

Dear Parents

### The Power of Reading

Here at Nicholas Hawksmoor, we know that reading is fundamental to a child's development, and we are committed to supporting every child in becoming a confident and enthusiastic reader. Reading not only helps children with their schoolwork but also enriches their imagination, creativity, and emotional intelligence, setting them up for future success.

### Societal Challenges

As a parent myself, I am fully aware of the ease in which children can have access to entertainment from streaming services, mobile technology and other devices. The danger of this is that they become so reliant on passive forms of entertainment, they don't develop the patience, commitment and ultimately rewarding experiences that you can only get from getting 'lost in a book'. This takes time, and effort, and this is the hardest part of engaging children in reading.

Here in school, we see more and more children putting books back on shelves after the first few pages as they are not 'into it'. My mantra has always been, when you choose a (chapter) book, you commit to it and read to the end of chapter 3, or page 50 (whichever comes first) and if you don't like it then you put it back and choose something else. I use a Netflix boxset as an example: It takes time to get into a series, the first twenty minutes can feel like you don't know what's going on, but at some point, you find yourself 'hooked'. And a good one will leave you on a cliffhanger and make you want to watch more – this is what we want for our children's reading habits.

### Our Approach

- We have extensive age-appropriate libraries in each year group, and thanks to FoNHS funding, we are able to update these regularly to inspire readers with new and exciting books as they are released. Staff discuss books choices with children and signpost them towards other suitable books where possible.
- We have a robust and successful phonics programme well established throughout the school which provides the firm foundations to build a positive reading habit within children throughout their primary school journey.
- There are daily class reads, so that every child is read to (even Year 6), and this is crucial to help engage some of the more reluctant readers in high quality books and key discussions around them.
- We have recently updated our reading comprehension lessons in Key Stage 2 to provide more exposure to rich and diverse texts, and we are already beginning to get requests for additional copies on books on our shelves from children as a result – promising signs.
- Children from Year 3 will also be able to login to [ReadTheory](#) both in and out school, to help support their comprehension skills, along with learning some interesting facts about a huge array of topics. This is an intuitive reading comprehension tool from the US, used by millions around the world, that changes and adapts based on each child's individual reading ability. Technology does have its uses!
- Finally, as it is now a new year, I will of course be introducing my reading challenges, both in school, and at home. However the home one has a new twist!



## Mr Fulford's Home Reading Challenge 2026

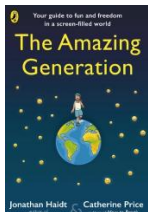
This year, I again invite parents to support their child's reading habits by **joining in** with my annual reading challenge. – See attached document – if you want a printed copy or two, please ask teachers of the school office and we will get them to you. Feel free to adapt the format based on what works for you. The most important thing is that we promote the positivity and enjoyment of reading at every turn. You can make it as competitive (or not) as you like!

### Supporting Reading at Home

We know the role you play at home is crucial in fostering a love of reading, and the importance and value of reading with your child cannot be overstated. Reading is a wonderful way to spend time together, creating special moments while nurturing their love for books. Whether it's a story at bedtime, a shared interest in a topic, or simply reading aloud a favourite book, these experiences provide great opportunities for bonding, discussion, and learning. Ask questions, make predictions, and talk about the characters, as this will help your child engage more deeply with the text.

So, please:

- **Read regularly with your child**, even as they get older. It can be a short passage, a few pages, or a chapter—whatever fits into your routine.
- **Discuss the stories you read together.** Ask about your child's favourite characters, what they think might happen next, or how they would end the story.
- **Create a reading-friendly environment at home.** Set up a cosy reading corner, get to the library to provide a wide range of books that reflect your child's interests and reading level.
- **Show your own reading habits**—if your child sees you reading often, they will understand that reading is a lifelong and enjoyable activity.
- **Finally, get stuck into the reading challenge.** It will be a lot more fun with you on board!



### New Children's Book Recommendation from Mr Fulford: [The Amazing Generation](#)

This is a really interesting, brand new book, written for children faced with a world of touch screens from the author of [The Anxious Generation](#), which itself is a fantastic book for adults that really gets you thinking about child development in this age. A worthy read, parents!

We are here to support you in nurturing a love of reading in your child. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or would like suggestions for books that are appropriate for your child's age and interests.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Joseph Fulford  
Headteacher

