



Our Lady & St Bede
Catholic Academy

READING MATTERS.



Happy New Year

Hello!

Welcome to the January edition of the Library Newsletter, a month of reflection, curiosity, and (despite the weather) a lot of energy in the library.

January marks Holocaust Memorial Month, a time to remember the victims of the Holocaust and other genocides happening even now. . Through reading, discussion, and quiet reflection, the library continues to be a space where pupils can engage with history, empathy, and the importance of standing against prejudice and hatred in all its forms.



It has also been a busy and vibrant start to the year. Pupils across year groups have been trying out different activities in the library. From reading challenges to creative and social spaces , Year 11 have been our busiest visitors, using the library consistently for revision as they prepare for their Pre-Public Examinations. Their focus and determination have been brilliant to see.



Looking ahead, February will bring even more library activities, displays, and opportunities for pupils to get involved, whether for revision, reading for pleasure, or simply finding a calm space during the school day.

We're also proud to be celebrating the National Year of Reading, a reminder of the power of books to inform, comfort, challenge, and inspire. Whether it's one page or one chapter at a time, every bit of reading counts.

Wishing you a fantastic start to the year filled with great books and wonderful discoveries.

Happy Reading!



Ms. Jawaid

Librarian and Reading lead



LIBRARY FAQs

A reading book is an essential part of your school equipment, make sure that you are prepared by dropping to check out a book from your library.

Opening Hours:

The Library is **open** at the following times:

Before school from 8.00am to 8.15am

At break time from 10:05am to 10:20am

At lunch time 12:20pm to 1:15 pm

After school from 3:20pm to 4pm (except Fridays, when the library **closes** at 3:30)

Our school library provides students with an opportunity to celebrate reading in a relaxing environment.

Here, you can take out books, read, complete independent study, or enjoy one of our many exciting enrichment opportunities:

Monday lunch (second half): Multicultural Club

Tuesday lunch (second half): Dungeons and Dragons Club

Wednesday lunch (second half): Pokémon Club

Thursday lunch (second half): Student Librarians' Meeting

Friday lunch (second half): Social Justice Club

Borrowing Rules:

Book Limit: 2 books at one time.

Loan period: 2 weeks.

Need more time? To renew any materials, books must be shown to the librarian.

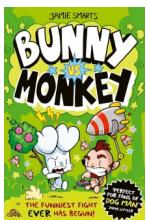
Current issues of magazines and research material may be issued with special permission.

Books should be kept in good condition.

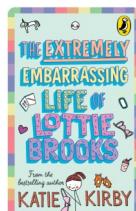
Late book? Lost book? Damaged book? Accidents happen! Please speak to Ms. Jawaid.

New Year...New You!

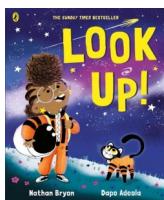
As we head into the New Year, it's clear that even our favourite book characters are terrible at keeping resolutions. Lottie Brooks swears she'll stop overthinking (she absolutely won't), and classic characters make big plans that go wrong almost immediately. Luckily, that's what makes stories so fun. If characters can mess up, learn, and try again, so can we — and at least our New Year's resolutions don't usually involve solving crimes, surviving haunted animatronics, or accidentally starting a revolution. The most important



STOP ARGUING WITH MONKEY.
- BUNNY



Stop over thinking!
- Lottie



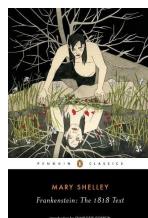
More space less screens!
- Rocket



Respect personal space.
- Freddy Fazbear



Start self-care.
- Boxer



Take responsibility for my actions.
—Victor Frankenstein



Get more sleep.
- Lady Macbeth



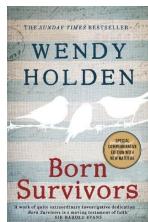
I will not overreact.
-Olive

If you've set yourself a new resolution for 2026 or need to set one, it's not too late! Check out our recommended reads to help you reach your goal!

Librarian's Recommendations

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY

Holocaust Memorial Day reminds us of the importance of remembering, bearing witness, and challenging prejudice wherever it appears. Reading personal stories helps pupils move beyond statistics to understand the real human lives affected by the Holocaust. The following books are recommended to support empathy, historical understanding, and reflection.

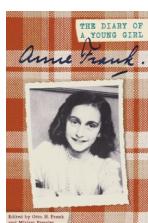


Born Survivors – Wendy Holden

The true story of three women who gave birth in Nazi concentration camps and kept their babies alive against unimaginable odds.

Why I recommend it:

This book highlights extraordinary resilience and courage while centering women's experiences during the Holocaust.

