

The Gilbert School

Part of the Alpha Trust



TBA/lsc
October 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Reading Update for Years 8 and 9

We have now almost completed our reading screening for all of our students across Years 7 to 9.

What does this mean?

We will soon have a reading age for each student and will identify a small cohort of students who may benefit from additional support on a one-to-one or small-group basis.

Will my child be affected?

Students with a reading age below their actual age may not receive any additional intervention outside of the classroom. Intervention will typically target students whose reading age is between 7 and 10 years in the first instance. We will contact you if this applies to your child.

What can I do to encourage reading in the home?

- Leave the book bag memories in Key Stage 2 but keep the good habit of making reading something that happens daily.
- Start where your child is. If they like films, start there, if they prefer audiobooks*, use them. If a little bribery helps, consider the long-term benefits it can bring.

**Please find attached to this letter, details on how to access the Borrowbox library app for audiobooks.*

How has The Gilbert School been encouraging reading?

- Last week, some of our classes took part in a Guinness World Record attempt for the highest number of people reading around the world in a ten-minute period. This was great fun and we will find out later this month whether we were successful.
- From next week we will be sending our mobile library around to Year 9 form groups during Personal Development, making it even easier for students to access reading materials.

Did you know?

- Year 8 Gilbertians have borrowed more than 384 books so far this year. Borrowing rates in Year 9 are currently much lower. Can we increase this?
- Just 6 minutes of reading can reduce stress by up to 68%.
- Students who read for 20 minutes most days are exposed to over 200 times more words than those who don't.
- Neuroscience studies show a link between reading and areas of the brain responsible for executive functions such as focus and attention control.
- Reading for pleasure is a difficult concept for many children, but reading to 'gain something', whether that be information, a reward, a moment of calm, a fascinating fact or a terrible joke, is much easier to understand and, for some, all the encouragement they need.

Headteacher: Mr J Mitchell

Brinkley Lane, Colchester, Essex CO4 9PU

Tel: 01206 842211 Email: admin@gilberd.com Website: www.gilberd.com

Alpha Trust

Registered in England and Wales Company No 07755713

Registered office: Norman Way, Colchester, Essex CO3 3US



The Gilbert School

Part of the Alpha Trust



If you have a child in Year 9, keeping the reading habit alive can have a significant long-term impact, as well as short-term gains linked to attainment in all subject areas.

If your child needs help getting started with selecting a book, keep an eye out for the recommendations around the school or contact cjn@gilberd.com for further advice.

Yours faithfully

Miss T Bates
Assistant Headteacher, Teaching and Learning

Headteacher: Mr J Mitchell
Brinkley Lane, Colchester, Essex CO4 9PU
Tel: 01206 842211 Email: admin@gilberd.com Website: www.gilberd.com

Alpha Trust

Registered in England and Wales Company No 07755713

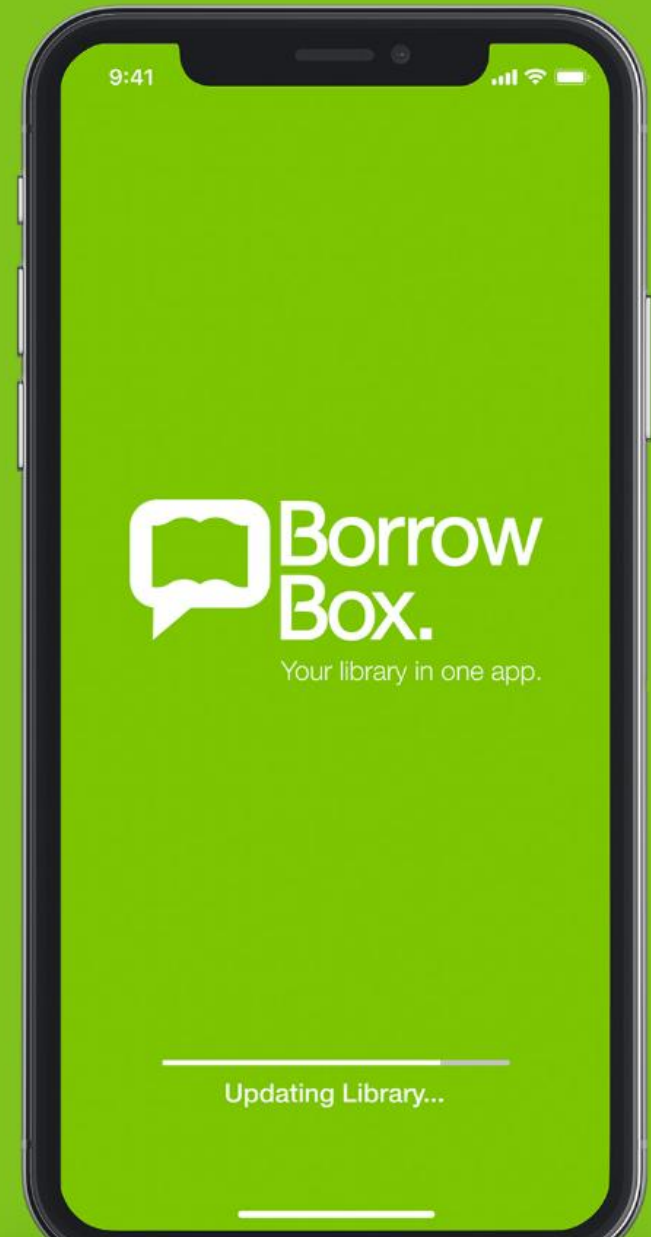
Registered office: Norman Way, Colchester, Essex CO3 3US





Your library in one app.

There's nothing like having a new app that transforms how you use your local library.



Would you like free access to thousands of e-audio and ebooks?

- Join Essex Libraries to access Borrowbox for free
- Access thousands of e-books, e-graphic novels (including Manga), e-audio and e-magazines completely free of charge
- Borrow up to 10 e-books, 10 e-audio and 50 e-magazines and e-newspapers. This can be any combination of e-magazines and e-newspapers at one time for a period of three weeks. This is in addition to the items through your normal Essex library card
- No overdue charges
- Items will be automatically returned at the end of the three-week loan period
- Age restrictions apply. Customers using a Child ticket can only download items available in the Children's collection.
- Accessibility features, including compatibility with screen readers and options to adjust fonts and layout
- Translation of articles into a range of community languages
- Text-to-speech, allowing you to listen to articles
- All this from one library app

DOWNLOAD THE **BORROWBOX** APP NOW

STEP ONE

Join your local public library

STEP TWO

Install the BorrowBox app on your device

STEP THREE

Select your library service

STEP FOUR

Activate with your library membership

STEP FIVE

Borrow eBooks, eAudiobooks, eNewspapers and eMagazines

READ/LISTEN **24/7** ON THESE DEVICES



iPhone

[Download the app now](#)



iPad

[Download the app now](#)



Android

[Download the app now](#)



Android Tablets

[Download the app now](#)



Kindle Fire

[Download the app now](#)

Any questions?
See Mrs Jenkins
in the library for
further guidance

