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## Sayes Court Primary and Nursery School - Developing a Reading Community

# Sayes Court Primary and Nursery School - Developing a Reading Community



Rochelle Richmond

@mrsrichmond2018 @sayescourtprim

For consideration within the Egmont RfP Awards – Whole School Award 2020

## **Context:**

Sayes Court is a one form entry primary school in Surrey. We have a higher than average percentage of DAP and EAL pupils. We began our RfP journey in 2018 after the Headteacher attended a TaRs group.

In 2018, our end of KS2 attainment in reading was significantly below national with only 61% of children reaching the expected standard. Across the school, boys were generally disengaged as readers and this was reflected in their progress.

## **OU Research Inspiration and rationale:**

The Headteacher shared the OU research with SLT and after discussion it became evident that RfP needed to be considered.

A meeting was held with staff to gain their views. The cultural web tool was used during this meeting. The meeting began with a walk around school to consider what our school 'said' about reading. We also discussed what reading looked like in school on a day to day basis.



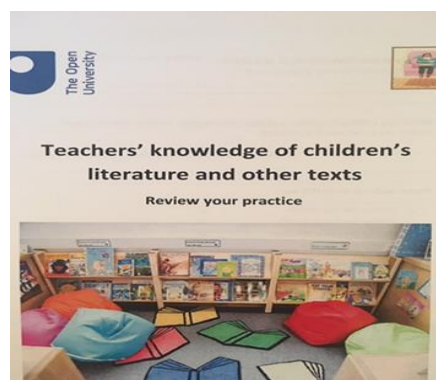
## **Outcomes of the meeting:**

- Reading in school took place mainly during guided reading or transitions – this was unplanned and limited.
- Children did not read for enjoyment.
- Reading was not a social activity.
- A limited range of texts were on offer.
- Teacher knowledge of children's literature and reading practices was limited.

## **Surveys:**

- Adults and children completed surveys so we could gain a clearer picture of where we were.
- The surveys confirmed the findings above.

Developing RfP with a focus on all of the above and using the TaRs research became part of the school development plan.



## Aims:

As a result of the findings above we decided to focus on the following during our RfP journey:

- developing teacher knowledge of children's literature
- developing our reading environments as individual classes and as a whole school
- developing the social aspect of reading
- developing reading stamina
- developing children's range of reading
- ensuring that children were enjoying books
- developing reading out loud
- developing story telling especially in the EYFS
- developing parental engagement

The Headteacher and SLT produced a plan based on all the information. This was shared and agreed with all staff. In the plan, it was clear that all strategies introduced would have measurable impact.

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Pupil Outcomes
Short Term
1. Children are focussed on their reading during the am/pm sessions and are not seen continuously changing books
Medium Term
1. Children share and discuss books
2. Library monitoring system shows a higher percentage of children are taking out a wider range of books
3. Children are able to talk about their favourite authors and books
4. % of children who have found a book they like is reduced
Long Term
1. Children read widely including fiction and non-fiction
2. Children confidently recommend books to one another
3. 100% of children have found a book /s they like
4. Children enjoy their reading shown in discussion and through repeat surveys
5. Children read widely

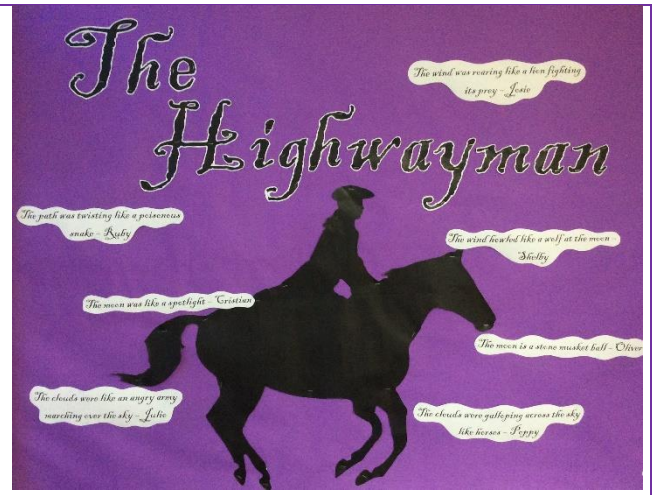
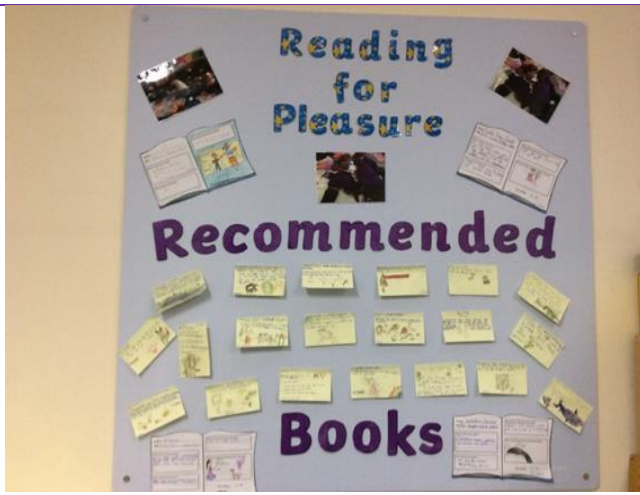
## Outline:

