

# **Abbey Grange Church of England Academy**

## **Supporting your child's literacy development**

**Information for parents of Year 7 students,  
September 2015**



## What is Literacy?

The term refers to communication skills encompassing reading, writing and speaking and listening. Literate students communicate with fluency and sophistication, in both written and verbal forms. Their reading skills enable them to draw out multiple layers of meaning from texts. Literacy skills form a 'toolkit' which will enable students to experience a high degree of success across the curriculum and throughout their time at secondary school and beyond. At Abbey Grange our particular focus is to **promote written accuracy** and develop and encourage **a positive reading culture** throughout the school.

## Literacy Provision at Abbey Grange

We have used the **Accelerated Reader** programme since 2012 with all Year 7 and 8 students. This is a computer programme that encourages children of all abilities to read more regularly and more actively, and helps teachers to monitor students' reading progress.

Pupils select a book at their own reading level (determined through regular reading tests) and when finished, they take a short quiz via the Accelerated Reader programme to test their understanding. Students accumulate points, which translate into certificates and prizes. Quizzing takes place once a fortnight in English lessons and at lunchtimes in the Galeena Learning Resource Centre, but reading should be done on a daily basis for the best chance of success. Quizzes can also be completed at any time via iPads using the AR App.

It is recommended that pupils develop a habit of reading on a daily basis in order to complete quizzes successfully. AR gives students and teachers feedback based on quiz results, which the teacher then uses to help students set specific reading targets. Accelerated Reader dramatically increases students' reading ages and therefore their performance across the curriculum. You can access further information about AR at

[www.renlearn.com/ar](http://www.renlearn.com/ar). For a list of over 10,000 books for which AR quizzes exist, visit [www.arbookfind.co.uk](http://www.arbookfind.co.uk)

**The Galeena Learning Resource Centre** enables all students in Years 7, 8 and 9 to access a range of books to support their love of reading and also their participation in the Accelerated Reader programme. The **Galeena** room is also open at lunchtimes so that students may take AR quizzes as soon as they have finished their latest reading book. A range of literacy related events and activities are also held throughout the year in there.

**Form time literacy:** Reading is encouraged as a form time activity once a week. Literacy activities are also provided to encourage the study of literacy and promote relationships across Key Stages.

**Across the Academy:** Abbey Grange is keen to promote a vibrant and proactive reading culture amongst students and staff, and this is reflected in the wide range of **literacy enrichment activities** on offer throughout the year. A number of students were involved in the creation of our **inspirational reading displays**, in the Humanities stairwell and Art corridor, promoting reading across the curriculum, and providing real life 'reading role models' for our students. Hundreds of students take part in our annual **World Book Day** activities where pupils are invited to dress up as their favourite literary character while raising money. Each year we run a **Readathon** for all Year 7 students, increasing the profile of reading in school, and raising money for a range of children's charities. Additionally, we publish a bi-annual student magazine, **Abbey Uncovered**, which gives students in KS3 the chance to write on any subject they wish to; many students really enjoy the sense of achievement connected with seeing their writing in print.

**Reading support:** We run a highly successful **Reading Mentors** scheme for students in Years 7 and 8 requiring extra support with their reading. This year parents will also be invited to attend a **Supporting Reading Workshop** (date tbc). KS3 readers who excel will

be invited to join an **Elite Readers circle**. All of these services are supported by our Year 12 and 13 **Literacy Ambassadors scheme**.

## **Working in Partnership**

In order to achieve this positive and productive approach to cross curricular literacy, it is vital that teachers, parents and students work together.

### **Teachers at Abbey Grange will:**

- Promote literacy within their teaching; in reading, writing and speaking and listening
- Offer stimulating and challenging teaching activities which explicitly promote and develop the use of literacy skills
- Supply and encourage the use of dictionaries and literacy mats in lessons
- Correct students' work by adhering to the school's literacy marking policy (see p.9)
- Promote and reward the use of 'Word of the Week'
- Encourage positive reading habits by using 'I am reading...' laminate in classrooms
- Encourage form time reading and literacy activities

### **Students should:**

- Always have a 'Reading Book in the Bag', especially for tutor period and Year 7 and 8 English lessons. This may be fiction or non-fiction; comics and 'hobby' magazines are also acceptable reading materials
- Use the literacy section in their planners to ensure progress is made in the quality of their written communication. Subject-specific literacy mats are available in each classroom.
- Use dictionaries available to them in classrooms and on iPads

