Perspectives of Reading for Pleasure Pedagogy in Western Australian School Classrooms

Jessica Nailer

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PERSPECTIVES OF READING FOR PLEASURE PEDAGOGY IN WESTERN AUSTRALIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL CLASSROOMS.

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Bachelor of Teaching (Primary)/Bachelor of Arts
Graduate Certificate in Applied Linguistics

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Philosophy

School of Education
Fremantle Campus
May 2022
Declaration

To the best of the candidate’s knowledge, this thesis contains no material previously published by another person, except where due acknowledgement has been made. This thesis is the candidate’s own work and contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any institution.

Human Ethics
The research presented and reported in this thesis was conducted in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007, updated 2018). The proposed research study received human research ethics approval from the University of Notre Dame Australia Human Research Ethics Committee (EC00418), Approval Number #2021-035F.

Signature:

Print Name: Jessica Nailer

Date: 13 May 2022
Abstract

Australian children read for pleasure less and less as they move through primary school, with a noticeable decline emerging in the middle primary school years. Reading for Pleasure at School (RfPS) also appears to have become de-prioritised in primary schools, with greater emphasis in the broader literacy education dialogue placed on instructional reading pedagogy and standardised literacy testing. This research focused on the pedagogy that meaningfully supports RfPS in Years 3-6, within a framework of school culture, teacher practices and the physical environment. This investigation aimed to explore the perspectives of three key stakeholder groups from one Western Australian independent public school: leadership, classroom teachers, and Year 3-6 children. Consistent with a phenomenological perspective, this qualitative case study collected data through semi-structured individual interviews with leadership and classroom teachers, small focus groups with Year 3-6 children, and a researcher journal. This research found that there were notable discrepancies between the educators’ and the Year 3-6 children’s perspectives of RfPS pedagogy, highlighting the importance of children’s perspectives being sought. This investigation also found that educator professional knowledge of RfPS pedagogy affects stakeholders’ perspectives, and that RfPS physical spaces and texts play a key role in meaningfully implementing RfPS in middle to upper primary school.
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Glossary

C-Pen
A small digital scanner that translates text-to-speech.

Classroom teachers
Educators who hold the main teaching responsibilities in a primary school classroom, including planning, delivering and assessing content from the core Learning Areas.

Educators
A general term referring to classroom teachers, leadership team members, teaching support staff and teaching specialist staff in primary schools.

Engagement
Level of attention, interest, curiosity and passion towards something, in this case towards the practice of reading and/or RfPS; a child’s involvement in the teaching and learning environment surrounding them.

Leadership
Adults who have decision-making responsibilities that affect the teachers’ and children’s teaching and learning environment, including strategic and/or operational decisions.

Motivation
An internal process that results in behaviours occurring; in this case referring to the desire to read for pleasure at school.

Pedagogy
The teaching strategies and practices in place; a teacher’s methods; the ‘art’ of teaching.

Reading for Pleasure (RfP)
Willingly engaging with texts for the purpose of enjoyment and personal response.
Reading for Pleasure at School (RfPS)

Willingly engaging with texts (hard copy or digital) for a sustained period of time (at least fifteen minutes) while at school, exercising some personal choice, and having only informal or social tasks attached.

Stakeholders

School leadership, classroom teachers and Year 3-6 children.

Texts

Reading material of any type or genre (for example, hard copy book/e-Book, fiction/non-fiction, novel/graphic novel/picture book, etc.).
1.1 Introduction to the Research

Reading for Pleasure (RfP) refers to willingly engaging with texts for the purpose of enjoyment and personal response (Cremin et al., 2014; Gamble, 2013; Garan & DeVoogd, 2008). RfP promotes literacy as a life-long skill (Dewan, 2016), therefore addressing the aims of the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration and the Australian Curriculum (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority [ACARA], n.d.; Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs [MCEETYA], 2019). In fact, “the more leisure books people read, the more literate they become, and the more prosperous and equitable the society they inhabit” (Dewan, 2016, p. 1). When reporting on Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) data, Kirsch et al. (2002) suggested that childhood RfP could potentially compensate for socio-economic disadvantages when determining a child’s overall educational success. Despite these powerful findings, opportunities to engage in RfP at school decrease as children move into middle and upper primary school (McGeown et al., 2015; Scholastic, 2019; Shoghi et al., 2013; Smith et al., 2012).

This research defines Reading for Pleasure at School (RfPS) as willingly engaging with texts for a sustained period of time (at least fifteen minutes) while at school, exercising personal choice, and having only informal or social tasks attached (Hempel-Jorgensen et al., 2018; Kucirkova & Cremin, 2018; Kucirkova et al., 2017; Merga, 2015; Merga, 2017; Scholastic, 2019).

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this investigation was to explore primary school leadership, classroom teachers’ and Year 3-6 children’s perspectives of their school’s RfPS pedagogy. Reading for pleasure motivation and engagement tend to decline in the middle to upper years of primary school despite most children becoming independent readers in this time frame. This research hoped to provide insight into this issue by exploring a diverse range of RfPS perspectives held by leaders and educators connected to the same primary school and the Year 3-6 children who experienced the RfPS pedagogy at that school.

1.3 Rationale

While society and its definition of ‘literacy’ rapidly evolves, Australian primary school-aged children engage less and less in the simple leisurely act of RfPS, and it is
difficult to ascertain the amount of quality RfPS currently occurring in Australian primary schools (Shoghi et al., 2013). Some studies argue that despite appearing regularly on classroom timetables in one form or another, RfPS is rarely pedagogically supported or meaningfully implemented (Cremin et al., 2014; McKool & Gespass, 2009; Merga & Gardiner, 2018). Hempel-Jorgensen et al. (2018) for example, found that schools and classroom teachers who claimed during individual interviews to pedagogically support RfPS, often in practice did not, despite having the knowledge and resources to do so, and knowing they were being observed for this purpose. Merga and Ledger (2019) also found that only one third of primary school classroom teachers engaged in daily reading aloud, one of the cornerstone behaviours of the RfPS pedagogical framework. Cremin et al. (2009) argued that “reading for pleasure urgently requires a higher profile in primary school education” (p. 18).

Despite reading practices and pedagogy being consistently debated and researched in Australia, studies and resulting media interest have historically focused on evaluating and developing instructional reading pedagogy (Afflerbach et al., 2013; Rowe & National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy (Australia), 2005). Instructional reading pedagogy is distinctly different to RfPS pedagogy as the goal is to teach discrete technical reading skills, such as decoding, fluency and comprehension, or reading strategies such as predicting, inferring and synthesising. The goal of RfPS, in contrast, is to promote personal engagement and intrinsic motivation to read (Clark & Rumbold, 2006; Cremin et al., 2014; Gamble, 2013).

Green et al. (2013) argue that current social and cultural factors result in an education system that continues to favour a skills-based approach to reading. Ironically, Allington (2013) found that a focus on instructional reading pedagogy can hinder children’s reading progress, as classroom teachers feel pressure to provide their ‘poor readers’ with more skill instruction, resulting in fewer opportunities for these children to practise their reading skills in a positive, relaxed and engaging manner. Fewer opportunities to experience success, positivity and personal enjoyment with reading leads to decreased motivation to read, and therefore less chance to develop the skills necessary; thus, the cyclical relationship between poor reading skills and negative attitude towards reading is born, referred to as the ‘Matthew effect’ (Clark, 2015; Clark & Rumbold, 2006; Stanovich, 1986). Instead of focusing further on decontextualised instructional reading practices, Krashen (2009) argues that literacy research needs to explore the only worthy pedagogic goal – promoting children’s engagement with available, interesting and comprehensible reading material.

The wealth of literature that does explore engagement and the promotion of positive attitudes towards reading tends to focus on early childhood education or parent/caregiver
influences prior to schooling (Shoghi et al., 2013). This gap in the literature surrounding RfPS in the middle to upper primary years is significant, as these are the years when Australian children read for pleasure less and less and current knowledge of children’s RfPS perspectives in this age range is inconsistent (Dungworth et al., 2004; Johnsson-Smaragdi & Jönsson, 2006; Merga, 2015; Merga, 2017; Merga & Mat Roni, 2018; Scholastic, 2019).

While various benefits of childhood RfP have been soundly established, few studies have explored current RfPS pedagogy, especially primary school children’s perspectives of their school’s RfPS pedagogy.

1.4 Significance of the Research

The decline in RfP is established in the existing literature. However, there exists a gap in research that specifically explores RfPS in middle and upper primary school. As such, this research makes a significant contribution both to research and also to classroom practice. This section will outline how this investigation is significant regarding the current body of RfPS literature, as well as relating to RfPS classroom practice.

1.4.1 Significance of the Investigation to Research

This investigation is significant as it adds to the growing body of literature investigating RfPS pedagogy in the middle and upper years of primary school. A large research base exists which focuses on primary school instructional reading pedagogy and the importance of RfP prior to schooling and RfPS in early childhood education. However, despite the decline in RfPS in middle to upper primary school, there is a gap in the research relating specifically to RfPS in the middle to upper primary school years (Afflerbach et al., 2013; Clark & Rumbold, 2006; Hammond, 2015; Rowe & National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy (Australia), 2005; Shoghi et al., 2013).

1.4.2 Significance of the Investigation to Classroom Practice

This investigation is also significant as it explores diverse stakeholder perspectives within a single primary school, including leadership educators, classroom educators and children from Years 3-6. This exploration of various stakeholders is limited in current RfPS literature. School-wide support is essential when successfully fostering RfPS and gathering data from multiple perspectives within a single setting school will provide a unique opportunity to compare emerging themes and uncover the essence of the school’s RfPS pedagogy (Cremin et al., 2014; Merga & Mason, 2019). A more comprehensive
understanding of this *essence*, and more broadly the diverse RfPS perspectives within a school, can lead to strong teacher knowledge and therefore more responsive classroom practice.

1.5 Participant School and Stakeholders

The participant school is a small, co-educational independent community primary school in metropolitan Perth. The school’s teaching and learning philosophy is based on child-centred, holistic and play-based principles, which align with the principles of RfPS (School website, 2021). The school also has strong community connections and is highly responsive to its local area, both geographically and culturally. The combination of their collaborative, inclusive teaching philosophy and status as an independent public school means that the School Council, which is composed of staff, parents/caregivers and community members, plays a key role in governing the school, especially from a strategic, policy-making perspective (School website, 2021). Therefore, the ‘leadership’ stakeholder group includes one leadership educator (school principal) and two School Council members. The three leadership participants provide a broad representation of this diverse stakeholder group. Due to the small size of the school, the stakeholder group of ‘classroom teachers’ consists of two participants, representing 100% of the Year 3-6 classroom teaching staff. The ‘Year 3-6 children’ stakeholder group comprises 14 children in Years 3-6 at the participant school. The term ‘stakeholders’ will be used henceforth to refer collectively to the three participant groups: leadership, classroom teachers and Year 3-6 children.

1.6 Research Questions

The overarching research question that guided this investigation was:

- What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School pedagogy in Years 3-6?

The sub-questions developed to respond to the overarching research question were:

- What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School culture in Years 3-6?
- What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School teacher practices in Years 3-6?
- What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School physical environment in Years 3-6?
1.7 Limitations of the Research

The main limitation of this investigation is that the findings are not generalisable due to the nature of qualitative phenomenological research and the use of a single participating school as a case study. To facilitate as rich an analysis as is possible within this qualitative research, the thesis provided thorough descriptions of the research context, participants, and emergent themes. Despite this limitation, it is hoped that the research will contribute to the growing discussion of RfPS pedagogy in middle to upper primary school classrooms.

1.8 Thesis Outline and Chapter Summaries

This thesis consists of six chapters; an overview is provided below.

Table 1.1

| Chapter One: | Introduction |
| Chapter Two: | Literature Review |
| Chapter Three: | Research Design |
| Chapter Four: | Presentation of Research Results |
| Chapter Five: | Discussion of Results |
| Chapter Six: | Implications and Recommendations |

Chapter One: The Introduction provides an overview of relevant RfPS concepts and provides this research’s rationale and purpose. It presents the research questions and outlines how the investigation addresses inconsistencies in current literature. The introduction also introduces the context of the case study and provides an overview of the thesis’s six chapters.

Chapter Two: The Literature Review discusses existing RfPS literature, organised into the themes of school culture, teacher practices, and physical environment, with each theme presented from the perspectives of leadership, classroom teachers and Year 3-6 children.

Chapter Three: The Research Design outlines the qualitative theoretical framework underpinning the research, including its epistemology, methodology, and methods of data collection and data analysis.

Chapter Four: The Presentation of Research Results presents the research results in relation to the research questions.

Chapter Five: The Discussion of Results provides an analytic discussion of the results, taking into consideration the literature and the research questions.
Chapter Six: The Implications and Recommendations reviews the research findings, answers the research questions, discusses implications, and offers recommendations.

1.9 Conclusion

This investigation is seeking to respond to the overarching research question: What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school’s Reading for Pleasure at School pedagogy in Years 3-6? The following chapter will explore and analyse existing literature on the topic of RfPS. Key themes that emerged from current literature relating to RfPS will be synthesised and outlined.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This purpose of this research is to explore key stakeholders’ perspectives of their school’s Reading for Pleasure at School (RfPS) pedagogy. Therefore, literature pertaining to RfPS in primary school contexts was reviewed, synthesised and presented in this chapter. The literature indicates three interconnected key themes underpinning RfPS, each experienced by leadership, classroom teachers and Year 3-6 children: the school culture, teacher practices, and the physical environment. These themes form this investigation’s Conceptual Framework (see Figure 2.1).

2.2 Understanding RfPS in the Literature

RfPS refers to willingly engaging with texts for a sustained period of time (at least fifteen minutes) while at school, exercising personal choice, and having only informal or
social tasks attached (Hempel-Jorgensen et al., 2018; Kucirkova & Cremin, 2018; Kucirkova et al., 2017; Merga, 2015; Merga, 2017; Scholastic, 2019). While ‘silent reading’ originally aimed to promote meaningful independent reading and has been a standard classroom practice for many years in Australia, its current perceived value and resulting classroom implementation is generally inconsistent with the new dynamic definition of RfPS (Merga & Gardiner, 2018; Merga & Ledger, 2019). Recognising the positive influence that affective factors and social collaboration have on teaching and learning is a significant contributing factor to this repositioning of RfPS (Afflerbach et al., 2013; McGeown et al., 2013). Nell’s (1988) prominent work on pleasure reading in adults provides an interesting precursor to current RfPS research and appears to largely support more recent insights into RfPS pedagogy. For example, Nell (1988) stated that the attentional effort required for ‘forced’ pleasure reading was greater than that required for work-related reading, which is supported by current understandings of the role that motivation and engagement play in reading behaviours. This investigation’s framework for effective RfPS pedagogy is based on Cremin et al.’s (2014) comprehensive findings, synthesised with Merga’s (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018) and Merga and Ledger’s (2019) insights, as these studies are recent, local and include multiple perspectives of RfPS within educational contexts.

The Australian Curriculum was endorsed by all education ministers in 2015 and was based on the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, recently superseded by the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (MCEETYA, 2008; MCEETYA, 2019). The Australian Curriculum includes ‘literacy’ as a General Capability, which acknowledges the “value of literacy as a gateway skill for learning in other areas.” (Merga & Gardiner, 2018, p. 38) The Australian Curriculum: English (AC:E) specifically focuses on high-quality children’s literature as the ‘vehicle’ for effectively and meaningfully teaching primary school language and literacy. In fact, an explicit aim of the AC:E embedded within the Year Level Descriptions is that all children from Pre-Primary to Year 6 “engage with a variety of texts for enjoyment.” (ACARA, n.d.). However, despite this general curricular support for RfPS, the lower and middle primary school years’ English curriculum includes only a small number of specific content descriptors supporting RfPS, such as the requirement that Year 3 children “develop criteria for establishing personal preferences for literature”. The Year 5 and 6 content descriptors do not directly refer to RfPS at all (ACARA, n.d.).

In addition to the lack of curricular support for RfPS, much of the reading pedagogy dialogue in Australia continues to focus on skills-based technical approaches (Allington,
Literacy teaching and assessment in Australia continues to be largely prescriptive and uncreative, with literacy education policy at times guided by a ‘quick-fix’ need to increase standardised test results rather than by a desire to promote reading engagement or motivation (Barton & McKay, 2016; Ewing, 2012, 2016). This approach creates inequity in the Australian education system by placing additional demands and expectations to increase standardised test results on ‘lower performing’ schools that are often already disadvantaged through socio-economic, geographic or cultural factors. These schools may respond by using even more structured and limited reading pedagogy and practices, thus disadvantaging them further in the overarching aim of creating motivated and engaged readers (Comber, 2012; Winch et al., 2020). This phenomenon has been described as the ‘Matthew effect’ (Stanovich, 1986, cited in Clark & Rumbold, 2006). RfPS has the potential to address these inequities and allow all Australians access to the educational goals as per the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (Cremin et al., 2014; MCEETYA, 2019).

2.3 Benefits of Reading for Pleasure at School

When RfPS is effectively supported and promoted, literature explicates several benefits. Benefits can include increased positive affective factors relating to reading, such as motivation and enjoyment of reading (Cremin et al., 2009; Garan and DeVoogd, 2008; Laurenson et al., 2015; Merga, 2017). Positive affective benefits of RfPS can then be connected to subsequent reading skill acquisition (Cremin et al., 2009; Garan & DeVoogd, 2009; Guthrie et al., 2012; Hempel-Jorgensen et al., 2015; Krashen, 2004; Laurenson et al., 2015). RfPS has also been linked to other literacy benefits such as increased vocabulary and improved grammar knowledge (Clark & Rumbold, 2006; Sullivan & Brown, 2015).

2.3.1 Affective Benefits of RfPS

Many studies (Cremin et al., 2009; Garan and DeVoogd, 2008; Laurenson et al., 2015; Merga, 2017) have found that when delivered according to a consistent and informed framework, RfPS pedagogy positively influenced affective factors such as intrinsic motivation to read, reader engagement and enjoyment of reading, for both children and classroom teachers. These affective benefits are closely intertwined and difficult to extricate from each other. Each affects the other and they work together to create more powerful RfPS outcomes for all children. Garan and DeVoogd (2008) for example, found that social shared buddy reading increased reader engagement in all children (that is, not only in ‘struggling
readers’), while Warrington and George (2014) reported increased confidence and intrinsic motivation to read in both ‘tutors’ and ‘tutees’ because of their multi-age peer reading program. In addition, Cremin et al. (2009) stated that when teachers engaged in ‘book talk’ in the classroom they encouraged child-led informal discussions around literature, which lead to book recommendations and social connections between peers. The increase in socially driven book recommendations then resulted in more engaged, self-confident learners (Cremin et al., 2009). In support of Cremin et al.’s (2009) assertion, Laurenson et al. (2015) found that most children expressed taking more enjoyment from English as a subject in general when RfPS was meaningfully incorporated. When interactive reading was used as a whole-class strategy for encouraging RfPS, children reported increased confidence, competence and security (Merga, 2017). These affective benefits of increased reading confidence, engagement and motivation demonstrate the power of RfPS pedagogy to positively influence children’s literacy experiences.

RfPS can have a range of other affective benefits such as helping children regulate moods, experience relaxation, and increase empathy (Kidd & Castano, 2013; Merga, 2017; Wilhelm & Smith, 2016). Wilhelm and Smith (2016) explored several different ‘pleasures’ experienced by children when engaged in RfPS, with ‘immersive play pleasure’ (that is, being immersed in a text and feeling a positive emotional response) underpinning all other benefits. These recent findings are again underpinned by Nell’s (1988) seminal work on pleasure reading that hypothesised a positive physiological response to pleasure reading. Though tentatively explored, RfPS could potentially enhance empathy and mindfulness as it increases one’s Theory of Mind through understanding that others may have different values and perspectives to one’s own (Kidd & Castano, 2013).

2.3.2 Link Between Affective Benefits of RfPS and Subsequent Reading Skill Acquisition

While it is difficult to establish a conclusive causal link between affective factors and reading skill acquisition, it is largely accepted in educational practice that motivation and engagement impact learners “above and beyond cognitive characteristics such as intelligence or prior knowledge.” (Schiefele et al., 2012, p. 427). For example, Merga (2017) established a positive relationship between teachers reading aloud for enjoyment and children’s levels of competency and confidence when reading aloud and using reading strategies, and McGeown et al. (2015) found that reader confidence had the strongest relationship to reading attainment. Afflerbach et al. (2013) and Schiefele et al. (2012) also argued that stronger reading motivation and engagement had significant positive influences on reading achievement as
they led to children willingly investing more time and effort into reading, creating a positive cycle of reading for both enjoyment and attainment. This positive cycle is supported by Cremin et al.’s (2009, p. 17) belief that “the will influences the skill”.

