



17 July 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

Sports Day, House Competitions, Summer Awards Evening, Reading Bulletin, Years 7 to 10 and Year 12 Reports, Uniform Donations, Summer Site Closure & IT Services

As we move towards the end of another busy and successful academic year, I wanted to share a few updates and reflections from what has been a fantastic week at the Academy.

Unfortunately, Mr Hardy remains unwell and therefore I have once again had the privilege of serving as Acting Head Teacher this week. Whilst we continue to wish him a full and speedy recovery, it has been a pleasure to see our school community at its very best during what has been an exceptionally busy period.

Sports Day

This week's Sports Day was a tremendous success and a wonderful celebration of our school values. It was fantastic to see students throwing themselves wholeheartedly into the day, demonstrating excellent levels of engagement, determination and sportsmanship. Whether competing, supporting their peers or helping the event run smoothly, students showed a real sense of community, encouraging one another and celebrating achievements together. The resilience and positive attitudes displayed throughout the day were a credit to our students, and we thank all staff who worked so hard to make the event possible.

House Competitions

Our House competitions have continued to bring energy, enthusiasm and a healthy sense of rivalry to school life. These events provide students with valuable opportunities to work together, contribute to a shared goal and strengthen the sense of belonging within their House communities. It has been particularly pleasing to see students demonstrating our values of community and aspiration, striving to do their best whilst supporting others around them. The pride students have shown in representing their Houses has been wonderful to witness.

Summer Awards Evening

It was a privilege to attend our Summer Awards Evening and celebrate the many accomplishments of our students. The evening provided an opportunity for us all to pause and reflect on the achievements, progress and perseverance demonstrated throughout the year. The awards recognised not only academic excellence but also commitment, character and contribution to school life. The stories shared during the evening perfectly captured our value of aspiration, highlighting what can be achieved through hard work, determination and a willingness to embrace opportunities. Congratulations to all award recipients and thank you to families for joining us in celebrating their success.

Reading Bulletin

Please find attached the final Reading Bulletin of the year.

It contains important information regarding changes to our DEAR programme for September and details of how we have been celebrating the National Year of Reading here at SRPA, plus some useful recommendations of good holiday reads for students and parents!

Year 7 to 10 and Year 12 Reports

We are pleased to confirm that Year 7-10 End of Year Reports and Tutor Reports, together with Year 12 reports, will be published shortly and made available through Go4Schools. These reports provide an opportunity to reflect on the achievements, progress and contributions made throughout the academic year, whilst also identifying next steps and aspirations for the year ahead.

We encourage parents and carers to take time to review these reports with their child and celebrate the successes and progress that have been made over the course of the year.

Uniform Donations

We would be very grateful for any kind donations of school uniform and PE kit that families no longer need. Thank you to everyone who has already donated winter coats. We are pleased to let you know that we currently have a good supply of these. Donations of uniform and PE kit can be dropped off at reception and will be gratefully received. Please note that, following our building works, the site will partially reopen from **3 August**, and donations can also be brought in during the summer holidays from that date onwards. Thank you for your continued support and generosity.

Summer Site Closure and IT Services

As part of essential maintenance work taking place during the summer holiday, there will be a planned shutdown of school servers and IT systems during the first few days of the break. Whilst backup power arrangements will be in place to support the maintenance programme, some school services may be temporarily unavailable during this period.

Parents and students may experience limited access to systems including email communications and Go4Schools, and we therefore encourage anyone wishing to access reports or download important information to do so before the end of term.

Please also note that the school's enquiries email service and reception function will be unavailable on **Thursday 23 July and Friday 24 July** whilst this work takes place. Any enquiries received immediately before this period will be responded to as soon as possible once services resume.

We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause and thank you for your understanding as we undertake this important work to improve the reliability and resilience of our systems for the future.