### Improving our reading environments:

- We commissioned an artist to paint an inviting mural in the library and on the playground.
- Staff built up reading displays in school. These are updated regularly.









## Time to read:

We considered our school timetable and adapted this to ensure reading took place on a daily basis. Our daily timetable now includes the following:

- All children reading for 15mins at the start of the day.
- All teachers reading to their classes at the end of the day for 20mins.
- All classes have a weekly session once where they read for 30 mins – they can read wherever they want, bring in cushions, slippers, have a drink and biscuits.

## Staff

To support the development of staff the following were put in place:

- RfP training sessions were timetabled in as part of the staff's weekly training. This was based on the resources provided by the OU during TaRs training. All staff attended as well as a few colleagues from neighbouring schools. The OU website was used as a stimulus and staff especially gained from watching the video clips.
- Regular book tastings were held.
- Opportunities for staff to share their own favourite books were created.
- It is clear from feedback that staff enjoyed the book blether and are now more familiar with a wider range of authors.

**BUILDING COMMUNITIES  
OF ENGAGED READERS**  
READING FOR PLEASURE



TERESA CREMIN, MARILYN MOTTRAM,  
FIONA M. COLLINS, SACHA POWELL  
AND KIMBERLY SAFFORD







#### SOME QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT...

What did you enjoy about the book tasting? Did you like books you didn't expect to like? What was surprising or interesting to you? How did you like being introduced to new books?

#### REFLECTION

I like being able to talk to others about a book that I have looked at briefly and how it could be used for the children in the school.

I like being able to munch biscuits as I read blurbs/synopsis to find out if the book is of interest to me.

#### SOME QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT...

What did you enjoy about the book tasting? Did you like books you didn't expect to like? What was surprising or interesting to you? How did you like being introduced to new books?

A really nice way to enjoy books together.

I have enjoyed being introduced to different genres and feel it has opened my eyes to look at different books other than picture books. Also nice to see a few books that my children have been reading in class. (Journey).

#### SOME QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT...

What did you enjoy about the book tasting? Did you like books you didn't expect to like? What was surprising or interesting to you? How did you like being introduced to new books?

I loved being exposed to a wide range of reading texts for children in a casual environment (while eating biscuits!)



#### SOME QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT...

What did you enjoy about the book tasting? Did you like books you didn't expect to like? What was surprising or interesting to you? How did you like being introduced to new books?

#### REFLECTION

I enjoy book tasting, talking about books in a very relaxed environment. I like listening to different people's point of view about different books it helped me to choose a book.



### SOME QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT...

What did you enjoy about the book tasting? Did you like books you didn't expect to like? What was surprising or interesting to you? How did you like being introduced to new books?

REFLECTION  
Listening to adults reading to each other and explaining why they like the books or having a discussion about them. Being able to laugh at books.

### SOME QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT...

What did you enjoy about the book tasting? Did you like books you didn't expect to like? What was surprising or interesting to you? How did you like being introduced to new books?

REFLECTION  
Having time to look at different books and discuss with others. See how they might be appropriate to my Year Group, within the curriculum.

### SOME QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT...

What did you enjoy about the book tasting? Did you like books you didn't expect to like? What was surprising or interesting to you? How did you like being introduced to new books?

REFLECTION  
I liked having an opportunity and time to look at new books that I may not have come across otherwise. There were lots of books by the same author which was great - an author I didn't know - always good to discover a new voice in children's books. I have a long shopping list!

### SOME QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT...

What did you enjoy about the book tasting? Did you like books you didn't expect to like? What was surprising or interesting to you? How did you like being introduced to new books?

REFLECTION  
I liked reading a variety of books that I wouldn't normally get a chance to. I enjoyed a lot of the picture books more than I expected. It was interesting that I didn't enjoy/relate to the young adult novels as I used to love them as a kid - though I did find one I want to read! I got an idea of some types and formats of books that my kids would like (Journey) - but think I could find something better.

- Staff wrote book reviews of children's books which were put up in the library. As a result of these, children were motivated to take out books they may not have tried previously. These were the beginning stages of developing book dialogue between adults and children.