Strong personal motivation to read for pleasure could also disrupt the ‘Matthew effect’ discussed in Section 2.2 (Stanovich, 1986, cited in Clark & Rumbold, 2006). While the ‘Matthew effect’ posits that RfPS would only benefit ‘good readers’, Cremin et al. (2009), Garan & DeVoogd (2009), Hempel-Jørgensen et al. (2015), Krashen (2004), Laurenson et al. (2015) and Guthrie et al. (2012) all concluded that when RfPS was effectively taught and supported, the resulting positive affective factors led to enhanced reading skill attainment for all children, not just the ‘good readers’. While it is difficult to establish a causal relationship between RfPS and improved reading skills, at the very least the “relationship might be cyclical” (Clark, 2015, p. 18). In other words, focusing on teaching technical reading skills at the expense of promoting positive reading attitudes, motivation and engagement is unlikely to yield positive long-term literacy gains (McGeown et al., 2015).

2.3.3 Other Literacy Benefits of RfPS

Clark and Rumbold (2006) summarised several specific literacy-related benefits of RfPS including increased reading and writing ability, enhanced text comprehension and improved grammar knowledge. Similarly, Sullivan and Brown (2015) found that childhood pleasure reading was specifically linked to strong vocabulary development and to a lesser extent mathematical competence. Other reported benefits of RfPS include increased general knowledge, greater community connection and participation, and a broader cultural worldview (Garces-Bacsal et al., 2018). Again, while it is difficult to establish a solid causal relationship between RfPS and cognitive development directly, studies consistently indicate a positive correlation between the two.

2.4 School Culture

There are many studies exploring the relationships between primary school culture and different aspects of literacy pedagogy or literacy achievement. For this review, only literature that specifically relates to RfP and RfPS has been included. Upon reviewing the relevant literature, school culture can be identified as a complex interplay between individual, whole-school and community values and practices. Each layer of school culture is then perceived differently by the three stakeholder groups: leadership, classroom teachers and Year 3-6 children.
2.4.1 Individual Values and Practices

Children’s reading engagement can be meaningfully impacted by their teachers’ perspectives and attitudes towards reading (Hempel-Jorgensen et al., 2018; McKool & Gespass, 2009; Merga, 2017). Merga and Ledger (2019) argued that “as teachers, we influence our children’s perspectives on the value of an activity through the manner in which we position it within the classroom” (p. 139). Teachers who adhere to the belief that ‘good readers’ are those who can competently decode and fluently read aloud for example, may be prioritising technical reading proficiency and communicating through their language and pedagogical choices that RfPS is not valued (Hempel-Jorgensen et al., 2018; Laurenson et al., 2015). This can result in a ‘pedagogy of poverty’ which causes the ‘Matthew effect’ discussed earlier and further entrenches literacy inequalities (Allington, 2013; Hempel-Jorgensen et al., 2018; Stanovich, 1986 as cited in Clark & Rumbold, 2006).

There are other ways that educators’ values and perceived limitations can affect RfPS pedagogy. Merga and Mat Roni (2018) for example, found that once children had acquired independent reading skills, there was a tendency for teachers to value reading less, leading to a decrease in RfP pedagogy. Laurenson et al. (2015) reported that some teachers were genuinely surprised by the positive attitudes their children expressed towards reading when asked directly by the researchers, highlighting the potential for classroom teachers to make false assumptions about their children’s reading attitudes and subsequently teach according to these false assumptions. Classroom teachers may also perceive their own limited professional knowledge as a primary challenge to prioritising RfPS (Kucirkova & Cremin, 2018). While these limitations may in fact be exerting real and unavoidable pressure, classroom teachers hold much responsibility for RfPS, as their “recognition of the multifaceted value of reading can drive them to embed it as an enjoyable practice that is an inextricable component of classroom culture.” (Merga & Ledger, 2019, p. 140).

In fact, classroom teachers who held positive attitudes towards RfP and engaged in RfP themselves were more likely to integrate meaningful RfPS pedagogy into their classrooms and promote intrinsic motivation for reading (McKool & Gespass, 2009). While this may suggest that only primary school teachers who are avid readers are capable of effectively teaching, RfP, Garces-Bacsal et al. (2018) found that even teachers who did not identify as ‘devoted readers’ were able to identify and discuss effective RfPS pedagogy. This would suggest that despite definitive research to support the notion, all primary school teachers can implement effective RfPS pedagogy, providing they reflect upon their own
reading attitudes and approach RfPS positively and enthusiastically. As Merga (2016, p. 267) stated, “teachers of reading can impart both reading skill and will”.

While there is a gap in the literature regarding leadership perspectives of RfPS in Year 3-6 classrooms, some studies suggest a preliminary understanding of the crucial role that leadership play in promoting RfPS. Western Australian primary school teacher librarians, for example, concluded that leadership’s personal attitudes and practices played a noteworthy role in creating positive schoolwide reading cultures (Merga & Mason, 2019). They indicated a reliance on leadership support through adequate resourcing and funding to provide diverse high-quality texts for children to choose from, and leadership educators who identified as readers were more likely to provide this support, as well as actively advocate for RfPS and promote reading initiatives (Merga & Mason, 2019). To summarise: “Where leaders were readers, the flow-on effects seemed to be highly positive, and therefore efforts to increase the reading engagement of school leaders could yield benefits for the school culture and beyond” (Merga & Mason, 2019, p. 186).

There are inconsistent findings regarding children’s perspectives of RfPS. Laurenson et al. (2015) found that some children associated two separate meanings to the word ‘reading’ – one being a pleasurable task and one being instructional. Others have argued that many children hold predominately negative perspectives of ‘reading’ due to its assumed connection to schooling and academic achievement, and is not seen as a desirable leisure activity, particularly when competing with technology or structured extracurricular activities (Dungworth et al., 2004; Johnsson-Smaragdi & Jönsson, 2006; Reedy & de Carvalho, 2021; Scholastic, 2015). Merga (2016) found that although most children said that reading was important, almost half did not know if their teacher enjoyed reading based on their classroom behaviours, while Mathers and Stern’s (2012) Year 3 participants agreed almost unanimously that reading was ‘important’, but significantly fewer reported ‘liking’ to read. Several studies have found that existing positive attitudes towards reading decline noticeably as children move into middle and upper primary school (McGeown et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2012). This raises an interesting question when combined with the previously discussed influence of teacher values and practices: what comes first – the children’s or the teachers’ change in reading values and attitudes?

Several recent studies have begun exploring children’s perspectives of RfPS specifically. Alexander and Jarman (2018) for example established a Reading Challenge for primary school children to engage with nonfiction science books and reported positive results. Prior to the Reading Challenge being implemented, they stated that only 16 per cent
of children reported they would willingly read nonfiction science books and children indicated that nonfiction science books were probably ‘boring’ or ‘difficult’ to read (Alexander & Jarman, 2018). After supportive, enthusiastic RfPS pedagogy and extrinsic rewards were provided, 83 per cent of children reported a sense of ‘awe’ and enjoyment while reading the nonfiction science books and 90 per cent indicated that they had found the Reading Challenge ‘enjoyable’ or ‘very enjoyable’ (Alexander & Jarman, 2018). The participating teachers also reported an increase in positive reading attitudes and behaviours because of the Reading Challenge (Alexander & Jarman, 2018). While it may be argued that offering extrinsic rewards does not result in true RfPS, particularly considering Schiefele et al.’s (2012) and McKool & Gespass’s (2009) findings that intrinsic motivation and RfPS are strongly connected, the reported changes in children’s perspectives still provide interesting and optimistic insights into the possibility of changing children’s attitudes and motivations to read for pleasure at school.

It is important to identify potential limitations to RfPS from children’s perspectives. For example, Merga (2017, 2018) asked children directly what factors would encourage them to read for pleasure more often, with her results supporting earlier findings that time allocation, choice, diversity of available texts and supportive physical environment are crucial factors. Merga and Mat Roni (2018) also found that some children shared the teacher perspective discussed earlier that pleasure reading decreases in importance once they can read independently. Contrasting this, Scholastic’s (2019) report indicated that older children would like to continue RfPS beyond the point of independent skill acquisition, particularly when conducted as enjoyable shared reading experiences with educators. Children overwhelmingly identified choice and personal interest as important factors to consider and explained that, when given the chance to exercise autonomy or to read interesting material, they did view reading as a pleasurable option (Merga, 2018; Merga & Mat Roni, 2018; Reedy & de Carvalho, 2021). Given some discrepancies in the research thus far regarding children’s perspectives of RfPS, there is a need for ongoing exploration in this area.

2.4.2 Whole-School Values and Practices

Although a small number of studies have investigated the value of whole-school support when fostering RfPS, more investigation in this area is needed (Cremin et al., 2014; Merga & Gardiner, 2018; Merga & Mason, 2019). Regarding leadership and literacy in general, Barton and McKay’s (2016) case studies of Queensland high schools identified whole school culture, supported by leadership teams, as the driving force behind powerful
literacy learning, while Bouchard (2001) argued that classroom teachers often do not prioritise reading because of leadership’s lack of direction to do so. Cremin et al. (2014, p. 18) stated that “teachers need considerable support in order to … develop an appropriately personalised reading curriculum, which is both responsive and inclusive”. There is a very limited number of studies investigating RfPS whole-school values from the perspective of leadership in primary schools. Of the studies that do exist, whole-school values and practices are evidently influenced by leadership perspectives and therefore require ongoing investigation (Merga & Mason, 2019).

2.4.3 Community Values and Practices

Broader community factors such as curriculum expectations, standardised testing pressures and home/parental RfP values can affect the stakeholders’ perspectives of RfPS (Gaffney et al., 2012). Merga and Gardiner (2018) for example assert that the lack of RfPS in the AC:E reflects the broader policies and educational culture in Australia that prioritises reading skill acquisition. This focus on instructional reading pedagogy and achievement therefore affects the stakeholders’ awareness and effective implementation of RfPS (Merga & Gardiner, 2018). To illustrate this point, few schools in Western Australia meaningfully included RfPS in their schoolwide literacy programs and policies, instead favouring ‘top-down notions’ of reading, contradicting RfPS’s strong social, collaborative child-oriented approach (Merga & Gardiner, 2018). There are many studies exploring the role that community values and practices play in early childhood reading experiences, particularly the importance of positive caregiver values and practices when promoting early engagement with texts for pleasure, however there is a gap in the literature relating to community values and practices that affect RfPS in middle to upper primary school.

The emerging theme of school culture within RfPS pedagogy in Year 3-6 classrooms contained within it several notable discrepancies and gaps. There is a lack of literature pertaining to leadership perspectives of RfPS school culture, and it is unclear to what extent children’s and classroom teachers’ perspectives of culture are connected. There are inconsistent findings relating to the relationship between classroom teachers’ RfPS values, their teaching practices, and their children’s RfPS perspectives. Based on this analysis of the literature, the following research sub-question was developed: What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school’s RfPS culture in Years 3-6?
2.5 Teacher Practices

Dynamic teacher practices that effectively support RfPS result in increased motivation and engagement with reading for primary school aged children, yet they tend to decrease as children progress into middle and upper primary school (Cremin et al., 2014). Well-informed and consistent RfPS teacher practices in primary school classrooms can also potentially disrupt educational inequities by meaningfully engaging children in reading and promoting lifelong literacy development, and it is the role of all primary school educators to explicitly teach and support RfPS (Garces-Bacsal et al., 2018; Hempel-Jorgensen et al., 2018). For RfPS to be meaningfully and effectively promoted, classroom teachers must act as mentors, co-readers and listeners (Kucirkova & Cremin, 2017).

Cremin et al.’s (2014) comprehensive recommendations have been synthesised with other relevant evidence-based suggestions to create a pedagogical framework of key RfPS teacher practices: reading aloud, creating social reading environments, engaging in informal book talk and recommendations, acknowledging autonomy, allocating regular class time to RfPS, and using technology (Cremin et al., 2014; Fletcher et al., 2012; Hempel-Jorgensen et al., 2018; Laurenson et al., 2015; Mathers & Stern, 2012; Merga, 2016). A key theme emerging from the literature was the vital role that classroom teachers play in successfully implementing RfPS through their everyday classroom practices. To complement this theme, the literature also indicated the importance of classroom teachers having sufficient professional knowledge of these practices.

2.5.1 Reading Aloud

Reading aloud to children is a commonly practised teacher practice known as ‘shared reading’, however it usually focuses on modelling or explicitly teaching reading skills, such as sounding out or predicting (Cremin et al., 2014; McKool & Gespass, 2009; Merga, 2017). Cremin et al. (2014) and Merga (2017) found that reading aloud with no instructional focus played a significant role in promoting RfPS as it increased children’s confidence in their own reading aloud abilities and removed children’s negative perceptions of reading. Reading aloud should be conducted regularly and beyond the time when children become independent readers, with children indicating disappointment that reading aloud for pleasure ceased as they moved through primary school (Merga, 2017). Merga and Ledger (2019) stated that nearly 80% of Australian teachers surveyed indicated ‘limited time’ and ‘demands of the curriculum’ as limitations of reading aloud for pleasure, despite all participants reporting to enjoy the practice themselves and most acknowledging its various benefits for their children.
For reading aloud to meaningfully promote RfPS, the teacher must also display genuine connection to the text and enjoyment of the practice, for example responding appropriately to humour, using engaging intonation, expression and characterisation in their voice and body language, and asking natural questions about the plot and characters (Fletcher et al., 2012; Merga, 2016).

2.5.2 Creating Social Environments

As children move through middle and upper primary school and as peer influence becomes stronger, creating social positivity around reading is deemed to be crucial (Fletcher et al., 2012; Mathers & Stern, 2012). Kuzmicova et al. (2017) and Mathers and Stern (2012) discovered that a social element was sometimes preferred over silence when reading in the classroom, and children responded positively to the opportunity to share their thoughts informally with peers before or after reading. Mathers and Stern (2012) extended this idea further and proposed that a ‘café culture’ be applied to classrooms to cater for children’s social and physical needs and increase reading motivation and engagement, particularly as children transition into middle and upper primary school. This approach would encourage child-led and child-owned RfPS experiences, such as book readings, Readers’ Theatre, author visits, etc. In this way, reading becomes socially accepted and children feel empowered to position themselves as ‘readers’ (Mathers & Stern, 2012).

Creating social reading environments can positively influence children’s perspectives of RfPS. Warrington and George (2014) implemented several 6–12-week multi-age peer RfPS programs across primary schools in Antigua and Barbuda. They matched Year 5 ‘tutors’ with Year 3 ‘tutees’ with the specific goal of stimulating joy and pleasure in reading (Warrington & George, 2014). Significant positive outcomes in reader confidence and increased intrinsic motivation to read, in both the ‘tutors’ and the ‘tutees’ were reported by Warrington and George (2014). While the goal of creating social environments is to promote child-centred and empowering interactions, its success is heavily reliant on classroom teachers to prioritise, implement and support, thus justifying its place within the pedagogical framework of teacher practices necessary to promote RfPS (Cremin et al., 2014).

2.5.3 Engaging in Informal Book Talk and Recommendations

The literature indicated that engaging in informal book talk and recommendations is crucial in supporting RfPS (Fletcher et al., 2012; Merga, 2016). Enthusiastically and consistently recommending books based on specific and thoughtful elements and allowing
room in the conversations for children’s input has the potential to shape children’s RfPS attitudes and practices (Merga, 2016). Fletcher et al. (2012) for example found that boys in particular responded positively to educators who knew their interests and could recommend texts that both appealed to them and encouraged them to broaden their regular repertoire. For this teacher practice to be effective, teachers should be positioned as ‘co-readers,’ that is, they should create a less rigid hierarchical relationship between teacher and student when discussing RfPS and recommending texts (Cremin & Swann, 2016). The inherent challenge within this teacher practice is that the educator needs to have a broad knowledge base of diverse books ready to discuss and recommend and identify as a ‘reader’ themselves, which may not be the case.

Cremin et al. (2014) surveyed over 1200 classroom teachers in the UK and found that over half of the participants could not name six children’s literature authors, and much of their knowledge was dominated by ‘classics’ such as those authored by Roald Dahl. This teacher practice can also be interpreted as creating environments where children engage in informal book talk and recommendations with each other. Petricevik (2019), for example, evaluated different strategies designed to encourage Year 7 children to voluntarily borrow books to read for pleasure and found that the most successful strategy was allowing children to act as the teacher librarian and provide book recommendations to their peers.

2.5.4 Acknowledging Autonomy

The concept of children’s autonomy within primary school education is broad and far-reaching, therefore only literature that explored autonomy as it relates specifically to RfPS was included in this review. Due to this filtering of literature, a definition emerged that distinguishes autonomy within RfPS from the broader concept of autonomy in education. The concept of autonomy as addressed in this research refers to children having free choice over the texts that they read during RfPS and classroom teachers explicitly teaching strategies for selecting and evaluating texts to enable greater autonomy (Cremin et al., 214; Fletcher et al., 2012; Merga, 2017; Reedy & de Carvalho, 2021). When children’s perspectives have been explored, a key theme consistently emerges of children highly valuing RfPS autonomy (Cremin et al., 2014; Merga, 2017; Reedy & de Carvalho, 2021). Reedy and de Carvahlo (2021) for example found that Year 5 children in London named autonomy as one of the most important factors influencing their RfPS practices. Fletcher et al. (2012) also reported that children expressed appreciation when class time was dedicated to modelling and discussing strategies for selecting and evaluating texts to be read for pleasure, while Merga (2017)
reported that children perceive a lack of time to explore texts and make good choices as a significant hindrance to their RfPS practices.

2.5.5 Allocating Time

The literature indicates that allocating RfPS time within Year 3-6 classrooms is a common theme for all stakeholders. This teacher practice refers to teachers allocating sufficient sustained RfPS time in their classrooms and ideally, utilising that time to read for pleasure themselves (Cremin et al., 2014). Having purposeful, regular and sustained RfPS communicates to the children that RfPS has value and contributes meaningfully to their literacy practices (Cremin et al., 2014). From the children’s point of view, Mathers and Stern (2012) reported that the issue of limited time allocation appeared as the most frequent response to justify not liking to read for pleasure at school. This is supported by Merga’s (2016) finding that 29% of respondents (children aged between 13-16) felt that ‘no one’ encouraged them to read for pleasure at school because they were not provided with dedicated time to read. Research suggests that allocating time could be considered the crucial apex under which the other teacher practices fall; without allowing children time to immerse themselves in rich texts that they have chosen and feel motivated to read, the other teacher practices do not have opportunity to take effect (Cremin et al., 2014; Merga, 2017).

Observing a teacher model RfPS can also be a powerful use of class time. Merga (2016) reported a positive correlation between teachers openly engaging in RfPS during class time and children spontaneously instigating informal book talk and recommendations with the teacher and each other. However, there are a very limited number of studies exploring teacher modelling of RfPS in middle to upper primary school classrooms.

2.5.6 Using Technology

Reading pedagogy research continues to explore the shifting technological landscape and its implications on literacy learning, such as integrating e-books and interactive applications (apps) into reading programs. Most of the literature focuses on early childhood contexts, instructional reading pedagogy or student engagement (Kucirkova & Cremin, 2018; Kucirkova et al., 2017). It is becoming clear through this growing body of research that children will increasingly engage with digital texts when reading at school, for both instructional and pleasure purposes (Burnett & Guy, 2018; Kucirkova et al., 2017). Kucirkova et al. (2017) found that integrating e-books into lower primary school reading programs resulted in highly engaged and personalised reading experiences. Furthermore,
Fletcher et al. (2012) found that digital texts could be useful in enticing reluctant readers in upper primary.

Digital texts could be meaningfully integrated into RfPS using the pedagogical framework proposed by the literature. Kucirkova et al. (2017) suggested that when promoting student RfPS engagement through digital texts the experience must be affective, shared, sustained, creative, personalised and interactive, and supported by key teacher skills and practices such as knowledge of high-quality children’s texts and positive attitudes towards RfPS. Ghalebandi & Noorhidawati (2019) added that embedding social interactions and allowing children choice of digital texts is crucial when integrating technology into RfPS. Taking into consideration the scope of this research, the literature suggests an open-ended approach to technology to be most suitable. Allowing open-endedness when defining RfPS tools and resources will allow participants to focus on the phenomenon of RfPS pedagogy itself, as befitting phenomenological research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Educators’ and children’s perspectives regarding the specific integration of technology into their pleasure reading programs would constitute its own separate phenomenological study.