With just a few days of the school year remaining, I think it is fair to say that students and staff alike are looking forward to a well-earned summer break. Before then, however, we look forward to welcoming everyone back for the final three days of term, where there will be further opportunities to celebrate the year that has passed and bring another successful academic year to a close.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support throughout the year.

Best wishes for a lovely weekend.

Yours faithfully



Mrs R J Gilbert
Acting Head Teacher





Sir Robert Pattinson Academy

Reading Bulletin 2026
Term 6

Welcome and Overview



Welcome to our latest Reading Bulletin. Since we last wrote to you, we have been busy with driving forward our reading agenda.

In this edition you will find: a look back at how we celebrated World Book Day; an introduction to our new whole-year DEAR approach; a fresh set of book recommendations for students and parents/carers alike; an update on improvements in reading using Reading Plus; news about a budding author of our own; and a round-up of reading events taking place locally and nationally later this year.

Celebrating World Book Day 2026

World Book Day this year once again saw students take part in our book review competition and our reading recommendations treasure hunt, with the whole Academy joining in across the day.

For the book review competition, students submitted reviews of the opening sections of five books they read during each lesson throughout the day. The standard of entries was excellent and made selecting winners rather difficult! The strongest entry from each House and year group earned its author a copy of the book they had championed and had found most intriguing. Winners were invited to a celebration in the Library during R2L to mark their success where they received a copy of their book.



The treasure hunt saw students following a trail of reading recommendations posted by their teachers around the Academy, trying to hunt down the answers they required to complete the quiz. Our sharpest-eyed participants who managed to complete the quiz with a full score took home a pin badge and won a book of their choice.

We look forward to seeing the enthusiasm and engagement return next year and eagerly await introducing students to new books and seeing their thoughts on these titles.

Budding author in Year 7

We are thrilled to celebrate the fantastic achievement of Edith in Year 7, who shared her insights into the importance of reading in her article published in the *Hykeham and Witham Gazette*. In this she talked about her own experiences, offering advice and encouragement for others to broaden their reading horizons. Read more:

Reading Helps Reduce Symptoms of Depression and Anxiety

According to scientists and members of 'psychology today' and 'anxiety centre': As well as stress and anxiety, scientists have proven that reading Fiction stories/books helps reduce depression and can potentially improve memory and focus.

Reading can also offer a sense of social connection and reduce feelings of isolation, which may be beneficial for those who are experiencing loneliness. Often, the reason no one reads is because they can't choose a book.

To me, reading is so important. It's one of my ways to cope with my anxiety. Not only do I enjoy reading myself, but because I read, I enjoy writing also. If you enjoy reading, or even if you don't, these set of instructions, which I have written, may help you:

How to choose the perfect book:

When you walk into a bookshop, do you ever feel stuck or spend loads of time trying to choose one book? Well, I know I did! But then I came up with five quick and easy steps to help you and other book lovers with your problems.

Before we start you are obviously going to need a few simple items:

- A bookshop or library;
- This guide;
- Somewhere to keep your book safe;

Method

1. When you walk into a library/bookshop,

there will almost always be lots of different sections with lots of different types of books. This is where you should think about all the different books you have read and enjoyed in the past. Have you read lots of fantasy books? How about non-fiction or history books? Once you have remembered you need to decide between non-fiction or fiction. (*My personal favourite is fiction*). This brings us to step two.

2. Now you should have decided on one of the two and gone over to that section. Once you have done that, take your time and have a good look at the books.
3. Next, I advise you to choose and pick up three or four books so you can have an option. Pick carefully as once you have chosen, there is no turning back.
4. Now you should have three or four books to hand; follow these mini steps.

- Choose one book
- Look at the front cover, has the book won any awards? Do you like the design?
- Read the blurb and think, does it hook you? Would you like to know more? If the answer to these questions is no, then you need to put the book down.
- If you are still interested in this book, look at the author. Have you read something by them before? Do they sound familiar?
- Repeat with other books until you have two left.

