



Our Lady & St Bede  
Catholic Academy

# READING MATTERS



## Welcome to the June Edition of Our Library Newsletter

Dear Readers,

As we enter the final weeks of the school year, this June edition arrives with both joy and reflection.

We were deeply saddened by the recent loss of one of our pupils, and our hearts remain with their family and friends. In times like these, we are reminded of the strength of our school community and the importance of our shared faith. As a Catholic school, we continue to draw on our values of compassion, hope, and unity as we support one another and persevere together.

This month also brought moments of light and celebration. Our Culture Day Festival was a true highlight. It was an uplifting and colourful celebration of the rich diversity within our school. Thank you to everyone who contributed, participated, and helped us learn more about one another's stories and traditions.

We also marked Refugee Week 2025 (June 16–22), with the theme of "Healing," we are reminded of the many ways people find strength through struggle. Our book displays and library resources this month invite pupils to explore stories of resilience, belonging, and a meaningful opportunity to grow in empathy and understanding.

Thank you for being part of our library family and for walking with us through both the joyful and difficult moments of school life.

We invite you to reflect with us through this prayer:

### A Prayer for Healing and Hope

God of compassion,  
Be near to the broken-hearted and the weary.  
Heal the wounds that cannot be seen, and comfort all who grieve.  
May our school be a place of kindness, peace, and renewal.  
Help us to build a community where all are welcomed, and no one is forgotten.  
Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Wishing you peace, healing, and inspiration this month,





# Library Events



## Celebrating Unity in Diversity: Multicultural Club's 2nd Annual Culture Day Festival

The school came alive with colour, flavour, and joy as the Multicultural Club proudly hosted its 2nd Annual Culture Day Festival. It was a vibrant celebration of the many cultures that make up our school community.

This year, pupils representing 18 different countries shared their rich heritage through food, traditional dance, powerful presentations, and displays of clothing and artefacts that told stories beyond words.

From the rhythmic beat of the Philippine's *Tinikling* dance sticks to the delicate movements of classical Pakistani dance, *Kathak*, the day was filled with moments of pride, beauty, and discovery.

Pupils wore traditional attire with confidence, explaining the meanings behind patterns, fabrics, and cultural symbols with passion. Tables were lined with artefacts from handwoven baskets, musical instruments, and family heirlooms each item a piece of someone's history, generously shared.

But perhaps the most talked-about part of the





festival was the food. The Sports Hall was full of tasting stations, offering bites of homemade dishes from across the globe: spicy jollof rice, flaky pakoras, empanadas, lumpia, dumplings, and so much more. It was not only a feast for the senses but a bridge between communities.

The festival isn't just about celebration; it is about connection. Through every performance and every conversation, pupils learned more about one another, saw new perspectives, and recognised the shared values beneath our differences: family, tradition, resilience, and pride.

A heartfelt thank you goes to every pupil who participated, every family who contributed, and every teacher and volunteer who supported this incredible event.

The Multicultural Club has once again proven that our diversity is one of our greatest strengths and that when we come together to celebrate it, we create something truly beautiful.





# Librarian's Recommendations

Refugee Week takes place from 16 to 22 June 2025.

This year's theme is "Healing", exploring the power of community, creativity, and care in building a better future together.

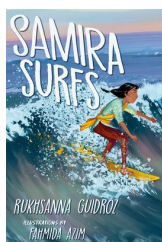
Join us in showing solidarity, sharing stories, and working toward a world where everyone can heal and thrive through our selection of reads. Each story offers a window into the experiences of people who have been forced to flee their homes, highlighting not only the challenges they face but also the strength, resilience, and hope that carry them forward. Through characters who rebuild their lives, process grief, and find comfort in friendship, family, and creativity, these books help readers of all ages explore what healing can look like after trauma. By engaging with these stories, pupils can develop empathy, deepen their understanding of the refugee experience, and consider how we can all contribute to making our communities more welcoming, supportive, and inclusive. Check out a few of our recommendations below and visit the library to explore powerful voices, unique experiences, and thought-provoking perspectives that highlight the journeys of refugees and the strength of our shared humanity.