The literature indicated several recommended teacher practices to effectively support RfPS in middle to upper primary school, these being reading aloud, engaging in informal book talk and recommendations, creating social environments, acknowledging autonomy, allocating time, and using technology. It is difficult to ascertain from current literature the extent to which these teacher practices are occurring in Year 3-6 classrooms. The literature also indicated that sufficient professional knowledge of these teacher practices is crucial in successfully promoting RfPS and may be lacking. Due to these themes, the following research sub-question was developed: What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school’s RfPS teacher practices in Years 3-6?

2.6 Physical Environment

The literature indicated several themes relating to the RfPS physical environment. These themes include the physical spaces available for children to read in, the desired noise level when reading, the text collections available for the children to choose from, and the extent to which children have agency over the curation of the text collections.

2.6.1 Physical Spaces

Creating a conducive physical environment is identified in the literature as a crucial element of RfPS pedagogy. Physical elements such as classroom layout, lighting, noise levels
and seating options should be considered when promoting RfPS (Kuzmicova et al., 2017; Mathers and Stern, 2012). When teachers provided a comfortable, inviting physical space filled with an enticing range of diverse reading materials, children were more willing to read for pleasure (Kuzmicova et al., 2017; Laurenson et al., 2015; Reedy & de Carvalho, 2021). This aligns with recent studies into effective classroom learning designs, which find that flexible, open spaces create communities of collaborative, engaged learners (Barrett et al., 2017; Rands & Gansemer-Topf, 2017). While Kuzmicova et al. (2017) and Mathers and Stern (2012) found that the option of quiet conversation was sometimes preferred over silence to create a social ‘café culture’, in contrast Reedy and de Carvalho (2021) indicated that children preferred a quiet reading environment.

2.6.2 Children’s Agency in Creating Text Collections

Cremin et al. (2014) and Laurenson et al. (2015) found that easy accessibility of a wide range of high-quality, diverse children’s literature may be equally as important as teacher practices. In a general sense, Bennett et al. (2018) argued that ‘multicultural literature’ and ‘culturally responsive print rich environments’ are two key facets of effective literacy pedagogy, which is further supported by Adam and Barratt-Pugh’s (2020) assertion that “improved access to quality culturally authentic children’s literature is important if the principles of diversity that lie at the heart of Australian educational policy are to be achieved” (p. 830). Diverse and inclusive literature helps children to affirm their identity, feel a sense of belonging and experience more engagement in literacy learning (Harper & Brand, 2010; Rennie, 2013). Despite compelling justification for diverse and inclusive texts in classrooms, recent studies conducted in Australian early learning settings have found predominately monocultural literature collections and teachers unsure of how to select and promote diverse texts (Adam & Barratt-Pugh, 2020; Adam et al., 2019). This is supported by Best et al.’s (2020) findings that 42% of children surveyed in the UK aged 9-11 could not relate to the characters presented in the texts they were reading. Given that RfPS pedagogy aim to promote children’s willing and positive engagement with the texts available at school, providing access to a range of diverse and inclusive texts would appear to be important.

Upon reviewing the relevant literature, children’s agency regarding RfPS can be defined as children actively participating in the decision-making process when curating the text collection available to them in the classroom or wider school environment. Barton and McKay’s (2016) Queensland secondary school case study highlighted agency as a key feature of impactful literacy learning in general. While Merga (2017) discussed ‘choice’ and ‘access’
to texts as key limitations to RfPS from middle to upper primary school children’s perspectives, the concept of participating in text collection decision-making has not been explored in recent studies. The emerging theme of the importance of accessible and engaging text collections combined with a lack of literature surrounding children’s agency in creating text collections led to the development of the research sub-question: What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS physical environments in Years 3-6?

2.7 Conclusion

The purpose of this literature review was to synthesise findings relating to RfPS in middle to upper primary school classrooms from various stakeholders’ perspectives. Reading research in Australia remains predominately focused on instructional reading pedagogy or the implications of early childhood literacy experiences. While these areas are important, the literature indicates a gap in RfPS pedagogy knowledge and resulting school practices. Educators (including school leaders) need to acknowledge the decline of RfPS as children move through primary school and move to prioritise RfPS dialogue (McGeown et al., 2015; Shoghi et al., 2013; Scholastic, 2019; Smith et al., 2012). As Merga (2017, p. 217) stated: “much more needs to be done by literacy advocates to improve children’s engagement in reading.”

The literature indicated three overarching themes regarding RfPS pedagogy in Year 3-6 classrooms: school culture, teacher practices and the physical environment. The literature reveals discrepancies regarding the impacts and interplay between leadership, classroom teachers’ and children’s perspectives of RfPS. Studies specifically exploring children’s perceptions have indicated similarly contradictory findings regarding RfPS attitudes and the impact of teacher values and pedagogy on the children’s willingness to read. There are also gaps in the literature indicating that more insight is needed into RfPS teacher practices in Year 3-6 classrooms, for example the value of children’s agency when creating text collections. These gaps and inconsistencies justify this investigation’s purposive sampling of leadership, classroom teachers and Year 3-6 children from the same school, as well as the overall research design decisions as outlined in the following chapter.
Chapter Three: Research Design

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed relevant literature pertaining to Reading for Pleasure at School (RfPS) and outlined the conceptual framework that views RfPS pedagogy, namely school culture, teacher practices and the physical environment, from leadership, classroom teachers’ and children’s perspectives. Two key themes that emerged from the review of literature were the consistent decline of RfPS in the middle to upper primary school years and the inconsistencies regarding how children and educators view RfPS. These themes informed the research design, overarching research question and three sub-questions:

Overarching research question:
• What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School pedagogy in Years 3-6?

Sub-questions:
• What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School culture in Years 3-6?
• What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School teacher practices in Years 3-6?
• What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School physical environment in Years 3-6?

To explore the research question, a qualitative phenomenological case study design was selected based on a single primary school in Perth, Western Australia. This chapter describes and justifies the research design components, including theoretical underpinnings, methodology, data collection and analysis methods, as well as ethical considerations.

3.2 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is a broad form of social inquiry that is interested in exploring meaning ascribed to the world around us (Creswell & Poth, 2018). It acknowledges subjectivity in interpretation, allows for flexibility of design, accepts the importance of context, and relies on words rather than numbers to express meaning (Cohen et al., 2018; Yin, 2018). Qualitative research can explore and attempt to understand an individual’s complex and unique perspective of a situation, therefore suiting the intention of this
investigation to investigate key stakeholders’ diverse perspectives of RfPS pedagogy at their school (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, Yin, 2018).

### 3.3 Theoretical Framework

Creswell and Creswell (2018) indicate the need for a broad research approach, or theoretical framework, that outlines the interaction between an investigation’s philosophical worldviews, design and specific methods. The overall approach is also informed by the proposed research question, the researcher’s personal experiences and beliefs, and the intended audience of the research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Figure 3.1 outlines this investigation’s theoretical framework.

**Figure 3.1**

*Theoretical Framework*

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### 3.4 Epistemology: Constructivism

Epistemology refers to a broad philosophical worldview regarding the nature of existence and how humans come to ‘know’ the world around them (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Crotty, 1998; Ryan, 2018). Constructivist epistemology stems from relativist ontology which maintains that ‘truth’ is subjective and ‘reality’ is relative, therefore aligning
appropriately with constructivist acknowledgement that social, cultural and historical factors are integral to individual experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Crotty, 1998; Ryan, 2018). Yin (2018) suggests that constructivist research is characterised by several key beliefs: multiples realities exist that are time- and context-specific, research cannot be fully separated from social, cultural and personal values, and establishing cause and effect is irrelevant. Constructivist research therefore tends to be inductive by allowing themes found in open-ended qualitative data to emerge in an organic yet structured manner (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Crotty, 1998). This research is underpinned by a relativist ontology and constructivist epistemology because it seeks to explore RiPS perspectives based on the differing experiences and realities of the stakeholders of one Western Australian primary school.

3.5 Theoretical Perspective: Interpretivism and Phenomenology

Interpretivism is a theoretical perspective which stems from a relativist ontology and constructivist epistemology (Crotty, 1998; Ryan, 2018). Interpretivism emphasises social interactions and the importance of acknowledging individual experiences (O’Donoghue, 2007; Ryan, 2018). It believes that these individual experiences, including the researcher’s, are then subjectively interpreted through one’s own cultural and historical lenses (Ryan, 2018). Interpretivism therefore does not rely on pre-existing theory nor hope to create a universal theory that can be applied to multiple contexts; instead, it seeks only to gain insight into the participants’ constructed meanings and realities (Cohen et al., 2018; Vagle, 2018). Cohen et al. (2018) argue that phenomenology is a ‘genre’ of interpretive research. Interpretivism is therefore an appropriate theoretical perspective for this research as it reflects the investigation’s intention to explore diverse perspectives through qualitative methods.

Phenomenological research is interpretivist because its primary aim is attributing meaning to human experiences (Cohen et al., 2018; Vagle, 2018). Phenomenology is distinguished by its belief that humans experience the world around them subjectively, interpret these experiences as shaped by one’s social and cultural contexts, and then actively ascribe meaning to the experiences based on this interpretation (Cohen et al., 2018; Vagle, 2018). Research underpinned by phenomenology explores, interprets and constructs meaning from shared experiences or phenomena and these shared experiences are captured and described with the intention of identifying the essence of the focus phenomena (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Eddles-Hirsch, 2015; Vagle, 2018). Finding the essence requires phenomenological reduction or epoche – a process of suspending judgment through the practice of bracketing (Cohen et al., 2018; Vagle, 2018).
3.5.1 Bracketing

Bracketing refers to researchers attempting to be cognisant of their own perceived biases and beliefs to allow the research to focus on the participants’ perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Eddles-Hirsch, 2015; Ryan, 2018; Sloan & Bowe, 2014). Bracketing is crucial in phenomenological research as the researcher needs to be open and responsive to the phenomena in question as it unfolds, without being impacted by their own judgements and prior experiences (Gaudet & Robert, 2018; Vagle, 2018). Sloan and Bowe (2014) argue that reflexivity is the antithesis of bracketing; reflexivity acknowledges and embraces researcher consciousness of the phenomena while bracketing attempts to acknowledge and then ‘set aside’ researcher consciousness. Keeping a reflective journal, however, can assist with bracketing, as it allows the researcher to bring their own experiences and preconceptions to the forefront of their thinking for interrogation (Gaudet & Robert, 2018). This research explored the phenomenon of RfPS pedagogy by collecting and analysing rich, open data from participants, while keeping a reflective journal to assist with bracketing.

3.6 Methodology: Case Study

Case studies are a qualitative methodology that align with constructivist epistemology and an interpretivist and phenomenological theoretical framework. Case studies are a detailed analysis of a case bound by time and/or context and allow the researcher to “capture the perspectives of different participants and focus on how their different meanings illuminate your topic of study” (Yin, 2018, p. 16). A case can take many forms and it can be difficult to draw a clear distinction between the case and the context in which the case exists (Cohen et al., 2018; Rozsahegyi, 2019). Case study methodology is appropriate as it not only stems from the stated theoretical underpinnings but also suits research that explores contemporary phenomena occurring in real-life settings over which the researcher has little to no control; in this case the phenomenon of RfPS pedagogy within a local primary school (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2018).

This case study is embedded single-case design (Cohen et al., 2018). The main case is clearly bound by an institutional boundary, being a single primary school setting, with the participants’ roles within that institution forming nested cases within, these being leadership, classroom teachers, and children, all of whom are currently connected to Years 3-6. This research is descriptive and instrumental in nature as it does not seek to explain the intrinsic nature of RfPS specific to the participant school, but instead focus on the phenomena of RfPS itself as it exists in a real-world setting (Cohen et al., 2018; Priya, 2021; Simons, 2009). Data
collection and analysis processes for case studies are linear but iterative and reflective, again aligning with the theoretical underpinnings and overall research design (Simons, 2009; Yin, 2018).

3.7 Data Collection Methods

The following qualitative data collection methods were employed for their suitability to respond to the research questions (Figure 3.2):

1. Semi-structured interviews.
2. Small focus groups.
3. Researcher journal.

Figure 3.2
Data Collection Methods
3.7.1 Semi-structured Interviews with Leadership and Classroom Teachers (Phase One)

Interviews are essentially social interactions focused on sharing and constructing knowledge, making them an important source of information when conducting phenomenological case study research (Cohen et al., 2018; Patnaik & Pandey, 2019; Yin, 2018). Semi-structured interviews are a useful qualitative data collection tool as they can provide greater depth of insight from the participant while remaining focused on the research questions (Winwood, 2019). Semi-structured interviews should be well-planned but flexible, with the researcher skilled in actively listening and asking neutrally probing and clarifying questions when needed (Cohen et al., 2018; Hancock & Algonzzine, 2017). Using an interview protocol (a document with pre-prepared questions and prompters) is recommended to ensure that the research questions are sufficiently addressed, and relevant rich data are obtained (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Hancock & Algonzzine, 2017; Winwood, 2019).

3.7.2 Focus Groups with Year 3-6 Children (Phase Two)

Focus groups provide a small-group interview-style method of qualitative data collection that focuses on participant interaction and requires clearly defined objectives (Barbour, 2018; Berg & Lune, 2013). Cohen et al. (2018) argue that while it is important to be mindful of the cognitive and social differences between adult and child participants when conducting focus groups, it is also crucial to view children as having agency and competency about phenomena they have direct experience with, as is the case in this research. While focus groups typically consist of six to eight participants, smaller numbers are preferable when working with children, and the children’s physical and emotional safety and wellbeing must be at the core of all considerations (Berg & Lune, 2013; Cohen et al., 2018; Morgan et al., 2002). When conducting focus groups with children for example, it is important to minimise the possible power imbalance between participants and facilitator and establish trust quickly (Cohen et al., 2018). This trust can be achieved by beginning with structured and engaging ‘ice-breaker’ activities, establishing clear ground rules for participating, using informal seating arrangements, and conducting short sessions with regular breaks (Berg & Lune, 2013; Morgan et al., 2002). The facilitator must be organised, skilled at creating rapport, and able to ask probing, clarifying, yet appropriate, questions to accurately access children’s meanings without imposing their own perceptions and ideas upon them (Berg & Lune, 2013; Morgan et al., 2002). The researcher used skills gained as a primary classroom teacher and reflective evaluation of their researcher journal to display the skills and behaviours necessary to effectively run focus groups with children.
3.7.3 Researcher Journal

Phenomenological case study research aims to construct meaningful interpretations of the participants’ experiences; therefore, it is vital that researchers attempt to capture what is happening ‘between the lines’ during interviews and focus groups by keeping observational notes of participants’ non-verbal cues and body language (Laverty, 2003). During the individual interviews and focus groups, the researcher took such notes using the hard copy interview protocol document that were then transferred into the researcher journal and analysed in conjunction with the transcripts (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Laverty, 2003). Utilising the researcher journal in this way also enhances trustworthiness through capturing a more complete picture of the participants’ responses (Elo et al., 2014). Additionally, researcher journals support the process of bracketing, as they provide contextual cues and personal critical reflections to be referenced during data analysis, rather than the researcher unintentionally applying their own interpretations and pre-existing biases to the participants’ responses (Laverty, 2003). The researcher added reflective comments before and after data collection processes to assist the bracketing process.

3.8 Sampling and Participants

Phenomenological case study research requires purposive sampling, meaning that participants are selected on the basis that they have directly experienced the phenomena in question and have diverse and rich perspectives to share, as is the case with this investigation’s participating school (Cohen et al., 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Laverty, 2003). This research uses criterion purposive sampling, as the participants also need to fall within the boundaries of the case as defined earlier by the case study methodology, that is, they are leadership, classroom teachers or children in Years 3-6 from the same primary school (Cohen et al., 2018; Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). While it can be difficult to establish the ‘right’ sample size for qualitative research, Cohen et al. (2018) recommend each nested case in a case study having no fewer than three participants. While the CT group only consisted of two participants, this represents 100% of the Year 3-6 classroom teachers at the participant school.

The participant groups of leadership, classroom teachers and Year 3-6 children were selected from the participant school. The participant school willingly collaborated with the University of Notre Dame Australia School of Education research team, thereby establishing a sense of trust and safety, and allowing access to a range of participants who have direct yet diverse experiences with RfPS (Laverty, 2003). Participants’ basic demographic information
as relevant to the investigation has been disclosed to increase the dependability of the research (Elo et al., 2014).

### 3.8.1 Participant School

This research comprised participants from a small co-educational, independent community primary school located in the Perth metropolitan area. Independent primary schools in W.A. maintain full autonomy over their culture, policies and practices (Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia [AISWA], 2019). The participant school promotes autonomy and agency of children, connectedness to community, and individualised ‘whole-child’ values-based education (School website, 2021). The School Council as a governing body reflects their strong philosophy of community support and collaboration, and is responsible for the school’s strategic direction, staffing, and ensuring the school adheres to relevant legislation (School website, 2021).

The school’s total enrolment number is 90 children from Pre-Kindergarten to Year 6; due to this small population it has split classes with a teacher-to-child ratio of one to fifteen, allowing children to have the same teacher for two years in a row (School website, 2021). The school has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) of 1168, indicating that it has a higher-than-average level of educational advantage based on various school and community factors such as geographical location, and parents/caregivers’ education and occupations, and approximately 20% of the children identify as having a language background other than English (MySchool, 2021). For this research, the participating classroom teachers and children come from the two split classes of Year 3/4 and Year 5/6.

### 3.8.2 Individual Participants

There were three sets of participants across two phases of data collection (Table 3.1 Participants). All 19 participants were connected to children in Years 3-6 at the participant school as the literature clearly indicates that middle to upper primary school is when RfPS begins to decline. Phase One consisted of individual semi-structured interviews with the first two sets of participants: three adults from the leadership team (LT) and two classroom teachers (CT). LT participants consisted of the school principal and two School Council members, and the CT participants were the Year 3/4 teacher and the Year 5/6 teacher, both full-time and long-standing staff members. Phase Two consisted of small focus groups with the third set of participants: children currently in Years 3-6 at the participant school. All
children in Years 3-6 (approximately 48 children) were invited to participate in the focus groups and 14 children consented and took part. Three focus groups were conducted comprised five children from Year 6, five children from Year 5, three children from Year 3 and one child from Year 4.

Table 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Phase One: Individual semi-structured interviews</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership team</td>
<td>No. of participants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Council member</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3/4 teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5/6 teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase Two: Focus groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6 children</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5 children</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4 children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3 children</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total participants</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.9 Ethical Considerations

This research complied with all required ethical processes and considerations, including obtaining full human research ethical clearance, showing respect for people’s rights and dignity, and obtaining informed consent from all participants. A full risk application was made to the School Research Committee. This application then proceeded to the UNDA’s Human Research Ethics Committee, being granted Unconditional approval prior to commencing. This investigation considered issues of privacy, anonymity and confidentiality to show respect for people’s rights and dignity. All participants were given an overview of the research procedures and assurances of confidentiality. Participants have not been identified and are referred to on transcripts using pseudonyms that refer only to their school position or year level (for example, ‘LT1’ for leadership, ‘CT1’ for classroom teacher and ‘Year 6 Child’ for a child in Year 6.)

Informed written and verbal consent was obtained from all participants, including parents/caregivers of minors (Appendix 4). Simplified language was used when explaining focus group information to minors to ensure they understood their right to withdraw at any time. All participants were provided with detailed information sheets and explicitly informed
that their participation in this research was voluntary, and that they were free to withdraw at any time prior to publication without negative consequences (Appendix 3).

3.10 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness refers to the quality and rigour of qualitative research at all stages of the research process: research design, data collection, analysis and reporting of findings (Cohen et al., 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Elo et al., 2014). Establishing trustworthiness within qualitative research is especially crucial given that its theoretical underpinnings acknowledge the existence of multiple subjective realities, including the researcher’s own experience of the world (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2018). To ensure trustworthiness, this research considered the four elements as proposed by Lincoln and Guber (1985): credibility, transferability, confirmability and dependability.

3.10.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to how confident one can be in the investigation’s findings, including the purpose of the research and how successfully the research meets that purpose (Amankwaa, 2016; Cohen et al., 2018; Elo et al., 2014). At the research design phase, the researcher selected data collection tools that were both varied and most appropriate to qualitative phenomenological research, that is, collecting unstructured and open data from multiple participants to allow for data and method triangulation (Amankwaa, 2016; Cohen et al., 2018; Elo et al., 2014). Credibility was also enhanced by pilot-testing the interview questions with educator colleagues and pilot-testing the focus group questions with children of relevant ages familiar to the researcher. These pilot tests allowed the researcher to reflect and implement any necessary changes before collecting data. The data collected during the pilot tests were not included during data analysis.

