

Form Time Reading Curriculum

2026–27

WHY WE READ IN FORM TIME

In form time, pupils at Sacred Heart read together. Form time reading is about far more than practising a skill: it gives every pupil, whatever their starting point, the chance to share in great books, to hear them read well and to talk about the big questions they raise.

01

Reading for pleasure

Sharing great stories together, so that every pupil experiences the enjoyment of a book and is encouraged to keep reading for themselves.

02

Personal development

Texts explore courage, friendship, faith, justice and belonging, opening up conversations about how we live and treat one another.

03

Cultural capital

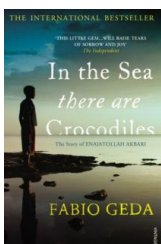
Pupils meet classic and modern novels, famous speeches and important moments in history: knowledge that widens their horizons.

04

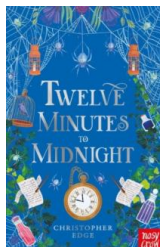
Fluency

Reading a whole novel builds the stamina and fluency pupils need in every subject, with the form tutor modelling expert reading.

THIS YEAR'S NOVELS



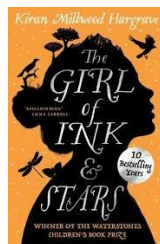
Year 7



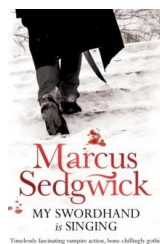
Year 7



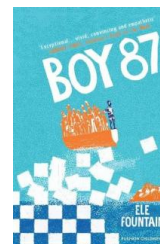
Year 8



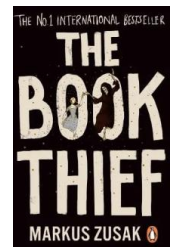
Year 8



Year 9



Year 9



Year 10

HOW IT WORKS

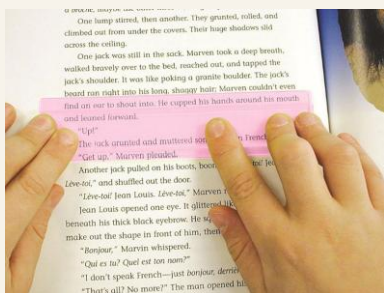
- **A whole novel, read aloud.** Each form reads complete novels together over the year. Reading a full text, rather than extracts alone, is one of the most effective ways to build reading fluency and stamina.
- **The form tutor models expert reading.** Pupils hear what fluent, expressive reading sounds like: the pace, phrasing and tone that bring a text to life.
- **Purposeful Reading Units.** Between novels, pupils read shorter speeches, extracts and non-fiction linked to our school standards, key dates and personal development themes.
- **A balanced selection.** Texts are chosen to include male and female protagonists, a range of genres and voices from diverse backgrounds and experiences.

OVERVIEW

The year at a glance

	NOVEL 1	SHORT TEXTS	NOVEL 2
Year 7	In the Sea There Are Crocodiles <i>Fabio Geda</i>	Purposeful Reading Unit	Twelve Minutes to Midnight <i>Christopher Edge</i>
Year 8	The Giver <i>Lois Lowry</i>	Purposeful Reading Unit	The Girl of Ink and Stars <i>Kiran Millwood Hargrave</i>
Year 9	My Swordhand Is Singing <i>Marcus Sedgwick</i>	Purposeful Reading Unit	Boy 87 <i>Ele Fountain</i>
Year 10	The Book Thief <i>Markus Zusak</i>	—	—

Each year group reads its texts in the order shown. Details of every text follow on the next pages.



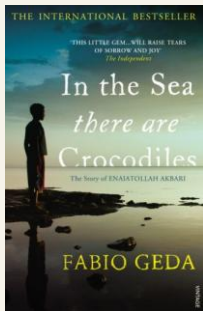
SUPPORTING FLUENT READING

Reading rulers

Pupils use reading rulers in form time to support fluent reading. Placing the ruler under the line being read helps pupils keep their place and follow the text smoothly as their tutor reads aloud, so they can concentrate on the story rather than on finding their way across the page.

The coloured strip highlights one line at a time, which many pupils find makes the page easier and more comfortable to read.

Year 7 reading



NOVEL 1 • WHOLE CLASS READ

In the Sea There Are Crocodiles

Fabio Geda

Based on the true story of Enaiatollah Akbari. One night, his mother gives him three rules: never use drugs or weapons, never cheat, never steal. The next morning she is gone, and ten-year-old Enaiatollah is alone on the Pakistan border. His five-year journey takes him through Iran, Turkey and Greece to Italy, where he claims asylum at fifteen. Told in Enaiatollah's own warm, honest voice, it is a story of courage in the face of fear and the search for a place to call home.

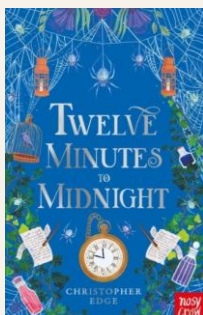
KEY FEATURES Male child protagonist • Refugee experience • Friendship • Diverse backgrounds
• Based on a true story

PURPOSEFUL READING UNIT

Short texts for discussion

Speeches, fiction extracts and non-fiction linked to our school standards, key dates in the calendar and personal development themes.

