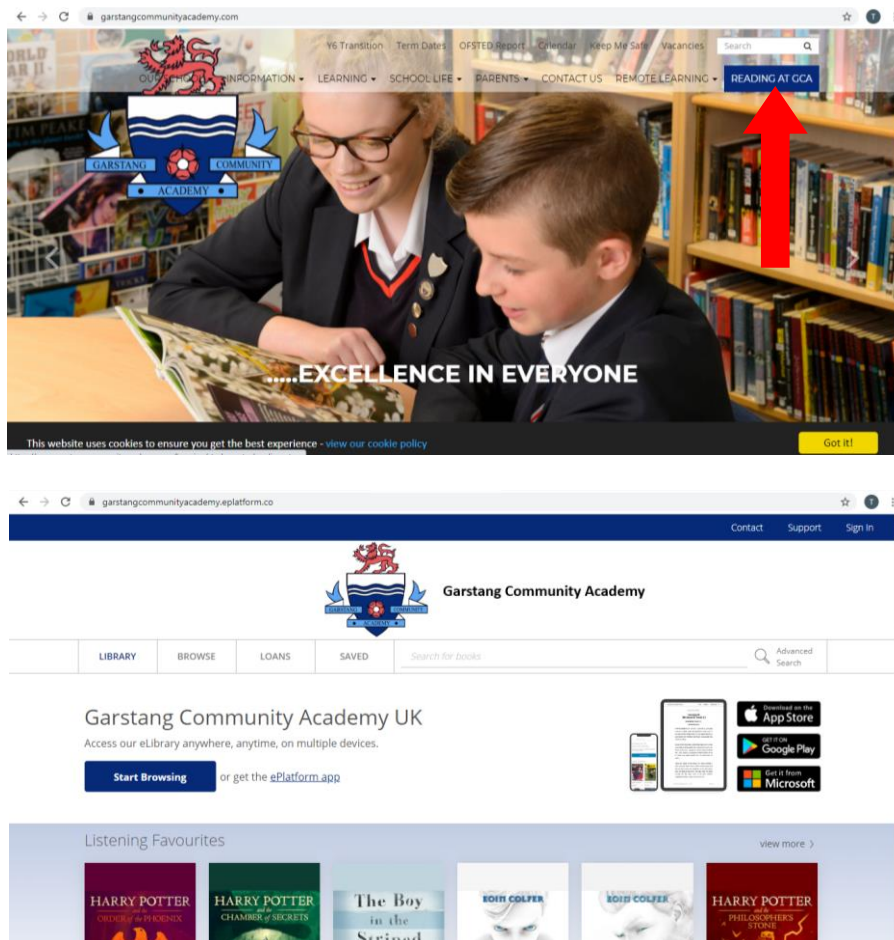


18<sup>th</sup> October, 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

The world is changing quickly and so is our teaching of reading. We are working hard in school to ensure that children are given every opportunity to read and enjoy books. Children are spending increasing amounts of time online and using technology, and we wanted to use this as an opportunity to improve their reading skills. With this in mind, I am delighted to be able to share with you the following information on the GCA Digital Library.

Students can access this resource by clicking on the 'Reading at GCA' tab on the homepage of the school website, and then clicking the link that follows ('GCA Digital Library'). This will take them to: <https://garstangcommunityacademy.eplatform.co/browse>.



The digital library is incredibly simple to use. Your child has their own log in details which look like this:

Username: **Joe.Bloggs** (no spaces, but capital letters and the full stop are necessary)

Password: **library1** (all lower case)

Once they have logged in, students have access to an app that will allow them to borrow books and read them online on a computer, phone or tablet. In addition to this, the platform has over 900

audio books, so we can encourage students who prefer to listen. Please encourage your child to use this exciting resource!

The free app is downloadable from the App Store, Google Play and Microsoft and is compatible with most devices, including iPad/iPhone, Android devices and other tablets. The links for each can be found here:

iOS: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/eplatform-by-wheelers/id912668852?mt=8>

Android: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.eplatform.android.googleplay&hl=en>

Windows: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/store/p/eplatform/9nblggh3z38k>

You also may search 'ePlatform' in the Play Store or iOS stores for further information.

Once your child has accessed the website/app, they will have access to over 2000 books for reading, and 900 audiobooks as previously mentioned. It works as any standard library, so your child will be able to borrow the book for two weeks, but will also be able to request titles already on loan to other students, as well as renewing the book that they are currently reading.

When students have a book on loan they also have the option to alter how the text looks on the screen in order for them to be able to make the reading experience as simple and enjoyable as possible. Students are able to change font, background colour, font size, letter and word spacing. There is also extra support available for dyslexic or visually impaired students, which can be found here: <http://www.icontact-archive.com/archive?c=1581396&f=18559&s=21732&m=210383&t=cc8ab79039df76d16884468d07cd54e79a613e85d43c4a829ab3f85b937db27b>. This information also features in the drop down for altering text – click on 'Launch Dyslexia Wizard'.

We do not intend for this to replace our physical library; it will act as a vital support. Students will once again be able to access this phenomenal resource at the heart of the school in January 2022.

Research tells us that one of the best ways of improving literacy is by following texts while the words are read to them. This is happening in school for Ys 7-10 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings through the GCA Literary Canon, but we also know that simply watching subtitles while enjoying films and TV programmes can really help to improve reading. Making this happen in your home when children are watching their favourite programmes would really benefit them. If you are interested in finding out more about then please follow this link: <https://turnonthesubtitles.org/>.

The 'Reading at GCA' tab on the homepage of the school website will be regularly updated over the course of the year – please check this regularly for the latest information and guidance.

I hope that you find this information useful and that your child will make full use of this resource. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me in school.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Cummings  
*Assistant Subject Lead - English*