**Book Title** Varjak Paw  
**Author** SF Said  
**Illustrator** Dave McKean  
**Genre** (tick as many as apply to your book)  
☐ biography ☐ diary ☒ Fiction  
☐ autobiography ☐ film/TV  
☐ sport ☐ historical  
☐ information ☐ instructions

**What my book is about:**  
 This book is about a cat called Varjak Paw and he was a majestic and skilful cat he contered around the city

**Three new words I have learnt and what they mean:**  
 1. Majestic means royal and brave  
 2. interview means to talk with  
 3. pleshing means enjoying something

**My favourite fact:**  
 That Sally bones has met ugalal in mesopotamia and that's were varjak dreams

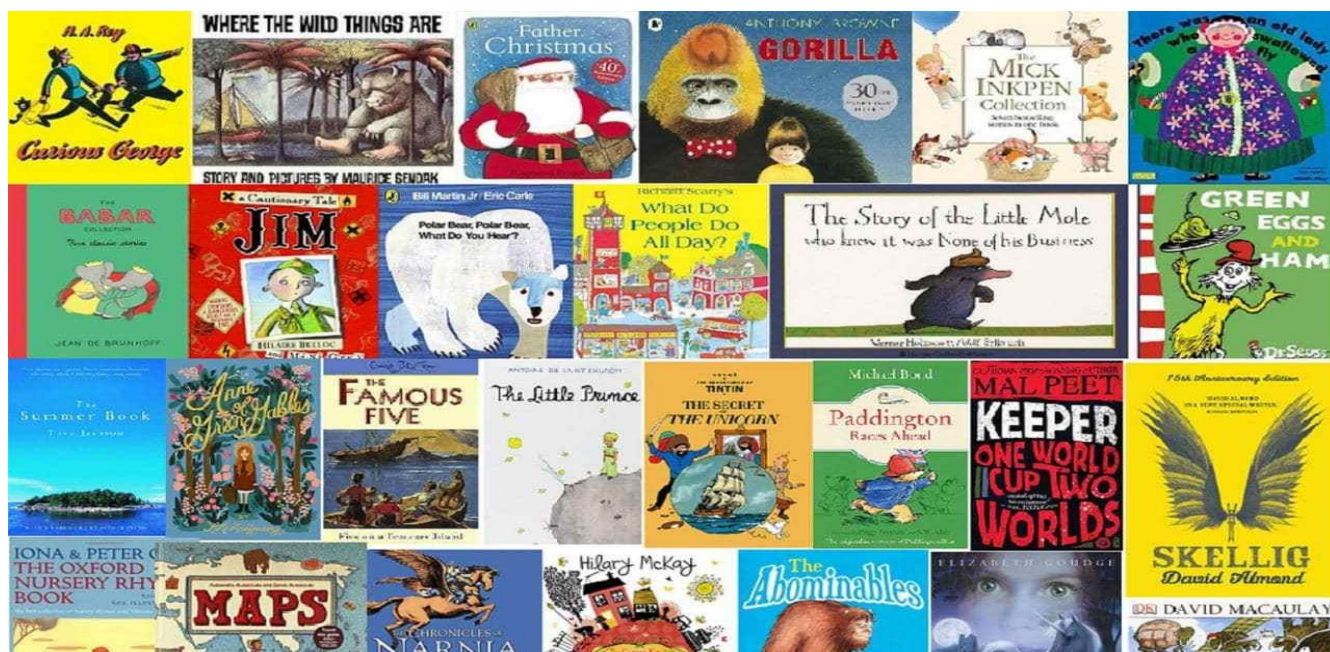
**My Star Rating**  
 ★★★★★  
 Why I rated the book 5 stars  
 Because it inspired me not to be scared of anything but brave

**This book made me feel**  
 brave because that is how varjak is when he degeat Sally

**My favourite page:**  
 page 257  
 I liked this page because: Varjak degeat Sally bones

**draw how you felt!**

- All staff completed reading rivers – these were shared with children. The reading rivers encompassed so many different types of reading and genres that children began to show an interest in sharing their own reading.
- Over time staff developed their own 'canon' which is added to on a regular basis. This has ensured that children are exposed to a wide range of books and has broadened the range of texts used as writing stimuli.





## Children

- Regular reading time during school has led to a great improvement in children's reading stamina. In addition, opportunities for adults to discuss children's reading including their book choices, have also been created.



- Once children's reading stamina began to grow, the social aspect of reading really flourished and children now readily discuss and share their reading.
- We have invested in class sets of books for afternoon reading time.