Member-checking is an important process for establishing credibility in qualitative research as it allows participants to provide feedback on their own representation within the data (Amankwaa, 2016; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Elo et al., 2014; Yin, 2018). This research provided adult participants with their transcripts via email and child participants with a written summary of their focus group discussion in child-appropriate language. All participants were encouraged to provide feedback to the researcher and confirm the data’s accuracy in representing their perspectives of RfPS. An executive summary was also provided to the participant school which outlined the findings and themes in a concise way at the conclusion of data analysis (Elo et al., 2014).
3.10.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which findings may be applicable or generalised to other situations (Amankwaa, 2016; Elo et al., 2016). Amankwaa (2016) argues that it is the researcher’s responsibility to provide sufficient and detailed information to allow for accurate evaluation of the investigation’s transferability to be determined. Transferability is a limitation of this research given that it is a case study focusing on one small independent primary school. This research includes full, rich descriptions of the research design, sampling, participants, data collection and analysis processes to mitigate this limitation.

3.10.3 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the degree of neutrality that exists within research and its findings (Amankwaa, 2016; Cohen et al., 2018; Elo et al., 2014). Along with member-checking and triangulation as discussed in Section 3.10.1, confirmability can be enhanced using audit trails, Inter-Coder Agreement (ICA), reflexivity, and verbatim quotes from participants (Amankwaa, 2016, Cohen et al., 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Elo et al., 2014, Guest et al., 2012). The ICA process allows for the codes that were attributed to data during data analysis to be evaluated as objectively as possible by someone other than the researcher (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Guest et al., 2012) ICA was applied to a small selection of transcripts from both phases of data analysis to enhance reliability, confirmability and face validity of data analysis using university colleagues and supervisors (Elo at al., 2014; Guest et al., 2012).

A physical audit trail consisting of raw data, memos and reflective researcher journaling was developed as data were continually revisited and reduced, enhancing confirmability of the results through saturation and bracketing of potential researcher bias (Cohen et al., 2018; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Elo et al., 2014; Guest et al., 2012; Nowell et al., 2017). The researcher journal also assisted in data triangulation, which was already established through multiple data collection methods (Amankwaa, 2016; Cohen et al., 2018; Guest et al., 2012; Sloan & Bowe, 2014; Yin, 2018). Regular consultation with university colleagues and supervisors throughout data collection and analysis also improved this investigation’s credibility, that is, its ability to report the process accurately (Amankwaa, 2016; Cohen et al., 2018; Elo et al., 2014; Guest et al., 2012). A minimum of one verbatim quote from a participant was included in each theme when discussing findings in Chapter Four to further enhance the confirmability of the research.
3.10.4 Dependability

Dependability refers to the stability of the data when reviewed from an external or investigative position (Amankwaa, 2016; Cohen et al., 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Elo et al., 2014). The researcher’s reflective journal and physical audit trail (including key decisions made during the research) increase the investigation’s dependability. The data collection and analysis methods remained stable throughout this research and are clearly described to ensure that the processes could be replicated by another researcher (Amankwaa, 2016; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Elo et al., 2014).

3.11 Data Collection and Analysis

3.11.1 Gathering of Data

Prior to collecting interview and focus group data, the researcher engaged in reflective journaling to identify personal experiences and biases that could potentially influence the data collection phase to assist with bracketing (Gaudet & Robert, 2018; Vagle, 2018). The researcher conducted and audio-recorded one-on-one semi-structured interviews with the stakeholders using a hard copy interview protocol to ensure the interview stayed focused (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Laverty, 2003). Interview were structured to begin with informal ice-breaker questions to build rapport, followed by a brief overview of this investigation’s key terminology and concepts. Several open-ended questions were asked, along with a range of probing sub-questions as needed, such as those presented in Appendix 1, to provoke rich, experiential responses (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The data were inductively and thematically analysed, with the resulting themes then presented to the children’s focus groups for discussion (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Crotty, 1998).

The researcher conducted and audio-recorded three focus groups consisting of four to five children of similar age (that is, a Year 6 group, a Year 5 group and a Year 3/4 group). The focus groups took place in the Early Childhood room on the university campus outside of the university’s regular semester timetable to provide a relaxed and inviting setting. Three children from the Year 3/4 group requested that their parent/caregiver be present during the focus group to increase their sense of comfort and ease. Each focus group included a 20-30 minute talking session (5-10 minutes for creating rapport and 15-25 minutes for semi-structured discussion) followed by the option of free writing and/or free drawing to clarify and draw out further meaning if the child chose to do so (see Appendix 2) (Berg & Lune, 2013; Cohen et al., 2018; Morgan et al., 2002). None of the 14 children chose to write or draw any further ideas. The focus groups explored children’s perspectives of their school’s
RfPS pedagogy based on the themes that emerged from analysis of the leadership and classroom teacher interviews (Berg & Lune, 2013). To allow the researcher to focus on maintaining a sensitive and appropriate environment for the children, a second researcher acted as technical assistant, assisting with recording devices and organising resources (Berg & Lune, 2013; Morgan et al., 2002).

3.11.2 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is a flexible data analysis approach appropriate to many qualitative research designs; it seeks to find themes, that is, recurring patterns of responses or meanings that are relevant to the research question and appear across data sets (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). As this research stems from a constructivist, interpretivist and phenomenological framework, its underpinnings acknowledge that individual perspectives are embedded in sociocultural and structural factors and therefore data analysis takes the form of latent thematic analysis, looking to interpret what is ‘underneath’ the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Nowell et al., 2017). It is important to note that despite being inductive in nature, thematic analysis relies on active interpretation from the researcher and requires that researchers are constantly interacting with the data set by asking questions and making comparisons (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). These interactions align with the theoretical underpinnings of the research, and processes were implemented to ensure trustworthiness, as discussed above.

Thematic analysis is an iterative process that begins during data collection and requires ongoing reflection and consideration as the researcher moves back and forth between coding, analysing and writing, or as Corbin and Strauss (2008) stated; “thinking is the heart and soul of doing qualitative analysis” (p. 5). While adhering to the general principles of data analysis outlined in Figure 3.3, the process of thematic analysis also comprised a combination of Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six steps and Corbin and Strauss’s (2008) general guidelines, that include; thoroughly familiarising oneself with the data, performing open and axial coding, constantly creating memos, and searching for and refining themes before producing the final written discussion (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Nowell et al., 2017).
Conducting qualitative research results in large amounts of information being collected and therefore needing to be systematically organised. Data condensation refers to selecting and arranging data to allow for themes to inductively emerge (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Guest et al., 2012). It is during this process of data condensation that the researcher thoroughly familiarised herself with the data and engaged in open and axial coding, created ongoing memos and searched for more and more highly refined themes to emerge (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Nowell et al., 2017). The researcher promptly transcribed recordings after data were collected and read them in full as hard copy documents, alongside the corresponding researcher journal entries. As data were repeatedly read, initial codes were generated through colour-coding key words and phrases on transcripts and transferring codes to new pieces of paper with supporting extracts recorded underneath (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017). Some merging and separating of codes also emerged as themes evolved across data sets (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Nowell et al., 2017) (Table 3.2). Throughout this process the researcher created hard copy memos as informal written products of the analysis process, and occasionally created informal diagrams to explore possible relationships between codes (axial
and determine whether conceptual saturation had been reached (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Table 3.2
An Example of the Coding Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Raw data from transcript</th>
<th>Initial code</th>
<th>Refined code/s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...I would like a larger room, with a couch...that would be terrific to have that, and you know little reading corners...</td>
<td>Physical environment</td>
<td>Physical limitations of the school site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...it doesn’t feel like something that has to be structured into the day because otherwise you’re not going to do it...</td>
<td>Whole-school RfPS culture</td>
<td>Allocating dedicated class time to RfPS vs RfPS occurring spontaneously during class time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...If one child recommends a book, then we're likely to buy that for the school library as well...</td>
<td>Text collections</td>
<td>Children’s agency in creating text collections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the initial coding process was completed, the researcher reviewed themes following a two-step process as recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006). Firstly, all coded data extracts were re-read in full to ensure that each theme presented a cohesive and accurate representation of the data extracts within it; if not the researcher re-evaluated the data extract and the theme by asking questions and making comparisons to determine which extract was problematic (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Then, the themes were reviewed in relation to the data set as a whole to evaluate the extent to which they effectively reflected the ‘big picture’ (Braun & Clarke, 2006). At this stage the researcher re-visited their reflective journal to interrogate any potential influence from personal experiences and pre-conceptions. This process occurred several times before the thematic map satisfactorily represented the data set and themes could be refined and defined.

Data were displayed through written thematic descriptions, adhering to phenomenological principles, case study methodology and thematic analysis processes (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Guest et al., 2012). The rich thematic descriptions consist of compelling verbatim extracts to increase this investigation’s credibility and an analysis of the themes to represent the interpreted essence of the phenomenon (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Elo et al., 2014; Guest et al., 2012). These thematic descriptions appear in Chapter Four: Presentation of Research Results and Chapter Five: Discussion.
Verifications and conclusions were drawn to finalise the data analysis process. As thematic analysis occurs continuously and simultaneously to data collection, conceptual saturation was able to occur, that is, sufficient data were collected to create full and rich descriptions of the themes and therefore relevant conclusions were able to be drawn (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The data analysis process was cross-referenced with Braun and Clarke’s (2006) 15-point checklist of criteria for good thematic analysis (Table 3.3). All findings were also examined considering the literature reviewed and presented in Chapter Five: Discussion.

### Table 3.3

**Braun and Clarke’s (2006) 15-point Checklist of Criteria for Good Thematic Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transcription</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The data have been transcribed to an appropriate level of detail, and the transcripts have been checked against the tapes for ‘accuracy’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coding</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Each data item has been given equal attention in the coding process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Themes have not been generated from a few vivid examples (an anecdotal approach), but instead the coding process has been thorough, inclusive and comprehensive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>All relevant extracts for each theme have been collated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Themes have been checked against each other and back to the original data set.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Themes are internally coherent, consistent, and distinctive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Data have been analysed – interpreted, made sense of – rather than just paraphrased or described.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Analysis and data match each other – the extracts illustrate the analytic claims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Analysis tells a convincing and well-organized story about the data and topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>A good balance between analytic narrative and illustrative extracts is provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Enough time has been allocated to complete all phases of the analysis adequately, without rushing a phase or giving it a once-over-lightly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written report</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>The assumptions about, and specific approach to, thematic analysis are clearly explicated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>There is a good fit between what you claim you do, and what you show you have done – ie, described method and reported analysis are consistent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>The language and concepts used in the report are consistent with the epistemological position of the analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>The researcher is positioned as active in the research process; themes do not just ‘emerge’.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.12 Conclusion

This research was designed as a qualitative phenomenological case study to explore key stakeholders’ perspectives of their school’s RfPS pedagogy. This research is underpinned by a relativist ontology, constructivist epistemology and interpretive phenomenological theory. It is a single-case design that collected data from three key stakeholder groups (leadership team, classroom teachers and children in Years 3-6) through semi-structured interviews, focus groups and researcher journal. Data were analysed thematically, and findings reported through rich textural thematic descriptions. The following chapter will present the research findings, organised thematically based on the inductive data analysis process.
Chapter Four: Presentation of Research Results

4.1 Introduction

This chapter’s purpose is to present the results from the instrumental case study that explored leadership, classroom teachers’ and Years 3-6 children’s perspectives of their school’s Reading for Pleasure at School (RfPS) pedagogies. The data were gathered in two phases and both phases included researcher field notes. Phase One consisted of five one-on-one semi-structured interviews, three with leadership and two with classroom teachers, while Phase Two consisted of three focus groups with 14 children from Years 3-6 (see Table 4.1 Participant Pseudonyms). All participants were drawn from the same small independent community primary school in metropolitan Perth.

Table 4.1
Participant Pseudonyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase of data collection</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Pseudonym/s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase One: Individual semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>Principal and board members (n=3)</td>
<td>LT1, LT2, LT3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 3-6 classroom teachers (n=2)</td>
<td>CT1, CT2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase Two: Focus groups</td>
<td>Year 6 children (n=5)</td>
<td>Year 6 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 5 children (n=5)</td>
<td>Year 5 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 4 children (n=1)</td>
<td>Year 4 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 3 children (n=3)</td>
<td>Year 3 Child</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results are initially organised into two sections based on the data collection phase, and then each section is divided again into three subsections based on the specific iterations of the overarching research question:

- What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School pedagogy in Years 3-6?

Sub-questions:
- What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School culture in Years 3-6?
- What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School teacher practices in Years 3-6?
What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School physical environment in Years 3-6?

4.2 Phase One Results: One-on-one Semi-structured Interviews with Leadership and Classroom Teachers

This section presents the perspectives of three leadership team members and two classroom teachers at the participant primary school. The following sub-sections outline the key findings from Phase One, organised firstly into the research sub-questions relating to RfPS culture, teacher practices, and physical environment, and then thematically according to the themes that emerged during data analysis.

4.2.1 What are the Perspectives of Leadership and Classroom Teachers Regarding their School's Reading for Pleasure at School Culture in Years 3-6?

This section will outline the findings pertaining to the leadership and classroom teachers’ perspectives of their school’s RfPS culture. An overview of the themes that emerged which relate to RfPS culture are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. What are the perspectives of leadership and classroom teachers regarding their school’s Reading for Pleasure at School culture in Years 3-6?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes that emerged</th>
<th>Participant interview example of evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive impact of home support</td>
<td>...they’re getting a lot of support from home... (CT1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...our parent population would highly value reading...(LT1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive impact of early years’ RfPS</td>
<td>...I think it’s really valued down in the lower years...(CT2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...there’s such a cohesive school culture that is built up from when the children are quite young that makes reading for and with pleasure an essential part of the children’s experience...(LT3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RfPS as supported and valued by the whole school</td>
<td>...we all just encourage it. It’s really important...(CT1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...when the school philosophy as a whole values pleasure for learning, then it’s harder to extricate...(LT3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...we have a culture where can see the value of reading and encouraging kids to read so we really do promote it, very much so...(CT1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive impact of local community</td>
<td>...we do have the children’s literacy program down at [local place] and they just love it...(CT1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...kids love that [workshops and local literature centre] because they meet authors and illustrators, that’s very inspiring for them. (LT1)</td>
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</table>
4.2.1.1 Positive Impact of Home Support. All (5) Phase One participants spoke of the perceived positive impact that home support has on their school’s RfPS culture. Four out of the five participants spoke of tangible home support in the form of families providing children with books to bring to school to read for pleasure. Three participants also spoke of a belief that parents would either read for pleasure themselves and/or actively encourage their children to continue to read for pleasure as they moved through primary school. LT2, for example, stated “we probably have a lot of parents who would read for pleasure, so they’d be modelling that.” CT1 commented that “the culture we have at school is very much at home as well, it’s actually developed at home.” Three of the participants felt there was a positive and collaborative relationship between the home and the school that contributed to a positive reading culture. LT3 noted that “there’s a strong level of participating in the school…there’s consistent dialogue that makes it quite a contextual practice…that’s the culture that builds because of that participation.”
4.2.1.2 Positive Impact of Early Years’ RfPS. Despite there not being a direct interview question pertaining to early years’ RfPS, most (4) participants indicated that their school’s positive RfPS culture was a continuation of positive reading experiences that children had in their early years at the school. CT1 for example stated that “by the time they get to me, they love reading. They just develop this love of reading.” LT2 spoke of the freedom and supportive physical environment in lower primary classrooms that they felt established a culture where “books are something that we love and share and talk about.” LT1 commented repeatedly on the positive impact of early years’ RfPS on the school’s RfPS culture, noting that “there is a culture of reading for pleasure, that begins from when the children are very young.”

4.2.1.3 RfPS as Supported and Valued by the Whole School. All (5) participants attributed some of the school’s positive RfPS culture to a general sense of whole-school support and to RfPS being openly valued by leadership and classroom teachers. Two of the participants directly linked the school’s positive RfPS culture to the school’s teaching and learning philosophy, particularly its child-centred underpinnings. LT3 for example stated that “the school provides – again I’ll come back to the word culture – but just a supportive, really supportive environment for pleasure and joy to be a part of the learning everywhere.” LT2 established a relationship between the child-centred features of RfPS and the school’s tradition of holding Morning Meetings, asserting that “there’s quite a lot of scope for them to just talk about whatever’s interesting to them,” and “they have a chance to talk about it [reading] at school.”

4.2.1.4 Positive Impact of Local Community. The positive impact of the local community on the school’s RfPS culture emerged as a key theme, with all five participants commenting on the local community’s general support for RfPS. Most (4) participants specifically mentioned the proximity of two local bookshops, the local library and one local literature centre. Three participants also spoke of local authors/illustrators collaborating with the school, which they felt had a positive impact on the school’s RfPS culture. LT2, for example, commented that “having an author in [to] talk about their books…that’s always been really inspiring to the kids.” LT3 stated that the relationship with the local library “perhaps peters out a little bit” in Years 3-6.
4.2.1.5 Trusting Relationships and Positive Collaboration between Leadership and Classroom Teachers. Of the two classroom teachers interviewed, both expressed a sense of support and encouragement from leadership that fostered a positive school RfPS culture. CT1 stated that leadership “encourages all the teachers to get the kids reading” and CT2 said leadership was “very supportive” of classroom teachers using their budgets to purchase new books. Two of the three leadership team participants spoke of the school’s leadership explicitly supporting the school’s RfPS culture. LT2 commented that leadership “very clearly” supported RfPS in Years 3-6 classrooms, while LT3 stated that “there’s a very collaborative and trusting relationship between the coordinator [principal], the teachers…I think that it certainly is something that is important to the leadership in the school time but at the same time it remains important to the teachers.”

4.2.1.6 Positive Perceptions of Children’s Attitudes. Most participants believed that the children in Year 3-6 enjoyed RfPS and held positive attitudes towards the practice, with three participants explicitly expressing this perception. CT1 reported that they were “really shocked at how enthusiastic they were about reading for pleasure…even the kids who are a little bit reluctant,” and CT2 stated “I think the kids love it.” CT1 also reflected that this positive RfPS attitude had changed over time, with more children having a positive attitude now compared to 20-25 years ago at the same school. One of the three leadership participants explicitly expressed a belief that the Year 3-6 children held positive attitudes towards RfPS.

4.2.1.7 Positive Personal Valuing of RfPS. Positive personal valuing of RfPS emerged as a key theme, as expressed by four of the five participants. Four participants spoke positively of engaging in RfP personally, with supporting comments such as “Most of the time I read for pleasure when I’m on holidays…I like crime book, mysteries…that’s what I tend to read” (CT1), “I seem to be reading a lot of memoir at the moment…I’ll devour a book in an afternoon” (LT2) and ‘I find pleasure in that [just reading]…personally I place a lot of emphasis on reading for pleasure,”’ (LT1). Two of the five participants also explicitly acknowledged personally valuing RfPS in the middle to upper school. LT2 stated, “I think it is a bit of a critical stage, for them to get that [reading] bug,” and CT1 commented, “I really do encourage it [reading in Year 3-6].”
4.2.1.8 Perceived Benefits of RfPS. Two themes emerged within the perceived benefits of RfPS: literacy-related benefits and personal benefits. Both classroom teachers felt that RfPS led to literacy-related benefits for the children. CT1, for example, commented on perceived benefits in writing, reading comprehension scores and spelling, stating that RfPS had a “really good flow-on effect in other areas of literacy.” Two of the five participants felt that RfPS resulted in personal benefits such as calming down after play time and developing empathy, perseverance, and greater knowledge of the world. LT1 stated that RfPS is “such a great way for them to learn about the world without having to experience it themselves.”

4.2.1.9 Lack of RfPS Acknowledgement in Broader Education Contexts. A lack of RfPS conversation in the broader education community emerged as a theme within the leadership team group, with two of the three leadership participants expressing a strong belief that conversations about RfPS are not currently prioritised in broader education contexts. These two LTs attributed this lack of RfPS focus to some extent to the current focus in literacy education on phonics and instructional reading pedagogies. LT1 commented that they “felt like other things have overtaken it, maybe that’s based around NAPLAN and then you want to give the phonics tests to the Year 1s and that tends to be what you keep hearing about.” LT3 stated that “your interpretation of the curriculum is also often driven by all the other ‘wars’ that are going on on the side…and that’s political.” One of the leadership participants felt that RfPS used to feel important when they were starting in education, but that it “seems to have lost some emphasis along the way.”