5. When you have two books left repeat step four and you should hopefully be able to rule one of them out.

And one sneaky last step: Once you have chosen your book, remember; enjoy it and give it a chance, you might not like it at first, but I am 99.9% sure you will love it in the end.

Here are some helpful and handy hints and top tips:

- If you are still struggling with step four, try asking a member of the book store or library for advice and recommendations.
- Read the first page.
- Is it part of a series?
- And the last thing I am going to say is enjoy your book and have an amazing time reading!

Written by 11-year-old Edith Skaley, Edith is a talented young writer who has won the English 500 words competition. She was first in her school and in the top 25 in England.

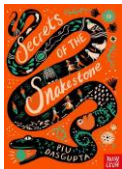


Drop Everything and Read

Having reflected on how Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) has worked over the past year, we have been trying something different this term with our Year 7 students. Rather than every student choosing their own book to bring to R2L to read during form time, all R2L groups have been sharing in the reading of the same book, *Twelve Minutes to Midnight*, and participating in class discussions about what they have read.

Having trialled this with Year 7 with great success, next year each year group will read the same novel together as a cohort. A shared book gives students something in common to talk about, gives form tutors a chance to engage with students about what they are reading and lets our stronger readers support those who are less confident, since everyone is working through the same story at the same pace.

The titles have been chosen with each year group's interests and current curriculum in mind:



Year 7: *Secrets of the Snakestone* by Piu DasGupta. Two children, Zélie and Jules, team up to solve the mystery of a missing parent, embarking on a dangerous race through Paris' catacombs to find a fabled 'Snakestone' before it falls into the hands of a sinister secret society.



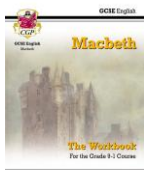
Year 8: *Twelve Minutes to Midnight* by Christopher Edge. A gripping, time-slipping mystery narrated by Penny, a fiercely clever teenage editor investigating strange happenings in Victorian London which revolves around tales being spun about the future and who controls it.



Year 9: *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding. A modern classic that raises big questions about civilisation, leadership and human nature as a group of boys are stranded on an island without adult guidance where society's rules are soon forgotten.



Year 10: *The Sign of Four* by Arthur Conan Doyle. One of the original Sherlock Holmes novels, Sherlock Holmes and his assistant Dr. Watson help Mary Morstan investigate her father's disappearance and mysterious gifts of pearls and their origins.



Year 11: *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare. As part of the preparation for their GCSE English Literature examination, students will be revisiting key scenes from Macbeth and exploring meanings created by Shakespeare to improve their recall of the plot, characters, relationships, themes and context.

FAQs related to supporting reading

Do you have a reluctant reader?

Following our tips in the previous two Bulletins (available via the Academy website), here are five further tips that may prove useful in engaging and supporting your reluctant reader:

Tip 16: Why not link a book to an upcoming holiday, trip or event? Reading something set in the destination or about a similar experience can give reading a clear, exciting purpose. They might even be able to share insights about the place which you never knew!

Tip 17: They might want to read a BANNED book (banned by schoolboards in the USA). There are many wonderful 'banned' books suited to a teen audience that you can find through a Google search such as *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas, *Diary of Anne Frank*, *Looking for Alaska* by John Green (all more suited to KS4), and *The Giver* by Lois Lowry, or *Captain Underpants* by Dav Pilkey (suitable for KS3 and above).

Tip 18: Children can also read to pets as well as adults or siblings: just the act of reading aloud and sharing part of a book can help to rekindle the enthusiasm of a reader – you never know, the dog might love reading too!

Tip 19: Consider organising a 'booknic' – a picnic featuring books! Fun to do as a family or for well-organised teens to do as friends. All that's needed is a place to host (perhaps a local park or garden), somewhere to sit together (a rug, blanket, maybe some cushions) and, of course, the picnic and book selections!