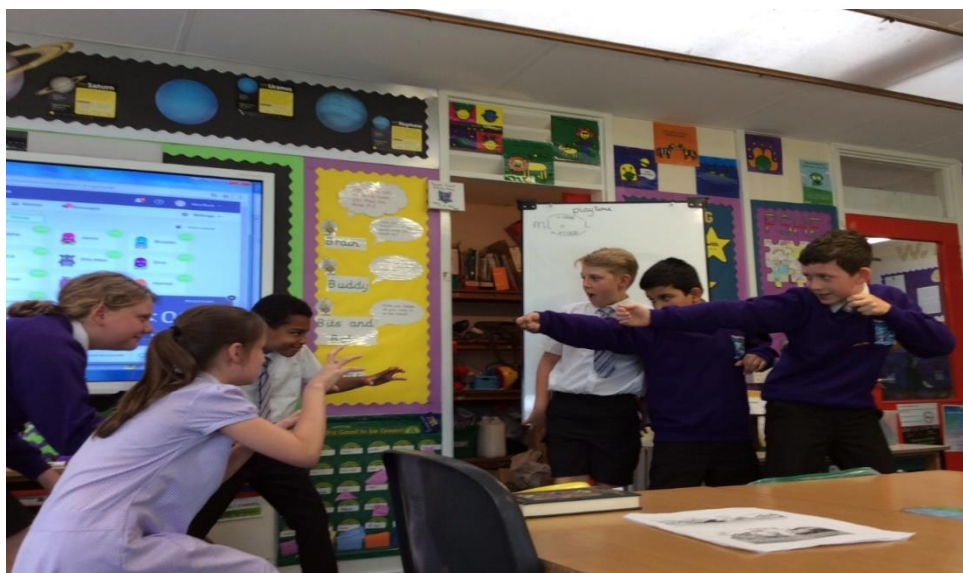




- This has moved on to include 'recommend to a friend' walls which children use to find books of interest. Reading repertoires have been positively impacted by this!



- Teachers provide opportunities for children to re-enact parts of books to enable them to engage more with their reading.



- For reluctant or early readers we introduced weekly visits from Monty dog. Children who read to Monty have become more confident at reading and sharing this with others.







- We hold annual reading sleepovers. Uptake has been very good and funds raised have been used to buy more books for our library. We have raised £1600 in total!







- Reading out loud has been a focus for us and children from Reception Class through to Year 6 regularly share and read poetry out loud in assemblies.







- We have a lunchtime book club. Book club members have presented their reading to the whole school during assembly. There are at 16 members in total! Book club are starting an inter school book club which will meet up at regular intervals to discuss reading around one book.



- At least 12 of our children are librarians. They oversee the library during lunch times. They also share new books in assembly, distribute these and write reviews.



Name - Erin and the animals Author - Matt Haig

What's it about?  
 It's about an eleven year old girl called Erin who can talk to animals. Her mother was killed by a villainous man called Mortimer J Mortimer who she must find and defeat.

Rating! ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
 5/5 stars

Characters

- Erin
- Granma Flora
- Mortimer
- Dad
- Mom
- Ramesh
- Khalo the rabbit

Genre

- ✓ Fiction
- Non-Fiction
- Fantasy
- Humour
- Biography
- Romance
- Mystery
- Scary
- Fairy
- Adventure
- Sports
- Animal
- Historical

Favourite Part  
 When a rabbit saves Erin and her dad's life

What did you think?  
 I loved it and would recommend anyone who cares about animals

- We have regular reading assemblies where children bring in a book to share with their partner or the whole school.







- EYFS have the same reading timetable as KS1 and KS2. They also focus throughout the day on reading out loud and oral storytelling. This is to enable children to develop the skills necessary for building reading stamina.