4.2.2 What are the Perspectives of Key Leadership and Classroom Teachers Regarding their School’s Reading for Pleasure at School Teacher Practices in Years 3-6? This section will outline the findings pertaining to the leadership and classroom teachers’ perspectives of their school’s RfPS teacher practices. An overview of the themes that emerged which relate to RfPS teacher behaviours are presented in Table 4.3.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes that emerged</th>
<th>Participant interview example of evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading aloud as a key teacher practice</td>
<td>...I read to the kids quite a bit...(CT1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...it would more be a situation where a teacher might read a novel aloud...(LT3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal book talk and recommendations with children as</td>
<td>...I try and encourage them to move on, to a different type of novel or genre...(CT2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a key teacher practice</td>
<td>...I might ask them what they’re reading, what they like about it...(LT1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing children to exercise choice over texts</td>
<td>...the kids can actually have that choice to read what they like to read, and they’re encouraged to do that...(CT1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...the very fact that you’re being told that you have to do this now...I think that’s different to [RfPS]...(LT2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocating dedicated class time to RfPS vs RfPS occurring spontaneously during class time</td>
<td>...when we do have spots we do have regular quiet reading, like after lunch, 20 minutes, half an hour...(CT1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...it doesn’t feel like something that has to be structured into the day because otherwise you’re not going to do it...(LT3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited use of technology</td>
<td>...I don’t often use technology to encourage reading for pleasure...(CT2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...do we need more digital books?...I haven’t done that because I think it sounds hard...(LT3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived limitations to effective teacher practices:</td>
<td>...the only thing that really hinders us I suppose is meeting all the areas of the curriculum...(CT1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time, curriculum and knowledge of texts</td>
<td>...I feel like it’s a time issue...the way they are expecting you to fit in different learning areas...(L1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overlap or inconsistency between RfPS and instructional</td>
<td>...there’s been a reading journal used at home...that has actually discouraged reading...(LT2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reading practices</td>
<td>...they chorus read around, and then they talk about the text, and we do a reading strategy...(CT2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**4.2.2.1 Reading Aloud.** Most (4) Phase One participants perceived the teacher practice of reading aloud for pleasure to be happening regularly in the Year 3-6 classrooms. Two of these four participants expressed uncertainty about whether the reading aloud practice was occurring regularly in Year 5-6. LT3 for example stated that “[reading aloud] continues into Year 2 and 3 and 4, not so much in the 5/6 I think, but the 3/4 the teacher was reading chapter novels aloud to the children,” while LT2 commented, “I’m not sure about in the 5/6,
but definitely at the 3/4 stage there’s still reading aloud going on in the classroom, and that’s always very inspiring.” CT1 spoke of reading aloud to children regularly, listing preferred authors such as Paul Jennings and Gary Crew: “I’ve read quite a few of [their] books to the kids.”

4.2.2.2 Informal Book Talk and Recommendations with Children as a Key Teacher Practice. Engaging in informal or unplanned conversations and recommendations with children emerged as a valued teacher practice to promote RfPS, both in the classroom and in the wider school environment, with four of the five participants indicating they either engaged in or observed this practice regularly. Participant responses that contributed to this theme included: “It’s the conversations about them reading, having those conversations is really cool” (CT2) and “it’s really important as a teacher to try and keep suggesting – have you tried this one, have you tried that one, because finding the right author, book that you’re interested in, just kicks you along a bit” (LT1). LT2 commented that “the teachers need to know what the kids are reading and be interested…discussing books with kids”, while CT1 felt that “just talking to the kids about their books and what they’re reading, I think that’s really, really good”.

4.2.2.3 Allowing Children to Exercise Choice over Texts. Most (4) Phase One participants believed that children exercised some choice over the texts they read for pleasure at school. CT2 for example, spoke of children reading “whatever literature they want to access,”, while LT2 commented that “the children do have choice in what they’re reading.” One of these four participants (CT1) indicated that sometimes choice should not be provided: “some days you can read a novel, other days are free reading days.” A potential limitation to allowing the Year 5/6 children free choice was identified by two participants, given that these children may be choosing texts with more mature or complex themes and content and most of their texts were brought in from home. These two participants stated that monitoring the appropriateness of Year 5/6 chosen texts when RfPS can be challenging; LT1 stated “they’re at that level, that maturity level where they want to be reading something more complex and maybe with slightly more ‘young adult’ themes, but they do still need that guidance.”

4.2.2.4 Allocating Dedicated Class Time to RfPS vs RfPS Occurring Spontaneously During Class Time. All (5) Phase One participants indicated that allocating dedicated class time to RfPS was both important and happening with some regularity in the
Year 3-6 classrooms. Three participants suggested that RfPS was embedded organically into both class and play time. Participant responses that contributed to this theme included: “We’ve always had a timeslot for reading for pleasure… it’s probably more like two or three [times a week]” (LT1); “I know they also have timetabled silent reading sessions, which I think are just – read your book” (LT2); “when they finish their work, reading for pleasure as well, I try to encourage that” (CT1); and “you can’t have reading for pleasure if you don’t make the time for it” (LT3).

4.2.2.5 Limited Use of Technology. A theme that emerged relating to technology was that while its potential benefits were acknowledged, it was not currently being used in the Year 3-6 classrooms to promote RfPS. Three of the five participants identified potential benefits of using technology as “it does allow more access to different reading material which is good” (CT1), “it’s been really freeing [using C-pens] for them to be able to operate independently” (CT2), and “maybe they’ve [guest authors] gotten more creative about it because we had to do more things online” (LT1). The same three participants indicated that they are not currently using technology to support RfPS: “the battery doesn’t die on you” (LT1), “I think the management’s a little bit tricky sometimes” (CT1), and “No, I don’t use it [technology] for reading for pleasure” (CT2).

4.2.2.6 Perceived Limitations to Effective Teacher Practices: Time, Curriculum and Knowledge of Texts. Most (4) Phase One participants expressed perceived limitations to effectively implementing RfPS teacher practices; these limitations included time and curriculum pressures, and insufficient knowledge of children’s texts. Of these four participants, three spoke of time and curriculum pressures impacting on teacher practices, and two indicated teacher knowledge of texts as a limitation. Participant responses that contributed to this theme included: “I can’t! [stay on top of new literature]…finding the time again, to get out to [teacher resource store]…it’s just very hard” (CT1); “I’m not as up to date on the most recent books as I was…I do think it’s an issue for primary schools because of their time commitments because of how the curriculum – what it’s become over the last 20 years” (LT1); and “there are certain formalities in the curriculum…that might bring a bit more pressure to the Year 3/4 and 5/6 classes” (LT3).
4.2.2.7 Overlap or Inconsistency between RfPS and Instructional Reading Practices. All (5) participants’ responses indicated an overlap or inconsistency between RfPS and instructional or home reading practices. When discussing teacher practices, CT1 for example, referred to Four Roles of the Reader, reading for research purposes, encouraging home reading, and conducting whole-class novel studies, while CT2 spoke of using levelled or decodable readers for ‘Book Club’, teaching reading strategies, and implementing structured and commercially produced home reading journals. For one of the CTs, these instructional reading practices were balanced with RfPS pedagogies, for the other they underpinned most of their pedagogical comments. All (3) leadership participants spoke explicitly about the perceived fine line between RfPS and instructional reading: “sometimes it [reading aloud] may be linked with - so they might read it, [teacher] might read it to them, and then they read it again to do the work later” (LT1), while LT3 stated that “I find that [home reading] quite hard to separate…were there moments when it wasn’t pleasure – yes. But also, in some ways there was pleasure, so it’s complicated.”

4.2.3 What are the Perspectives of Leadership and Classroom Teachers Regarding their School’s Reading for Pleasure at School Physical Environment in Years 3-6?

This section will outline the findings pertaining to the leadership and classroom teachers’ perspectives of their school’s RfPS physical environment. An overview of the themes that emerged which relate to RfPS physical environment are presented in Table 4.4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes that emerged</th>
<th>Participant interview example of evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quantity and diversity of text collections at school</td>
<td>...I try and mix it up a little bit with series, authors, yeah, non-fiction, factual books ...(CT1) ...they definitely have a lot of books, so we’ve got a lot of resources and that’s really important...(LT1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children having access to the text collections</td>
<td>...and they have access to it all...(CT2) ...if you’re a reading kind of kid, they’ve always got access...(LT2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children influencing the text collection choices</td>
<td>...the way I do it is ask the kids, I say, what books do you like?...(CT1) ...you’ll obviously walk into the Year 3/4 and the selection of the books that are there reflect the interests of those age groups, and they also change, so they might reflect the interests of the children who are there now...(LT3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Themes that emerged | Participant interview example of evidence
--- | ---
Providing comfortable spaces for reading | …we’ve got couches, we’ve got mats on the floor…(CT2)
 | …I imagine a cosy nook…every class does have something like that…(LT1)
Physical limitations of the school site | …I would like a larger room, with a couch…that would be terrific to have that, and you know little reading corners…(CT1)
 | …it is a small school and that has its challenges in terms of space too, there’s no dedicated library…(LT3)
Expected noise levels: quiet/silent | …I won’t let them talk, not at that point…(CT2)
 | …they’d [classroom teachers] like to timetable it so it’s kind of a quiet time in your area, or if you’ve got a class next to you that’s doing quiet reading time…(LT1)

4.2.3.1 Quantity and Diversity of Text Collections at School. The quality and diversity of text collections at school emerged as a strong theme, with all (5) Phase One participants commenting on this aspect of RfPS pedagogy. All (5) participants expressed a belief that the text collections in the Year 3-6 classrooms were sufficiently stocked in terms of quantity and diversity of texts. Some participant responses that contributed to this theme included: “you only have to look at my library, it’s extensive and there’s all different types of texts within it,” (CT2); “it [the text collection] seems quite broad…having a range of themes and ideas,” (LT2); and “those [graphic novels] are available to make a choice to read, and so I think that variety [is important] as well” (LT3).

4.2.3.2 Children Having Access to the Text Collections. All (5) Phase One participants commented on the importance of providing easy access to text collections. CT1 stated that “we’ve got access to books everywhere,” while CT2 said “they have access to all the texts in the class.” All (3) leadership participants also made statements contributing to this theme, including “each class has their own class library, so we do have really good access to books – they’re just right there,” (LT1) and “there are books everywhere, in the school” (LT3).

4.2.3.3 Children Influencing the Text Collection Choices. Another theme that emerged relating to the school’s RfPS physical environment was the perceived influence that children had over the curation of texts available in the school and classrooms, with four of the five participants commenting on this belief. Participants statements that contributed to this
theme included: “I know the teachers upgrade them [text collections] and they also ask the kids what they’re enjoying so some of it will be input from the kids,” (LT1); “the next year there might be different set of books that are available there,” (LT3); and “there’ll be a book or a series that they all want to read [within the books on offer]” (LT2).

4.2.3.4 Providing Comfortable Spaces for Reading. Most (4) Phase One participants felt that providing a comfortable reading space was an important feature of the physical environment when promoting RfPS. The most mentioned features of a comfortable reading space were beanbags, cushions and couches. LT2 elaborated: “I don’t think they want to sit at their desk and read, so to be able to sit on a couch or lie on a cushion.” Other participant responses that reflected this theme included: “when the bean bags were there, there were kids just flopped down on the floor, always, and that was always the prime spot for quiet reading,” (CT1) and “they do lie all over the place” (CT2).

4.2.3.5 Physical Limitations of the School Site. The physical limitations of the school site, such as limited space for larger text collections or comfortable reading spaces, and the lack of a dedicated school library, emerged as a theme during the data analysis process. Most (4) participants commented on this aspect of the school’s RfPS physical environment, with statements such as: “I’d like to have more reading areas,” (CT1) and “it [quantity of texts]’s not a huge number because space is always a thing…we don’t have a teacher-librarian,” (LT2). LT1 commented that “I’d love a quiet reading space that you can just go to, but we don’t have that because we don’t have enough classrooms…it would be kind of nice to have one [space] that was, you more, more for all ages.”

4.2.3.6 Expected Noise Levels: Quiet/Silent. Most (4) participants commented that during allocated RfPS time in the classroom, the children would read quietly or silently. CT1 for example stated, “I do insist on quiet, you can’t talk to your mates” and CT2 referred to “quiet reading after lunch.” Two of the three leadership participants also referred to RfPS as “silent reading” several times.

4.3 Phase Two Results: Small Focus Groups with Year 3-6 Children

This section presents the perspectives of 14 participants within the Year 3-6 focus groups. Three focus groups were conducted; Focus Group 1 consisted of four children from Years 3-4, Focus Group 2 consisted of five children from Year 5 and Focus Group 3
The following sub-sections outline the key findings from Phase Two, organised firstly in response to the research sub-questions relating to RfPS culture, teacher practices, and physical environment, and then thematically according to the themes that emerged during data analysis.

4.3.1 **What are the Perspectives of Year 3-6 Children Regarding their School’s Reading for Pleasure at School Culture in Years 3-6?**

This section will outline the findings pertaining to the Year 3-6 children’s perspectives of their school’s RfPS culture. An overview of the themes that emerged which relate to RfPS culture are presented in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes that emerged</th>
<th>Participant interview example of evidence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited but positive impact of whole-school and local community</td>
<td>...I wish we could go to the library... Year 6 Child</td>
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<td></td>
<td>...I really like it [visiting local authors] because it’s just really fun and they tell you about their writing and stuff... Year 5 Child</td>
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### 4.3.1.1 Limited but Positive Impact of Whole-School and Local Community

A theme emerged from two of the three focus groups relating to the children’s limited but positive perception of the whole school and local community support for their school’s RfPS culture. Key statements from the Year 5 and 6 children that supported this theme included: “I wish we could go to the library, like we used to when we were younger...cos they got like a thousand new books in the library”; “It [visiting local authors]’s really cool and [author] was really funny,”; and “It [visiting local authors] makes you very comfortable, I mean I’m personally quite comfortable with authors, especially if I read their books.” One child from Year 5 also commented on the recent occurrence of Book Day at school as an example of the whole school culture supporting RfPS. The third focus group did not produce any statements that could be attributed to the school’s RfPS culture. It is difficult to ascertain whether this is due to the absence of school RfPS culture or to the challenge these children might have in acknowledging and articulating the abstract concept of ‘culture’.
4.3.2 What are the Perspectives of Year 3-6 Children Regarding their School’s Reading for Pleasure at School Teacher Practices in Years 3-6?

This section will outline the findings pertaining to the Year 3-6 children’s perspectives of their school’s RfPS teacher practices. An overview of the themes that emerged which relate to RfPS teacher practices are presented in Table 4.6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes that emerged</th>
<th>Participant interview example of evidence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Importance of allocated time</td>
<td>...I’d really love it if we could just have half an hour after lunch every day or second day...Year 3 Child</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...like you can’t do anything else, you have to read. So, it does encourage you to actually read...Year 6 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging in informal book talk and recommendations</td>
<td>...I like to talk to my friends about books after quiet reading...Year 5 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...lots of the books are just going around, people are bringing to school...Year 6 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistent perceptions of reading aloud</td>
<td>...I just don’t like it [teaching reading aloud] because I want to read further, I just don’t like...Year 3 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...[teacher] does read us books and they’re usually good books because [teacher] has pretty good taste...Year 6 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of choice when selecting texts</td>
<td>...you didn’t get to choose what you wanted to read...Year 4 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...I wasn’t allowed to read [book series] at school which irritates me...Year 6 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overlap or inconsistency between RfPS and instructional reading practices</td>
<td>...they gave us this thing called a [reading approach] and it’s meant to encourage you to read, every night – it makes more work...Year 3 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...we’d read out loud a page, or paragraph...it’s not really the same [as RfPS]...Year 5 Child</td>
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4.3.2.1 Importance of Allocated Time. The theme of allocated class time for RfPS appeared across all three focus groups. There was a consensus across the three focus groups that allocating RfPS time in their classrooms was an important teacher behaviour that was happening inconsistently across the Year 3-6 classrooms. Some responses that supported this theme included: “[we want] more time to read,” “We used to do 15 minutes of silent reading – it kind of stopped…which is kind of sad,” and “We get a chance to, but that’s the only time
at morning tea and lunch,” and “I only read at school during recess.” Several children indicated that having allocated time meant that other options should be unavailable, such as playing in the hall during play time, and using the computers in the classrooms. For example, a Year 5 Child commented, “Sometimes I read at breaktime and lunchtime although it’s a bit harder because sometimes we’re allowed to play on the computers.”

4.3.2.2 Engaging in Informal Book Talk and Recommendations. Engaging in informal book talk and recommendations also appeared as a strong theme across all three focus groups. Most children indicated that this practice was happening amongst themselves in an unstructured manner, that is, without any identifiable teacher practices. One of the Year 6 children repeatedly reported feeling “irritated” or “annoyed” when they could not discuss their books with peers due to having different reading tastes, and another Year 6 Child said that “no one checks what you read” when asked about opportunities to talk with educators about their books. The Year 3-5 children reported recommending books to each other regularly and talking about books outside of class time: “I get most of my books from [points to friend]”, “I usually read – we read a lot of the same stuff,” “We share ideas,” and “I’m trying to get everybody onto [book series] at the moment.” The researcher was required to repeatedly re-direct and re-focus the children, most notably the Year 6 children, due to their regular digressions into informal and enthusiastic conversations about books.

4.3.2.3 Inconsistent Perceptions of Reading Aloud. While all focus groups discussed the teacher practice of reading aloud, there were inconsistent perspectives about its impact on their RfPS experience. One focus group perceived reading aloud to be a negative experience, as supported by statements such as: “I don’t like it,” “I think it’s a bit boring and slow,’ and “They have to read it out and show you the pictures but if you’re reading it by yourself you can read, look at the picture,” and “Then all the class comments on it, it’s really annoying.” The other two focus groups reported positive perceptions of reading aloud, indicating that it happened often in their classroom. They named authors that were regularly read aloud, commenting that “they’re funny. [Teacher] actually read us some other stories…[Gary Crew title], which was awesome, it was really good,” and “[teacher] also reads spooky stories, like the Paul Jennings collection.”
4.3.2.4 Importance of Choice when Selecting Texts. The theme of being able to exercise choice when selecting texts to read for pleasure emerged across all three focus groups. The children reported that for a reading activity or session to be considered RfPS, full autonomy over the texts was required. A Year 4 Child for example commented, when asked whether an activity constituted RfPS: “No, you didn’t get to choose what you wanted to read. They chose for you.” A Year 5 Child commented that they were allowed to read their own texts, even during teacher read-alouds, if they did not enjoy the text being read aloud. The Year 6 group came to a consensus that they would only read new texts for pleasure if they appealed to them; otherwise, they would repeatedly re-read the same texts. This created a challenge for one Year 6 Child in particular, who felt that their choice of texts was not supported by the school text collection (see Section 4.3.3.1).

4.3.2.5 Overlap or Inconsistency between RfPS and Instructional Reading Practices. A theme that emerged across all three focus groups during data analysis related to the concept of teacher practices creating an overlap between RfPS and instructional reading. Two of the three focus groups reported this as being a negative experience. Some participant responses that contributed to this theme included: “We try to [read for fun], but we don’t really…we don’t do reading for fun at school,” “You read for enjoyment, not to prove that you’ve read something,” and “[teacher] wanted us to read but [they] didn’t really try to encourage us.” The third focus group indicated that this overlap was somewhat positive, as supported by the following participant statement: “When there’s a little bit of talking or work attached to it, [it’s still fun] most of the time.”

4.3.3 What are the Perspectives of Year 3-6 Children Regarding their School's Reading for Pleasure at School Physical Environment in Years 3-6?

This section will outline the findings pertaining to the Year 3-6 children’s perspectives of their school’s RfPS physical environment. An overview of the themes that emerged which relate to RfPS physical environment are presented in Table 4.7.
Table 4.7
What are the perspectives of Year 3-6 children regarding their school’s Reading for Pleasure at School physical environment in Years 3-6?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes that emerged</th>
<th>Participant interview example of evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Importance of diverse texts available, including series adherence</td>
<td>...most of the books aren’t that good but there a few pretty good ones...Year 6 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...I read a series at a time...Year 3 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing comfortable spaces for reading</td>
<td>...I like to either lay down on a bed or a couch, or sit on a couch...Year 4 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...the beanbags are the best spot to read – sitting with your book, a water bottle and on a beanbag, that’s pretty good...Year 6 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desired noise levels: quiet/silent</td>
<td>...I want it to be quiet...Year 3 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...around the corners near the lockers, it’s generally a lot quieter there...Year 5 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to have more influence over text collection available</td>
<td>...I would like it if they asked kids more what their preference of books is...Year 6 Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...I reckon there should be a vote on what books [the teachers buy]...Year 4 Child</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.3.1 Importance of Diverse Texts Available, including Series Adherence. A strong theme that emerged across all three focus groups was the importance of having enough diverse, high-quality texts for children to choose from when RfPS. One focus group felt that a wide range of texts were provided from which to choose, commenting that the books at school were “quite good,” and that “they have a large library,” listing several authors that featured in their classroom collection. One participant in this group commented that “some people like non-fiction books but they don’t have many of those, they usually have novels or something. They don’t usually have autobiographies, recounts, or anything like that.” The children in this focus group also reported that including complete book series was an important feature of their classroom’s text collection, reporting “I think they should put Wings of Fire or Warrior Cats in there because lots of people love both those books,” “If they have one book in the series, then they skip the next one, and go to the next book in the series – oh that’s so bad,” and “They’ve got all the old ones [books in an ongoing series], but I’m bored of those because I’ve read them so many times, and they don’t have all the newer ones.”

