



Winner

Egmont Reading for Pleasure Award

In partnership with the OU and UKLA 2020

School Reading Champion Category

5 ways to use your School Library to build Reading Communities

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Context

- I am the Library and Resource Co-ordinator at **Headlands Primary School**, a two-form primary school in Northampton, part of Northampton Primary Academy Trust (NPAT).
- We have 450 children in Nursery to Year 6 and a 30-space Woodlands Unit for children with communication and interaction difficulties, including autism.
- Headlands Primary has made great strides raising the profile of reading in recent years. The library has benefited from a complete refit and the appointment of myself as Library and Resources Co-Ordinator in January 2018.
- Over the past 2 years, we have undertaken a range of projects to encourage Reading for Pleasure including Book Bingo sheets, after-school book clubs, Book Buddies, reading surveys, author visits, book award judging etc.

OU Research Inspiration & Rationale

As an inexperienced library worker, attending a local OU / UKLA Teachers Reading Group and studying Reading Agency research, opened my eyes to the ways our library could support the work happening in classrooms to encourage Reading for Pleasure, particularly relating to the OU TaRs research Strand 5:

“Reading communities that are reciprocal and interactive” (Cremin et al., 2014)
As that research argues:

TaR 5: Reciprocal and interactive reading communities enabled teachers to:

- Develop a shared concept of what it means to be a reader in the 21st century
- Create new social spaces that encouraged choice, parental and library involvement and child ownership of their RfP
- Make strong connections between children’s home and school reading worlds
- Foster children’s autonomy as readers who can exercise discrimination within and beyond school
- Build new and more equal reading relationships with families and community members.

Aims

This exemplar outlines 5 initiatives that I have used in the library to encourage such reading communities, both within and beyond the school gates.

I outline the following initiatives and then give a brief assessment of each:

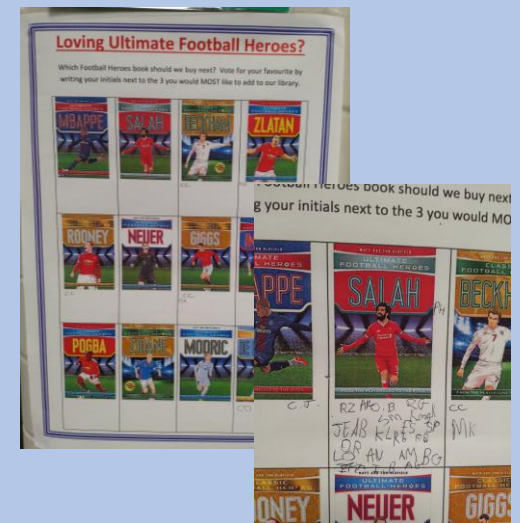
- 1. Child-led Ownership of Reading Material**
- 2. Contacting Authors**
- 3. Trust-wide reading Challenge**
- 4. Library Café**
- 5. Engaging Parents**

Initiative 1:

Child-led Ownership of Reading Material.

“Foster children’s autonomy as readers who can exercise discrimination within and beyond school.”

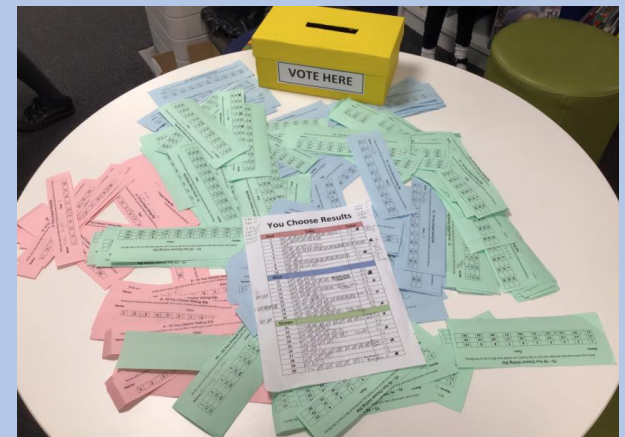
- In 2018, a Siobhan Dowd grant allowed us to take a group of children to choose books at our local comic book store. The excitement this generated led me to **involve children in the selection of books on a more regular basis.**
- Each term, a **‘You Choose’ Display** gives children the chance to vote on which new books will be purchased for the library. Books are introduced and blurbs read aloud during Library Sessions.
- The book selection is **weighted towards increasing diversity** and includes at least 1 option each for fiction, non-fiction, graphic novels and poetry. We have trialed voting with the stickers and voting slips.
- **Smaller votes are held on an occasional basis**, for example, to choose which Ultimate Football Heroes book should be bought next. Salah was a clear winner!



Initiative 1: Child-led Ownership of Reading Material.



In our most recent vote, I was pleased to see that two poetry and two graphic novels won. It was worth tallying over 1000 votes!



