

1<sup>st</sup> December 2023

Dear Families,

I hope this letter finds you well. I would like to take this opportunity to outline an important aspect of our plans to develop students' academic progress, through assessing and developing reading ability. Our primary goal in selecting our whole school priorities, is to provide the best opportunities for our students to learn and grow, and a key part of this is ensuring they are reading at an appropriate level.

Reading is the foundation of nearly all academic subjects and is a skill that affects a student's success not only in English and literacy-based subjects but also in mathematics, science, and all other areas of learning. A student's reading proficiency greatly influences their ability to comprehend and learn from textbooks, follow instructions, and engage with lesson materials. To ensure that our students are on the right path to academic success, it is essential that we assess and address their reading abilities and then support them to develop further any gaps they may have.

To assess students' reading ability, we have conducted online standardised reading tests, the New Group Reading Test - NGRT [follow this link for more general information](#). This reading test provides us with information about a student's word knowledge and language comprehension skills. Every student who sits the test gets a Standardised Age Score (SAS) and as a school we can use these scores to identify students for intervention and to measure trends in progress. In the two years that we have been using the NGRT we are delighted to report that the SAS (Standardised Age Score) average for every year group in school has increased, showing progress in reading ability greater than what is expected against the national average. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our families for all that you do, to support your children in developing their reading.

In assessing student reading ability, we have the following aims:

**Early Intervention:** Identifying any potential reading difficulties early on allows us to implement interventions that can help your child overcome any obstacles and progress at a steady pace. You will already have been contacted if your child is now receiving a reading intervention;

**Increase Confidence:** Success in reading can boost your child(ren)'s self-esteem and confidence. By providing them with the right materials and strategies, we aim to help them become confident readers and learners. Please talk to your child(ren) about reading, ask them what they are reading during Form Time and what the academic word of the week is, furthermore check if they define it and use it in a sentence;

**Aid Overall Academic Progress:** Improved reading skills have a direct impact on academic success. A student who reads fluently and comprehends well will excel in all subjects, which is vital for their future education and career prospects;

**Lifelong Learning:** Encouraging and nurturing a love for reading sets students on a path to be a lifelong learner, a skill that will benefit them throughout their entire life.

If you would like any more information about your child's reading test and the outcome, please email me directly at [cathy.johnston@gaa.org.uk](mailto:cathy.johnston@gaa.org.uk) .

Yours faithfully,

Mrs C Johnston

Assistant Principal Reading and Disciplinary Literacy