The other two focus groups reported feeling dissatisfied with the quantity and diversity of texts available to them at school. Participant statements that support this theme...
4.3.3.2 Providing Comfortable Spaces for Reading. All three focus groups discussed their preference for being physically comfortable when RfPS. Beanbags and couches were mentioned in all three focus groups. Some participant comments that contributed to this theme were: “We’ve also got pretty comfy spots with beanbags,” “The beanbags are the best spot to read,” “We need more spaces to read,” and “More beanbags!” One focus group had a lengthy discussion about converting unused spaces on the school site into reading areas specifically for the Year 3-6 children, inspired by a reading space in the early years’ classrooms with beanbags, fairy lights and pillows.

4.3.3.3 Desired Noise Levels: Quiet/silent. A clear theme emerged across all three focus groups of children preferring allocated RfPS time to be quiet or silent. One focus group commented that the noise level currently experienced when RfPS was too loud: “There are always a couple of people in the quiet area being loud,” “I find it a little hard to concentrate on it [RfPS] when people are being loud,” “It’s annoying when they [peers] try to talk to you while you’re reading,” and “[I want] more actual quiet reading time.” The other two focus groups expressed a belief that their allocated RfPS was mostly quiet: “In the quiet reading time you’re not allowed to talk to each other,” “When it’s quiet reading, [teacher] says, don’t share books,” but also “there isn’t really a quiet place.”

4.3.3.4 Desire to Have More Influence over Text Collection Available. The final theme that emerged during Phase Two data analysis was that of Year 3-6 children desiring more influence over the text collections available to them at school. Two of the three focus groups discussed this feature of RfPS. Participant comments that support this theme included: “They assume that kids would like the books, when they’re not really what kids would prefer sometimes,” “Sometimes [our preferences are taken into account], but not that often,” and “More preference.”
4.4 Researcher Journal

The researcher journal ensures that bracketing occurs throughout the research process. Bracketing allows the researcher to acknowledge and then ‘set aside’ their pre-existing assumptions, experiences and biases, therefore allowing the emergent themes to be an accurate reflection of participants’ responses. The researcher took reflective notes before, during and after the individual interviews and focus groups, and these notes were continually referred to during the data analysis process. As themes began to emerge and solidify, notes from the researcher journal were critically evaluated to confirm that the emergent themes were authentic and not influenced by the researcher’s beliefs.

The researcher journal included notes taken at the conclusion of individual interviews, such as “Felt more neutral in how I framed the questions” which allowed the researcher to reflect on the importance of avoiding leading questions and removing personal bias from the interview process. Notes were also taken prior to conducting individual interviews, such as reminders to “clearly articulate the definition of RfPS before starting the interview”, allowing the researcher to reflect on the need for effective probing and prompting questions. Notes taken during focus groups indicated that three children from the Year 3/4 focus group requested an adult caregiver to be present during the focus group; these three children then appeared comfortable and attentive, and contributed equally to the conversation. The researcher journal indicated that all participants appeared relaxed and engaged during the interviews and focus groups, with no notable body language to indicate otherwise. It was noted during the focus groups that the children spoke enthusiastically and passionately about reading, and often needed re-directing, particularly the Year 6 group.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, findings were presented in response to the research question: What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school’s RfPS pedagogy in Years 3-6? The data analysis process resulted in emergent themes in response to each of the research sub-questions, as outlined within this chapter. The findings therefore presented the perspectives of each of three stakeholder groups: leadership, classroom teachers and Year 3-6 children. These findings will be explored and considered alongside the relevant literature in the following Discussion Chapter.
Chapter Five: Discussion of Results

5.1 Introduction

The research aimed to explore key stakeholders’ perspectives of their school’s Reading for Pleasure at School (RfPS) pedagogy. The following chapter will discuss the findings presented in Chapter Four and examine them in relation to the literature presented in Chapter Two. The analytical discussion will answer the overarching research question and sub-questions proposed in Chapter One:

Overarching research question:

- What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School pedagogy in Years 3-6?

Sub-questions:

- What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School culture in Years 3-6?
- What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School teacher practices in Years 3-6?
- What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School physical environment in Years 3-6?

To discuss each research sub-question, the findings presented in Chapter Four have been consolidated into key themes that incorporate Phase One and Phase Two findings. These key themes will form the structure of this Chapter’s discussion (See Figure 5.1).
Research sub-question 1  
What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS culture in Years 3-6?

Phase One findings:
- Positive impact of home support
- Positive impact of early years' RfPS
- RfPS as supported and valued by the whole school
- Positive impact of local community
- Trusting relationships and positive collaboration between leadership and classroom teachers
- Positive perceptions of children’s attitudes
- Positive personal valuing of RfPS
- Perceived benefits of RfPS

Specific to leadership team:
- Lack of RfPS acknowledgement in broader education contexts

Phase Two findings:
- Limited but positive impact of whole-school and local community

Discussion themes in response to the research question
- Home/school/community RfPS partnerships
- Individual RfPS values and beliefs

Research sub-question 2  
What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS teacher practices in Years 3-6?

Phase One findings:
- Reading aloud as a key teacher practice
- Informal book talk and recommendations with children as a key teacher practice
- Allowing children to exercise choice over texts
- Allocating dedicated class time to RfPS vs RfPS occurring spontaneously during class time
- Limited use of technology
- Perceived limitations to effective teacher practices: time, curriculum and knowledge of texts
- Overlap or inconsistency between RfPS and instructional reading practices

Phase Two findings:
- Importance of allocated time
- Engaging in informal book talk and recommendations with children as a key teacher practice
- Inconsistent perceptions of reading aloud
- Importance of choice when selecting texts
- Overlap or inconsistency between RfPS and instructional reading practices

Discussion themes in response to the research question
- Key RfPS teacher practices
- Perceived limitations to RfPS teacher practices

Research sub-question 3  
What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS physical environment in Years 3-6?

Phase One findings:
- Quantity and diversity of text collections at school
- Children having access to the text collections
- Children influencing the text collection choices
- Providing comfortable spaces for reading
- Physical limitations of the school site
- Expected noise levels: quiet/silent

Phase Two findings:
- Importance of diverse texts available, including series adherence
- Providing comfortable spaces for reading
- Desired noise levels: quiet/silent
- Desire to have more influence over text collection available

Discussion themes in response to the research question
- Children’s agency in creating text collections
- RfPS physical spaces
5.2 What are the Perspectives of Key Stakeholders Regarding their School's RfPS Culture in Years 3-6?

The previous chapter outlined the key findings that emerged during the data analysis process from both phases of data collection in response to the first research sub-question: *What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS culture in Years 3-6?* The key findings have been consolidated into the following two themes for discussion: home/school/community RfPS partnerships and individual RfPS values and beliefs.

5.2.1 Home/School/Community RfPS Partnerships

The positive impact of the home environment and family support on RfPS emerged as a strong finding from leadership and classroom teachers. The partnership between school and home was not a focus for the literature review as the emphasis was on pedagogies within the school. While this focus did encompass cultural practices and beliefs of educators and the local community, it did not extend to the home. It is noteworthy that the leadership and classroom teachers expressed a strong perception of the home’s influence on RfPS in middle to upper primary years, despite this not being the focus of the research. The children also implied strong support for RfPS at home, based on their access to diverse, high-quality texts and the prevalence with which they read for pleasure at home. Given the community’s demographics and educational advantages, there is potential for the school to rely on home support for RfPS. The assumption of home support could also be connected to the leadership and classroom teachers emphasising culture as positively impacting RfPS as opposed to the more observable features of teacher practices and the physical environment, particularly when contrasted against the children’s lack of emphasis on culture. The strong sense of home support could also be related to the broader theme of inconsistent educator RfPS knowledge (see Section 5.2.2) and the absence of RfPS dialogue in broader educational contexts, as Year 3-6 educators may not perceive RfPS pedagogies to be a priority and therefore not seek to further their professional knowledge of the concept.

The whole school’s positive reading culture was viewed as having a substantial impact on RfPS from leadership and classroom teachers’ perspectives. Classroom teachers expressed strong views that RfPS was encouraged by leadership and woven into the school’s values and learning philosophies, aligning with Merga and Mason’s (2019) assertion that leadership attitudes play a vital role in creating a positive school reading culture. Leadership also spoke frequently and confidently of the school culture’s impact and influence on RfPS. Despite the perception of a strong, positive reading for pleasure culture, leadership and classroom teachers
were not aware of RfPS explicitly appearing in any whole-school literacy policies or documents, supporting Merga and Gardiner’s (2018) finding that few schools in W.A. include RfPS in their literacy documents. Leadership values and practices that explicitly support a positive RfPS school culture are therefore vital in influencing RfPS pedagogies, as classroom teachers may not have any awareness or accountability for RfPS if it does not appear in their school’s literacy policies.

Interestingly, the Year 3-6 children did not articulate school-wide reading culture as a factor in their RfPS experience, focusing instead on observable teacher practices and the physical environment. One focus group did not feel that the whole-school supported RfPS, one focus group mentioned Book Week, and all three focus groups commented on author visits. The noteworthy discrepancy between the adults’ strong positive perspective of school culture and the children’s almost non-existent perspective of a schoolwide reading for pleasure culture highlights the importance of RfPS research that investigates multiple perspectives and prioritises children’s voices. It is clear from these findings that children do not perceive the school culture to be as powerful or influential on their experiences as the educators do. This finding is supported by the inconsistent understandings of children’s RfPS perspectives represented within current literature (Laurenson et al., 2015; McGeown et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2012). The researcher acknowledges that the discrepancy between the educators’ and the children’s perspectives may be influenced by the children’s lack of understanding or vocabulary to articulate the complex concept of ‘culture’. It may also reflect the fact that educators and children can view the world around them through significantly different lenses, even when viewing the same school context. Educators may believe that RfPS is supported through the school culture, which they then may assume permeates through to the children’s perspectives, and therefore de-prioritise teacher practices and the physical environment. Therefore, classroom teacher practices and the physical environment must be considered and implemented, even if there is an established school-wide reading culture from the educators’ points of view. At the very least, the Year 3-6 children’s strong focus on teacher behaviours supports the general contention that children are impacted by educators’ perspectives and attitudes towards reading (Hempel-Jorgensen et al., 2018; McKool & Gespass, 2009; Merga, 2017).

Community values and practices were also inconsistently regarded across participant groups; similarly to the impact of positive home and whole-school support, leadership and classroom teachers placed a much higher value on the local community’s positive reading culture than the children did. Despite a strong perception of positive local support for RfPS,
leadership identified a decline in RfPS dialogue amongst primary school leadership at the broader community level. The leadership perspective indicated that current primary school literacy education dialogue tended to focus on instructional programs, standardised testing and the dichotomy between phonics and whole language. This finding aligns with a range of studies suggesting the Australian primary education system currently focuses more heavily on instructional reading than on RfPS (Afflerbach et al., 2013; Allington, 2013; Green, 2013; Rowe & National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy (Australia), 2005). As Merga and Gardiner (2018) argue, schoolwide promotion of RfPS is inextricably linked to the broader community’s RfPS values and practices, and leadership and classroom teachers will not be able to effectively promote RfPS until there is a broader conversation about its value in middle to upper primary school.

Considering these research findings relating to school culture, the challenging question that needs to be asked of the Australian primary education system is this: If RfPS is left to the discretion of individual school leadership or Year 3-6 classroom teachers, without broader structural support and the presence of strong home support as perceived in this school setting, will inequitable outcomes be the result? Will some children never experience a positive reading culture or supportive RfPS pedagogies during their middle to upper primary years? RfPS will continue to be deprioritised and inconsistent if these questions are left unanswered.

5.2.2 Individual RfPS Values and Beliefs

The general concept of reading for pleasure was highly valued by participants, and most leadership and classroom teachers self-identified as enthusiastic readers who enjoyed a variety of texts when time permitted. Four out of the five leadership/classroom teacher participants named preferred genres and/or specific authors that they enjoyed reading for pleasure and expressed genuine personal interest in the practice. Interestingly, one classroom teacher indicated limited personal reading for pleasure practices and often spoke of instructional reading practices in the classroom, such as implementing reading journals and levelled ‘Book Clubs’, rather than pedagogies that would indicate a strong understanding of RfPS. They were also the only educator participant who did not mention reading aloud as a RfPS teacher practice. This finding could indicate a potential relationship between an educator’s personal values and practices and their RfPS pedagogies, which aligns with Hempel-Jorgensen et al.’s (2018) and Laurenson et al.’s (2018) assertion that teachers may inadvertently promote instructional reading over RfPS based on their own beliefs and practices. The children of this classroom teacher validated the assertion by expressing their beliefs that there were no deliberate or
effective RfPS teacher practices in place in their classroom. While the focus of the investigation is specifically on reading for pleasure in the school context, the findings related to personal reading values and practices contributes to the argument that there is a relationship between educators’ personal RfP practices and the effective implementation of RfPS in their classrooms.

Regardless of their personal practices, most leadership and classroom teachers indicated a strong belief in RfPS’s value and perceived benefits for Year 3-6 children. The perceived benefits ranged from increased positive affective factors towards literacy in general such as those proposed by Garan and DeVoogd (2008) and Laurenson et al., (2015) and improved empathy such as that suggested by Kidd and Castano (2013), to the calming physiological effect as identified by Nell (1988). Despite the difficulty in establishing a causal link between RfPS and technical literacy proficiency, one classroom teacher confidently felt that there was a connection between RfPS and improved literacy skills in writing, spelling, and reading comprehension. These strong beliefs about RfPS’s perceived benefits, along with the previously discussed strong personal valuing of RfPS, are in opposition to Merga and Mastori’s (2018) suggestion that as children become independent readers, teachers may value reading less, leading to a decrease in RfPS pedagogy. The inconsistent implementation of RfPS pedagogy (particularly as perceived by the Year 3-6 children) therefore appears to be more attributable to a lack of teacher knowledge of recommended RfPS pedagogies or lack of structured practices, rather than the classroom teachers’ or leadership’s perceived value of RfPS (see Sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 for further discussion). This potential limitation corroborates Kucirkova and Cremin’s (2018) conclusion that professional knowledge is one of the primary challenges of prioritising RfPS.

The children’s responses indicated a genuine love of reading for pleasure. This may reflect the school’s educational advantages and strong RfP home support, as it contradicts the findings of several studies that indicate reading is not a preferred leisure activity as children move through primary school (Dungworth et al., 2004; Johnsson-Smaragdi & Jönsson, 2006; Reedy & de Carvalho, 2021; Scholastic, 2015). Instead, the results may support Laurenson et al.’s (2015) findings that teachers can make false assumptions about their children’s reading attitudes, and therefore de-prioritise it in their classrooms. One classroom teacher admitted they were “really shocked” by how enthusiastically their classroom engaged in an informal whole-class conversation about their reading for pleasure habits and opinions, even within a school setting where the educators felt a strong sense of positive RfPS culture and support. These findings about personal values and practices suggest that Year 3-6 classroom teachers should engage in open-minded and ongoing discussions with middle to upper primary school children.
to accurately determine their RfPS attitudes and practices instead of inadvertently applying their own values or making assumptions about the children’s attitudes.

Home/school/community RfPS partnerships and individual RfPS values and practices reflect the key emergent thematic findings in response to the research sub-question: What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS culture in Years 3-6? These findings suggest that there are notable discrepancies between educators’ and children’s perspectives of their school’s RfPS culture, with educators placing greater emphasis on its impact on the school’s RfPS pedagogies than the children. Despite strong cultural RfPS support within a school, personal educator values may impact on their RfPS classroom pedagogies, and educator knowledge and implementation of specific RfPS pedagogies is still needed to ensure that RfPS is meaningfully occurring in middle to upper primary school.

5.3 What are the Perspectives of Key Stakeholders Regarding their School's RfPS Teacher Practices in Years 3-6?

Chapter Four outlined the key findings that emerged during the data analysis process from both phases of data collection in response to the second research sub-question: What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS teacher practices in Years 3-6? The key findings have been consolidated into the following two themes for discussion: key RfPS teacher practices and perceived limitations to RfPS teacher practices.

5.3.1 Key RfPS Teacher Practices

Reading aloud was perceived by most of the educators as a valuable RfPS practice that was occurring regularly in the Year 3-6 classrooms, indicating that it may be the most practiced RfPS teacher practice at the school. Reading aloud is recognised in the literature as a practice that requires minimal preparation, can be done in short unscheduled bursts of time and uses any kind of text available, and this could account for it being the most practiced pedagogy in research findings (Cremin et al., 2014). Considering Hempel-Jorgenson et al.’s (2018) and Merger and Ledger’s (2019) findings that self-reported frequency of reading aloud for pleasure tends to be significantly overstated when compared to its actual frequency, further investigation into this teacher practice is needed. Regardless of its actual regularity in the classroom, it was perceived by educators to be a worthwhile and enjoyable teacher practice that promotes RfPS.

There was one notable exception to this finding; some children reported strong feelings of dislike for reading aloud. They attributed this dislike to it being boring, slow and out of their control. Fletcher et al. (2011) and Merga (2016) outlined some key characteristics of reading
aloud, including genuinely connecting to the text, enjoying the practice personally and using engaging voice and body language. Given that the corresponding classroom teacher indicated lower levels of personal reading for pleasure and displayed the most inconsistent knowledge of RfPS concepts and terminology (as discussed in Section 5.2.2), a connection could be made between these two findings. One could argue that there is a relationship between a classroom teacher’s personal reading for pleasure values and their effective implementation of RfPS pedagogies, as suggested by McKool and Gespass (2009), who found that teachers who engaged meaningfully in personal reading for pleasure were more likely to implement RfPS pedagogy and promote intrinsic reading motivation. Contrasting this, Garces-Bacsal et al., (2018) found that teachers who did not self-identify as ‘devoted readers’ were still competent in discussing RfPS pedagogies. While there are contradictory findings in the literature, the current investigation’s findings support the possible relationship between personal teacher reading for pleasure practices and implementation of RfPS pedagogies. The generally positive perception of reading aloud also confirms the importance of individual classroom teachers implementing the RfPS pedagogical framework, even within an overwhelmingly positive school reading culture.

Most of the participants indicated that they felt there was a supportive social environment in the school that encouraged and respected children’s RfPS behaviours. The social environment seemed to largely be an extension of the positive school culture around learning in general, for example, Morning Meetings and child-led conversations about books during play times. There did not seem to be any knowledge or implementation of structured or deliberate teacher practices to create RfPS social environments in the classroom, except for children having opportunities to engage with authors and illustrators. As suggested by Mathers and Stern (2012), engaging authentically with authors and illustrators was positively perceived by educators and children as a worthwhile activity that motivated them to talk about reading. Due to the strong collaborative and child-led culture of the school, the lack of structured and regular social environments to promote RfPS in Year 3-6 classrooms would most likely be a result of inconsistent teacher knowledge of the RfPS pedagogical framework, again supporting Kucirkova and Cremin’s (2018) assertion that professional knowledge is one of the biggest challenges to implementing RfPS. For example, taking the ‘Book Club’ structure and aligning it with RfPS principles (such as children having autonomy over texts, reading for a sustained period in a comfortable space and scaffolding informal book talk) could effectively create social environments which encourage children to read for pleasure at school. The lack of structured teacher practices highlights the importance of re-positioning RfPS in literacy
education as a valuable practice and providing teachers with opportunities and support to engage in professional learning about the recommended pedagogical framework.

Creating a social environment in the upper primary school years is particularly crucial and provides unique challenges as children may be reading from texts with more mature and complex themes and content (Fletcher et al., 2012; Mathers & Stern, 2012). One Year 6 child in particular illustrates this point, as the child stated repeatedly that nobody else in their school reads the same kinds of texts that they do, and therefore they did not feel that they could discuss these texts with anyone. This finding aligns with recommendations for multi-age social shared buddy reading programs, such as the one proposed by Warrington and George (2014).