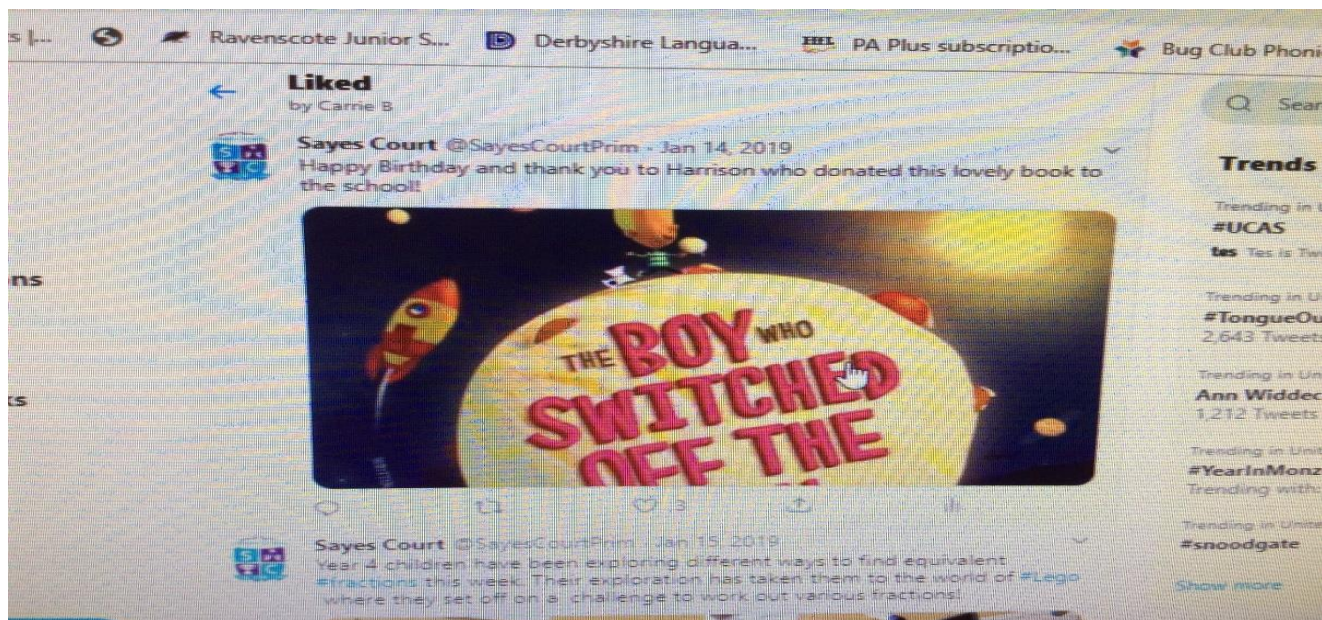








- Instead of children bringing in sweets on their birthdays they donate a book to their classroom library or the school. They share their book in assembly.



### Parents:

We invited all parents to a reading river event in school. This was very successful and a non-threatening way to open up discussion about reading. All families completed reading rivers together.







- We hold whole school book tastings to which parents are invited. These have been very successful and well supported.







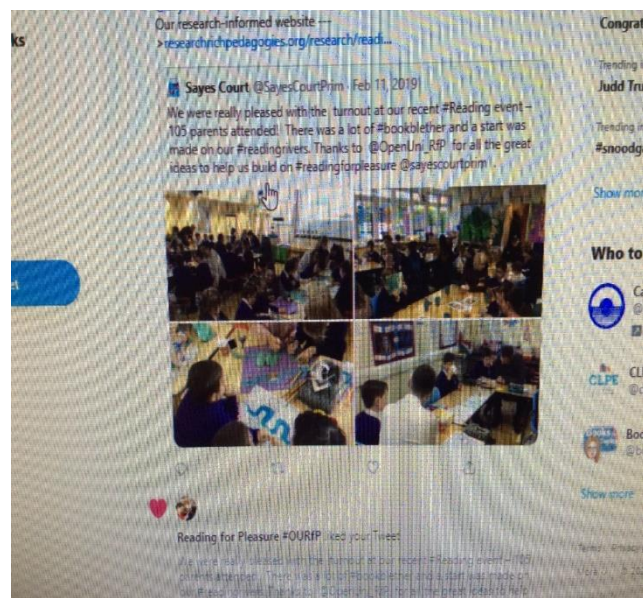
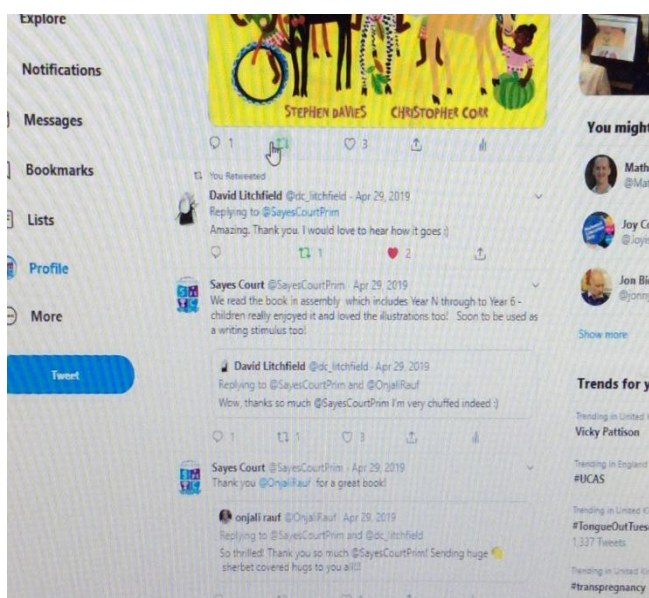
- We invited our PFTA to become involved in developing RfP and they bought a book for every single child in the school at Christmas.
- Parents and governors come into school to read to children in assembly.

