



Change your story

Building a reading culture

Leading reading for pleasure for every child

Early Years



Guidance for Summer Term Reading for Pleasure CPD– Leadership

Background

This guidance has been developed for leaders in the early years sector, childminders, headteachers, nursery managers, reading leads, early years leads, and teachers to help celebrate the reading for pleasure culture in their setting, and to identify areas for development. The following resources have been used to develop this professional development course:

- [Early Years reflection guide](#)
- Self-reflective grid
- Reading for pleasure CPD slides to share in training
- Action plan

These resources can be found in the downloads section at the end of [the resource page](#)

How to use this resource

This resource can be adapted to use in a variety of ways:

- To form part of a dedicated reading for pleasure staff meeting, celebrating what the setting is doing well and identifying potential areas for development.
- To support evaluation, using the grid as a practical tool to help you determine where your school is on its reading for pleasure journey.
- Further opportunities to deepen your understanding are available in the 'Further Reading' section.

How you choose to use this resource is entirely up to you as a leader, adapt it to best fit the needs of your school or setting.

Reading for Pleasure CPD slides

The notes section of the Reading for Pleasure slides includes a script and prompts to enable you to pick up and use the CPD with minimal preparation. However, please do use your professional judgement and make appropriate adaptations when working with this resource; it is intended as a supportive tool to help you shape a CPD session that best fits the needs of your school or setting.

Guidance for leads

Before leading the session with teachers, educators or childminders, it's important that you feel prepared and confident with the materials and the focus of the discussion. The points below outline preparation steps.

- Download and read the PowerPoint and script so you are familiar with the structure and key messages.
- Review the scoring grid carefully and ensure you're familiar with the criteria and wording.
- Prepare a few examples of strong practice from your setting to help start the celebrating section positively. – You may choose to share some images from your setting/school.
- Consider any small adaptations you may want to make so the session fits your team and context.
- Print copies of the matrix and action plan, ready to review and fill in during the session

Slide 1

Front cover

Slide 2

Before inviting your team to share their celebrations, start by offering a few positive examples you've noticed yourself in your setting or school. This gives everyone time to think and helps set a warm, appreciative tone. You may choose to record these on post-it notes and begin a **celebration board** that the team can add to during the session. These might include

- "There are some wonderful things happening in the baby room, where staff have created a calm and nurturing environment"
- "One practitioner is particularly skilled at using facial expression and tone to engage and enthuse children during storytime."
- "A practitioner has developed an inviting reading area, and the children are regularly fully absorbed in the books and activities."
- "One practitioner regularly takes children and parents to the library, and during a recent visit a parent even signed up for their own library card"

Slide 3

This part of the session gives educators the chance to reflect on what is already working well in their reading for pleasure culture. Encourage them to reflect on the strengths they see in everyday practice and to share these with the group. If you are using post-it notes, educators can write down their ideas and add them to the celebration board so everyone can see the range of positive experiences across the setting.

You may want to prompt educators to think about areas from the [reflection guide](#)

- Leadership
- Book choice
- The environment, space and time
- Social aspects of reading
- Reading aloud
- Role models and parental engagement
- Inclusive provision

Slide 4

This is an opportunity to explore your reading for pleasure culture together. It is a positive developmental activity designed to help all staff reflect on the setting or school's current practice. The aim is to focus on the positives and how you can build on them, this is an opportunity to strengthen the reading for pleasure culture in your setting/school. You may choose to work through all of the sections or select the parts that feel most relevant and useful for your setting/school at this time.

Slide 5

Explain that you will use the self-reflective grid to rate each area from 1–4 individually, choosing the paragraph that you feel best describes the current reading for pleasure culture in your setting. Emphasise that there are no right or wrong answers– this activity is simply a starting point for professional dialogue and future planning.

Once the grid is completed, we will be able to plan more effectively for how we want to develop our reading for pleasure culture. There is a handy action plan template available for the team to record next steps.

Explaining the scale:

- **1.** We have laid the foundations of reading for pleasure.
- **2.** Our reading for pleasure culture is building momentum.
- **3.** Reading for pleasure has been embedded into the setting.
- **4.** Reading for pleasure is a joyful and thriving aspect of the setting.

As a team, go through your ratings together. If there are any major differences in how people have scored an area, this is a valuable opportunity to have a professional conversation about why. After this discussion, the agreed scorings will guide your next steps and help shape your action plan. The blank action plan template can be used for capturing ideas and next steps.

Give educators around **five minutes** to complete the self-reflective grid, or ask them to complete it ready for your next meeting if you prefer. Completing the whole self-reflective grid or focussing only on the specific section/s you have chosen to prioritise.

Now is the time for professional discussion. Invite each practitioner to explain why they chose their score for a particular area. This helps everyone understand different perspectives and builds a shared picture of your current reading for pleasure culture and practice. Once educators have shared their reasoning, ask the group to consider:

“What could we do to improve this for the children and families?”

All ideas that emerge from your discussions can be written into the action plan. This ensures that the reflections and suggestions from the whole team are captured clearly and can be used to guide future development.

To support conversations, you can prompt thinking by using the reflection guide headings. Here are some examples you might offer:

- **Leadership** e.g., exploring how leaders can model reading for pleasure more visibly or create regular opportunities for staff to share book recommendations, discuss and model reading practice.
- **Book Choice** e.g. reviewing representation and diversity in the book collection to ensure all children see themselves reflected.

- **Environment, Space and Time** e.g. protecting story time, developing additional cosy reading areas or ensuring children have unhurried time to enjoy books.
- **Social Aspects of Reading** e.g. creating more opportunities for children to talk about books with each other or share stories in small groups.
- **Reading Aloud** e.g. planning a wider range of read aloud experiences across the week or introducing new voices and genres.
- **Role Models and Parental Engagement** e.g. finding ways to involve parents more, such as inviting them to story sessions or supporting families to visit the library.
- **Inclusive Provision** e.g. ensuring books and reading experiences are accessible to all children, including those with SEND or emerging language needs.

These examples can help educators think practically about what could be strengthened. The ideas they generate here will feed directly into the action plan and shape meaningful next steps for the setting.

Slide 6

The action plan is an opportunity to bring together the ideas and suggestions shared during professional discussion. Select and complete the areas that feel most relevant and turn the team's reflections into a workable, achievable plan.

Use the suggestions generated by educators to populate the action plan, focusing on realistic next steps that will make a meaningful difference to children's reading for pleasure experiences. This should feel manageable rather than overwhelming.

As a next step, plan follow up meetings to an agreed timescale to review the actions. This will give the team time to implement changes, reflect on what has worked well, and have another opportunity to celebrate their achievements.

Slide 7

This final section signposts educators to further reading that can deepen their understanding of reading for pleasure and support ongoing development. You can highlight any documents, research summaries, or guidance materials that you feel would be most useful for your team. Encourage educators to explore these resources in their own time and bring any reflections or ideas to future discussions.

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