Leadership and classroom teachers consistently reported that engaging in informal book talk and recommendations was an important teacher practice that was happening regularly with children, but this was inconsistent with the children’s perspectives, who felt that they did not often discuss or recommend texts with their teachers. Educators wanted to be viewed as ‘co-readers’ with the less hierarchical relationship as recommended by Cremin and Swann (2016) but the reality of practising this teacher practice was limited by time and teacher knowledge of current texts (see Section 5.3.2). These two limitations are acknowledged both by the educators and in the literature (Cremin et al., 2014). Unlike creating social environments, leadership and classroom teachers were aware of the importance of engaging in informal book talk and recommendations and therefore were limited on a more practical level.

The children highly valued the opportunity to engage in informal book talk and recommendations; they stated it explicitly and engaged in it organically many times during the focus groups. Comparably to creating social environments, informal book talk and recommendations appeared to be valued and happening organically amongst the children during school hours but was not happening in a structured or deliberate way during class time, from the children’s perspectives. Again, this finding indicates a discrepancy between the educators’ and children’s perspectives and a possible lack of awareness of the pedagogies needed to effectively promote RfPS. The fact that the Year 3-6 children were engaging in informal book talk and recommendations outside of class time while at school could be due to a combination of external influences, for example home and family positive valuing of reading for pleasure, and the positive school reading culture. The finding that children highly valued informal book talk and recommendations and engaged in it spontaneously also provides encouraging insight into Year 3-6 children’s desire to talk about reading, and justification for teachers to dedicate class time to RfPS and its associated practices.
The school’s child-led teaching and learning philosophy underpinned a general respect for autonomy and this value does appear to have flown naturally through into RfPS. Most educators acknowledged autonomy as a crucial factor when RfPS and felt like the school acknowledged and respected children’s text choices when RfPS. For example, children were encouraged to bring in texts from home, therefore allowing them full autonomy over what they read for fun at school and were allowed to read during various unstructured times in the classroom as they choose to. The children clearly expressed that this autonomy was important to them and made the option of RfPS more appealing. This finding supports Reedy and de Carvalho’s (2021) contention that upper primary children seek and prefer autonomy when selecting texts to read.

Allowing autonomy could arguably be challenging during the upper primary years when texts become more mature. For example, the Year 6 children indicated frustration at the lack of preferred texts available to them and the sense of ‘not being allowed’ to read certain books from home that may have been deemed inappropriate by the school or classroom teacher. While this is an understandable frustration, especially given how important autonomy is when RfPS at this age, schools do need to be accountable for the texts being read in their classrooms. One possible solution to this challenge is dedicating time to modelling and supporting children in selecting and evaluating texts, as recommended by Fletcher et al. (2012). The teacher practice of modelling text selection and evaluation did not specifically appear in any stakeholders’ perspectives, suggesting that it requires more awareness and support.

Using technology to read for pleasure at school was not a priority for either group. Kindles were identified as sometimes used at school, but the consensus from educators was that using technology brought extra challenges that they did not feel prepared to address at this stage, and the children expressed a preference for hard copy texts. The growing interest in using technology to support primary school literacy teaching and learning is an area that could provide schools with creative solutions to the limitations of RfPS, as suggested by Kurcikova et al. (2017) and Ghalebandi and Noorhidawati (2019). For example, using technology could provide schools with opportunities to implement elements of the pedagogical framework, such as partnering with local libraries to have widen their text collections through access to e-books, connecting remotely with authors and illustrators, or using blog-type applications to create online social environments in which children and educators discuss texts.
5.3.2 Perceived Limitations to RfPS Teacher Practices

Allocating sufficient time for sustained RfPS was identified as a limitation by most participants, though it was more strongly emphasised by the children. This finding aligns with Mathers and Stern’s (2012) contribution that time allocation was frequently identified by primary and secondary school children as affecting their RfPS. The children in the current research clearly desired sustained, regular quiet times to read, for example half an hour after lunch at least every second day. Educators felt that the organic unstructured opportunities available during class time were generally sufficient, for example when the children had finished set work and had extra time. The discrepancy between time allocation perspectives could highlight the different influence attributed to the school’s culture; leadership and classroom teachers may believe that the strong positive school reading culture would balance out the lack of scheduled RfPS time, whereas the children felt strongly that they wanted more allocated quiet time, regardless of any perceived positive reading culture. This research finding adds further weight to the importance of raising educators’ professional awareness of the RfPS pedagogical framework as distinct from instructional reading, and of not making assumptions about Year 3-6 children’s RfPS experiences and opinions.

Leadership and classroom teachers also indicated several potential limitations to RfPS that were influenced by factors outside of their own and their school’s control. Time pressures and curriculum demands were the most common limitations, which are clearly connected and reflect Merga and Ledger’s (2019) key findings about teachers’ perceived limitations to RfPS. While the participants’ personal values indicated that they valued RfPS and wanted to dedicate classroom time to it, there was a consensus that it would be challenging to allocate regular sustained time, as it would take time away from other curriculum content that needed to be taught and assessed. Such a perception supports Merga and Gardiner’s (2018) concern that RfPS is not supported by the Australian Curriculum and adds weight to the argument that RfPS should be more explicitly embedded into national curriculum documents and school-wide literacy policies to ensure awareness and accountability of its implementation. Having insufficient knowledge of children’s literature was identified as another possible limitation, which aligns with Cremin et al.’s (2014) findings that classroom teachers may rely on limited or outdated children’s authors in their classrooms.

Key RfPS teacher practices and perceived limitations to effective RfPS teacher practices reflect the key emergent thematic findings in response to the research sub-question: What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school’s RfPS teacher practices in Years 3-6? These findings suggest an overall inconsistency between the educators’
perspectives and the Year 3-6 children’s perspectives of the teacher practices occurring in the school. While some of the recommended RfPS pedagogies are occurring organically, or through child-driven practices outside of class time, there are limited structured teacher practices supporting RfPS within Year 3-6 classrooms. This research finding supports Merga and Gardiner’s (2018) and Merga and Ledger’s (2019) assertion that classroom implementation of RfPS in Australia is generally inconsistent with the current child-centred, social nature of RfPS. Due to the strong positive cultural and personal valuing of RfPS, this inconsistency could again potentially result from a lack of educator knowledge of the RfPS pedagogical framework and a lack of support from the broader educational community.

5.4 What are the Perspectives of Key Stakeholders Regarding their School's RfPS Physical Environments in Years 3-6?

Chapter Four outlined the key findings that emerged during the data analysis process from both phases of data collection in response to the third research sub-question: What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS physical environment in Years 3-6? The key findings have been consolidated into the following two themes for discussion: children’s agency in creating text collections and physical spaces.

5.4.1 Children’s Agency in Creating Text Collections

All participants expressed a strong belief that having access to broad and diverse text collections was a crucial element of RfPS, supporting Cremin et al.’s (2014) and Laurenson et al.’s (2015) assertion that quality text collections may be equally as important as teacher practices. Interestingly, there was minimal consideration of cultural or linguistic diversity within the text collections, despite Adam and Barratt-Pugh’s (2020) emphasis on the importance of culturally diverse text collections. This could reflect the school’s demographics (approximately 20% of the students identify as having a language background other than English) or it could indicate that children either are or are perceived to be accessing culturally diverse texts at home. While the leadership and classroom teachers felt generally that their text collections were sufficient, though could always be improved upon, the children were notably passionate about improving the school’s text collections to include books that are currently popular, complete book series, and more mature themes and content regardless of form (that is, graphic novels and picture books were both specifically mentioned as desirable texts, provided the content was age-appropriate). The Year 5/6 children especially felt that if they did not bring a book in from home to read, then they would not have much to read in the classroom
that suited their interests or ability level. Collaboratively curating an enticing text collection emerged as a crucial RFPS practice from the children’s perspectives, despite a lack of evidence from the research literature discussing this practice.

One of the strongest findings overall about text collections from the children’s perspectives was that they wanted to have more agency. They wanted a louder voice in the decision-making process when it came to creating their school’s or classroom’s text collection. This research finding supports Barton and McKay’s (2016) statement that agency is a powerful factor when influencing children’s literacy learning in general, as well as Merga’s (2017) confirmation of this regarding RFPS specifically. Given the wide range of children’s texts available, it would be very difficult for classroom teachers to create an enticing text collection without involving the children and giving them a voice in decision-making. There may be opportunities to combine the inclusion of agency with some of the teacher practices discussed earlier; for example, if classroom teachers were effectively creating social environments and engaging in informal book talk and recommendations, they may feel more confident in knowing their children’s preferred RFPS texts and involving the children in conversations about the types of texts children they like to access in their classroom.

The notable discrepancy between educators and children regarding the importance of agency could reflect several factors. The demographics of the participant school for example could mean that the children have access to many diverse texts at home, and therefore there is less pressure on the school to provide a larger text collection. Leadership and classroom teachers could start to subtly value RFPS less in Year 3-6 as suggested by Merga and Mat Roni (2018) and therefore not prioritise children’s text preferences as much as they may have done in the earlier years. The discrepancy of perspectives within this theme also raises an interesting challenge regarding text collections. Schools and classroom teachers should have the knowledge and resources to curate a diverse text collection that reflects the cultural diversity present in our society and exposes children to multiple genres, forms, concepts, etc., but also allow children to have a strong voice in curating a text collection that reflects those children’s interests and preferences, even if that might result in a more homogenised text collection. Further studies are needed to explore how to reconcile these seemingly conflicting ideas, particularly in disadvantaged communities where resource acquisition may be more challenging in general.
5.4.2 Physical Spaces

All participants agreed that a comfortable physical space affected their RfPS experience. While all participants agreed on the positive value of a comfortable physical space, (Kuzmicova et al., 2017; Mathers & Stern, 2012; Reedy & de Carvalho, 2021) there were different perspectives on whether the school offered enough of them. The children felt strongly that they needed more physical spaces dedicated to RfPS and enthusiastically discussed possible spaces in the school that could be turned into ‘reading nooks’ with bean bags, cushions and fairy lights. While the children acknowledged the practical limitations of having all the reading nooks that they desired, the findings clearly support the notion that a comfortable physical space is crucial when RfPS.

The children and the classroom teachers also discussed their preferred noise levels when RfPS. Both groups emphasised their desire for the environment to be quiet during RfPS, contradicting Kuzmicova et al.’s (2017) and Mathers and Stern’s (2012) findings that a more social ‘café culture’ might encourage RfPS. There was a discrepancy between their perspectives of current noise level practice. Both classroom teachers felt that they insisted on quiet if the whole class was RfPS, whereas the children felt that there was regular chatter or minor disruptions that affected their ability to immerse themselves into RfPS and felt strongly that they wanted any allocated RfPS to be as quiet as possible. This discrepancy can most likely be attributed to the fact that the children appeared to often engage in RfPS during unallocated class time, meaning that not everybody is RfPS at the same time and the noise level may fluctuate. To ensure that children have the best opportunity to engage meaningfully in RfPS, it would seem that allocating regular whole-class quiet time to the practice and allowing children to satisfactorily immerse themselves in their texts in a comfortable physical space is crucial. As with the previous discrepancies relating to RfPS teacher practices, this finding demonstrates that children’s RfPS perspectives may not be sought out or fully understood by their school’s leadership and classroom teachers.

Children’s agency in creating text collections and physical spaces reflect the key emergent thematic findings in response to the research sub-question: *What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS physical environment in Years 3-6?* These findings confirm that while text collections and physical spaces are indeed crucial aspects of RfPS pedagogy, there were vastly different perspectives regarding the quality and quantity of text collections and physical spaces that were available to the Year 3-6 children. The children felt strongly that they wanted more texts of greater diversity, and more comfortable reading spaces, all to be accessed regularly during allocated quiet time. Being able to exercise agency
when creating text collections emerged as a key aspect of RfPS pedagogy that is currently underrepresented in the literature.

5.5 Responding to the Overarching Research Question

The overarching research question for the current research was *What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school’s RfPS pedagogies in Years 3-6?*. To respond to this research question, all key findings have been considered in relation to the literature and consolidated into three themes: inconsistent RfPS perspectives across stakeholders; the importance of RfPS educator professional knowledge; and the value of RfPS physical spaces and texts (see Figure 5.5).

5.5.1 Inconsistent Perspectives Across Stakeholders

One of the most notable features of the discrepancy between educators’ and Year 3-6 children’s perspectives was the differing emphasis placed on culture. The findings showed that educators perceived culture as significantly impacting the school’s RfPS pedagogies, whereas the Year 3-6 children focused on observable and measurable RfPS teacher practices and physical aspects. This is evidenced through the fact that nine themes relating to culture emerged from the educators, contrasted with one theme from the children. Additionally, the findings that emerged relating to the teacher practices and physical environment sub-questions, while thematically similar, revealed two distinct perspectives of the same themes. To illustrate this discrepancy, educators indicated that they believed Year 3-6 children to have notable influence over the text collections curated by their classroom rooms, whereas the Year 3-6 children perceived themselves as having little input into text collections and expressed a clear desire for more input. This finding aligns with several studies that indicate middle to upper primary school children do view RfPS as an engaging and worthwhile activity, and desire more engagement and support for the practice (Merga, 2018; Merga & Mat Roni, 2018; Reedy & de Carvalho, 2021; Scholastic, 2015), while contributing to Laurenson et al.’s (2015) assertion that classroom teachers may make false negative assumptions about their children’s reading attitudes and practices. However, these inconsistent perspectives contrast with McKool and Gespass’s (2009) findings that teachers with positive reading attitudes and personal practices are more likely to implement RfPS pedagogies, and Merga and Mason’s (2019) findings that leadership members who supported RfP as a concept were more likely to provide tangible support for RfPS. This incongruity between reading values/beliefs and the children’s perspectives of RfPS pedagogies in the
school and classroom environment would suggest professional knowledge of RfPS pedagogies is crucial (see Section 5.5.2).

**Figure 5.2**

*Responding to the Overarching Research Question*

- **Research sub-question 1**
  - What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS culture in Years 3-6?
  - Themes that were discussed:
    - Home/school/community RfPS partnerships
    - Individual RfPS values and beliefs

- **Research sub-question 2**
  - What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS teacher practices in Years 3-6?
  - Themes that were discussed:
    - Key RfPS teacher practices
    - Perceived limitations to RfPS teacher practices

- **Research sub-question 3**
  - What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS physical environment in Years 3-6?
  - Themes that were discussed:
    - Children's agency in creating text collections
    - Physical spaces

**Overarching research question**

What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS pedagogies in Years 3-6?

- Inconsistent RfPS perspectives across stakeholders
- Educator RfPS professional knowledge
- RfPS physical spaces and texts
5.5.2 Educator RfPS Professional Knowledge

The inconsistent perspectives discussed above, when combined with the educators’ strong perceptions of a positive reading culture within the school, would suggest that varying or limited educator RfPS professional knowledge is a significant factor in the stakeholders’ perspectives of their school’s RfPS pedagogies. This is further evidenced by the emergent theme within sub-question 2 being ‘overlap or inconsistency between RfPS and instructional reading practices’ and the first two emergent themes for sub-question one being directly related to home and early childhood RfPS experiences, despite the research focus on RfPS in middle to upper primary classrooms. The leadership team perspective that there is a lack of RfPS acknowledgement in broader education contexts could also be a contributing factor to this overarching theme, which would support Merga and Gardiner’s (2018) assertion that the broader education community’s focus on instructional reading pedagogy affects stakeholders’ awareness and effective implementation of RfPS (Merga & Gardiner, 2018). This theme also aligns with Kucirkova and Cremin’s (2018) contribution that limited professional knowledge could be seen as a primary challenge to prioritising RfPS.

5.5.3 RfPS Physical Spaces and Texts

The value of RfPS physical spaces and texts appeared consistently as an emergent theme across all participant groups. While it largely arose in response to sub-question 3, relating to the school’s RfPS physical environment, there are clear overlaps with both the school’s RfPS culture and teacher behaviours. Educators for example equated the visible presence and large quantity of texts and comfortable reading spaces with the curation of a positive reading culture. The Year 3-6 children spoke of teacher practices such as reading aloud considering the text choices their teacher made and how those choices influenced the effectiveness of the reading aloud behaviour. Children’s agency in creating text collections and exercising autonomy over texts also emerged and encompassed several themes. For example, educators attributed some of the positive school culture to the fact that children were encouraged to exercise autonomy over the texts that they read for pleasure at school, while the Year 3-6 children wanted to see more teacher practices that acknowledged their agency and autonomy, as recommended by Merga (2016). While children’s autonomy over texts has been established in the literature as a key feature of RfPS (Cremin et al., 2014; Merga, 2017; Reedy & de Carvalho, 2021), children’s agency in creating text collections is currently under-represented in the literature. The findings indicated a clear overarching message that both educators and children highly value the presence of quiet, comfortable
places for reading, and that text collections, agency and autonomy play a vital role in meaningfully implementing RfPS.

5.6 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to analytically discuss the research results when considered alongside the research literature and the research questions. The overarching research question was responded to by focusing on the three sub-questions:

Overarching research question:

- What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School pedagogy in Years 3-6?

Sub-questions:

- What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School culture in Years 3-6?
- What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School teacher practices in Years 3-6?
- What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's Reading for Pleasure at School physical environment in Years 3-6?

In conclusion, the current research has found that there are three key themes in response to the overarching research question: inconsistent RfPS perspectives across stakeholders, RfPS educator professional knowledge, and RfPS physical spaces and texts. The final chapter will respond to the findings presented in this discussion to pose implications and recommendations.
Chapter Six: Implications and Recommendations

6.1 Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research was to explore key stakeholders’ perspectives of their school’s Reading for Pleasure at School (RfPS) pedagogy in Years 3-6. This research focused on key stakeholders as the leadership, classroom teachers and Year 3-6 children at a small independent public primary school in metropolitan Perth as a single-case qualitative case study. The case study explored the stakeholders’ perspectives of the school culture, teacher practices and the physical environment, as these were the key themes indicated by literature. This research aimed to contribute to a wider discussion in literacy education drawing attention to the declining rates of RfPS in middle to upper primary school. In this chapter the research questions will be addressed, implications raised, and recommendations made for practice and for further research.

6.2 Research Questions Answered

The findings for the research questions were presented in Chapter Four, and then discussed considering the literature in Chapter Five. A summary of the findings in response to the research questions is presented in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1
Research Questions Answered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research question</th>
<th>Key findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS culture in Years 3-6?</td>
<td>• Key stakeholders had different perspectives of the school’s RfPS culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Educators expressed a sense of strong, positive reading culture at an individual, school and community level.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Educators felt that RfPS in Years 3-6 was impacted significantly by home support</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Educators felt that RfPS in Years 3-6 was impacted significantly by positive experiences in early childhood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Educators perceived RfPS to have multiple benefits for children and felt generally that their school culture supported and promoted RfPS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The Year 3-6 children, in contrast, expressed a limited positive presence of a RfPS school culture, instead focusing on the more observable aspects of RfPS pedagogy such as teacher practices and the physical environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research question</td>
<td>Key findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS teacher practices in Years 3-6? | - Leadership indicated that RfPS was not a priority within broader educational dialogue.  
- Findings largely supported the RfPS pedagogical framework of teacher practices such as reading aloud, creating social environments, allowing children choice, and engaging in informal book talk and recommendations  
- Creating social environments and engaging in informal book talk and recommendations appeared as emergent themes, although in a mostly unstructured format, that is, without the support of deliberate educator behaviours.  
- Allocating dedicated class time to RfPS emerged as a strong theme, with educators acknowledging its importance and children strongly desiring more.  
- Technology did not appear to be a priority within the school’s RfPS pedagogies.  
- Stakeholders’ perspectives of their school’s RfPS teacher practices indicated some overlap or inconsistency between instructional reading pedagogies and RfPS pedagogies, suggesting that there was inconsistent professional knowledge of the specific teacher practices required to implement RfPS.  
- Some limitations to implementing RfPS were identified in the findings such as time and curriculum constraints, and having insufficient knowledge of suitable texts. |
| What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS physical environment in Years 3-6? | - All stakeholders felt that the physical environment played a significant role in the school’s RfPS pedagogies.  
- Quality diverse text collections and providing comfortable, quiet spaces for reading were perceived as crucial elements of RfPS.  
- There were discrepancies between stakeholders’ perspectives regarding the school’s current pedagogies. The most notable divergence of perspectives was the children’s desire for greater diversity and quantity in the text collections available to them, greater agency in curating the text collections, and more comfortable, quiet reading spaces. |

The overarching research question that informed this investigation was *What are the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding their school's RfPS pedagogy in Years 3-6?* Three key themes emerged when consolidating the research sub-questions; these were: inconsistent RfPS perspectives across stakeholders, RfPS educator professional knowledge, and RfPS physical spaces and texts. Within all three research sub-questions, there were markedly different perspectives of the school’s RfPS pedagogies across stakeholder groups, particularly
when comparing educators’ perspectives to the Year 3-6 children’s perspectives. Each research sub-question’s findings also highlighted the importance of educators having strong RfPS professional knowledge, and acknowledged that the RfPS physical spaces and texts were inextricably linked to the school culture and teacher practices, particularly from the children’s perspectives.

