

Reading for Pleasure: Pedagogy

At Emmaus, we want children to enjoy reading, as well as be proficient at the underlying skills. We recognise that children who read for enjoyment routinely are also more likely to be more successful in later life (Clark and Rumbold 2006). We want our children to be excited by the opportunities that reading brings: to go on adventures, discover new places, empathise with different lives and learn new facts. Reading can bring all this and more.

The Open University and UK Literacy Association (UKLA) (2021) have identified a series of steps that schools can take to foster reading for pleasure with their communities. This builds on the work of Cremin et al (2009; 2014), who identified how to build communities of readers.

- **Teachers' knowledge of children's literature and other texts:** Evidence suggests that teachers who have a broader understanding of children's literature are more able to make effective book recommendations to their class, more able to model and foster reading for pleasure (Cremin et al 2008).
- **Teachers' knowledge of children's reading practices:** Having an understanding of children's reading preferences, favourite authors, and reading practices at home allows teachers to tailor book recommendations- allowing teachers to get 'the right book into the right hand'.
- **Reading for Pleasure (RfP) pedagogy:** Four reading practices are required for a robust Reading for Pleasure pedagogy: reading aloud, informal booktalk and recommendations and independent reading time within a social reading environment (OU and UKLA 2021a). These must be underpinned by a commitment to 'LIST': RfP Classrooms need to be 'Learner led, Informal, Social and include Texts that tempt.
- **Reading Teachers (teachers who read and readers who teach):** Teachers that are both readers and teachers are better placed to create more reciprocal reading communities: they can share their own experiences of reading and model reading behaviours to the children in their class.
- **Reading communities:** RfP thrives in the relationships between children, teachers, families and communities. Shared understandings can be developed about the value of everyday reading and the changing nature of reading in the twenty-first century. Stronger connections can be fostered between children's home and school reading experiences.

Since 2021, we have introduced reading for pleasure as Cremin et al (2008) described. We focused on each of these steps in turn with staff and children. In 2024-25, we participated in the Open University RfP Strengthening and Sustaining programme, which helps schools to build on established practice and offers ways to take it further.

Actions taken include:

- Professional Development Meetings for staff about each of the areas above.
- Investment in new children's books: we have enjoyed investing in our class libraries over the last 5 years, building a strong relationship with a local independent children's bookseller and with the Bookmark reading charity. These include ensuring children have access to books with protagonists from diverse backgrounds, award-winning contemporary books and giving children the chance to re-read books they have already encountered in previous years.

- Creating a social reading environment: we have changed our book storage so that most books can be stored 'front facing'- allowing children to see front covers as they browse. We are introducing a broader range of non-fiction and graphic novels, to follow the children's interests.
- Developing our reading environments around school: to provide children with comfortable environments that are attractive to spend time in. This includes providing soft furnishings in class libraries, outdoor reading environments and several micro-libraries around school. These micro-libraries have been designed with input from our Reading Ambassadors. Our Reading Ambassadors have been chosen because they are passionate about reading and enjoying sharing reading choices with other children. They will recommend different books to others, helping to build our reading community across school (Open University and UKLA 2022).
- We had been working hard on making links with parents- creating events for parents to enjoy reading with their child. This includes termly family reading events in class, a Comic Book Club for Y3/4 and Chatterbooks- a parent-child reading and craft group.

In 2024-25, we worked on making links with our wider community to build communities of readers. This year, we will be consolidating what we introduced last year with our Chatterbooks group and using observations about reading for pleasure to help children make positive connections with what they read.

For more information, please read:

Clark C and Rumbold K (2006) *Reading for Pleasure a research overview*, , The National Literacy Trust

Cremin T et al (2008) Exploring teachers' knowledge of children's literature; *Cambridge Journal of Education* Vol. 38 No. 4 pp. 449-464

Cremin T et al (2009) Teachers as readers: building communities of readers; *Literacy* Vol. 43 No.1 pp. 11-19

Cremin T et al (2014) *Building Communities of Engaged Readers: Reading for Pleasure* Routledge London

Open University and UKLA (2021) *Reading for Pleasure* <https://ourfp.org> Accessed 14.09.2021

Open University and UKLA (2021) *Reading for Pleasure Pedagogy* <https://ourfp.org/reading-for-pleasure-pedagogy/> Accessed 14.09.2021

Open University and UKLA (2022) *Reading for Pleasure Reading Communities* <https://ourfp.org/finding/reading-communities-5/> Accessed 20.09.2022