themselves as readers. In addition, as the study undertaken by Orkin et al., (2018) indicates, schools too often seek to foster RfP by offering extrinsic rewards to children or families, for completing reading homework or for the number of books read for instance. Such reading for recognition, for grades and for competition focuses on extrinsic motivation which can have a detrimental effect on reading comprehension and readers' engagement. It is widely known and underscored by Orkin et al's (2018) study, that RfP is closely associated with intrinsic motivation, desiring to read for its own sake rather than reading for rewards. This research found that the presence of incentives to read were ineffective in encouraging readers, and that those readers who were supported to find their own pleasure in reading and became intrinsically motivated, demonstrated increased engagement in the reading tasks offered and extended their skills in the process.

The research is clear; if teachers are to develop children's RfP, they need, as Figure 2 indicates, to enrich their knowledge of texts and of children, and to develop a RfP pedagogy, one that is as noted earlier reader-led, informal, social and with texts that tempt (RIST), as well as a personal stance as a Reading Teacher. They will then be in a position to build communities of readers within, and potentially beyond, the classroom.

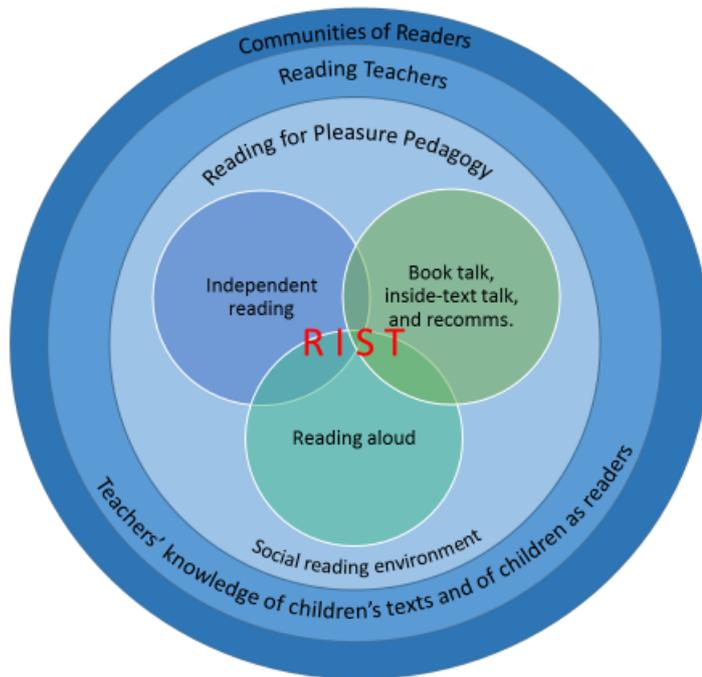


Figure 2: Research insights regarding effective RfP (based on Cremin et al. 2014)

## Mediating RfP research through professional development

### *The CPDL framing*

Fostering children's pleasure in reading is more complex than introducing an intervention or programme; building reader to reader relationships and a reading culture takes time, it is an ongoing commitment. The CPD course, 'Reading for Pleasure' on which this chapter draws, was organisationally framed around the research-based recommendations made by Cordingley et al. (2015) about CPD and its essential focus on CPDL-ie CPD and learning. The course sought to ensure that the teachers were actively engaged in reviewing their practice, identifying individual starting points and working with facilitators who in a responsive manner sought to develop the teachers' subject and pedagogical content knowledge, helping them to apply their learning from sessions and explore and evaluate their work back at school in order to support the younger learners.

It was designed in partnership with academics from The Open University, Cambridge University and teachers from the University of Cambridge Primary School (UCPS). Ten teachers from local school were recruited, two staff from UCPS also attended, one Learning Coach Lead and one classroom practitioner. Some course members were English leaders in their schools. Over the course they worked together, shared their learning journeys and development work back in school. This was central to each of the six three-hour sessions. The programme made extensive use of a new practitioner website informed by the TaRs research, which shares the findings in an accessible classroom focused manner. This has multiple resources framed around the insights as presented in Figure 2. These resources include: self-reviews, focused research summaries, practical classroom strategies and over a hundred Examples of Practice, written by members of the profession and informed by the research. Additional Features on Top Texts, authors and related blogs serve to support practitioner enquiry and full papers and chapters on the work are available. <https://researchrichpedagogies.org/research/reading-for-pleasure> . RfP was foregrounded, but the course also paid attention to comprehension. Tutors included two teacher members of the OU website Advisory Board and three academics, all ex teachers.

