



Robert Smyth Academy

Dear Parents/Carers,

Reading for All

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum experience for our students because we believe that reading is one of life's profound joys. To this end, one of our whole school priorities is to continue to provide more opportunities for students to develop enjoyment, mastery and confidence in reading. It is for these reasons that we issue students with summer reading books in Key Stage 3 and we plan reading opportunities in Key Stage 4 and 5. We do not believe that reading should be the preserve of any group of students and we are ambitious that every child learns to enjoy reading including children with identified Special Educational Needs.

Last week, all teachers participated in additional training to consider the best evidenced based approaches to supporting children in school who had not yet gained confidence and fluency in reading whilst planning for reading opportunities for all throughout the curriculum and planned homework activities.

We have also adopted a strategy to support all students who are still developing confidence in reading because we believe that everyone deserves to feel confident in reading. These interventions include:

Phonics programme

Mrs. Eddy (Literacy Catch Up Teacher) is working with a focus group of students to improve their knowledge of phonics to promote confidence in reading. The phonics programme we are delivering this year is designed specifically for Key Stage 3. This programme guides students through the Alphabetic Code and it has been proven to be successful. The aim of this intervention is to improve reading and spelling by focusing on core word and sentence level skills using systematic synthetic phonics.

Dyslexic Gold

This online programme is specifically for students who have a reading age below 11 years. This intervention is programmed for key students during tutor times. We would also encourage all students who are undertaking this intervention to do this at home as well, in order to take full benefit of the scheme through homework.

Rapid Plus

This is an intervention solution for students who have not yet reached age related expectations, and students with Special Educational Needs. This intervention is programmed each week and it is taught in small groups led by a Learning Support Assistant. Students benefit from both fiction and non-fiction literature.

How is it going so far?

The student response to intervention sessions have been really positive, with many students discovering that their spelling and comprehension skills have improved, alongside a new confidence in reading aloud. Most students on the programme are now fully engaged with reading and have regular conversations with our librarian, Mrs. Coxon, to discuss what they would like to read next.

Get in touch

We hope that this gives parents an update into some of the approaches that we are taking to promote reading for all. If you wish to speak to a member of staff regarding these programmes, then you should contact Mrs McNair (Strategic Lead for SEND) or Mrs Finnemore (SENCO) via the School Office email, for more information.



Part of Tudor Grange Academies Trust



Robert Smyth Academy

Charity Fundraiser: Staff Football Match

Report from Mr Markham (Teacher of English and Student Leadership Coordinator)

Ever since the announcement, the Robert Smyth Staff Charity Football Match had been the talk of the school. With the student body voting on proceeds going to Cancer Research UK, Friday 28th October arrived with unparalleled optimism and excitement. As the school day finished, over 300 students made their way to the football field to watch their favourite teachers put on a technical masterclass.

The match had everything: six goals, unbelievable saves, controversial decisions, iconic celebrations and a red-hot crowd, fed and watered by the incredible efforts of our catering team. As one teacher put it "my husband heard the cheers from across Market Harborough". Most importantly we raised £850.00 for Cancer Research.

A massive thank you to all staff who played in and supported the smooth running of the event; it is something no one there that day will ever forget. However, the biggest thank you of all must go to Daisy and Aoife, who managed the teams with maturity and skill, and had the vision to create the blueprint for the entire event.

This went to show why our school is a truly supportive and inspiring family. Here's to next year!

Sixth Form Open Evening: Wednesday 9th November (6-8pm) – Year 11

On Wednesday evening, we will open our doors to students who wish to find out more about gaining a place at Robert Smyth Academy Sixth Form. This evening is an important opportunity for current Year 11 students to consider the opportunities available to them next year including key course information.

Robert Smyth Sixth Form offers a wide range of A-Level courses, excellent pastoral care and guidance, personal development opportunities and pathways to a range of aspirational destinations including Russell Group Universities. This year, 35% of the total grades awarded at A-Level were at A* or A (A-Level; 2022) and therefore we believe that we offer an unrivalled provision for students to grow, learn and progress.

There is no need to book in advance and we welcome parents and students on this evening.

Key dates - reminders

- **Next week:** Year 11 Trial Exam week
- **Wednesday 9th November:** Sixth Form Open Evening (6-8pm) for Year 11 students
- **Friday 11th November:** Virtual Whole School Remembrance Assembly and a Moment of Silence
- **w/b Monday 21st November:** Year 7-10 in-class assessments
- **w/b Monday 28th November:** Year 12 in-class assessment week

I hope that you have a good weekend and once again thank you for your fantastic, ongoing support of our school. It has been a great week and the students continue to work hard in preparation for key assessments.

Yours sincerely,

D Cleary
Principal



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