

4 October 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

### **Accelerated Reader – Developing Reading at Outwood Academy Bydales**

As you may be aware, students at Outwood Academy Bydales partake in a programme called ‘Accelerated Reader’; this has proven highly effective across the Outwood Grange Family of Schools. The programme encourages regular reading by students in order to promote a rapid rate of progression in reading ability. There is a direct correlation between increasing a student’s reading age and increasing their capacity to succeed in exams across all subjects, not just in English. Given the increased demands of the new 9-1 GCSE examinations, you will appreciate this is a priority for us.

This year, we intend to increase further the effectiveness of our current Accelerated Reader programme. Within the English department, your son/daughter’s Accelerated Reader lessons will include a more robust focus on strengthening reading and comprehension skills. This is to ensure that students’ levels of comprehension are increased and therefore their ability to decipher and understand exam questions in all subjects will improve. We are now recommending, based on educational research, that students should be reading for a minimum of 20 minutes per day. We also believe that the effectiveness of the Accelerated Reader programme can be increased by enlisting more the specific support of parents and carers.

We are now in a position to launch a new Accelerated Reader log book. All students in Year 7-10 and also Year 11 students who are not involved in a specific curriculum focused VMG (i.e. a Maths, English or Science intervention VMG), will be given an Accelerated Reader ‘Log Book’ by their VMG tutors. Students should carry their reading book and their Log Book with them each day at the academy, and get used to bringing it home each day also. The Log Book will be used to record how long the student has read for each day, with 20 minutes being the minimum expected requirement. This should be routinely logged in the reading Log Book by the student and we would be extremely grateful if this could be signed by his/her parent/carer. During the student’s assigned VMG Literacy session, the Log Book will be checked for the previous week’s reading. Should 20 minutes of reading not have been completed on 5 of the days during the week, with a parental signature to indicate this, then the tutor will explore with their student what the barriers are, and offer encouragement. We appreciate many students read regularly, indeed many read more than 20 minutes a day, but many have also fallen out of the habit, and we want to encourage them to get back into it.

For those students who are regularly completing and surpassing these requirements, we will be rewarding their hard work and commitment with: prizes; praise postcards; and, for significant milestones reached such as a ‘million words read’, a Kindle Fire eBook will be presented by Mr Wappat in assemblies.

The goal of Outwood Academy Bydales is to ensure that students come first, through consistently raising standards and changing lives. Literacy skills and reading comprehension skills are invaluable to our young people and to their life chances. I am grateful for your support in this matter and know that you will encourage your son/daughter to regularly read and record in their log book to ensure their academic success.

Should you have any questions regarding Accelerated Reader, please do not hesitate to contact Miss Shallow, Associate Assistant Principal at [v.shallow@bydales.outwood.com](mailto:v.shallow@bydales.outwood.com)

Yours faithfully



**Andrew Wappat**

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VAT number: 158 2720 04. Outwood Grange Academies Trust is an exempt charity.

A list of Directors’ names is open to inspection at our registered office.