The sessions included inputs, workshops, feedback on gap tasks which related to auditing practice in the light of research evidence, and working on a small practitioner enquiries, either individual or whole school. In addition, professional reading, establishing a baseline in the chosen area and the development of research-informed practice were key. Each teacher's journey was undertaken as an enquiry, and course members were invited to make clear their aspirations for their children as readers and document any differences occasioned by their changes to practice. They worked not only to track the impact of their work, capturing and exploring outcomes, but shared their resultant work on the OU RfP website as 'Examples of Practice'. This directional target sought to prompt practitioners to distil their learning and the principles underpinning their approach to RfP. In the final session, teachers presented these Examples to each other and to attending SLT members from their schools. The Examples were structured as Title and name, School context, Research inspiration, Aims, Outline, Impact, and Reflections ( weblinks to some are noted below).

### ***Auditing practice in relation to the research evidence***

As a core part of the CPDL, teachers reviewed their practice using research informed audits on the OU website. This helped identify areas of strength and areas which would benefit from development. The most common areas of strength were reading environments, although some saw these as reading corners alone and not the wider school social reading environment. Several teachers identified a need to develop their own (and their staff) knowledge of texts for children, *'I simply cannot name any picture fiction authors beyond the most popular and I realise now this is holding me and the children back,'* whilst others sought to re-instate reading aloud or their provision for independent reading: *'it's just dropped off the timetable and so many of our children don't read at home'*. Reviewing was a two-stage process; step one was an overarching audit which enabled the teachers to identify an area of need, step two was a focused audit, also derived from the OU website.

#### **Step 1: Reviewing your RfP knowledge and practice: an overarching audit**

Go to <https://researchrichpedagogies.org/research/page/developing-reading-for-pleasure-in-your-school> and complete the Open University Review your Practice audit based on the TaRs research.

This will help you consider your own knowledge of children's literature and of individual children as well as your RfP pedagogy, your stance as a reading Teacher and your experience at developing reciprocal reading communities.

In reviewing your work linked to these research findings you will be able to identify key strengths and a areas for development.

## Step 2: Reviewing your RfP knowledge and practice: a focused audit

Following step 1, list the areas for development identified. Prioritise one of these, such as your knowledge of children's texts, and/or your young readers, your RfP pedagogy, your Reading Teacher Stance or the development of reading communities and undertake a second audit from the website based on your priority for development. See the research findings on the site under each of which there is an audit:

<https://researchrichpedagogies.org/research/reading-for-pleasure>.

### **Stretching intellectual muscles through professional reading**

Reading relevant research to stretch professional understanding and discussing the extent to which this challenged or confirmed current practice was key. Course members were both set and set themselves research reading challenges, they read around their area for RfP development, both research summaries on the OU website and other material.

For example, the Learning Coach Lead at UCPS came to read: *The Book Whisperer* by Donalyn Miller, *The Reading Environment* by Aidan Chambers, *Developing Critical Thinking Through Picture books* by Mary Roche, *Understanding Reading Comprehension* by Wayne Tennant, the OU website More Research Details (based on the TaRs research) and a paper on '*Understanding Boys (Dis)engagement with Reading for Pleasure*' by Amelia Hempel Jorgensen, Teresa Cremin, Diane Harris and Liz Chamberlain. Her area of focus was to improve staff and children's knowledge of children's literature and to create more social interactive spaces to profile RfP. These readings helped her on her journey, offering underpinning arguments around the value of text talk, teachers' knowledge of children's texts and the explicit sharing of this knowledge in ways that would tempt and engage the children.

The reading and discussion supported the teachers as they began to shape up their own enquiries and worked to enrich their knowledge and practice. It caused them to ask questions, debate issues, engage with robust and often challenging material; each piece of which was not always closely aligned and sometimes needed mediation. In retrospect however, these discussions might have been more effectively summarised if the teachers had been invited to represent their understandings visually and if more 'research texts in common' had been set by the course team. Careful selection and setting of one or more of the listed texts in the references of this chapter could be of value in future CPDL for RfP to read, discuss and represent. Balancing the setting of more and less demanding readings can also be effective. It is also always useful to set at least one text that deals in detail with the applied consequences of the research and attends to the consequences for children's knowledge, skills, understanding or attitudes.

