

The Sirius Reader

Welcome to our first edition of The Sirius Reader, highlighting all things reading and literacy based within the academy.



Ten books to read before Secondary School



Author Visits



A key highlight has been the number of visiting authors who have shared their work and experiences with our students. We welcomed Simon James



Green, Nadine Aisha Jassat, Alastair Chisholm, Jeffrey Boakye and Clare Harlow—all of whom brought different perspectives and genres to life for our KS3 students. These events were hugely successful with our students, giving them a valuable opportunity to ask questions, hear directly from published writers, and think about books in new ways.

Reading Ambassadors

This year we also introduced a team of 14 KS3 Reading Ambassadors. These students were selected for their enthusiasm and commitment to reading, and they've taken on an important role in promoting a love of books across the academy. From helping to support events such as World Book Day, to recommending reads to their peers, they've made a real contribution to the school's reading culture. All 14 reading ambassadors also took part in The James Reckitt book awards, reading the shortlisted books throughout the year, taking part in author events and attending The Big Malarky event. For students interested in becoming a reading ambassador in September, please pop into the library and speak to Mrs Chapman or chat to Mrs Rhodes in 305.

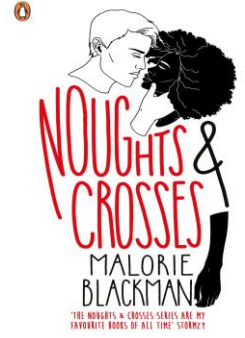
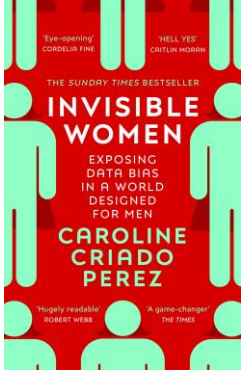
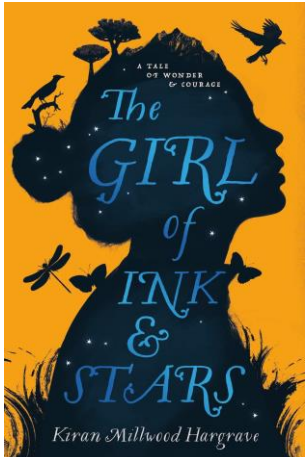


School's Out—Time to Dive Into a Good Book!

As the school gates close for the holidays, it's the perfect time to unwind and let your imagination roam. Whether you're heading to the beach, relaxing at home, or exploring new places, why not take a book along for the journey? Reading is a wonderful way to escape, discover new worlds, and keep your mind sharp while school's out. So, find a cozy spot, pick up a great story, and let the adventure begin!

Here are some recommended reads to get you started...

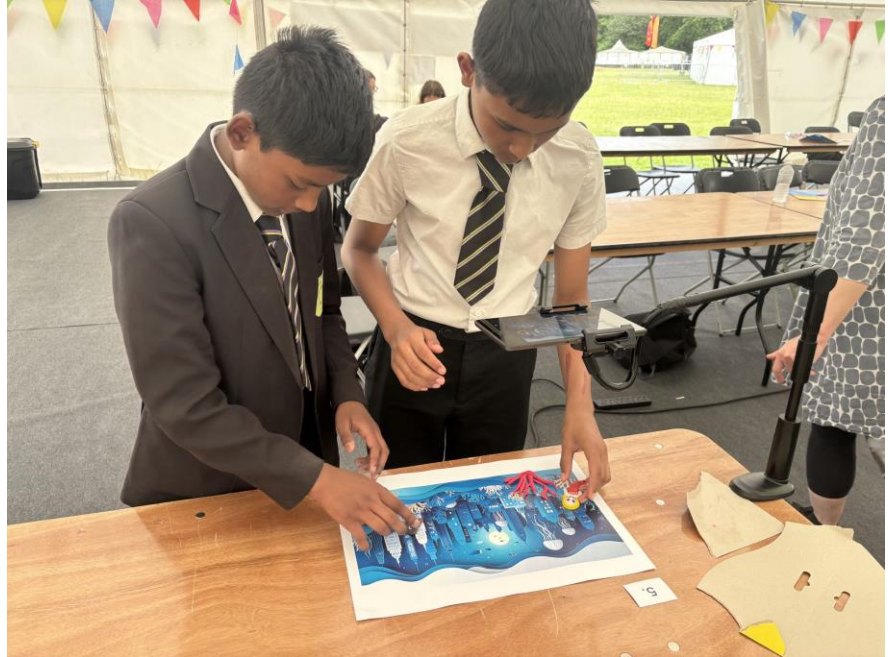
	<p>Age 12-16</p>	<p>An inspiring true story of courage, education, and resilience. Malala's voice encourages young people to value their education and speak up for what is right.</p>
	<p>Age 14-18</p>	<p>A clever and suspenseful mystery that follows a student investigating a closed murder case for her school project. Twists, turns, and a strong female lead make it a page-turner.</p>
	<p>Age 14-18</p>	<p>A powerful and thought-provoking novel that explores themes of identity, justice, and activism through the eyes of a teenage girl. It sparks important conversations about race and society.</p>
	<p>Age 12+</p>	<p>This heartwarming and deeply empathetic novel follows August Pullman, a boy with a facial difference, as he navigates starting school for the first time. It's a powerful story about kindness, acceptance, and the courage to be yourself.</p>

	Age 13-17	<p>A gripping dystopian story that flips societal power structures and challenges readers to think critically about prejudice and privilege.</p>
	Age 15+	<p>A powerful look at how the world is built for men—and why that needs to change. Eye-opening and essential.</p>
	Age 12+	<p>When her best friend goes missing, Isabella, a mapmaker's daughter, ventures into a forbidden land filled with legends and danger. A beautifully written tale of bravery, friendship, and the power of stories.</p>



Sirius, Student, Shine at The Big Malarkey Festival

What an inspiring experience our students had at this year's **Big Malarkey Festival** in East Park! Over two exciting days, students from Sirius Academy West immersed themselves in creativity, storytelling, and laughter through a series of exceptional workshops.