Initiative 2:

Contacting Authors.

“Develop a shared concept of what it means to be a reader in the 21st century.”

- **Author interactions**, facilitated by the library, have a huge impact on children's engagement. Interactions have included:
 - Visits from Onjali Rauf and Ralph Timmerman.
 - Skype chat with Charlotte Lo (Book Penpal).
 - Live Twitter chats with SF Said.
 - ‘Tweet the Author’ slips available on library desk.
 - Author tweets assembly for World Book Day.
 - Twitter request looking for Polish-language books resulted in some special post for Kaya from Philip Ardagh.
 - Signed book copies, postcards letters etc.



Onjali Rauf visit.



Initiative 2: Contacting Authors.



Skype calls &
Twitter chats.



Polish-language
book post.



World Book Day assembly tweets.



Signed copies, postcards etc.



'Tweet the
Author'.



Initiative 3 :

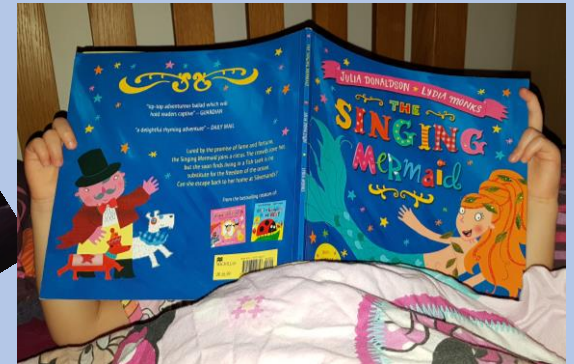
Trust-wide Reading Challenge

“Build new and more equal reading relationships with families and community members.”

- Headlands Primary School has historically had low reading engagement outside of school e.g. low numbers completing the Reading. Agency Summer Reading Challenge. I wanted to develop a reading challenge that would involve parents and family members and encourage a competitive edge across the MAT.
- **The NPAT Reading Bingo Challenge** was launched on World Book Day across 11 schools. Children had one month to complete 15 reading challenges to earn a Gold Certificate and entry into a £10 book token prize draw
- The class with the highest number of points won £50 to spend on books for their classroom.
- **Challenges included:** Read to someone younger; Read outside on a sunny day; Read a book chosen for you by someone else; Read in a library; Read to someone over phone or Skype.



Recording Sheet and Gold Certificate



Bingo Challenges: children reading with a torch, in bed, on a phone, in a den and on a sunny day.

Reading Bingo Challenge

Challenges must be signed by a parent, guardian or teacher. Return to your teacher by **5th April**.

Read outside on a sunny day	Read to someone younger	Read a book with a red cover	Read a book that you borrowed or swapped	Read a poetry book
Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____
Make a den and read inside it	Read to a soft toy or pet	Read in the dark using a torch	Read a story you have never heard of before	Write your own story and read it
Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____
Read a book you've read before	Read to someone older than you	Read instructions for something	Read a book that makes you laugh	Read in a park or playground
Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____
Read before you eat your breakfast	Read on a Monday	Read a book with an animal on the cover	Read some non-fiction	Read a book written before you were born
Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____
Read a book to someone over phone or video chat	Read a book chosen for you by someone else	Read in a library	Read a story set in another country	Read a book with a name in the title
Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____	Date: _____ Signed: _____

Name: _____ Class: _____

School: _____

The class with the highest total (across NPAT) will receive £50 of new books for their classroom. Any children earning GOLD will receive a certificate and be entered in a prize draw to win a £10 book voucher (one winner per school). P.S If you send photos of yourself completing any of the challenges to npatlibraries@epatschools.org you will earn a bonus entry into the prize draw! NB: By emailing any photos you are agreeing to the images being used within all NPAT schools e.g. in newsletters and assemblies, for one year.



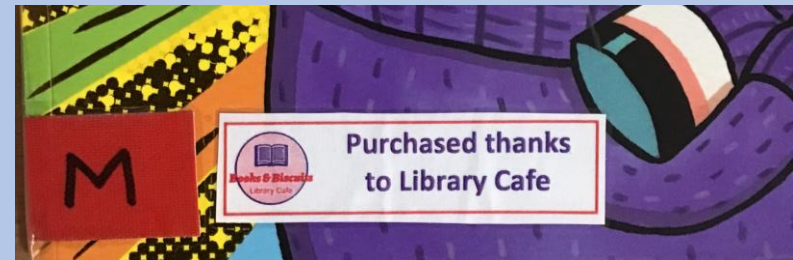
Initiative 4: Library Café

“Create new social spaces that encouraged choice, parental and library involvement and child ownership of their RfP.”

