



SEN Department Newsletter

Welcome and Welcome Back!

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Welcome back to Reading for the 2015-16 school year, and a warm welcome to all our new students and staff.

We hope you enjoyed your summer break and are looking forward to the challenges the new school year brings.



The Sherlock Holmes Foundation Begins

Last term a group of students from Years 7 and 8 got together with Mrs Gwyther to form a puzzle and mystery-solving group called The Sherlock Holmes Foundation. Meeting each Tuesday in L5, the boys tackled some super sleuth challenges based on the exploits of the fictional detective.

They began with a hunt for evidence which sent them racing to the four corners of the school on the trail of items and people. Great results were achieved with imaginative substitutions found, including a skillful rendering of Mr Fermor and his famous hat, and a less skillful sketch of Mr Ivanovski. The race to the finish was between Team Conan the Barbarian and Team Witty Watson, which

the former won by just one point after finding all the items. Then they tackled mind-bending puzzles to develop their detective skills, working in teams to sort the impossible from the truth.

Their training culminated in a murder case, where the boys interviewed some very shifty suspects. Sadly, we ran out of time at the end of term so the murder remains unsolved, but we'll be back on the case very soon.

New detectives will be enrolling on Tuesday 29th September, so please come along if you'd like to get involved. If you have a sharp

mind (or are just a bit nosy and want to have some fun on Tuesday at lunchtime) The Sherlock Holmes Foundation might need you...



Meet Charley Roe

Welcome to Charley Roe, a Reading old boy, who joins the SEN team for a year, covering in L5 on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. We took the time to ask him a few questions...

Welcome back to Reading! What have you been doing with yourself since you left in 2011?

I've been studying medieval languages and literature. I read English at Oxford, where I specialised in medieval writing and picked up medieval French. I then followed that three-year degree with another year in Oxford, doing a Master's, which meant going back to Latin, reading thirteenth and fourteenth-century manuscripts, and writing about King Arthur. Most of this activity stills goes on in the evening, with a few more legends about saints and a little less King Arthur these days, as I'm hoping to study for a doctorate next year.

What will you be doing at Reading this year?

I shall be working with Mrs Gwyther and Miss Rogers in L5, and providing games and general excitement at lunch and break, as well as running breakfast club on Friday mornings. I'm also organising the school's events calendar; this includes House Music, parents' evenings, prize giving, the carol service, and Commemoration Service. . .

How does it feel to be a staff member after being a student?

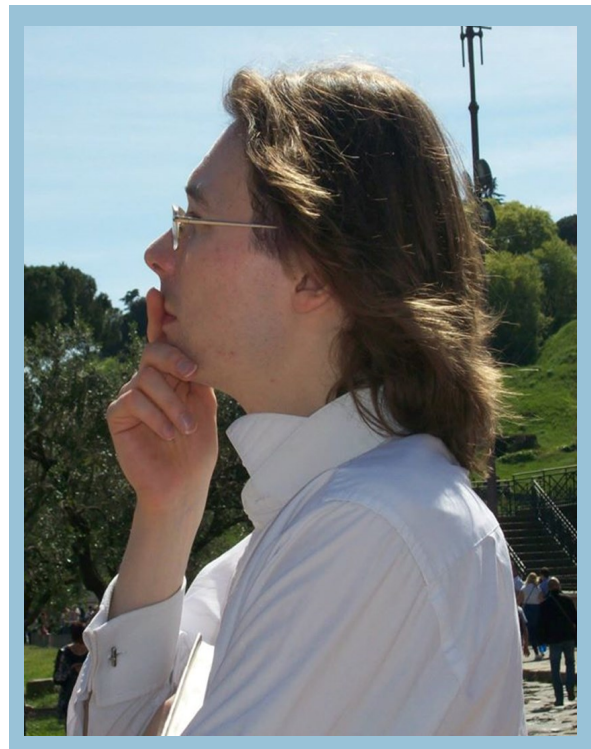
Unsurprisingly, it's strange being a member of staff. Many things aren't different at all: the teachers are pretty much the same as you might imagine, staff training days are just like longer assemblies, and I even suffered from a subconscious paranoia that I might have to go to a violin lesson after school on Monday. The real advantages are having an office, choosing a break time, and having a wider range of sartorial options available.

What are you particularly looking forward to at school this year?

As school or university begins and the summer dies a swift and bitter death, I always end up looking forward to Christmas. This is only enhanced by rumours of an L5 cinema trip! Obviously, I'm also rather looking forward to Commemoration. One day you too may realise that you cannot escape from 'All People that On Earth Do Dwell' and the endless debate as to which figure in the procession is actually the Mayor—he's not the one with the mace. You will wonder what you ever did in October without them.