**Parents should:**

- Regularly listen to your child read aloud, and encourage the value of reading books at home. We recommend that students spend 10-20 minutes a day at home reading for pleasure – this will enable them to achieve higher rates of success with the Accelerated Reader programme
- Have a good quality, child-friendly dictionary for home use (such as Oxford School Dictionary).
- Consider buying spelling games such as Scrabble, Lexicon and Boggle; encourage the use of word puzzles, such as crosswords and word searches.
- Schedule regular trips to your local library. Set a routine for reading and celebrate reading successes with your child
- Be a positive reading role model for your child: they will be encouraged to read if they see you doing it too!
- Ensure homework tasks are completed to a high standard: encourage the proofreading of homework (for spelling, grammar and punctuation errors) by students
- Attend Reading Workshop at Abbey Grange should you wish to support your child's literacy development further (date tbc).
- Understand Accelerated Reader Levels and encourage your child to make progress with their reading.

## Understanding Accelerated Reader

**Accelerated Reader Book Levels** (*this reflects your child's reading age, which we assess several times a year*):

<b>Green</b>	<b>0-1.9</b>
<b>Orange</b>	<b>2-2.9</b>
<b>Blue</b>	<b>3-3.9</b>
<b>Yellow</b>	<b>4-4.9</b>
<b>Red</b>	<b>5-5.9</b>
<b>Black</b>	<b>6+</b>

A record of how your child is progressing throughout the year can be found on p. 44 of their planner.

**Accelerated Reader Certificate Levels** (*this reflects how much reading your child has done – certificates are awarded monthly during form time*):

<b>Ready Reader:</b>	Accumulate 5 points.
<b>Independent Reader:</b>	Accumulate 10 points, on at least 3 books at 1.2 book level or higher.
<b>Independent Reader:</b>	Accumulate 10 points, on at least 3 books at 1.2 book level or higher.
<b>Rising Reader:</b>	Accumulate 10 points, on at least 3 books at 1.6 book level or higher.
<b>Super Reader:</b>	Read independently at least 3 books at 2.0 book level or higher worth 1 point or more each.
<b>Advanced Reader:</b>	Read independently at least 3 books at 3.0 book level or higher worth 2 points or more each.
<b>Star Reader:</b>	Read independently at least 3 books at 4.0 book level or higher worth 4 points or more each.
<b>Classic Reader:</b>	Read independently at least 3 books at 6.0 book level or higher.

## Literacy Marking Key – for KS3 and KS4 work:

<b>Sp</b>	Spelling error
<b>Vocab</b>	Better choice of vocabulary needed
<b>Cap</b>	Capital letter needed
<b>Sense?</b>	Sentence/paragraph does not make sense
<b>Com</b>	Comma needed
<b>FS</b>	Full stop needed
<b>Col</b>	Colon needed
<b>SC</b>	Semi-colon needed
<b>Apost</b>	Apostrophe needed
<b>//</b>	New paragraph needed
<b>HW/Pres</b>	Handwriting/presentation is poor

## Literacy websites & Resources for parents

### Reading:

<http://www.leeds.gov.uk/leisure/Pages/Libraries.aspx>

<http://www.booktrust.org.uk>

<http://www.readingrockets.org/>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/childrens-books-site>

<http://www.harrisbeckenham.org.uk/185/parental-literacy-support-booklet>

<http://www.poetryarchive.org/guided-tour/tour-childrens-archive-jean-sprackland>

### Writing:

[http://www.cabrillo.k12.ca.us/faralloneview/files/Parents\\_Support\\_Reading\\_Writing.pdf](http://www.cabrillo.k12.ca.us/faralloneview/files/Parents_Support_Reading_Writing.pdf)

<http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources>

[http://www.prizemagic.co.uk/html/writing\\_comps.htm](http://www.prizemagic.co.uk/html/writing_comps.htm)

<http://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/teenagers/have-some-fun/competitions/>

### General Literacy:

<http://www.allwords.com/wow.php>

<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/>

<http://www.familylearning.org.uk/>

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/websites/4\\_11/site/literacy.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/websites/4_11/site/literacy.shtml)

***Please see the school website for further information on literacy  
(under 'Curriculum')***

***Literacy related enquiries should be directed to the General Office in the first instance  
([info@abbeygrangeacademy.co.uk](mailto:info@abbeygrangeacademy.co.uk))***