- Previous after-school book clubs have been successful, but only available to a small number of children at any one time and did not engage other family members.
- To increase breadth of access, **Library Café is now open two days per week from 3.15-4.15 pm.** Access is as informal as possible - families can pop in for 5 minutes or for the whole hour. Younger children must be accompanied by an adult. Children from Year 5-6 can stay unaccompanied with a signed permission slip.



- **Drinks and snacks are available.** Families and children can read books, complete craft activities and become comfortable in the library setting.
- Profits from snack sales are used to purchase books which are labelled **“Purchased thanks to Library Café”**.





Recent Library Café themes include Ramadan; Superheroes; Wimpy Kid; Comic Strips; Poetry; Underpants; Fairy Tales.



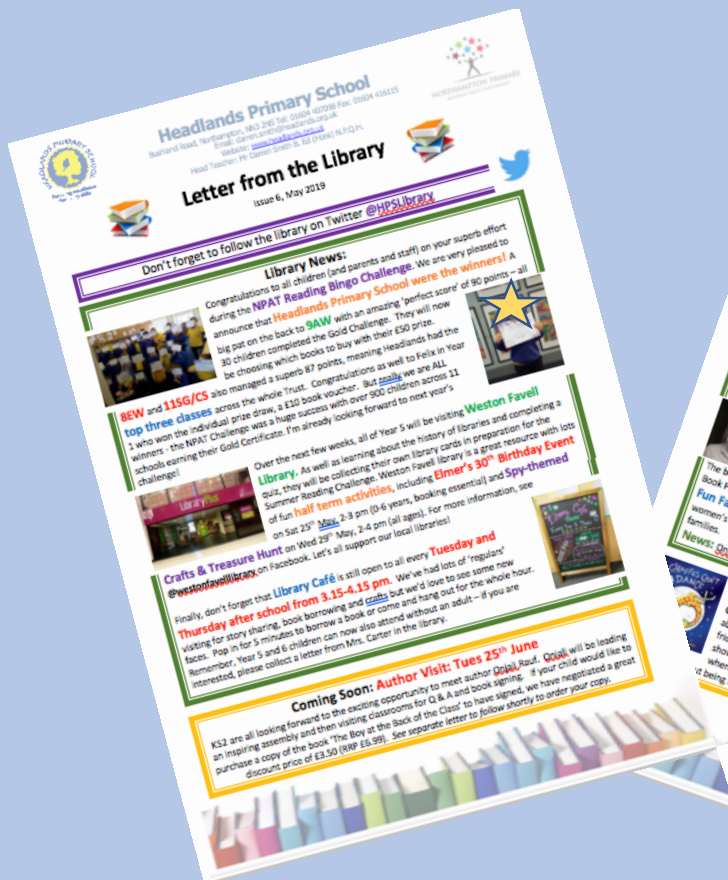
Initiative 5 :

Engaging Parents

‘Build new and more equal reading relationships with families and community members.’

- Each half term, a **newsletter ‘Letter from the Library’** is published to improve family knowledge of library events, children’s literature, and the importance of Reading for Pleasure. Key features include Library News, Books of the Month, Mrs. Carter’s Corner and My Favourite Book – a short review of a favourite children’s book by a staff member *including non-teaching staff e.g. cleaners.*
- Using donations from staff, we compiled 2 **shelves of adult fiction and non-fiction titles, within our school library. Family members can sign up** for their own library account and borrow up to 4 (adult and/or children’s) books at a time.
- Beginning with Reception and working up through the school, we have run RfP information sessions for KS1 year groups. Parents come to the library for a brief 10-minute talk on why Reading for Pleasure is important, with free drinks and snacks provided. They were then joined by children to read books together and are then encouraged to stay for Library Café.

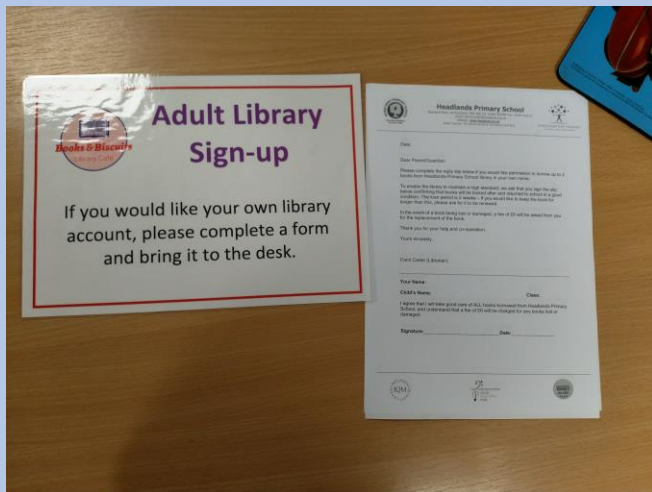
Recent Issues of 'Letter from the Library'



New editions are published each term.



