


KS2 Book Banding Guide for parents

White and White +

The length of text extends to help build reading stamina.

Short Novels with fewer illustrations are frequent.


Real-life problems encourage empathy.



Lime and Lime +

More sophisticated word play and a range of narration styles.


Children should now be able to discuss the characters and narrator in much more detail.



Ruby and Ruby +

A range of content, narrative styles and points of view.


These books have more complex text features, vocabulary and deeper structures of character relationships and themes.



Sapphire and Sapphire +

Sapphire books encourage children to synthesise information from different places in a text


Books are written in a subtler way, and often have a build-up of humour or tension.



Lilac and Lilac +

Books typically have very few/no illustrations, and have complex text features.

Children reading at this level are strong, confident readers and will typically read often for pleasure.



Year group	School Term	Summative assessment	ORT	Sounds Write Unit	Book Band	Approx. reading age	
Foundation Stage		Emerging	1	Initial: 1 - 7	PINK	Less than 5	
		Expecting	2	Initial: 8 - 11	RED	5 years	
		Exceeding	3	Initial: 11	YELLOW	5 - 6 years	
1	Autumn	Year 1 E	4	Extended: 1 - 9	BLUE		
	Spring	Year 1 D	5	Extended: 10 - 15	GREEN		
	Summer	Year 1 S	6	Extended: 16 - 26	ORANGE		
2			7	Extended: From 27	TURQUOISE	6 - 7 years	
		Autumn	Year 2 E	8	Extended: 27 - 50		PURPLE
		Spring	Year 2 D	9	Extended: 27 - 50		GOLD
Summer	Year 2 S						
3	Autumn	Year 3 E	10		WHITE WHITE +	7-8 years	
	Spring	Year 3 D					
	Summer	Year 3 S					
4	Autumn	Year 4 E	14		LIME (scheme) LIME +	8-9 years	
	Spring	Year 4 D	15		Scheme RUBY RUBY +		
	Summer	Year 4 S	16				
5	Autumn	Year 5 E	16		Scheme SAPPHIRE SAPPHIRE +	9-10 years	
	Spring	Year 5 D	17				
	Summer	Year 5 S	18				
6	Autumn	Year 6 E	18		Scheme LILAC	10 - 11 years	
	Spring	Year 6 D	19				
	Summer	Year 6 S	20				
SECONDARY READY					LILAC +	11 - 12 years	

Throughout school, children learn how to choose books that they will enjoy and are encouraged to read a variety of text types (e.g. fiction, non-fiction, poems etc.).

Children will work at their own pace through the colour bands, only moving on when teachers feel they are ready to progress. Please trust teachers' judgement: children's movement between bands is not only dependent on the ability to decode, but also on being able to show an appropriate comprehension of the texts they meet.

As we are teaching children to read for pleasure, it is to be expected that, from time to time, they will sometimes select books that are too challenging for them to access completely independently. Therefore, please do not worry if this happens - as it is still a perfect opportunity to share the book/enjoy the story together.