### **Establishing a baseline, desired outcomes and methods to evaluate impact**

Having reviewed their RfP knowledge and practice, chosen an area for development, and widened their understanding of related research, course members sought to involve the children, staff and/or parents as appropriate and give space to their voices. Some also drew on other forms of baseline data. An English leader in their school for example involved all staff in completing the OU audit of teachers' knowledge of children's texts. They often found that, as in the studies reviewed above, that staff were reliant on texts from their own childhoods or those written by celebrity authors (Cremin et al., 2009; Clark and Teraveinen, 2015). Another course member invited all staff to bring their term's read aloud books to a staff meeting and found that all but one of these had been published before 2000. So both these teachers, working to enrich staff knowledge focused on broadening staff repertoires of more contemporary texts.

Some staff, seeking to find out children's attitudes to reading used the OU survey <https://researchrichpedagogies.org/research/page/developing-reading-for-pleasure-in-your-school>

. In one case when all the data was analysed across a school, staff were concerned to learn that over 70 % of their children preferred reading at home than school. This resulted in a development focus on teachers' knowledge of the children as readers, and a school development plan which prioritised practices that sought to make school-based reading more relaxed and enjoyable. Another course member, who used the survey wanted to enrich her reading aloud practice, found to her consternation that children were somewhat indifferent to this practice. This underscored the need to enrich her reading aloud provision, and prompted her to re-shape her pedagogy and ensure it was RIST;

she sought to involve the children in making more of the read aloud choices for example, offered time for them to talk informally about the texts read and, through reading more widely herself and purchasing texts recommended by leaders and members, tried to make wiser more discerning choices to read aloud. As the year progressed this teacher, documented the difference that her altered pedagogy made to the children’s attitudes and interests as readers. Other data sources used by teachers to establish an initial baseline from which to document difference included observation of a small number of case study children, (those who could but didn’t choose to read), library borrowing records, Ofsted reports and parents’ perspectives written as part of the inspection process.

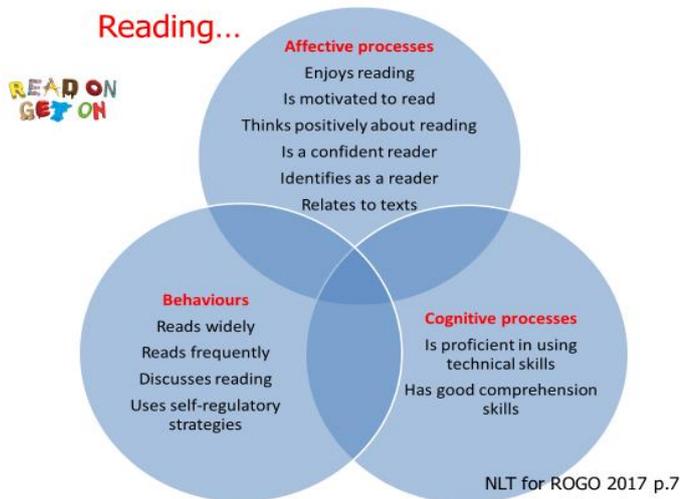


Figure 3: Top-level tripartite conceptualisation of what we mean by “reading” (Clark and Teraveinen, 2017)

Discussion of desired reader outcomes revealed that members felt that if children were seen to be visibly enjoying any activity, this was an endorsement and justification for such. Robust discussions ensued about the value of tracking more closely the impact on children’s development as readers (behaviourally, affectively or cognitively) and the group were introduced to the National Literacy Trust’s tripartite conceptualisation of reading, based on the OECD’s (2016) new definition of reading (see Figure 3). This led to focussed discussions on a professional need to develop ways to track (not measure) subtle identity shifts and the frequency with which children choose to read which in turn resulted in a research review and the production of a summary document to support the profession. This showcases the interplay between research and practice. See:

[https://researchrichpedagogies.org/downloads/Documenting\\_Childrens\\_Reading\\_for\\_Pleasure\\_FINAL\\_.pdf](https://researchrichpedagogies.org/downloads/Documenting_Childrens_Reading_for_Pleasure_FINAL_.pdf)