## **Wider Community**

- We now have our own Patron of Reading, author Stephen Davies. He has visited the school to work with children, train staff and also talk to parents. He supports us on World Book Day.
- We make book recommendations and share our good practice on Twitter. We have begun to invite other schools within our academy to observe our good practice.
- We have a number of colleagues from local schools who attend our TaRs group.









- We have arranged visits to the local library. Children have been able to join the library and take advantage of the wide range of books and activities on offer. Parents come along on the visits and have therefore also engaged with this resource with some joining themselves.





## Feedback from adults in school on our RfP journey:

Reading for pleasure has helped to develop our own knowledge of children's literature. We feel more confident recommending books to pupils. In book tasting, we've seen books and thought, "That would be perfect for..." Book tasting also gave us a way "back in" to children's literature and it was lovely to have time just to discuss books.

The most important development for us in class has been seeing children take part in thoughtful, animated discussions about books. They've discovered that reading can be social. The addition of magazines, comics and graphic novels have been lovely ways to engage reluctant readers. Reading has become a pleasure, not a chore!

### Reading for Pleasure in Reception

In reception reading for pleasure works and the children have benefitted from having it daily. They like sitting in the reading corners in a comfortable position and enjoy looking at books and will do this independently in small groups and on their own. They really enjoy listening to stories and join in with discussions eagerly which has helped support their reading and writing development. During shared reading they have built on their listening and attention skills and will listen attentively and respond to answers about the text confidently. We have found they enjoy reading anywhere in the classroom both indoors and outdoors and will use the stories to extend their play.



Reading for pleasure has introduced different genres to children as well as teachers. It has given children the chance to explore different books and encouraged them to choose books they wouldn't normally choose. They have also been given the opportunity to recommend books to their friends and teachers. It is fantastic to include reading for pleasure in the Early Years as it grows their attention span and increases their listening skills as they begin their adventure into reading. We have also found that the teachers have become more confident in reading stories aloud. We have included reading for pleasure mornings with our parents which we have found a wonderful way to include parents into their children's reading journey and show parents that reading can be a pleasure!

It has increased my confidence in reading aloud and being listened to by others. The social skills within classes and school have improved, especially with reading buddies and mixed aged reading. As a teacher I have begun to read more children's books which I hadn't done before. Reading stamina has improved over time through practice and engaging book choices. We have expanded the range of books available to encourage even the most reluctant of readers, including comics, factual books and look and find books.

Reading for pleasure helps the children develop their reading stamina in a relaxed environment.

In reception, reading for pleasure helps the adults to oversee the children's understanding of the stories they have listened to. We do this by having a group discussion about the main events of the story.

As teachers it's helped us develop our knowledge of children's literature and encourages conversations between the children and the teachers about their book choices. It also shows us which stories the children enjoy to read.



## Feedback from parents on our RfP journey:

*"The school's RfP has definitely had an impact on my child and he's really enjoyed being part of it so far. I only wish it had been in place when our older children were at the school as the message 'reading is fun' is so important, particularly in this age of technology. Elias has always been a keen reader, but literacy-related events at the school (like RfP, having authors in) have really fired up his love of reading even more and he's very proud of being one of the school librarians." Parent in Y5*

I

*'RfP has had a fantastic impact on my son, he use to hate reading as it always felt like a chore to him. He now picks books he would never usually choose and reads in bed every evening. He enjoys reading and looks forward to reading his new books. I have noticed he has grown in confidence with reading and his learning. He has gone up a reading level too. He talks with excitement about reading for pleasure in Year 3 and how he loves the pretend camp fire, having hot chocolate and being able to bring in their own pillows and mugs. He also enjoyed the author that comes in and has purchased most of his books.'*  
Parent in Y3

*'Since reading for pleasure was introduced at Sayes Court I can really see the benefits it has had on my children's love for books.*

*The parent book tasting experience was a great way to introduce us to a range of genres. It encouraged us to look at books we wouldn't normally dream of picking up and enjoy them.*

*One of the things that stuck in my mind was something that an author said, during one of the visits. "If you show that you love books, your children will too". As a busy mum, I felt I never had time to read books for myself and often made excuses not to read. I now make a conscious effort to find time to read and have found a love for books that I never had.*

*It's been lovely to see my children's enthusiasm for reading grow! They are excited when we get a new book at home and my son will often take books into school that he thinks his peers will enjoy, not just himself.' Parent in YR, 3 and 6*

*'My daughter Jess loves being able to bring her cushion and slippers in for reading for pleasure sessions. She likes being able to choose a favourite book and really enjoys reading to her buddy whilst having a hot chocolate'. Parent in Y4*



## Feedback from children on our RfP journey:

Reading is a great experience, it has made me realise how creative we humans are. In our library we have a range of books from comedy to fantasy to non-fiction to choose from. Not only has it opened my eyes to different worlds but it has also helped me to become a better writer. Our school has had visits from real authors to tell us what it's like to be an author. Our library is a fantastic place as it has bean bags and an amazing picture on the wall which creates a peaceful atmosphere.