Adult Fiction and Non-Fiction shelves in the school library.



Family members can sign up for their own library account.

What is Reading for Pleasure?

Reading for Pleasure is **not** – Reading for pleasure **is** –

- phonics
- decoding words
- spelling correctly
- reading X number of words a minute
- having fun
- sharing stories
- learning about the world
- discovering what kind of books we enjoy.

Question: Do you read for pleasure yourself? Why/why not? Where? When?

Slides from parents 'Reading for Pleasure' presentation.

Why is Reading for Pleasure important?

Reading for Pleasure has **proven** benefits for:

- Reading attainment
- Writing ability
- Text comprehension
- Vocabulary and grammar.

More importantly it has **proven** benefits for:

- Self-confidence
- General knowledge
- Community participation
- Mental health
- Life satisfaction

Being a 'reader' is good for you!

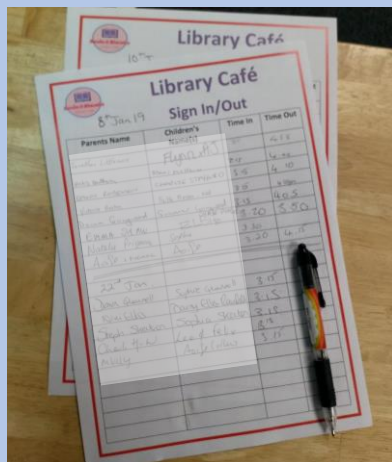
How? Where? When? What? Who?

- **Access to books** – children who do not have books at home are more likely to report that they never read. Use your school library, come to library café!
- **Book talk** – What are you reading at school? Do you like it? Which is your favourite page of this book? What made you pick that book? Do you prefer fact books or story books?
- **Anytime** – bedtime is a great way to unwind for parent and child, but over breakfast, in the car, while you're washing up.....
- **Who?** Siblings, grandparents, the dog. A great way to build connections.
- **Let them see you read.**

Impact

- **Initiative 1: Child-led Ownership of Reading Material – Highly Successful:** All books chosen by children have seen very high borrowing figures. Cheers erupt when the books are put on display, and most books have several reservations.
- **Initiative 2: Contacting Authors - Highly Successful:** Author visits had a dramatic impact across all year groups, e.g. 100 copies of Onjali Rauf's book were ordered by children. Tweets, Skypes, etc. have been influential on individuals and classes. For example, following Charlotte Lo Skype, the class have been top borrowers for 3 months in a row.
- **Initiative 3: Trust-wide Reading Challenge – Highly Successful:** Across all 11 schools over 900 children completed the Gold Challenge. Headlands had the winning class and highest overall points – 3 classes had *all* members of the class completing the Gold Challenge. I received lots of positive feedback from parents and staff, .

- **Strand 4: Library Café – Highly Successful:** Attendance varies but has been between 4 and 12 families each day, mainly from Reception-Year 2. Parents often bring pre-school siblings and we have also had visits from ex-students who are now in Y7-8. Year 1 quote: "I love Library Café, I wish it were every day!"
- **Strand 5: Engaging Parents – Partially Successful:** Approx. 20 parents attended the Reception event, and 23 for Year 1. After each event, many parents signed up for their own library account and stayed for Library café. Adult books shelf however has seen very little use, and impact of newsletter has not been measurable.



Library Café Register



Grandma, Y1 child and Y6 child engaged in book-related crafts



Reading Challenge winning class.

Reflections & Next Steps

- **Initiative 1: Child-led Ownership of Reading Material** – To capitalise on the success of voting for library stock, I will run KS2 library sessions where 4-5 children present 'My Book Recommendation' then class votes on which book to buy.
- **Initiative 2: Contacting Authors** – I will continue to strongly promote author contact. A new iPad will enable me to show author videos (e.g. Authorfy, poetry readings) during library sessions.
- **Initiative 3: Trust-wide Reading Challenge** – The NPAT Challenge for next year will develop the idea with new challenges and layout. As well as individual and class prizes, an NPAT Reading Challenge Trophy will go to the winning school.
- **Initiative 4: A Library Café** – We will continue Library Café 'as is' while developing and trialling strategies to engage a wider range of families, in particular PP children and older year groups.
- **Initiative 5: Engaging Parents**– We intend to gradually extend the RfP sessions to KS2 year groups over the next term, and reduce newsletters to 3 x per year but include more of the children's work.
- **My Personal Reflections:** Undertaking and sustaining these initiatives has really helped me get to know my readers and become part of the school and wider reading community, with more time and space to talk to children, staff and parents about our reading habits. My eventual aim in 2020 is to develop a virtual reading community across the Trust, using Padlet - an online space where parents, staff and children can share thoughts and reflections on the books they have read.