



6th July 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

St. Bernard's High School - Whole School Reading Initiative

St. Bernard's High school values reading and the way it can open doorways to new worlds. To embed the love of reading across KS3, Year 7 and Year 8 will be enjoying a reading book together in form time. During tutor time once a week, your daughter will listen to their tutor read aloud from the set reading book and students will discuss the themes and ideas, answering questions in their booklet. **Your daughter will need her own copy of the novel.**

The chosen text for Year 7 is 'October, October' by Katya Balen.

Year 7 – October, October – Katya Balen

A classic in the making for anyone who ever longed to be WILD.

October and her dad live in the woods. They sleep in the house Dad built for them and eat the food they grow in the vegetable patches. They know the trees and the rocks and the lake and stars like best friends. They read the books they buy in town again and again until the pages are soft and yellow - until next year's town visit. They live in the woods, and they are wild.

And that's the way it is.

Until the year October turns eleven.

Please purchase a copy of the book for your daughter to read in school. The book is available now to buy from **Parent Pay** and it is available at a discount price of £7.50. Students will then be given their copy of the book in the first week of September.

We also hope to welcome the author, Katya Balen, in to school to sign books and meet the students.

We look forward to enjoying this reading experience as a year group and we look forward to the interesting discussion and conversations around the books. We like to follow the words of Margaret Fuller, 'Today a reader, tomorrow a leader.'

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Elizabeth Bailey

Assistant Headteacher