On **Thursday**, a larger group of students took part in three standout sessions:

- 📄 **Comedy Writing with Simon James Green** – where students explored how humour can shape powerful, relatable stories.
- 🎨 **Art Masterclass with Kev F** – a hands-on dive into comic book art and character design.
- 🎬 **"What If?" Animation Workshop** – where imagination ran wild as students brought their ideas to life through animation.



On the first day, our **Reading Ambassadors** attended the festival to take part in the **James Reckitt Hull Children's Book Award voting ceremony**. These students have been reading and reviewing the shortlisted titles over the past term, and this event was the exciting culmination of their efforts—casting their votes and celebrating the power of reading with other young book lovers from across the city.

Throughout the festival, our students represented Sirius Academy West with pride, showing outstanding creativity, curiosity, and conduct. We couldn't be prouder of their participation in this celebration of stories and ideas! ☀️



Promoting Reading Through Rewards



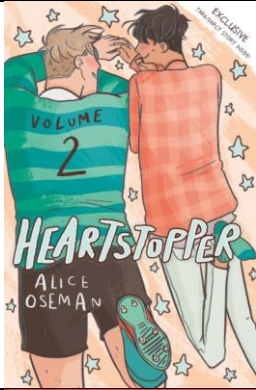
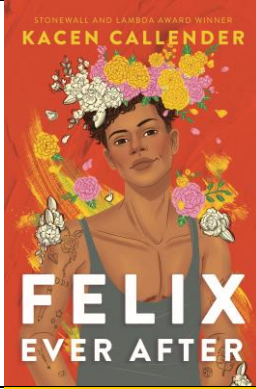
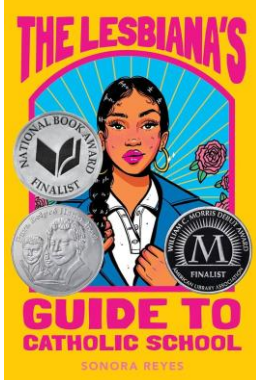
progress.

We introduced new reading rewards this year to recognise students who read aloud in lessons, help their peers with reading, or show determination when tackling more difficult texts. These students were entered into a weekly prize draw, with winners receiving a book from our fantastic book vending machine, a "Star Reader" badge, and a small treat. Library cards were also launched for students who read three or more books in a half term. This has proven popular, with many students eager to take part and keep track of their reading

Celebrating Pride Month Through Reading

Pride Month is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate diversity, inclusion, and the power of being true to yourself. In our school library, we're marking the month by highlighting books that explore LGBTQ+ voices, stories, and histories. From heartfelt coming-of-age novels to inspiring memoirs and powerful poetry, these reads help foster empathy, understanding, and respect. By engaging with a wide range of perspectives, students can see themselves reflected in stories—and also step into someone else's shoes. Reading is one of the most meaningful ways we can celebrate Pride and support a more inclusive school community.

Here are some Pride reading recommendations to explore...

	Age 12+	<p>A sweet, inclusive graphic novel series about friendship, love, and coming out.</p>
	Age 14+	<p>A powerful story about identity, self-worth, and being unapologetically yourself, featuring a Black transgender teen.</p>
	Age 14+	<p>A funny, heartfelt story about a queer teen navigating faith, family, and first love.</p>

Short Stories

We've launched a new reading initiative in the LRC where students can enjoy a selection of short stories printed and made available each week. These stories are carefully chosen to be engaging, accessible, and varied in genre, giving students the chance to explore different styles and voices in literature. Whether they have a few spare minutes or want to take something home, the initiative encourages a love of reading by making it easy and enjoyable to pick up a story at their leisure.

Drop Everything and Read (DEAR)

DEAR Time: Embedding a Love of Reading at KS3

Our half-termly DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) events continue to play a vital role in promoting reading for pleasure across Key Stage 3. These sessions—ranging from focused reading lessons to multi-part storytelling—have become a valued part of our school culture, helping to make reading a regular and enjoyable experience. We've explored a variety of engaging texts, including seasonal themes for Valentine's Day, Easter, and Christmas, as well as thought-provoking short stories like Roald Dahl's *The Landlady* and a motivating extract from *Atomic Habits* by James Clear. Each session offers students the chance to pause, reflect, and connect with texts in meaningful ways.



World Book Day Across the Academy



World Book Day itself was a whole-school effort. Staff decorated classroom doors with their favourite books, creating a vibrant display across the academy. We ran various competitions, another author event, and again joined in the “Booky and Footy” quiz. The day helped spotlight reading in a fun and inclusive way. World Book Day is also a highlight in the academic calendar as it is great to see the whole academy come together to celebrate a love of reading and literature.

Remember to keep an eye out for World Book Day in March 2026 for lots of fun and engaging activities celebrating reading and literature.