

High Quality Texts at Northwick Park

‘Great books build the imagination...A child who is read to will have an inner kingdom of unicorns, talking spiders and a knife that cuts into other worlds. The mind is like a ‘tardis’; it may seem small but inside there are many mansions. Each great book develops the imagination and equips the reader with language.’ Pie Corbett

We believe that children should hear quality texts read to them throughout their school life; an enjoyment of books is a life skill and a vehicle through which many skills can be taught.

To this end, we developed a ‘spine’ of quality story books and poems that children will hear read to them throughout their time at Northwick Park Trust. Each book has been selected for interest, vocabulary development, pleasure and themes that may benefit our children. Pupils and staff were involved in choosing the books. Books chosen represent a range of diverse authors and characters to reflect our pupils’ experiences both within and beyond their own communities.

Nursery, Reception and KS 1

Children in Nursery, Reception and KS 1 have a special box of the same books in each room. These are called the ‘Special Smiley’ books. These books become familiar to the children on their journey through the start of their school careers and act as a secure ‘bridge’ between one year group and another. Teachers read these texts frequently to the children and children may choose to read them themselves (initially learning by repetition). These books were chosen by staff and children and we aim for these books to provide fond memories in years to come.

Our 'Special Smiley' books are:



- Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andeae
- Amy Wu and the Patchwork Dragon by Kat Zhang
- Willy the Wimp by Anthony Browne
- Handa's Surprise by Eileen Brown
- Dear Zoo by Rod Campbell
- Hair Love by Matthew Cherry and Vashti Harrison
- The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle
- Splash by Claire Cashmore and Sharon Davey
- The Gruffalo by Julia Donaldson
- Aliens Love Underpants by Clare Freedman
- Not Now Bernard by David McKee
- My Must-Have Mum by Maudie Smith and Jen Khatun
- Peace at Last by Jill Murphy
- Whatever Next by Jill Murphy
- The Pirate Mums by Jodie Lancet-Grant
- We're Going on a Bear Hunt by Michael Rosen
- Where the Wild Things are by Maurice Sendak
- Two Places to Call Home by Phil Earle and Jess Ross

Rationale for choosing these books:

Giraffes Can't Dance Willy the Wimp	Overcoming adversity, celebrating difference.
Dear Zoo Whatever Next We're Going on a Bear Hunt Where the Wild Things Are The Gruffalo Aliens Love Underpants The Very Hungry Caterpillar	Children's classics, patterned language
Peace at Last Two Places Called Home The Pirate Mums Not Now Bernard	Representing different kinds of families Relationships
Hair Love Handa's Surprise Amy Wu and the Patchwork Dragon	Diversity
Splash My Must-Have Mum	Physical differences – limb difference Wheelchair user, disability is not the focus of the story.

They are easily recognised in classrooms by their smiley stickers and special boxes.

Year 2 Reading Spine

NB children in Y2 also have the 'Special Smiley' books. This list provides additional texts chosen to ensure a broad 'book diet' and build on the familiar books from prior learning.

Book Title:	Author:	Why is it included?
The Barnabus Project	Devin Fan	Self-acceptance
Ellie and the Cat	Malorie Blackman	Diverse characters
Gaspard the Fox	Zeb Soanes and James Mayhew	Humour Environmental Issues – respect for natural world
Mr Penguin 'The Lost Treasure'	Alex Smith	Humour/engaging text Longer text Vocabulary
Once Upon a Tune 'Stories from the Orchestra'	James Mayhew	Cultural capital – traditional classical music Vocabulary development
Willow Wildthing and the Swamp Monster	Gill Lewis	Strong female character Vocabulary Longer story
Daddy Do My Hair 'Deji's Haircut'	Tola Okogwu	Diverse authors/characters
The Tunnel	Anthony Browne	Complex picture book Multi-layered text
Heard It in the Playground	Allan Ahlberg	Popular poetry.