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The Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP
Secretary of State for Education

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The Rt Hon Priti Patel MP
By email: WithamMP@parliament.uk

10 May 2023

Dear Priti,

Thank you so much for your letter of 18 April, about your annual literacy event, 'Get Witham Reading', in partnership with schools in your constituency.

I am delighted to send a message of support to mark this year's 'Get Witham Reading' event.

"Building a love of reading is vital, the evidence base speaks for itself: the reading and writing of Standard English, alongside proficient language development, is the key to unlocking the rest of the academic curriculum.

Reading fluency is also a key indicator for future success in further education, higher education and employment – and research suggests that reading for pleasure is more important for children's educational development than their parents' level of education.

I am sure you will enjoy celebrating the journey of the pupils who started school when you launched the project in 2012 and are now entering the workforce or further education equipped with the knowledge they have learned and acquired through their school years.

I hope your event is a success and that your children leave inspired by the opportunities they can access through reading."

Yours sincerely,

The Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP
Secretary of State for Education