### ***Developing, documenting and sharing research-informed practice***

Diverse development work emerged. One of the English leaders who had identified teachers’ knowledge of children’s texts as an area for whole school development, used the OU PowerPoint on this with staff, set up a teachers’ book box in the staffroom, and made personal recommendations to staff in order to promote reading and book talk. She also created a space for book recommendations and requests and encouraged staff to follow keen readers on Twitter. The staff trip to a local Waterstones where the bookshop staff shared the nominations and winners of the Costa Book Award was particularly successful, and staff were inspired and enabled to select texts for their own classes. In her summary of this work, which also aimed to ensure staff were modelling a love of reading across the school, the leader notes that there was an increase in book blether around the school, with adults suggesting texts for children and each other. For her example see:

<https://researchrichpedagogies.org/research/example/teacher-bookworms>

Another English leader sought to develop an enthusiasm for reading among parents and children since the parent voice perspective analysed from the school’s Ofsted data indicated that like some teachers, they tended to perceive reading as book and proficiency bound. RfP was not widely valued. The leader deployed several strategies, the most

successful of which she perceived were Pop-Up Reading Picnics. These had a relaxed homely feel with blankets and cushions, food and a wide range of texts, chosen by staff for their year groups to enjoy. Children were buddied up (e.g. year 1-year 3 ) and responding sensitively to feedback on the initial picnics, adjustments were made. These half-termly events for each paired year group have since become an established part of school life, a marker of a growing reading community, the value of which is carefully documented via evidence from parents, staff and children. To read more see:

<https://researchrichpedagogies.org/research/example/the-pop-up-reading-picnics>

Common challenges experienced by course members included time to prioritise their development work back in school in the light of external pressures and expectations, (especially salient for those who were not literacy leaders), and a lack of financial resource to purchase new texts. Some teachers applied to the Foyle Foundation or the Siobhan Dowd Trust for additional funding, others raised money through in-school events, many teachers used their salary to supplement the class library. Another challenge was honouring children's text choices, as this created a loss of control for some teachers who were used to holding the reading reins more tightly. In some cases, there was a lack of support from senior leaders, usually due to their own levels of over-commitment and a lack of awareness of the value of RfP. Additionally, some teachers found it hard to remain focused, despite identifying a priority for development; many sought to introduce multiple RfP initiatives related to several research findings. This resulted in activity overload which meant the impact of the work on staff pedagogic practice and principled understanding was not as secure. In addition, this RfP activity orientation meant less time was spent examining the impact of these activities. In turn this meant that whilst time and effort had been put in to supporting readers, no one was sure this had made a difference to the children as shifts in their attitudes, behaviours and identities as readers were not closely documented.

The focus now turns to one school's journey. At UCPS, where strong head teacher support was offered, development work was undertaken to enrich staff knowledge, enhance book talk and strengthen the wider reading community. Under the first of these areas for development, individual teachers within UCPS worked to enhance their reading repertoires and share this with the young learners. For a summary of this work overall see:

[https://researchrichpedagogies.org/downloads/eop/Nurturing\\_RfP\\_at\\_UCPS\\_Aimee\\_Durning.pdf](https://researchrichpedagogies.org/downloads/eop/Nurturing_RfP_at_UCPS_Aimee_Durning.pdf)

One UCPS teacher, a science specialist, following the stage two audit, set herself the challenge of reading more widely and using this new subject knowledge to help reluctant/vulnerable readers find pleasure in reading. She established a self-set non-negotiable of reading to the class each day, made a bookshelf of texts she had read (and could therefore discuss and recommend), created loan sheets for some of these texts, and for the first time, set aside time for reader-led informal discussion of texts and recommendations. She went on to establish a lunchtime book club for the less keen readers, affording them ownership of this relaxed time in which they read alone and together, and engaged in drawing and illustrating texts (or other activities they could suggest) in '*a super informal reading atmosphere*'. Her final website sharing of research-enriched practice highlights the impact of these sustained initiatives on the children, many of whom had begun to see the possibilities in reading, and on her own understanding and practice: <https://researchrichpedagogies.org/research/example/the-potential-of-good-read1>