Sayer Court has done many things to help all of us enjoy reading more. They have let us read by ourselves or in a group of people sharing a book every Friday when we do reading for pleasure. They also let us have hot chocolate and biscuits we can also bring in slippers and a cushion for it. We wear costumes of characters of books we are reading in class for world book day. The school has put new books in the library which has helped with choosing books.

When I read it feels like I'm in my own world of the books and authors I love. We also read a main book in the whole class. Also every year a box of new books that we can read ourselves or with a partner or with our parents. We also have reading for pleasure (also known as RfP). In that we choose a partner to share a book together and you would have hot chocolate and biscuits (normally chocolate biscuits). In that way we get more interested in books and it becomes much more enjoyable.



So much has changed at Sayes Court in terms of books over the past year. Reading for pleasure has helped me because we can share our books and give / receive recommendations for authors or books. Also, the school has bought more books so we can have a range of books to choose from. We have also had multiple book fairs and world book days to make reading more fun. We have had some authors come in (e.g. Steven Davies).

I love books because it's like it sucks me into it and makes me stay there. My school encourages us to read to improve our work (and because it is really fun). Sayes Court makes a lot about reading nicer like our World Book Day, book fairs and bringing authors into school like Steve Davies. In our time table they include reading for pleasure and let us sit where ever we want and let us drink hot chocolate and eat biscuits.

My school makes books much more fun to read!

Ramisha

Reading is such a big part of me. I absolutely adore it! Whenever I am bored my first instinct is to grab a good book. At home however I have very little books and the book fair at our school has helped me to buy more books and have more to read. I also sometimes pick books either too easy or too hard, now because of Accelerated Reader I know what my range is. Before our library had very few book and genres, and now we have almost every type including comics.



I enjoy reading for pleasure as we get to read books with our peers and have hot chocolate in the winter, orange juice and we always get biscuits. In reading for pleasure we also can read books that are not our age level. However, we also get to meet new authors to discover new books. Another way to discover new books and authors is when our teacher reads us a class book which is enjoyable. We also have a reading sleeper where we roast marshmallows, watch a movie and read! we only do this once a year.

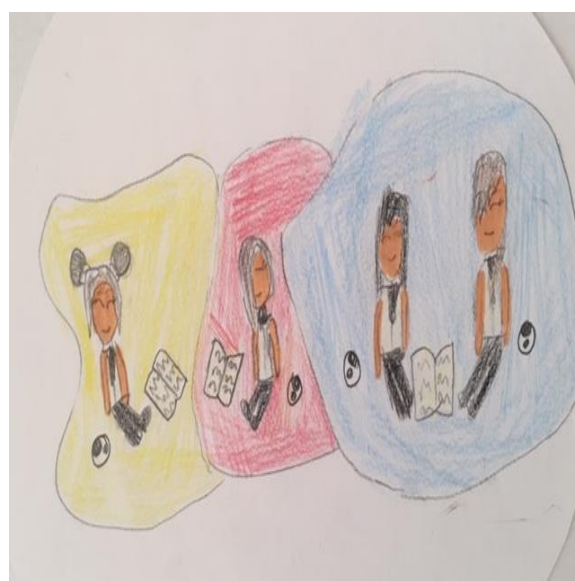
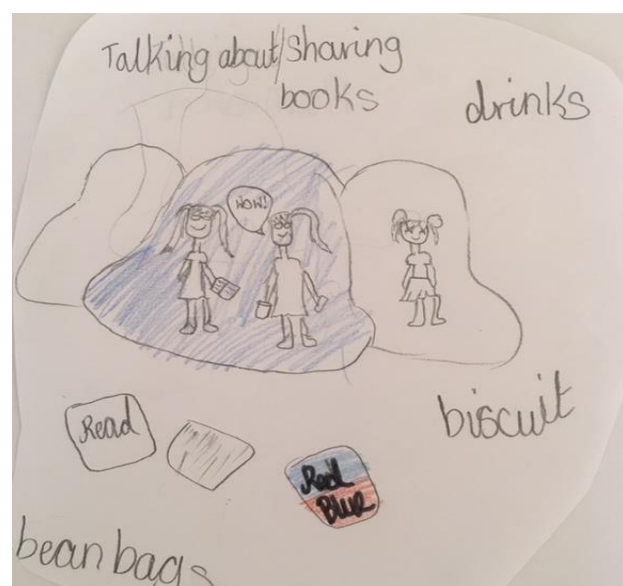
### Reading for Pleasure!

