

12 December 2024

Year 8
Letter to Families

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I hope you are well and looking forward to the Christmas break. I wanted to write to you before the end of the year to highlight some of the great work that has been undertaken in school this term, as well as some forthcoming developments and important information.

The first term of the school year is always a very busy one. However, there is always lots to celebrate, and the end of the term provides a good opportunity to reflect on, and recognise, the student's achievements and hard work when we hold our Celebration assembly in the final week of the school term. We will also be undertaking additional work with pupils early next term to further develop our rewards system. This is a really important focus for us in enhancing the culture of the school. We know that the vast majority of our pupils come to school each day and not only meet, but surpass, our expectations. We want to ensure they are recognised and rewarded for representing the school so well.

As always, there have been a number of sporting achievements within the Year group. The Boys and Girls football teams have been awarded great wins, home and away for the school and in the Cross-Country championship finals we have also had some great successes. The students should be very proud of this.

Reflecting upon the academic year so far, it has been an absolute privilege to work with our GREAT students who continue to impress me daily. I look forward to 2025 and to further supporting the young people within the year group and watching them develop into fantastic ambassadors for our school and citizens within our community.

As their Head of Year, it is important to me that students are well-rounded individuals with hobbies and interests outside of their studies. Extra-curricular activities are valuable to children and future employers look favourably on the skills that children gain from participating in them i.e. teamwork, resilience, commitment, improving communication skills – to name a few. If your child is not currently involved in any, there are many that are offered at GAA for free and I hope that you will support and encourage your child to attend an extra-curricular to enhance their skill set. Please remind your child that these opportunities are shared on their Microsoft Teams page and through the form time curriculum.

As a school, we encourage that students follow the GREAT values (Genuine, Respect, Achieve, Excellence and Together) at all times. These values are required in the adult world and enable people to be the best version of themselves. Staff at GAA will continue to reward students with GREAT points on ClassCharts. It also shows any consequences or after-school corrections that have been put in place so you can see what time to expect your child to finish school and arrive home. Please download the app and contact the Year 8 team if you need a new access code.

I am proud to lead a diverse year group, and this diversity is reflected through the range of contexts students experience within their curriculum. This year, the young people are reading *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime* by Mark Haddon as their reading book during Reg ad Read. The students also have some interesting assemblies coming up with themes including Holocaust Memorial, World Book Day and Easter/Eid celebrations. The students also have access to our school library during social times, where our librarian Ms. Selwood prepares engaging literacy activities based on the weekly theme.

A gentle reminder of two key school policies. The school mobile phone policy is *Not Seen, Not Used, Not Heard* so please consider this when attempting to make contact with your child throughout the day. For urgent messages, please ring reception who will divert your call to a member of the Year 8 team who will be more than happy to help. The Academy's uniform policy is clear and is available on the school's website. Students should attend school in full school uniform every day, wearing their ties, black school shoes and their blazer. If there are any issues with uniform, please make us aware as soon as possible so we can work with you to find a solution.

Being in school is important for you child as attendance is heavily linked to attainment. If your child is in school every day this will ensure that your child meets their full academic potential.

As always, the Year 8 team at GAA continue to look forward to working with you and your child this year and to supporting your child to learn, grow and achieve on their academic journey. Please contact the Year 8 team on redpastoral@gaa.org.uk if you have any concerns or questions.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs P Farrell

Head of Year 8

Great Academy Ashton