School standards	1887 rules for children
Houses	Winston Churchill's "We shall fight on the beaches" speech
Democracy	Extract from Lord of the Flies (William Golding)
European Day of Languages	Non-fiction
Black History Month	Speech by Martin Luther King Jr.
Mental Health Awareness	Non-fiction



NOVEL 2 • WHOLE CLASS READ

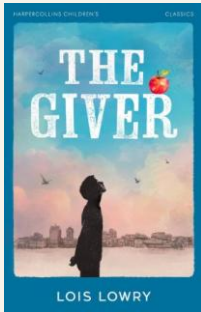
Twelve Minutes to Midnight

Christopher Edge

London, 1899. Thirteen-year-old orphan Penelope Tredwell secretly writes, edits and owns the city's most popular magazine, The Penny Dreadful, hiding behind the pen name Montgomery Flinch. When a strange letter arrives, she is drawn into a real-life mystery: every night at twelve minutes to midnight, the patients of Bedlam asylum begin feverishly writing terrifying visions of the century to come. With her friend Alfie, Penelope sets out to uncover the cause, and finds herself in real danger.

KEY FEATURES Female child protagonist • Gothic • Historical fiction • Mystery

Year 8 reading



NOVEL 1 • WHOLE CLASS READ

The Giver

Lois Lowry

Jonas lives in a community with no war, no poverty and no pain, but also no memory of the past and no freedom of choice. Only one person, the Receiver of Memory, holds the memories everyone else has forgotten. When Jonas is chosen to be the next Receiver, he begins to see the truth about his society and must decide what freedom is really worth.

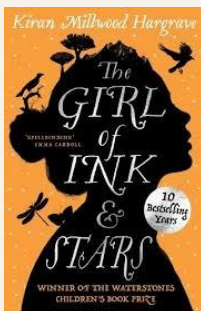
KEY FEATURES Child protagonist · Dystopian fiction · Freedom and choice

PURPOSEFUL READING UNIT

Short texts for discussion

Speeches, fiction extracts and non-fiction linked to our school standards, key dates in the calendar and personal development themes.

School standards	The Navy
Florence Nightingale	Non-fiction
Healthy relationships	Non-fiction (personal development)
Fiction extract	The Tattooist of Auschwitz (Heather Morris)
Internet safety	Non-fiction
Fiction extract	Turtles All the Way Down (John Green)



NOVEL 2 • WHOLE CLASS READ

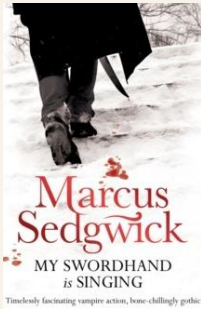
The Girl of Ink and Stars

Kiran Millwood Hargrave

Forbidden to leave her island, Isabella dreams of the faraway lands her mapmaker father once charted. When a girl from the village disappears into the island's mysterious Forgotten Territories, Isabella and her lifelong friend Pablo set out to find her. A story of myth, magic and the power of friendship.

KEY FEATURES Female child protagonist · Adventure · Myth and legend · Friendship

Year 9 reading



NOVEL 1 • WHOLE CLASS READ

My Swordhand Is Singing

Marcus Sedgwick

When woodcutter Tomas and his son Peter settle in the remote village of Chust, Tomas digs a channel of fast-flowing water around their hut and guards a long, battered box whose contents Peter is forbidden to see. Tomas is a man with a past, and that past is hunting him. When the dead of Chust begin to rise from their graves, father and son must face a terrifying enemy together. A gripping gothic tale rooted in Eastern European folklore.

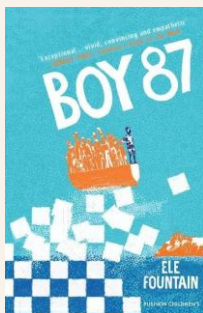
KEY FEATURES Child protagonist · Gothic · Folklore · Diverse backgrounds

PURPOSEFUL READING UNIT

Short texts for discussion

Speeches, fiction extracts and non-fiction linked to our school standards, key dates in the calendar and personal development themes.

Fiction extract	Cilka's Journey (Heather Morris)
Speech	A speech
Fiction extract	Nineteen Eighty-Four (George Orwell)
Non-fiction	Travel writing



NOVEL 2 • WHOLE CLASS READ

Boy 87

Ele Fountain

Fourteen-year-old Shif and his best friend Bini are ordinary boys with big ambitions, until soldiers take them from their families and send them to a remote desert prison. Their arrival gives the prisoners new hope, and together they plan an escape. Reaching the nearest town, Shif's dangerous journey towards safety and freedom has only just begun. Told in Shif's own voice, this powerful story shows the reality of life as a refugee, and the strength of kindness and the human spirit.

KEY FEATURES Child protagonist · Refugee experience · Diverse backgrounds · Hope and kindness

Year 10 reading



NOVEL 1 · WHOLE CLASS READ

The Book Thief

Markus Zusak

Nazi Germany, 1939. At her brother's graveside, Liesel picks up a book half-hidden in the snow: *The Gravedigger's Handbook*, her first act of book thievery. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father she learns to read, and soon she is rescuing books from Nazi book-burnings and wherever else she can find them. But these are dangerous times, and when her foster family hides a Jewish man in their basement, Liesel's world is changed forever.

KEY FEATURES Female child protagonist · Historical fiction · Second World War · Cultural acceptance

READING AT HOME

Ask your child about the book their form is reading: what has happened so far, which character they would most like to meet, or what they think will happen next. Talking about books at home is one of the best ways to help them enjoy reading.