6.3 Contribution and Implications

This research has contributed to a larger body of work developing in Australian education exploring RfPS in primary school settings. It is hoped that the findings contribute to the growing dialogue through drawing attention to the value in seeking multiple RfPS viewpoints, particularly children as active participants in the phenomenon. This investigation also hopes to contribute to teaching practice through highlighting the importance of ongoing educator professional knowledge and creating positive RfPS physical spaces and text collections.

6.3.1 Implication: Acknowledging that Children’s Perspectives Cannot be Assumed

The research findings encourage schools to acknowledge the discrepancies between educators’ and children’s RfPS perspectives and critically evaluate any assumptions educators may hold that potentially influence RfPS pedagogies in Year 3-6 classrooms. The findings also support Scholastic’s (2016) assertion that children want to keep RfPS beyond the point of independent reading skill acquisition. The Year 3-6 children in this research valued RfPS and wanted to engage in it more often, and in a more structured way. The implications of these findings are that educators may be making false assumptions about their Year 3-6 children’s perspectives of RfPS, as supported by Laurenson’s (2015) research.

6.3.2 Implication: Acknowledging that Educator RfPS Professional Knowledge Cannot be Assumed

These findings have implications relating to RfPS educator professional knowledge. Firstly, classroom teachers may value and support RfPS theoretically but not have the professional knowledge or skills to build a supportive RfPS culture, enact specific teacher practices or make the physical environment and text collections more conducive (Kucirkova & Cremin, 2018). Secondly, leadership may value RfPS but not have strong professional knowledge to know what teachers and children need structurally to support RfPS, other than provision of funding.
6.3.3 Implication: Valuing Teacher Practices and the Role of the Environment

Primary school educators may be driven by a belief that their positive school culture or positive personal beliefs about reading are sufficient in supporting RfPS in middle to upper primary school. The educator emphasis on culture may support Cremin et al.’s (2014) contention that RfPS teacher practices decrease in middle to upper primary school. This investigation’s findings clearly indicated that teacher practices and a supportive physical environment must be considered for children to engage meaningfully in RfPS, regardless of the perceived presence of a positive reading culture. This finding is supported by Merga’s (2017; 2018) research that reported children desired the practical elements of RfPS: more time, choice, diversity of texts and supportive physical environment. For RfPS to be effectively and equitably implemented, it is also important that educators do not make assumptions that children are being provided with RfPS skills and opportunities outside of the classroom.

6.4 Recommendations

Several recommendations can be made after examining the overarching findings of the research, considering current literature, and identifying the findings’ implications. The recommendations relate to practice, both at the classroom teacher level and the leadership level, and to future research. The following section outlines these recommendations with practical examples of how they could be addressed.

6.4.1 Recommendations for Practice

Recommendations for practice are offered relating to both classroom teachers and leadership educators. Four recommendations for practice have been suggested: classroom-based practical recommendations; creating social environments and engaging in informal book talk and recommendations; promotion of RfPS professional learning; and increased awareness of RfPS within the broader primary school educational context. These four recommendations will be supported by the research findings and literature.

6.4.1.1 Classroom-Based Practical Recommendations. There are several practical recommendations that may support RfPS in middle to upper primary school classrooms, based on this investigation’s findings. Most importantly, as evidenced by the discrepancies of perspectives within this research, educators must initiate conversations with their middle to upper primary school children, and engage in open, inclusive dialogue regarding the
children’s RfPS perspectives and their perceived RfPS needs, to avoid making inaccurate assumptions (Laurenson et al., 2015). Classroom teachers can negotiate regular RfPS time in their weekly timetables and actively involve children in curating the available text collections (Merga, 2017; Merga & Gardiner, 2018). Allocating specific RfPS time and involving children in creating text collections will provide opportunities during class time for classroom teachers to interrogate their children’s RfPS perspectives. At the leadership level, RfPS should be embedded explicitly into schoolwide literacy policies and communicated clearly to classroom teachers, to ensure that RfPS is afforded some priority alongside instructional reading (Merga & Gardiner, 2018).

6.4.1.2 Creating Social Environments and Engaging in Informal Book Talk and Recommendations. As key RfPS pedagogical practices, creating positive social environments and engaging in informal book talk and recommendations should be enacted in more structured, deliberate ways by educators. As recommended by Warrington and George (2014), upper primary school children could be offered regular and structured opportunities to speak about their RfPS texts with either educators or secondary school children. These opportunities acknowledge the children’s enthusiasm for informal book talk and allow them to explore more complex, mature texts with the support of an older peer. Introducing reading challenge programs aimed at increasing children’s engagement with non-fiction texts when RfPS, may also be effective (Alexander & Jarman, 2018). Enacting practical and deliberate strategies to support the creation of positive social environments and engaging in informal book talk and recommendations may help to give RfPS the power and support it needs to remain a valid and desirable activity as children move through upper primary school and into secondary school.

6.4.1.3 Promotion of RfPS Professional Learning. It is vital that educators critically reflect, identify their own strengths and weaknesses in RfPS knowledge, and seek appropriate professional development (Garces-Bacsal et al., 2018). Increased professional learning in RfPS would also ensure that schools’ RfPS pedagogies reflect the current dynamic definition of RfPS, as this investigation’s findings indicated that educators may not be aware of the RfPS pedagogies recommended by current literature and may continue to consider elements of instructional reading pedagogy as synonymous with RfPS pedagogy (Merga & Gardiner, 2018; Merga & Ledger, 2019). Educators who are leaders can support classroom teachers by seeking and promoting RfPS professional learning opportunities, as well as undertaking
professional learning themselves, as leadership support can significantly impact on classroom teacher practices (Merga & Mason, 2019).

### 6.4.1.4 Increased Awareness of RfPS within the Broader Primary School Educational Context.

The Year 3-6 children’s clear desire to engage in RfPS more frequently and in a more structured manner provides justification for the broader educational community and policymakers to prioritise RfPS and acknowledge children’s perspectives. RfPS needs to be drawn into the public discourse and afforded a place in the ongoing primary school literacy dialogue, a place it currently does not hold (Barton & McKay, 2016; Ewing, 2012, 2016). Stronger support from literacy associations for example could boost RfPS awareness in schools and increase educators’ RfPS professional knowledge.

### 6.4.2 Recommendations for Further Research

Further exploration of RfPS pedagogies in more diverse school contexts is required to begin compiling comprehensive insight into the current state of RfPS in Australia. This research focused on a small independent public primary school located within metropolitan Perth, Western Australia, with strong community support and an explicitly child-centred teaching and learning philosophy. Despite the strong child-centred philosophy, there were still notable discrepancies between the children’s and the educators’ perspectives of the RfPS pedagogy in place at their school. Therefore, further studies are needed that focus on schools of differing contexts and demographics, such as larger public/private schools and rural/remote schools. Given the discrepancies between educators and children’s perspectives explored in this research, further research is needed to investigate these differing perspectives more broadly in relation to RfPS.

This investigation’s findings emphasised children’s perspectives and acknowledged that children have valid perspectives that should be considered. Further studies are needed that centralise children’s voices and explore Year 3-6 children’s perspectives of RfPS on a larger scale. Given that technology appeared as a relevant theme within the literature but did not appear within this investigation’s findings, further research is also needed to explore the role of technology in RfPS in middle to upper primary school.
6.5 Concluding Remarks

This investigation was premised on exploring key stakeholders’ perspectives of their school’s Year 3-6 RfPS pedagogy in response to an established decline in RfPS behaviours in middle to upper primary school children. Diverse and unique perspectives were acknowledged by including leadership, classroom teachers and Year 3-6 children as stakeholders in a single-case qualitative case study. This research has contributed to a growing awareness of RfPS in Australian literacy research and proposed recommendations based on the synthesis of literature and this investigation’s findings.

This research has recognised that there is a lack of RfPS support in the broader education community and therefore is at risk of continuing to be de-prioritised in schools. This research also acknowledged noteworthy discrepancies between leadership/classroom teachers’ and Year 3-6 children’s perspectives regarding RfPS. Such discrepancies highlight the importance of educators interrogating their own assumptions and potential misconceptions about RfPS and giving children a voice to express their RfPS values, practices and requests. This research has determined that more professional awareness and knowledge of RfPS pedagogy is needed for RfPS to be effectively implemented by classroom teachers and supported by leadership. The physical spaces and texts available to Year 3-6 children when RfPS also emerged as important factors in establishing meaningful RfPS.

These key findings are interconnected; broader public discourse and support of RfPS in middle to upper primary school is needed to provoke educators to interrogate their own RfPS values and assumptions. This would ideally lead to educators seeking out Year 3-6 children’s perspectives and broadening their knowledge and skills through professional development. With more accurate understandings of both children’s perspectives and professional knowledge of RfPS, the physical spaces and texts available to children may be prioritised, leading to increased meaningful promotion of RfPS in middle to upper primary school.
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Protocol for Semi-Structured Interviews with Educators

Leadership educators

1. What do you believe to be the value of reading for pleasure at school (RfPS) in middle to upper primary school?
   a. What are your personal RfP practices?

2. What RfPS pedagogy do you believe to be in place at your school?
   a. What is your perspective of RfPS within your whole school literacy plans and policies?
   b. What are your perspectives of your school’s RfPS culture?
   c. What do you believe classroom educators need in order to support RfPS?
   d. What is your perspective of your school’s RfPS physical environment?
   e. In what ways do you believe the children’s cultural/linguistic/gender identities/diversities to influence your school’s RfPS pedagogy?

3. What external factors do you believe impact on your school’s RfPS pedagogy?
   a. What is your perspective of RfPS within the Australian Curriculum and broader educational policies?
   b. What do you believe the value of RfPS is within your broader school community?

4. Is there anything else you would like to add about RfPS at your school?

Classroom educators

1. What do you believe to be the value of RfPS in middle to upper primary school?
   a. What are your personal RfP practices?
   b. How do you perceive your own level of knowledge and skills regarding RfPS pedagogy?

2. What RfPS pedagogy do you believe to be in place in your classroom?

3. What is your view of the RfPS pedagogy in place in your classroom?
   a. How does the school culture influence RfPS?
   b. How does your classroom’s physical environment influence RfPS?
c. How diverse are the texts available to children?

d. In what ways do the children’s cultural/linguistic/gender identities/diversities influence your RfPS pedagogy?

4. What external factors do you believe influence your ability to implement RfPS pedagogy?

   a. What is your perspective of RfPS within the Australian Curriculum and broader educational policies?

   b. What is your perspective of RfPS’s value within your school community?

   c. How do leadership educators influence your school’s RfPS pedagogy?

5. Is there anything else you would like to add about RfPS at your school?
Appendix 2: Focus Group Questions for Year 3-6 Children

The following questions will be introduced after the ‘ice-breaker’ activities.

1. What do you think it means to ‘read for fun’ at school?
2. How do you feel about reading for fun at school?
3. What does your school do that makes it easier / harder for you to read for fun?
4. What does your classroom teacher do to make it easier / harder for you to read for fun at school?
   a. Prompts:
      i. Teacher behaviours such as reading aloud, engaging and promoting informal book talk and recommendations
      ii. Physical environment
      iii. Availability / diversity of texts and how they relate to your own culture/identity / interests / ability level
5. What else affects your decision to read for fun or not at school?
6. Would you like your school / classroom teacher to do something else that would encourage you to read for fun more at school?
7. What do you think about when your educator/school:
   a. Reads aloud to the whole class
   b. Lets you talk about books with your peers or talks to you themselves about your reading interests
   c. Lets you bring books in from home
   d. Has a set ‘quiet reading’ time in the classroom
   e. Lets you read whenever you have spare time in the classroom

8. Is there anything else you would like to add about reading for fun at school?

The children will then be provided with pencils and paper and asked to draw and/or write their perspective of what reading for fun looks like/feels like/sounds like in their school (Y-chart - facilitator to model).
Appendix 3: Information Sheets for Participants

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION SHEET

Your child is invited to participate in the research project described below.

**Perspectives of Reading for Pleasure pedagogy in Western Australian primary school classrooms.**

*If you would like to participate in this study, please return consent forms by this Friday 10th December, either by emailing directly to Jess on jess.nailer@nd.edu.au or by returning a hard copy to the school.*

*We will contact you on your provided phone number to arrange the focus groups which will take place on the University of Notre Dame campus next week (week starting Monday 13th December).*

Would you like this Information Sheet to be translated into a language other than English? _

Which language would you like this information to be translated into? _______________

**What is the project about?**

The research project will investigate educators’ and children’s perspectives of the Reading for Pleasure pedagogy (teaching and learning strategies) that are happening at their school. Reading for Pleasure has many benefits to both children and educators, particularly in Years 3-6 as this is when children’s reading attitudes and practices tend to change.

This project hopes to add to the growing body of research bringing Reading for Pleasure back into the literacy conversation in Australia.

**Who is undertaking the project?**

This project is being conducted by Jess Nailer and will form the basis for the degree of Master of Philosophy at The University of Notre Dame Australia, under the supervision of Dee O’Connor and Christine Robinson.

**What will my child be asked to do?**
If you and your child consent to take part in this research study, it is important that you understand the purpose of the study and the tasks your child will be asked to complete. Please discuss this with your child and make sure that any questions that you and your child have are answered to your satisfaction before you agree to allow your child to participate.

Your child will be asked to:

- Participate in one small focus group session with the aim of discussing the Reading for Pleasure pedagogy in place at their school. The focus group will consist of 4-5 children from Years 3-6 and will be audio-recorded. It will occur at the University of Notre Dame campus and should take approximately 30 minutes. An assistant will be present to provide technical support and additional supervision if needed.

- Engage in a short ice-breaker activity followed by some semi-guided discussion around Reading for Pleasure at their school, for example “How do you feel about ‘reading for fun’ at school?” Your child will then also be given the option to draw or write any additional responses before concluding.

- Spend approximately ten minutes at an appropriate time during the school day early next year discussing a written summary of the focus group themes to check its accuracy.

*Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?*

To minimise the very low risk of social discomfort or anxiety participating in this project, the focus group will be conducted by an experienced primary school educator. Clear guidelines and boundaries will be established at the start of the focus group, and your child is permitted to leave the focus group at any time with no negative consequences. If your child experiences any strong feelings, we will communicate this immediately to their classroom teacher.

*What are the benefits of the research project?*

There are no immediate benefits for participating. The general benefit of participating in this project is that it will contribute to recent research focusing on Reading for Pleasure in Western Australian primary classrooms. It will collect data from leadership educators, teaching educators and children to create a rich and diverse picture of the pedagogy in place at your school.
What if my child changes their mind?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you consent, you can withdraw your child from the study at any time without giving a reason and with no negative consequences. If your child decides they no longer want to participate, they only need to inform their teacher or someone from the research team. If your child withdraws, all information you and your child have provided can be removed if you choose. Please note that data cannot be removed once the transcripts have been made and audio-recordings deleted as all information is de-identified during this process.

Will anyone else know the results of the project?

Information gathered about you and your child will be held in strict confidence. This confidence will only be broken if required by law.

Your child may choose or be allocated a pseudonym based on his or her favourite fictional character during the focus group to protect their identity on the audio-recording. The audio-recording will be transcribed and stored on a password protected computer and any handwritten notes stored in a locked cabinet. Audio-recordings will be saved under a pseudonym and deleted once transcriptions are completed. Only the researchers will have access to this information during the project.

Once the study is completed, the data collected from you and your child will be de-identified and stored securely in the School of Education at The University of Notre Dame Australia for at least a period of seven years. The results of the study will be published as a thesis.

Will I be able to find out the results of the project?

Once we have analysed the information from this study, we will email a summary of our findings to the school which will then be made available to you. You can expect to receive this feedback in approximately twelve months.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?

If you have any questions about this project, please feel free to contact Jess Nailer at 0408 627 862 or jess.nailer@nd.edu.au. Alternatively, you can contact Dee O’Connor at at (+61 8) 9433 0151 or dee.oconnor@nd.edu.au. We are happy to discuss with you any concerns you may have about this study.
What if I have a concern or complaint?

The study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at The University of Notre Dame Australia (approval number 2021-035F). If you have a concern or complaint regarding the ethical conduct of this research project and would like to speak to an independent person, please contact Notre Dame’s Ethics Officer at (+61 8) 9433 0943 or research@nd.edu.au. Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

How does my child sign up to participate?

If you are happy for your child to participate, please sign two copies of the consent form, keep one for yourself and either email the other directly to Jess at jess.nailer@nd.edu.au or return in hard copy to the school by Friday 10th December.

Thank you for your time. This sheet is for you to keep.

Yours sincerely,

Jess Nailer
 PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET - CHILDREN

Perspectives of Reading for Pleasure pedagogy in Western Australian primary school classrooms.

What do you think about reading for fun at school?

Hello!
My name is Jess and I am doing a research study to find out more about reading for fun at your school.

I am asking you to be in my study because you are in Year 3-6 and it’s important for us to know what you think about reading for fun at school.

You can decide if you want to take part in the study or not. You don’t have to - it is up to you. This sheet tells you what we will ask you to do, and this will help you decide if you would like to take part or not. You can talk to your mum/dad guardian/teacher about it, and you call me on 0408 627 862 if you have any questions.

If you decide you want to be in the study and then change your mind later, that’s OK. All you need to do is tell me or your teacher that you don’t want to be in the study anymore.

What will I be asked to do?
If you say yes, we will ask you to do these things:
• Have a small group discussion about reading for fun at your school. If you say it’s OK, we will record your voice during this discussion.

• You might also like to write or draw your ideas about reading for fun at school at the end of the discussion. If you say it’s OK, I’ll take your writing and drawing with me to look at later.

When we ask you questions, you can choose which ones you want to answer. If you don’t want to talk about something, that’s ok. You can stop talking to us at any time if you don’t want to talk to us anymore.

**Will anyone else know what I say in the study?**

We won’t tell anyone else what you say to us, except if you talk about someone hurting you or about you hurting yourself or someone else. Then we might need to tell someone to keep you and other people safe.

All of the notes that we have about you from the study will be stored in a safe place and we will look after them very carefully. We will write a report about the study and show it to other people, but we won’t print your name in the report and no one will know that you were in the study.

**Are there any good things about being in the study?**

You won’t get anything for being in the study, but you will be helping us do our research.

**Are there any bad things about being in the study?**

This study will take up some of your time, but we don’t think it will be bad for you or cost you anything. If you feel worried or unsure at any time during discussion, you can tell me and you can leave the discussion and go back to your classroom straight away.

**This sheet is for you to keep.**
Appendix 4: Consent Forms

CONSENT FORM PARENT/GUARDIAN
Perspectives of Reading for Pleasure pedagogy in Western Australian primary school classrooms.

Would you like this Consent Form to be translated into a language other than English? ____
Which language would you like this information to be translated into? __________________

- I agree to allow my child to take part in this research project and to be contacted on the phone number below to arrange a focus group.
- I have read the Information Sheet provided and been given a full explanation of the purpose of this study, the procedures involved and of what is expected of my child.
- I understand that my child will be asked to: participate in a small focus group that will ask them to talk, draw and/or write about their perspectives of reading for fun at school. The focus group will take approximately 30 minutes and be held on the University of Notre Dame campus in the school holidays.
- The researcher has answered all my questions and has explained possible problems that may arise as a result of my child’s participation in this study.
- I understand that my child may withdraw or that I may withdraw my child from the research project at any time without the need for an explanation.
- I understand that all information provided by me or my child is treated as confidential and will not be released by the researcher to a third party unless required to do so by law.
- I agree that any research data gathered for the study may be published provided my name or my child’s name or other identifying information is not disclosed.

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<th>Name of parent/guardian</th>
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<td>Contact number</td>
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<tr>
<th>Signature of parent/guardian</th>
<th>Date</th>
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Researcher to complete: I confirm that I have provided the Information Sheet concerning this research project to the above participant, explained what participating involves and have answered all questions asked of me.

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<th>Signature of Researcher</th>
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CONSENT FORM CHILDREN

Perspectives of Reading for Pleasure pedagogy in Western Australian primary school classrooms.

Reading for fun at school

- I would like to take part in this project.
- I am happy for you to ask me questions about reading for fun at school.
- I am happy for you to record my voice and collect my drawings/writings.
- I understand that I can change my mind about taking part in the project at any time.

Would you like to take part in this project?

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<td>Signature of child</td>
<td>Date</td>
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- I confirm that I have provided the Information Sheet concerning this research project to the above child and parent/guardian, explained what participating involves and have answered all questions asked of me.

| Signature of Researcher | Date |