The school also began an OU/ UKLA Teachers' Reading Group. This group, alongside a parent book club, continues today and is run by the Learning Coach (TA) Lead, is open to local area teachers, TAs and librarians and represents a new platform to develop research-informed RfP practice. The aim of the group, one of 80 nationally supported by the OU, is to: foster children's RfP through supporting teachers' /members' own RfP and research-informed practice; support the profession by building a professional community around RfP locally and online; and share teachers' resultant development work on the OU RfP website. The OU/UKLA Group meets six times a year, mostly at the hotel across the road from the school, with the headteacher often in attendance. It is a rich opportunity to step away from the hustle and bustle of school, to bletcher about books, read research and enrich RfP practice. However, as the Learning Coach Lead acknowledges, with the demands on teacher workload, it can be difficult to attract regular attendance and fiction tends to dominate, sidelining non-fiction and poetry. Recognizing such challenges are important first steps towards addressing them.

Drawing on the OU TaRs research findings, the school action plan also sought to connect children's home and school reading lives and at a RfP parent workshop the TaRs research findings and a selection of contemporary children's books were shared. This inspired a regular parent book club which seeks to foster shared understanding around the benefits

of RfP, and situate reading as a practice beyond technical proficiency. The club, as an initial offer has produced a school-wide RfP Newsletter as it seeks to reach out to all parents.

Within high-stakes accountability cultures, the described RfP development work can be demanding; requiring changes to not only timetables and responsibilities, but also to mindsets. The course members' final evaluations indicated that they recognise this is not a tick box exercise - it has to be lived, sustained and embedded over time, a thread running through primary education, connecting children to each other and their teachers through reading for pleasure. In some of the schools, the ongoing development of RfP was integrated into school development plans and now features in policy and practice. At UCPS, the Learning Coach Lead documented this as a Reading for Pleasure Tree representing the school's many spaces and practices that foster a love of reading: 'The TaRs (Cremin et al., 2014) research findings flow from the roots and travel up the trunk into the branches to nourish all the reading initiatives at UCPS'. Reading for Pleasure is a feature of the school's curriculum design with a reading pedagogical framework laying out in more detail how a text rich curriculum can enable spaces that foster agency and support the emergence of a reciprocal reading community. But the tree needs nourishing and constant care.

## Conclusion

Professional development that builds sustained partnerships between academics and teachers focused on children's learning has the potential for mutual benefit, enriching pedagogic practice, identifying new areas for research enquiries and, most significantly, positively influencing children's learning. In the context of reading for pleasure, there is a need for such partnership work to attend to evidence, and to engage in both reflection and action. This can support the development of subject and pedagogical content knowledge, which, research indicates, is crucial in order to effectively engage and foster keen young readers (Cremin et al., 2014). Whilst the professional learning journeys of teachers will be unique, process commonalities were recognised and seen to include: attention to identifying needs, classroom or whole school intent, reading research, and drawing on it in order to implement changes and flexibly and sensitively shape and re-shape research-informed practice. The OU RfP website resources - from surveys, to research summaries, ideas and video clips, as well as Examples of other teachers' research-informed practice - offer strong support on the journey from intent to impact. Critically the influence of the implemented development work on the children, staff and parents needs to be documented. This remains an area for development both for research and for professional learning nationally.

## References

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<https://clpe.org.uk/library-and-resources/research/reflecting-realities-survey-ethnic-representation-within-uk-children>

- 9115 UK children's books were published in 2017, only 4% featured BAME characters
- Only 1% had a BAME main character.
- Children deserve to see themselves in books and have their realities reflected.

Clark, C. and Teravainen, A. (2015). *Teachers and Literacy: Their perceptions, understanding, confidence and awareness*. London: National Literacy Trust.

- A survey was completed by 2362 mostly secondary teachers (7% were from the primary phase).
- Dahl was in a league of his own, with J.K. Rowling and Malorie Blackman following some way behind alongside David Walliams.

Clark, C. and Teraveinen, A. (2017) *What it means to be a reader at age 11* London: National Literacy Trust.

- Reading encompasses affective, cognitive and behavioural processes
- Readers engage when motivational processes and cognitive strategies occur simultaneously.

