

Reading Recommendations Newsletter



Christmas 2025



Welcome to our reading recommendations newsletter!

Each term, we will share with you reviews and information about books our pupils are currently enjoying.

We encourage our pupils and their families to look through these to see if any may be of interest to them. In addition, we have reading lists by year group and genre on our website.

Happy reading!
The BVS Book Group

BVS Book Group

When?
Wednesday lunchtimes

Where?
Headteacher's Office

What?
We meet each week to discuss the book we're reading together, to recommend books to one another and to plan reading-related activities.

All welcome!

'First Friday' Book Stalls

When?
Lunchtimes on the first Friday of every month

Where?
Outside the Main Hall, in the foyer

Come along and choose from a wide range of pre-loved books for just 50p! New titles are available all year round from our book vending machines in the diners too!

Book Group Recommendations

All book group members are provided with free copies of the books we read!

Whether you love heartwarming tales, magical adventures or a festive mystery, here are some Christmas reads perfect for this season:

- **'A Christmas Carol'** by Charles Dickens – a timeless classic about redemption, generosity and the spirit of Christmas. Perfect for anyone who loves ghostly surprises and a story with heart, it's one of our favourites!
- **'Hogfather'** by Terry Pratchett – for fans of fantasy and humour, this Discworld tale puts a magical twist on Santa Claus and the power of belief.
- **'The Snowman'** by Raymond Briggs – A beautifully illustrated, wordless story that brings winter magic to life and is perfect for a quick festive read.
- **'Skellig'** by David Almond – Not strictly Christmas, but its themes of hope, miracles and new beginnings make it a thoughtful winter read.
- **'Letters from Father Christmas'** by J.R.R. Tolkien – Charming letters written by Tolkien himself, full of whimsy, adventure, and festive cheer.
- **'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe'** by C.S. Lewis – Enter Narnia in the heart of winter, where snow, magic and bravery collide in a story you'll never forget.
- **'One Christmas Night'** by Diana Hendry – A touching and evocative tale perfect for those who enjoy reflective, cosy winter stories.

Listen In!

As was shared last year, staff have narrated the wonderful story, set in Swansea, of **'A Child's Christmas in Wales'** by Dylan Thomas, where he reminisces about his childhood Christmases in our city! See if you can identify the voices!

Book Group pupils have read the beautiful and much-loved poem **'T'was the Night Before Christmas'** for you, read traditionally on Christmas Eve.

For those who enjoy reading or listening to poems, the poem which we heard in the carol service, **'Christmas'** by John Betjeman, is read by the poet here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AyZL9_To0_A and Mrs. Pole has also recorded it online.

Further members of our school community, including Governors, have also recorded some readings for you. Visit our website to learn more and to listen in!

<https://www.bishopvaughan.co.uk/library-and-wider-reading>

We hope you enjoy these festive items!

A range of Christmas short stories can be found free online here:

<https://teaandinksociety.com/classic-christmas-short-stories-read-online/>

Particular recommendations include those by Louisa May Alcott and, of course, Dylan Thomas's **'A Child's Christmas in Wales'**, which has also been narrated and recorded by staff, as described previously.

Staff Favourites:

Mr. Jones (Data Manager):
'The Secret History' by Donna Tartt
"Full of twists and turns! I genuinely couldn't put this book down!"

Mrs. Gwyther (PA and Deputy Data Manager):
*I love **'Little Women'** by Louisa May Alcott, though I think lots of staff have chosen this previously! It's a classic though, and it opens at Christmas ... I even named my daughter after one of the characters!*

Mrs. Pole (Headteacher):
*I have to revisit **'A Child's Christmas in Wales'** by Dylan Thomas every Christmas, as well Christmas poetry such as John Betjeman's **'Christmas'** which I unashamedly re-share in each annual Carol Service. **'The Greatest Gift'** by Philip Van Doren Stern is the book on which **'It's a Wonderful Life'** is based, for those who like the film!*

*I can recommend too **'Murder on the Orient Express'** by Agatha Christie and **'The Nutcracker'** by E.T.A Hoffman!*

Happy reading!

Wise Words:

"Think before you speak...
and read before you think."

Fran Lebowitz