And finally, what do you like to do in your free time?

I can often be found wandering around the countryside looking for strange medieval churches and/or castles, with a book of poetry in hand. Failing that, I tend to end up in the City of London with the increasing population of old boys who have been drawn into an urban existence, luring them away from their corporate lifestyles by telling them which bits used to be fields and palaces.



Mental Health

1 in 10 children and young people aged 5 to 16 suffer from a diagnosable mental health disorder in the UK, and this figure rises to 1 in 4 by adulthood. The number of young people aged 15 or 16 with depression nearly doubled between the 1980s and the 2000s.

Over the coming year we will continue to focus on this important issue. Mrs Fooks has arranged for speakers to visit the school to talk to students and staff:

- Dick Moore will visit to discuss adolescent mental health and the impact depression had on his family.
- Delyth Lynch from Wellington College and Rachel Kelly, author of 'Black Rainbow', will talk to Year 12 about their personal experience of depression.
- Satveer Nijal will deliver a series of talks about self harm in April next year.



friends. Ryan and Sam plan to run a Mental Health Week and other campaigns throughout the year to promote student well-being.

A Well-Being Corner has been created upstairs in the LRC, and includes titles from the popular Overcoming series of self-help guides and study skills books. These resources are available for everyone to use. Also check out the SEN Support area on Sharepoint for resources.

In addition to these new initiatives, we continue to offer other types of support for students.

Steve Griffiths is the school counsellor and has weekly sessions with students who need support with things like stress and anxiety, bereavement, anger management and depression. We also work with Deborah Sander, our Educational Psychologist, and the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service.

We are planning to cover topics related to mental health, well-being and positive psychology during PSHE lessons. These sessions will encourage peer help and self-help and will discuss the difficulties associated with mental illness.

Sam Miller and Ryan Yao-Smith in Year 12 have undergone training in peer coaching and will share information about mental health and drugs, alcohol and tobacco awareness. They will also encourage other students to talk about personal concerns, or concerns about their

Miss Rogers, Mrs Gwyther and Mr Roe run the Student Support Room, L5, and are always available to talk to if you're unhappy or need advice. They also support students with worries over school or homework, and can help if you're finding it difficult to manage your workload.

Zumos is available on all school computers and you can access online resources like Young Minds, which offers practical help across a range of topics: <http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for-children-young-people/whats-worrying-you>

This term we will be holding a parent information afternoon where parents will be invited to come and see the support available in school. Another aim of the session is to establish parent to parent support links. We feel parents have lots to offer one another, be it support through difficult times or just sharing their experiences, particularly related to students with special educational needs.

If you are interested in helping or have ideas or suggestions, please contact Miss Rogers at: senco@reading-school.co.uk



What's Going On?

The SEN Team have a regular programme of activities that go on all year round:

Sensory Circuits – every Tuesday morning from 8.10 am in the gym – a good place to learn new skills and make friends!

Great for:

- Improving motor skills
- Practicing working as part of team
- Making friends

Breakfast Club (KS3) every Friday morning from 8.20 am in L5 – come and join for fun and games ranging from the Uno to Penguin Pile-Up!

- Relaxed environment
- Fun games to play
- Inclusive atmosphere

L5 is also available at break and lunch times! So, if you're at a loose end during lunch and break times, come to L5 and enjoy the friendly atmosphere. You can try your skills at chess, Uno, board games, or even just read or do homework and have a bite to eat.

"I'm new and I've heard about L5 the Student Support Room - but where is it?"

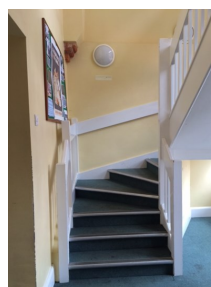


through this gate to the Coach House...

Down this path near the cross-roads...



in this door...



up these stairs...

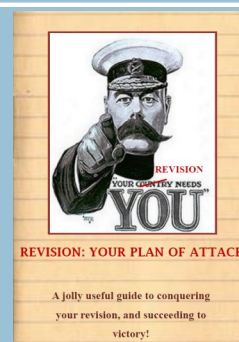


and there we are!

The SEN Department can help with revision!

Visit the Student Support section on Sharepoint, student area, to print off this revision leaflet and access other information.

If Year 11, 12, or 13 students would like more specific help and advice, please email a member of the SEN team or speak to your tutor.



If you need support of any kind please contact Mrs Gwyther sgwyther@reading-school.co.uk or Miss Rogers vrogers@reading-school.co.uk or come along to L5.