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Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, apologies to you all for the lengthy letter – it's important as it is about your child's reading, so please bear with me and read it all.

I am pleased to tell you that I have now completed all the initial 'Accelerated Reader' reading assessments on all the children in Key Stage 2.

This information will be used to give your child a range of books to choose from. For example 3.2-4.8. This range is called a ZPD and it means that your child can choose any book within this range. Every child in years 3,4,5,6 has been given a bookmark with their ZPD numbers on it and a reading target on the back. All our books now have these numbers written on an orange label, which is stuck to the back of each book. Our bookshelves have now been rearranged so that the books are arranged by number instead of colour. You will find the bookshelves on one side of the corridor in the library. Don't worry if your child brings home a picture book instead of a chapter book. All the books have been scored by the Accelerated Reader programme and the book they choose will be appropriate to them. Once the book is complete, your child may take an online quiz about the book at school. This is where they can gain points, grow a sunflower and count how many words they have read.

As your child's reading improves, so their ZPD score will increase. They will complete an online Star Reading Test in school every term to see whether their ZPD range can increase. In order for your child to gain the maximum benefit from Accelerated Reader, it is very important that they practise reading regularly at home. This should be at least four times a week or more, as this will truly benefit your child and ensure that their reading progresses well.

I am monitoring how many words each class reads. The year 3-4 class and the year 5-6 class that has read the most words each term will all get an end of term treat. We need to ensure all our children read as much as possible. **All** their learning is impacted by their reading ability. Please support us with this at home. Ask your child about the book, share a book with them, read to your child, listen to them read, visit the library, get lost in a bookshop.

Please note – children in years EYFS, 1 and 2 will still be able to choose from colour spots as at present. These will be in the lower school library.

The recent assessments have also highlighted a number of children who would benefit from reading daily at school as well as at home in order to help them improve rapidly. This is where I would like to ask for some volunteers!

I am planning to introduce some 'Reading Champions' to Whytemead. These would be a team of parents who are able to come in to school every day at 2.30pm. They would then be given an identified team of children to read with daily and some simple questions to ask the child about the book they are reading. I will offer training in how to ask the questions and read with a child. Each term, the children will use Accelerated Reader too see how much their reading improves.



This is a great opportunity for those interested in working in a school to gain some valuable volunteering experience. It will also be a fantastic help to those children you would be working with. Initially, I am looking for four adults, but, of course, I am very happy if more offer help!

Thank you for your support and understanding during our transition to Accelerated Reader; it has been a mammoth task but will certainly benefit all our children in the long run. As most of the secondary schools in our area use it too, it will also be useful when children transition to year 7.

There are some FAQs about Accelerated Reader attached with this letter.

Finally, a huge thank you to those parents who have kindly come in to help – we still have a way to go but we have made an amazing start. Also, to Mrs Smyth, who has been brilliant with organising and re-organising – thank you!

Mrs Mavin

Deputy head