Tip 20: Why not get your reader to try verse novels? The content often carries the emotional depth of a novel while following a rhythm and pace that seems less daunting – particularly for those returning to reading after some time away. Sarah Crossen's and Jason Reynolds' books often favour this style if you're looking for a place to start.

Progress with Reading Plus

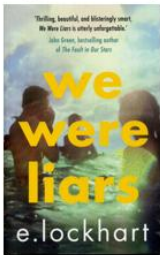
As part of our reading culture at SRPA, we continue to use Reading Plus both in Library lessons and as part of our homework provision. Reading Plus is our adaptive reading platform that develops each student's fluency, comprehension and vocabulary through online books and guided reading practice, facilitating progress at each student's own pace.

Over the course of this year, the percentage of KS3 students reading at or above their chronological age has risen steadily, from 32% in September to 47% by July – meaning almost half of our KS3 students are now reading at or beyond age expectations, up from fewer than one in three at the start of the year. At the same time, the number of students reading well below age expectations has fallen by seven percentage points. This is a strong sign that regular use of Reading Plus is having a genuine impact, and we would encourage all families to keep supporting their child's reading at home over the summer to build on this momentum.

Book Recommendations for Students:

We asked our staff to recommend books to students or to let us know what they were reading as part of the World Book Day celebrations. Below is a selection of their recommendations that might appeal to our SRPA readers across a range of genres!

Miss Hall
RECOMMENDS...



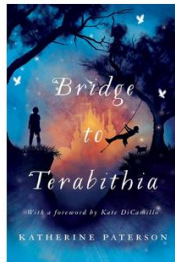
because... despite its idyllic setting, it has dark twists and family secrets that will keep you guessing until the final page.

Miss Brown
RECOMMENDS...



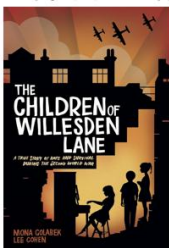
because... it is the nail-biting prequel to 'The Hunger Games' trilogy, focusing on the well-known and loved character of Haymitch Abernathy. It is a heart-breaking, gripping and powerful story showing us his brutal journey when he was chosen to take part in The Hunger Games.

Mr Whitley
RECOMMENDS...



because... it's a coming-of-age drama that leans into elements of fantasy. The protagonist, Jess, feels misunderstood at home and finds a sense of escape through his friendship with Leslie the new girl. Themes of grief and anger are explored deeply.

Mrs Lakin
RECOMMENDS...



because... it is a true story about hope and survival, which took place during the second world war. The story demonstrates strength and determination for Lisa, who longs to be a concert pianist. I love a step back in time!

Mrs White
RECOMMENDS...



because... it is the first of a four-part series of books by this author. If you read the first one. You'll want to read the rest!

Mr Drake
RECOMMENDS...



because... I'm reading this series with my son and who doesn't want to imagine being in a post apocalyptic world with no school where you fight monsters every day?

If your child would like to make a recommendation which would feature in our next Reading Bulletin, please encourage them to collect a recommendation or book review form from the library or to email Mrs Murdoch: jmurdoch@srpa.co.uk

Book Recommendations for parents/carers

Whilst looking to support your child with reading at home, you may wish to consider your next read. Some of our staff also provided recommendations for other staff or older readers. Thanks to Mrs Gilbert, Mrs Holmes, Mr Dickens, Mrs Gibson, Mr Reed and Mrs Mather for these recommendations!



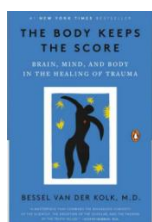
The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah

Set in World War II-era France, the story follows two estranged sisters who take drastically different paths – one through quiet endurance, the other through active rebellion – to survive the Nazi occupation, protect their loved ones, and fight for freedom in war-torn Europe.



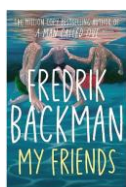
Basil D'Oliveira by Peter Osborne

Peter Osborne's biography chronicles how cricketer Basil D'Oliveira defied South African apartheid to play for England, with the 1968 "D'Oliveira Affair". The work highlights how D'Oliveira's pursuit of his career transformed into a pivotal, world-changing political event.