Reading for pleasure has not only inspired me, but everyone from year 6 all the way to reception! We usually have a nice, warm mug of hot chocolate and (of course) a biscuit. We don't just get this amazing privilege but we can sit next to anyone we want. As well as RFP, we can participate in magnificent events such as talking to authors, World Book Day and even our very own Book fairs that don't last 1 day, not 2 days, but 5 spectacular days! At Sayes Court school, we've met authors such as E.R Reilly and Steven Davies who even has an award winning book (Hilda). Some students can read to Monty dog.

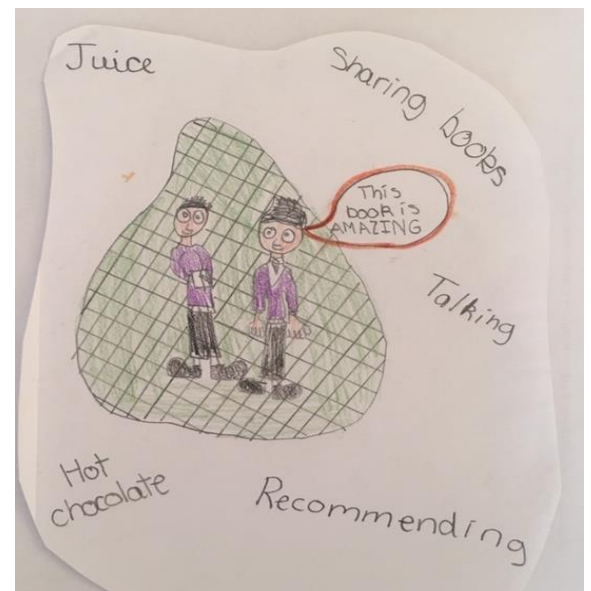
Reading is fun. Reading helps me calm down and relax. If all goes to waste, I start to read for a while and I start to drift into my own space. It's generally a portal to a new dimension where no one can disturb you. The school has also helped me read. Since they brought wonderful new books to our library. We also have a reading for pleasure period where we can sit where we want and read.



- In pictures – what reading means to the children of Sayes Court!







- We asked children to name their favourite authors – this has grown massively!

Paul Shipton  
 Michael Morpurgo  
 Stephen Davies  
 David Walliams  
 William Shakespeare  
 David Baddiel  
 Kate Saunders  
 Betty G. Birney  
 Geoff Kinney  
 Rachel Renee Russell  
 Jacqueline Wilson  
 Anthony Horowitz  
 (Team to name the rest)

Dr Suess  
 Lewis Carroll  
 Martin Waddell  
 David Litchfield  
 Roald Dahl  
 Paul Jennings  
 Roger Hargreaves  
 AA Milne  
 Stan Lee  
 Jeff Kinney  
 Neil Gaiman

Lemony Snickett  
 Edd Blyton  
 Jacqueline Wilson  
 R.J. Palacio  
 Jeff Kinney  
 Maz Evans  
 Roald Dahl  
 David Baddiel  
 Dave Pilkey  
 Andy Griffiths  
 Rachel ~~Alison~~ Renee Russell  
 Tom Crato  
 Andrew Norris  
 Jeremy Strong  
 Steve Barlow  
 JK Rowling  
 Terry Pratchett  
 Cathy Cassidy  
 Shilpan Rowden ??? (Wild MoreChase?)



### **Impact**

- Our teachers know more about children's literature and their reading practices.
- Our reading areas are inviting.
- RfP is embedded in school.
- Children and adults talk about reading.
- Children have reading stamina.
- Children's reading repertoire has grown.
- Children enjoy reading.
- Children have opportunities to read out loud.
- Parents attend reading events, know more about their children's reading habits and how to support them.
- 100% of children have read a book they've enjoyed
- 2 ½ + hours per week are spent reading (independently, with friends and being read to by adults).
- Our progress and attainment are improving.
- Boys have made strong progress and enjoy reading.

### **Reading Attainment End KS2**

% ACHIEVING EXPECTED 2017 – 2018	% ACHIEVING EXPECTED 2018 – 2019	IMPROVEMENT
61%	80%	+ 19%

### **Boys' Progress Across School**

2017 – 2018	2018 – 2019	IMPROVEMENT
-1.02	2.52	+ 3.54

### **What Next?**

We want to:

- Maintain our good practice.
- Continue developing reading out loud.
- Continue developing reading outdoors and create a mobile library.
- Engage further with the wider community and parents.
- Grow pupil voice in our plans for RfP.