



14 September 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

Year 7 NGRT Reading Assessment – Week Commencing 28 September

As part of our commitment to ensuring that every child is able to access the curriculum and make strong progress throughout secondary school, all Year 7 students will complete an **NGRT (New Group Reading Test)** during the week commencing **Monday 28 September 2026**.

Why is this assessment important?

Reading is fundamental to success at secondary school. It is not only important in English: students need to read and understand increasingly complex vocabulary, instructions, explanations and extended texts in subjects including Science, Maths, History and Geography.

The NGRT will provide us with an important **baseline of your child's reading ability at the beginning of Year 7**. We will use this information alongside other assessment information to:

- identify students who may need additional reading support;
- ensure classroom teaching and resources are appropriately challenging;
- identify students who would benefit from additional stretch;
- monitor the impact of reading interventions;
- track students' reading development as they move through Key Stage 3 and towards their GCSE examinations.

This is therefore much more than a one-off Year 7 test. It forms the starting point from which we can monitor reading development throughout your child's secondary education.

What is the NGRT?

The **New Group Reading Test is a nationally standardised reading assessment**. This means that your child's performance can be compared with that of students of the same age nationally, rather than simply with other students in their class or school.

The assessment provides us with information including a student's **reading age** and a **Standard Age Score (SAS)**. The test looks at important aspects of reading, including how well students understand sentences and how successfully they comprehend longer passages.

Students **do not need to revise or prepare for the NGRT**. We simply ask that they approach the assessment carefully and try their best so that the results give us an accurate picture of their current reading ability.

Why does reading age matter for GCSEs?

The reading demands of secondary education increase considerably between Year 7 and Year 11. GCSE examinations require students to independently understand questions, interpret subject-specific vocabulary and, in many subjects, read substantial amounts of unfamiliar information before they can begin answering a question.



A useful benchmark as students approach GCSE is therefore a **reading age of approximately 15 years or above**. Importantly, this does not apply only to English.

Research involving more than **370,000 secondary students** found a significant relationship between reading ability and GCSE achievement across the curriculum. The relationship between reading and GCSE performance was particularly strong in **English Language, Geography, Maths, Science and History**.

The same research found that **one quarter of 15-year-olds still had a reading age of 12 or below**. Students whose reading development falls behind their chronological age can therefore find it increasingly difficult to access GCSE courses and examination questions, even when they understand the subject itself.

This is why we want to identify any reading gaps **early in Year 7**, rather than waiting until students begin their GCSE courses.

Attendance during assessment week

It is extremely important that your child attends school during the week commencing **28 September**.

Every Year 7 student will have a scheduled opportunity to complete the assessment. Where possible, we ask families to avoid arranging non-urgent appointments during the school day that week.

Having a complete and accurate set of Year 7 results means that we can establish a reliable baseline for every student and put appropriate support in place from the beginning of their secondary education.

If your child is unavoidably absent, we will endeavour to arrange a catch-up assessment; however, completing the test with their year group during the planned assessment week is strongly encouraged.

Thank you for supporting us in making reading a priority. By working together and tracking reading carefully from Year 7 onwards, we can ensure that students develop the reading skills they need to access the full curriculum and succeed when they reach their GCSEs.

Yours sincerely,



Rachael Skelton
Headteacher