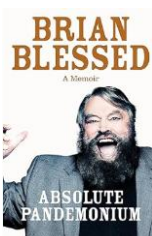
The Body Keeps The Score by Bessel Van Der Kolk, M.D

In *The Body Keeps the Score*, Dr. Bessel van der Kolk explains that psychological trauma is not just a mental event but is physically stored in the body and brain, altering stress responses.



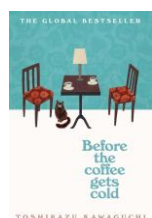
My Friends by Fredrik Backman.

An orphaned foster teen named Louisa connects with a famous artist's friends. As they travel to return the artist's ashes to his hometown, they share the emotional story of a world-famous painting.



Absolute Pandemonium by Brian Blessed

This is the loud, funny, and wild autobiography of British actor Brian Blessed. It follows his journey from a poor mining town in Yorkshire to global fame in films and TV shows like *Flash Gordon* and *Star Wars*.



Before the Coffee Gets Cold by Toshikazu Kawaguchi.

In a magical Tokyo cafe, patrons can travel back in time. However, there is a catch: whatever they do in the past cannot change the present, and they must return before their coffee gets cold. Four customers risk this journey to confront regrets, find closure, and embrace their futures.

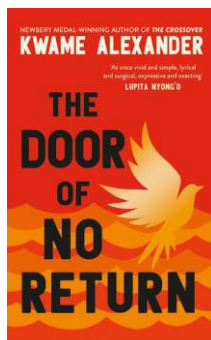
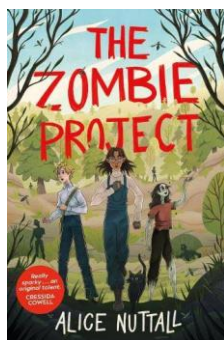
If you have any book recommendations you wish to share in the next Reading Bulletin, please email these to jmurdoch@srpa.co.uk for consideration.

Opportunities/Upcoming reading events

- **Lincoln Book Festival: Thursday 1st to Sunday 4th October 2026.** Based at the Lincoln Arts Centre with events across the city, the festival brings together authors, poets and storytellers for talks, readings and family-friendly sessions – well worth a visit if you are looking for a weekend outing with a literary theme.
- **National Poetry Day: Thursday 1st October 2026.** Run by the Forward Arts Foundation, this year's theme is "Wonder", which focuses on the natural world and climate science.
- Waterstones often hosts book talks and signings. Use the following link to check for events in our local area: [Search Events | Waterstones](#) as these occur throughout the year. Below are some of the upcoming events that may be of interest:
 - **Meet Steve Cavanagh at Waterstones Lincoln: Sunday 2nd August 13:00.** The legendary thriller writer Steve Cavanagh will be signing copies of his latest book 'One of Us Is Guilty'.
 - **A Court of Thorns and Roses book 6 release party at Waterstones Newark: Tuesday 27th October 19:00.** Join fellow fans of Sarah J. Maas and celebrate the hugely anticipated release of the sixth instalment in the A Court of Thorns and Roses series (recommended for KS5 and over).
- Using the National Book Token [Find a bookshop](#) link, you can also search for events running at your local book shops throughout the year.

SRPA Library:

The Library's 'Wishlist' box remains open for students to suggest titles they would like to see us stock – forms are available in the Library, and any suggestions are considered when we place book orders. Since our last bulletin, we have some additions that have been made to the library catalogue based on student requests. Below are some of the latest titles we have added to our collection:



Our recommended reading lists by genre, for both KS3 and KS4/5, remain available via the Library Frog page, and students can log in to AccessIt to check whether a title they are interested in is available to reserve. If your child isn't sure where to start, Mrs White, Mrs Lakin or Mrs Murdoch are always happy to help them find something new.