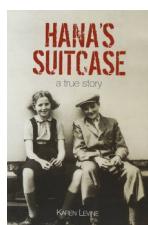


The Diary of a Young Girl – Anne Frank

Anne Frank's diary records her life in hiding during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, offering an intimate and honest account of fear, hope, and growing up during war.

Why I recommend it:

This is an essential text for understanding the Holocaust through a young person's voice. Anne's humanity, curiosity, and optimism make history personal.



Hana's Suitcase – Karen Levine

The story of a suitcase sent to a Holocaust education centre in Japan, and the journey to uncover the life of Hana Brady, a young girl murdered at Auschwitz.

Why I recommend it:

This book shows how remembrance crosses borders and generations. It encourages enquiry, compassion, and responsibility in remembering victims as individuals, not numbers.



The Book Thief – Markus Zusak

Set in Nazi Germany and narrated by Death, this novel follows a young girl who finds solace in stealing and sharing books during the war.

Why I recommend it:

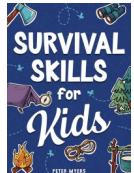
Through fiction, the book explores moral choice, resistance, and the power of words. It helps students think critically about complicity, courage, and humanity.

Holocaust Memorial Day is not only about remembering the past — it is about learning for the future. These books invite students to listen, reflect, and consider their own responsibility in standing up against hatred and injustice today.

Student Librarian's Recommendations

The new year is the perfect time to try something new and our Student Librarians have chosen books that inspire learning, curiosity, creativity, and motivation. Whether your resolution is to gain a new skill, explore a new interest, or simply read more, these picks are a brilliant place to start.

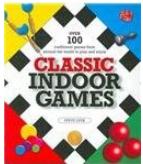
Annie recommends:



Survival Skills for Kids by Peter Meyer

A practical guide packed with real-world survival knowledge: from staying safe outdoors to being prepared in unexpected situations. Ideal for readers who enjoy hands-on learning and problem-solving.

Sophia recommends:



Classic Indoor Games by Steve Luck

Featuring over 100 traditional indoor games from around the world, this book encourages screen-free fun with friends and family. A great choice for anyone looking to try a new hobby or bring people together.

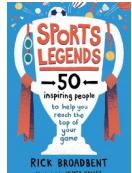
Aryanna recommends:



Ghosts of Science Past by Joseph Sieracki and Jesse Lonergan

A visually stunning graphic novel that explores major scientific discoveries, brilliant minds, and the mysteries of the universe. Perfect for curious readers who want to learn through storytelling and illustration.

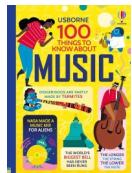
Isabelle recommends:



Sports Legends by Rick Broadbent

Discover the inspiring journeys of famous athletes and sporting heroes. A motivating read for anyone setting a New Year's resolution to get fitter, stronger, or more confident.

Ellie recommends



100 Things to Know About Music by Jerome Martin

An engaging introduction to music history, science, styles, and instruments. Ideal for music lovers or anyone wanting to deepen their musical knowledge in a fun, accessible way.

Why not make reading your resolution this year?

You don't need to read for hours, even 10 minutes a day can boost focus, knowledge, and wellbeing.

Visit the library, ask a Student Librarian for a recommendation, and start the year with a book that genuinely interests you.

Library Events

One of the most important moments this month was the commemoration of Holocaust Memorial Day. Through guided discussions in Social Justice Club, pupils explored not only the history of the Holocaust, but also the wider themes of prejudice, discrimination, and why remembering the past matters today. Conversations focused on anti-racism, standing up to injustice, and understanding how harmful language and stereotypes can affect individuals and communities. Pupils showed maturity and thoughtfulness in these discussions, asking challenging questions and reflecting on how lessons from history apply to the modern world. These sessions reinforced the message that "Never Again" means never again for anyone, anywhere.



Alongside this, Culture Club has been buzzing with curiosity and excitement as pupils have been learning about how different cultures around the world welcome the New Year. We explored traditions such as Hogmanay in Scotland, where celebrations include music, fire festivals, and the idea of "first-footing" to bring good luck for the year ahead. Pupils were fascinated by how customs vary from place to place while still sharing the same hope for a fresh start.



As well as being a space for enrichment and discussion, the library has continued to support pupils academically. Throughout January, the library has remained open after school for quiet revision sessions, providing a calm, focused environment for homework, reading, and exam preparation. These sessions have been particularly popular with older pupils preparing for assessments, and staff are always on hand to help pupils find resources or recommend revision materials.



Our library is than just a place for books — it is a space for reflection, learning, discussion, and support. As we move into February, we look forward to more cultural celebrations, reading activities, and opportunities for pupils to use the library as a place to grow, think, and succeed.

