



NEWLANDS GIRLS' SCHOOL
COURAGE COMMITMENT COMPASSION

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Dear Parents and Carers,

World Book Day will take place on **Thursday 5th March**, and to celebrate we would like to invite all students to come to school dressed as a character from a book. Please note that this is **not** a non-uniform day; students who choose not to dress up should attend in full school uniform.

We fully appreciate the financial pressures many families are experiencing, as well as the environmental impact of single-use costumes. With this in mind, we encourage students to be imaginative and resourceful by creating outfits using items they already own, can borrow, or can find in charity shops. This approach reflects our school values of **Commitment**—making thoughtful choices, **Courage**—trying something creative and new, and **Compassion**—considering the environment and the circumstances of others.

A few simple ideas include:

- Hand-made masks or accessories created from recyclable materials
- Everyday clothing adapted to represent a favourite character

At Newlands, we place a very high value on the many benefits that reading brings—not only to academic progress across the curriculum, but also to students' confidence and mental well-being. When students find reading difficult, the increasingly complex texts they encounter at secondary school can feel daunting. This can understandably lead to reduced enjoyment and motivation, creating a cycle in which students read less, progress more slowly, and then struggle further to access the knowledge required in many subjects.

Supporting students to break this cycle requires **Commitment** from all of us—staff, families, and students themselves. It also requires **Courage**, as students learn to persevere with challenging texts and develop the confidence to explore new genres and ideas. Above all, it requires **Compassion**, as we recognise the varied experiences students bring to reading and work together to nurture their enjoyment and success.

Research consistently shows that **reading for pleasure** has the greatest impact on students' progress and attainment in reading. Alongside our World Book Day celebrations, we continue to promote reading for pleasure throughout the year in a variety of ways, including:

- Competitions such as the form group who logs the most books on *Track My Read*, author and genre challenges, classics challenges, and mini competitions throughout the year
- A lunchtime book club open to all year groups
- A weekly creative writing and journalism club for KS3–4
- Sixth Form reading mentors who read with small groups of Year 7 students once a week during tutor time
- Silent reading in Form Time for Years 7–10
- A Scholastic Book Fair, which this year will form part of our World Book Day celebrations and will run in the library from **Thursday 26th February to Monday 2nd March**

We also recognise how challenging it can sometimes be to encourage reading at home. To support you, we have collated a range of useful resources and advice.

What should they be reading?

- The most important thing is that they enjoy what they read—this might be a novel, short stories, a graphic novel, online articles, websites, or magazines
- Explore fiction linked to topics they are interested in, or encourage them to read more about their hobbies online
- If they have enjoyed a book before, try another by the same author
- Spend time browsing library or bookshop shelves together, speaking to staff, or reading reviews online
- When browsing, read the blurb and a page or two from the start to see whether the book feels engaging
- Be mindful of reading level so that they can access the vocabulary independently; you may wish to discuss this with your child's teacher
- Our school library catalogue, reading lists, and links to book-based websites can be found here: [NGS Library – Homepage](#)
- Updates on competitions and popular book choices can be found in [Newlands News](#)

Where can they find suitable reading material?

- School and community libraries offer free access to books, as well as audiobooks and e-books
- Bookshops provide opportunities to browse and seek recommendations from staff

- Audiobooks can be purchased for phones or borrowed from libraries; BBC Sounds also offers a range of free audiobooks

How can a reading culture be created at home?

- Further guidance can be found in the attached document

We are always looking for new opportunities to promote reading across the school, and we will continue to keep you updated as the year progresses. We look forward to seeing the creativity, enthusiasm, and **Courage** that World Book Day always brings, and we thank you for your ongoing **Commitment** and **Compassion** in supporting your child's reading journey.

Kind regards,



Miss Bevan
Assistant Headteacher

