



FRIDAY 6TH JUNE 2025

DEAR PARENTS

It is no secret that we have lost the art of reading. We increasingly prefer instant gratification over the challenge of working our way through a book or text. This has far-reaching implications.

Reading for pleasure has declined significantly over the past two decades. This decline correlates with the rise of social media usage and the popularity of streaming platforms such as Netflix and Prime. While national finances and budgets are not the sole measure of societal health, it is nonetheless revealing to consider their impact. A recent [article in The Week](#) stated: "Millions of British adults 'struggle with basic literacy' (...), and this costs the economy an estimated £40 billion per year."

There are also pedagogical consequences. The enjoyment of reading fosters cultural literacy and develops the capacity to grapple with complex texts and ideas. In contrast, a decline in reading makes it more difficult -both for children and adults- to sustain focus. A pioneer in this field, E.D. Hirsch, has written extensively on how literacy plays a vital role in creating a virtuous cycle of learning. More recently, the [National Literacy Trust](#) shared findings indicating that regular reading makes a measurable difference: "Children and young people who read daily (n = 789; M = 109.49) had higher average (mean) standardised reading scores than children and young people who didn't read daily (n = 3,026; M = 103.35). This difference was statistically significant." Clearly, reading can have a greater impact than we might initially assume.

Of course, this concern is not new. As early as 1979, a literacy scholar observed: "Every generation, at some

point, discovers that students cannot read as well as they would like or as well as professors expect." (accessed [here](#)). That should be somewhat encouraging -every generation faces similar challenges. One only has to read the [Eton common entrance exams](#) from 1922 to appreciate this!

Still, the question remains: what can we do to improve literacy and knowledge in a digital age? One straightforward response might be to rediscover the value of delaying instant entertainment; especially that offered by smartphones. Willingham, a prominent educational psychologist, puts it wryly in [The Atlantic](#): "Being bored has become unnatural." Of course, we should not become idle, for, as the saying goes, 'the devil makes work for idle hands.' But we ought to rediscover the wonder of reading and meaningful interaction; of pondering things with our loved ones; of developing the ability to learn deeply.

In that spirit, I was intrigued by a recent [national initiative](#) led by some parents aiming to delay the introduction of smartphones for children. After all, if we as adults commit to reading (even just a little more) we may inspire young people to become more literate in turn.



Pablo Hinojo
Headmaster



PUPILS OF THE WEEK

WEEK 7



1st Form **Henry G**

2nd Form **Luca S**

3rd Form **Kyle W**

4th Form **Boris V**

CLICK [HERE](#) FOR SPORTS FIXTURES REMAINING THIS TERM

THE CEDARS SCHOOL

THE LAURELS SCHOOL

OAKWOOD SCHOOL

SUMMER Fete

28th of June 2025

BBQ, Paellas, Ice Cream Van, Inflatables, Hook a Duck, Pimms & Drinks, Live Music & Sport activities.
Fun and entertainment for all the family.

£5 entrance per family

12pm till 4pm

147 Central Hill
London SE19 1RS

KEY DATES FOR PARENTS - TRINITY 2025

Thursday 19 June

Summer Concert, PACT Hall, 6:30pm

Friday 27 June

Sports Day, 10:00am

Saturday 28 June

PACT Barbecue and Summer Fete

KEY ACADEMIC DATES

Monday 12 May – Wednesday 18 June

GCSE Exams

Monday 19 May – Friday 20 June

A-Level Exams

Monday 2 June – Friday 6 June

1st to L6th Internal Exams