

December 2024

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I hope this letter finds you well. Over the past four months, our GREAT Year 9 students have impressed me daily. As we look forward to 2025 and the years to come, I am looking forward to further supporting the young people within our year group and watching them develop into brilliant, community-minded and respectful citizens.

As a school, we encourage the students to 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 9 team if you need a new access code.

Year 9 is a diverse year group, who access a range of contexts within their curriculum. This year, the young people are reading *Noughts and Crosses* by Malorie Blackman during the new afternoon lesson 'Reg and Read'. The story follows a young couple who are learning to navigate their relationship in a world where racism is prevalent. The class discussions have focused on character development and the emerging themes of the book. Additionally, the students have some interesting assemblies coming up with themes including World Book Day, Holocaust Memorial Day, and Student Leadership opportunities. Please work with the Year 9 team to encourage your children to apply for the upcoming leadership opportunities as we support the Year 9 students to build their CVs and become well-rounded individuals.

My main goal for the year group remains to help the children to develop into independent young people. Please continue to encourage your child to have their uniform, bag and PE kit organised the night before, set their own alarm clock and have checked Microsoft Teams each morning for any relevant messages. It is important that children are encouraged to develop their organisation and communication skills which are essential for future life and will set them up for a successful day in school.

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 contact your child throughout the day. For urgent messages, please ring reception who will divert your call to a member of the Year 9 team who will be more than happy to help. Please note, that I will be reminding students that if they need to contact home that they must come to the pastoral office and not contact through a personal device. Additionally, the Academy's uniform policy is clear. It is expected that students attend school in full school uniform every day including black school shoes and tie. Blazers are an obligatory part of the uniform and must be worn when moving between lessons. Acrylic nails and eyelash extensions are prohibited so please consider this if allowing your child to have these treatments done. 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.

The Year 9 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 9 team on silverpastoral@gaa.org.uk if you have any concerns or questions.

Yours faithfully,

Miss N. Jones
Head of Year 9
Great Academy Ashton