

The Gilbert School

Part of the Alpha Trust



TBA/lsc
March 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Strengthening Students' Reading Habits

We recently celebrated World Book Day, and although it's often seen as a primary school event, the message behind it matters just as much for secondary students.

Many children read regularly with parents and carers during primary school. Books are shared, discussed, and enjoyed together, helping families understand their child's reading interests.

However, in research released as part of the National Year of Reading, trends show that the UK is now at a 20-year low: only 32% of young people aged 8–18 say they enjoy reading, and fewer than 20% read daily by choice.

The biggest drop in reading for pleasure happens between ages 11 and 14, which won't surprise many of us. Few families continue shared reading beyond Year 6 or make regular space to talk about books.

The most recent research tells us that children in the UK can read well but many choose not to or experience no expectation to do so. In other comparable countries, reading is seen as a natural part of family life, with adults and children intentionally spending time reading.

Over the next few weeks, we will be surveying students on their reading habits, the books they would like to read, and what might help them read more often.

I'll be in touch soon with practical strategies you can use at home to help keep your child reading—or to help you both rediscover the habit together.

Our aim is to see more of our already wonderful young people turning to all types of books as a source of knowledge, entertainment and connection.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours faithfully

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