SIR THOMAS BOTELER

CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

THROUGH GOD, WE CARE

HIGH EXPECTATIONS
HIGH ASPIRATIONS
HIGH STANDARDS
YOU WILL SUCCEED

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PARENT FORUM: SPARX READER

15th October 2026

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Learning is taught through language

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WHY DOES READING MATTER?

- **Every** lesson depends on reading.
- Better readers learn new knowledge more quickly.
- Better readers tend to achieve higher GCSE grades across all subjects.
- Reading doesn't just help in English—it helps in Science, Geography, History, Maths... everything.







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WHY SPARX READER?

📖 Books matched to your child's reading level
🧠 Checks your child's understanding as they read
📈 Gets harder as they improve

- Sparx Reader doesn't just tell your child to read a book.
- It chooses books that are right for your child, checks that they are understanding what they read, and helps them to gradually improve.
- Just like going to the gym makes your muscles stronger, regular reading makes your brain stronger.

VARIATION IN READING IN SECONDARY PUPILS

- Pupils in any secondary school classroom will be at **different points on their reading journey.**
- Research shows that reading is **extremely variable** in secondary pupils across every dimension: knowledge, skills, engagement.
- Reading is **not just a primary issue;** needs can emerge in secondary.
- The texts that secondary pupils need to access for the curriculum are **extremely diverse**, and the goals and **demands of reading** vary across subjects.

Ricketts et al. (2020); van der Klejj et al. (2023).

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SPARX READER & R.E.A.D.Y

- Sparx Reader will be used as the English homework platform KS3 + Year 10
- Fortnightly lesson for all KS3
- Sparx Reader does not just benefit English – it impacts every single subject
- Whilst tutors 'check-in' the rest of the form will work on R.E.A.D.Y (Revise, Engage and Develop Yourself)

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HOW DOES THIS IMPACT YOUR CHILD?

Their homework. Their progress. Their future.

Our expectation for all students:

- ✅ Complete every Sparx Reader homework (30 minutes of meaningful reading a week)
- ✅ Engage positively in your Sparx Reader fortnightly English lesson and in conversations with your form tutor
- ✅ Read carefully— do not rush
- ✅ Keep improving every week

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Ten minutes of reading today can make every lesson easier tomorrow.

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WHY SPARX READER IS PART OF OUR ENGLISH CURRICULUM

WHY IT IS PART OF ENGLISH?

Regular reading: makes sustained, careful reading a normal weekly habit.

Right level, right challenge: books are matched to pupils' reading level.

Reading for meaning: short comprehension checks encourage pupils to follow plot, character and ideas.

Vocabulary growth: contextual definitions help pupils tackle unfamiliar words independently.

Visible progress: teachers can monitor engagement and accuracy.

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WHY SPARX READER IS PART OF OUR ENGLISH CURRICULUM

HOW THIS PREPARES PUPILS FOR KS4?

Stamina: GCSE English requires pupils to read longer, more demanding texts under time pressure.

Comprehension: careful reading supports retrieval, inference, interpretation and evaluation.

Vocabulary: a wider vocabulary improves understanding of unseen texts and the precision of written responses.

Independence: persevering when a text or word is challenging rather than giving up.

Confidence: regular success with appropriately challenging books helps pupils approach GCSE texts more positively.

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WHOLE SCHOOL LITERACY

ALL STUDENTS IN YEAR 7 – 10 COMPLETE A READING TEST AT THE START AND END OF EACH ACADEMIC YEAR TO ASSESS CURRENT READING LEVEL.

PATHWAY 1 = IMPROVING READER

SCORE BETWEEN 69 - 85:
WEEKLY BESPOKE LEXONIC LEAP INTERVENTIONS

PATHWAY 2 = EMERGING READER

SAS SCORE BETWEEN 85 - 105:
LEXONIC ADVANCE INTERVENTIONS – 1 SESSION PER WEEK X 6

PATHWAY 3 = STRONG READER

SAS SCORE 105+:
AGE RELATED EXPECTATIONS ARE BEING MET

SAS KEY STAGE 3

- STUDENTS RECEIVE A LIBRARY INDUCTION (YEAR 7 ONLY).
- WEEKLY SPARX READER HOMEWORK TO IMPROVE READING ACCURACY, FLUENCY, CONFIDENCE AND ENJOYMENT.
- SPARX READER FORTNIGHTLY LESSON IN THE LIBRARY.
- FORTNIGHTLY SPARX READER CHECK IN WITH FORM TUTOR TO SUPPORT READING PROGRESS.
- FORTNIGHTLY RECIPROCAL READING SESSION WITH FORM TUTOR.

YEAR 10:

- WEEKLY SPARX READER HOMEWORK (THIS WILL VARY BETWEEN FICTION BOOKS CHOSEN BY THE STUDENT AND SET GCSE TEXTS ALLOCATED BY ENGLISH TEACHER).
- FORTNIGHTLY CHECK IN WITH FORM TUTOR TO SUPPORT READING PROGRESS.
- FORTNIGHTLY RECIPROCAL READING SESSION WITH FORM TUTOR.

YEAR 11

BY YEAR 11, STUDENTS HAVE GRADUATED FROM THEIR LITERACY INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT. STUDENTS BECOME FULLY IMMERSED IN EXAM PREPARATIONS.

**ALL TEACHERS ARE PROVIDED WITH UP TO DATE READING DATA FOR THEIR STUDENTS.
ALL INTERVENTIONS ARE SUPPORTED BY HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LITERACY SUPPORT ACROSS ALL CURRICULUM AREAS.**

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THE LIBRARY OFFER

The Library is the reading hub of the school and all students have access to it every day.

- Reading
- Extra-curricular
- Library Lessons in Year 7
- Reading interventions