## **Halfway to Somewhere**

By Jose Pimental

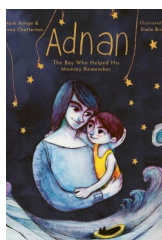
This graphic novel follows Ave, who moves from Mexico to the US amid her parents' divorce. She arrives in a strange place with half her family—and struggles with language, identity, and finding a sense of home. A beautifully illustrated tale of cultural transition and belonging.



## **Samira Surfs**

By Rukhsanna Guidroz,

Eleven-year-old Rohingya refugee Samira finds solace and empowerment in joining a girls' surf club in Cox's Bazar. Through sport and sisterhood, she heals from trauma and isolation. This novel-in-verse is a tender ode to healing through community and self-belief.



## **Adnan: The Boy Who Helped His Mummy Remember**

By Mark Arrigo & Steven Chatterton

Ten-year-old Adnan, a Syrian refugee now in the UK, notices his mother struggling—sinking into PTSD after their traumatic journey. To help her reconnect with happier memories, he crafts scenes from their past using found materials, determined to bring her back to joy. The book sensitively addresses trauma and recovery, spotlighting healing through creativity, love, and resilience. It also supports the charity Choose Love, donating 2% of the cover price to their refugee work.

# Library Events



Pupils enthusiastically participated in the Carnegie Medal Shadowing 2025, diving into this year's shortlisted books from mid-March. They loved debating the characters, sharing their own reviews online, and eagerly voting in the Shadowers' Choice to see how their favourite stories stacked up against the official judges' picks.

The official Carnegie Medal for Writing was awarded to Margaret McDonald for *Glasgow Boys*, a powerful debut about friendship and trauma, while Olivia Lomenech Gill won the Illustration Medal for her stunning artwork in *Clever Crow*.

In the Shadowers' Choice Awards, which are voted on by the pupils themselves, the Writing Medal went to Nathanael Lessore's *King of Nothing*, a hilarious and touching YA tale about a teen's journey beyond bullying and peer pressure and The Illustration Shadowers' Medal was awarded to Theo Parish's *Homebody*, a nuanced graphic novel exploring trans and non-binary identity that resonated deeply with young readers.

The library's Shadowing Group gives pupils a powerful outlet to express their opinions, fostered their love of reading, and provided a vibrant way to connect with the stories and creators behind these celebrated works.

All of the shortlisted books are available to check out from the library catalogue, so stop by and have a look.



## In Loving Memory: Supporting One Another Through Grief

This past month, our school community was shaken by the unexpected and heartbreaking loss of one of our pupils. In the quiet spaces of our hearts and hallways, we carry the weight of sorrow and questions that often have no easy answers.

As a Catholic school, we turn to our faith for comfort, knowing that God is especially near to the broken hearted. . In our grief, we know that Christ walks beside us, and that love, especially the love rooted in God, never ends.

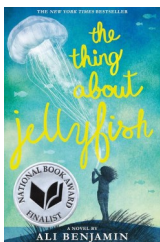
Our library remains a place of quiet reflection, peace, and hope. Books can offer comfort, understanding, and connection when words are hard to find. Below is a carefully chosen list of fiction and nonfiction titles that explore grief, mental health, and emotional healing.



### A Kids Book About Death

By Taryn Schuelke

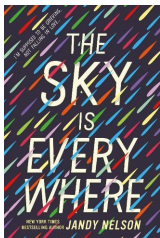
A gentle, clear book that explains death with honesty and care. This nonfiction title helps younger readers feel safe talking about life, loss, and love.



### The Thing About Jellyfish

By Ali Benjamin

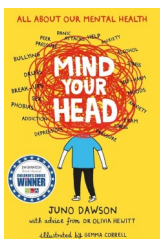
After her friend's sudden death, Suzy is consumed by grief and questions. Convinced it must have a scientific explanation, she embarks on a journey through silence, memory, and understanding.



### The Sky Is Everywhere

By Jandy Nelson

After her sister's sudden death, Lennie navigates overwhelming grief and the complexities of first love. Poetic, emotional, and deeply human.



### Mind Your Head

By Juno Dawson

A smart, accessible guide to mental health written specifically for teens, covering topics like anxiety, depression, self-care, and getting help.

Our prayers are with the family and friends of our dear pupil. May their soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. And may we hold one another close in love and kindness in the days ahead.