Cordingley, P., Higgins, S., Greany, T., Buckler, N., Coles-Jordan, D., Crisp, B., Saunders, L. & Coe, R. (2015) *Developing Great Teaching: Lessons from the international reviews into effective professional development*. London: Teacher Development Trust <http://www.curee.co.uk/news/2015/06/developing-great-teaching-new-report-effective-teachers-professional-development>

- Key findings about PD are offered, including teachers identifying starting points, working with specialists and facilitators to explore/challenge existing theories, beliefs and practices.

- Develop and apply their learning in a specific subject area over time, reviewing pupils' responses and reshaping work as a consequence in order to grasp underlying principles

Cremin, T., Mottram, M. Bearne, E. and Goodwin, P. (2008) Exploring teachers' knowledge of children's literature *Cambridge Journal of Education* 38 (4): 449-464.

- A survey was completed by 1200 primary teachers, none of whom were literacy leads.
- Over half of those surveyed could not name six children's authors, 24% couldn't name a picture fiction creator and 22% a poet.
- Dahl was pre-eminent, the author of choice from teachers' childhoods and use in school. The closest others were Michael Morpurgo, Jacqueline Wilson and J.K. Rowling.

Cremin, T. Mottram, M. Powell, S, Collins R and Safford K. (2014) *Building Communities of Engaged Readers: Reading for pleasure* London and NY: Routledge.

Research found in order to effectively develop children's RfP, teachers need:

- Considerable knowledge of children's literature and other texts;
- Knowledge of children's reading practices;
- A reading for pleasure pedagogy, encompassing:
  - social reading environments
  - reading aloud
  - informal booktalk and recommendations
  - independent reading time
- To become Reading Teachers
- To build reciprocal and interactive reading communities.

Hempel-Jorgensen, A., Cremin, T., Harris, D. & Chamberlain, L. (2018) 'Pedagogy for reading for pleasure in low socio-economic primary schools: beyond 'pedagogy of poverty'?' *Literacy* 52 (2): 86-94

- The 'pedagogy of poverty' is evident in RfP ; children's volition and social interaction as readers is constrained in low SES schools,
- Teachers' view reading as skills and proficiency focused
- Teachers need to reconceptualise reading as social and volitional to underpin RfP pedagogies.

Kucirkova, N. & Cremin, T. (2017) 'Personalised reading for pleasure with digital libraries: towards a pedagogy of practice and design' *Cambridge Journal of Education*

- Digital library systems offer considerable potential for RfP
- DL systems begin to address teachers' challenges: curriculum constraints, time and limited professional knowledge.
- DL systems position teachers as 'librarians, curators and monitors', rather than as 'listeners, mentors and co-readers' who build dialogue and reading communities.

McGrane, J., Stiff, J., Baird, J., Lenkeit, J. & Hopfenbeck-Oxford, T. (2017) *'Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS): National Report for England'* Department for Education

- 20% of pupils in England report that they do not like reading
- A lower percentage of pupils' report being very engaged in their reading lessons than pupils internationally
- Pupils who like reading the most score, on average, 45-points more than those who report that they do not like reading.

Merga, K.M. and Ledger, S. (2018). Parents' views on reading aloud to their children: beyond the early years. *Australian Journal of language and Literacy*, 41(3), 177-189.

- Once children can read parents tend to stop reading to them
- Unequal home opportunities exist alongside time constraints
- Reading aloud in school is key, especially for those children who don't experience it at home

Orkin, M., Pott, M., Wolf, M., May, S. & Brand, E. (2018) 'Beyond Gold Stars: Improving the Skills and Engagement of Struggling Readers through Intrinsic Motivation' *Reading & Writing Quarterly* 34.3 203-217

- 7-10 year olds were assigned to an intervention which emphasised autonomy and mastery, or to a control group that coupled the same curricula with material rewards for reading
- The intervention group made significantly greater gains in reading skills and showed significantly more engagement in reading

Sullivan, A. and Brown, M. (2013) *Social inequalities in cognitive scores at age 16: The role of reading*. CLS Working Paper 2013/10. London: Centre for Longitudinal Studies.

- Childhood reading is linked to substantial cognitive progress between the ages of 10 and 16
- Reading is strongly linked to progress in vocabulary, and to progress in mathematics
- RfP is more strongly linked than parental education to cognitive progress in adolescence.