

14th March 2025

Dear Families,

We have made an incredibly positive start to the Spring term here at Great Academy Ashton. Last week we celebrated World Book Day 2025. We had a plethora of different things happening throughout the week and prior to it to continue and build upon the success of reading, writing and oracy.

Since September 2024, we have made reading an integral part of the school day whereby our students get the chance to listen to their form tutor read to them for twenty minutes, four days a week. This is proving to be a huge success. Many of our students are borrowing more texts from our fully stocked library and writing about the texts they have been reading in Reg and Read and their own time by posting book reviews on our GAA reading review Padlet.

Prior to World Book Day week our librarian hosted a Spelling Bee here at Great Academy Ashton. Several students from other high schools in Tameside attended this event along with some students from GAA who also made it to the finals. The students had to spell aloud a selection of incredibly challenging words in front of several members of staff and all of Year 7 in our auditorium.

We also held a GAA Creative Writing Competition. This was open to all our students here at Great Academy Ashton. Students were invited to write a creative piece, no more than one side of A4, regarding the theme for World Book Day 2025 which was, 'Read Your Way'. Our winning entry was Emily Smyth in Year 7. Her wonderful story featured on every 'Do Now' slide at the start of every lesson on Thursday 6th March.

During World Book Day week and prior to that, our librarian launched a competition called, 'Decorate Your Door.' This year's theme was for form groups to decorate their form room door in the style of a book they have read during Reg and Read. We saw some amazing competition entries and thoroughly enjoyed seeing all the effort our students and their form tutors had gone to.

Furthermore, we continued with the World Book Day theme by delivering World Book Day focused assemblies. This was a fantastic opportunity for us to celebrate the success of all the books each year group has read so far during our afternoon Reg and Read sessions. Students also had the opportunity to listen to some members of staff talk about how reading helps them in their daily lives. Our very own Head Girl, Skye Yates and our Head Boy, Harry Drinkwater ended the assemblies with a speech about how literacy, in particular reading, has helped them to become successful with their literacy skills and in speaking confidently in front of an audience.

The buzz that World Book Day created around our Academy has been monumental and it gave us a chance to pause and reflect on the fabulous journey we are on regarding reading, writing and oracy. We will continue to create as many opportunities as we can to promote the lifelong skill of literacy and how particularly important it is for our young people and our own lives.

I would like to thank you once again for the support you give to our students, our staff, and our community. It is truly lovely to be part of this journey with you where our students can excel with reading and all the opportunities it will offer them now and in the future.

Yours Faithfully,

Miss Sharon Lees
Director of Learning (Reading and Disciplinary Literacy)