



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

2nd May 2025

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Introduction

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Through the quirks of Bank Holidays, this week I had my final Year 11 Geography lesson. As with many of our teachers, I have taught them multiple times each week for the last three years. Indeed, there are some I have seen every week since they joined Reading School in Year 7. As we shook hands and bid each other farewell (or 'au revoir' for those sensible students who have chosen Geography A Level!), it dawned on me what a tremendous journey we have been on over that time.

Along with a fantastic team led by Mrs Rix-Drummond and Mr Dimmick and driven by our amazing Heads of Departments, I am fortunate enough to oversee the School's curriculum; everything that happens in the classroom. This is about ensuring that across their time at Reading School, every student experiences the high quality, broad and balanced range of subject matter that we believe to be crucial for human flourishing. It is a genuine joy of a role.

Thanks to our resident Latin expert Mrs Rix-Drummond, I know that the word 'curriculum' originates from 'run a course or race', and it made me think about the course that we as a School and our Year 11 students have trodden over the past five years.

- We have undoubtedly improved: students mastering over 10 different subjects and the School embedding Electives are impressive feats.
- We have inevitably faltered: students making GCSE subject choices based on what their friends were doing and the School needing to improve the Design & Technology provision were unfortunate.
- But we have grown: our Year 11s now recognise why character excellence is as crucial as academic excellence, and the School now fully understands the risks that smartphones pose for our students' wellbeing.

However, despite what they mistakenly believed early on, our students' time at School has never been a race. Students at Reading School never need to compete against each other in the classroom. Our Year 11 and Year 13 students will do brilliantly this summer because they have learnt to learn from each other, to coach each other, to challenge and to support each other. Therefore, ahead of the end of year internal exams that all our students sit, it is this message of collaboration over competition that I want to emphasise to parents and students alike. These forthcoming exams have just three aims:

- Celebration: whether this has been your first or final year at the School, what a journey you have been on! The exams are a chance to remind ourselves of what fantastic character and academic growth you have achieved thus far on our own personal race. Well done!
- Practice: there will be further hurdles to come, many of them unforeseen, so ready yourself by trying out a revision timetable (even if it doesn't work well this time round) or going to bed earlier and being more self-disciplined with digital distractions in preparation for what is ahead.
- Improvement: Whether it is the excellent feedback that your teachers give you after the exams or the realisation that it is a delight rather than a chore to chat with your parents about your hopes and worries, the exams will soon be over and we move on. Nobody's race is finished and any test/exam you sit in School is designed to help you improve afterwards rather than prove anything.

So, to return to my Year 11 Geography class's journey; above and beyond their knowledge of urban regeneration strategies and coastal management techniques, I am proud of the fine young men that they have become. They raise each other up, laugh with, not at each other and share equally in each other's successes and struggles.

Please succeed with humility and lose with grace, ignore the grade boundaries or 'class average', for nobody should aim solely for external validation or to be average, and whatever journey you are on (for everyone is different), run it in a way that makes yourself and your loved ones proud.

With best wishes for a delightful long weekend,

Mr Fairchild
Assistant Headteacher (Quality of Education)

Key information

All Years

Internal Exams - w/c 19th May (Year 7, 9 and 12) and 2nd June (Year 8 and 10)

Please see the links below for information pertaining to End of Year exam arrangements. There are 3 documents for each year group:

'End of Year Exam Information 2025' detailing locations, timings and expectations for the exam period.
'Exam Timetable'

'Internal Exam Subject Guidance' compiled by Heads of Department to detail content that will be examined in each subject, format of exams and how to revise for the subject.

The information should be reviewed thoroughly by all students. Any queries should be directed to Mrs Clarke or your child's form tutor.

Year 7

[Year 7 End of Year Exam Information](#)

[Year 7 Exam Timetable](#)

[Year 7 Internal Exam Subject Guidance](#)

Year 8

[Year 8 End of Year Exam Information](#)

[Year 8 Exam Timetable](#)

[Year 8 Internal Exam Subject Guidance](#)

Year 9

[Year 9 End of Year Exam Information](#)

[Year 9 Exam Timetable](#)

[Year 9 Internal Exam Subject Guidance](#)

Year 10

[Year 10 End of Year Exam Information](#)

[Year 10 Exam Timetable](#)

[Year 10 Internal Exam Subject Guidance](#)

Year 12

[Year 12 End of Year Exam Information](#)

[Year 12 Exam Timetable](#)

[Year 12 Internal Exam Subject Guidance](#)

Summer Uniform – with effect from Tuesday 29th April

With the warm weather we have experienced this week we decided to put our Summer uniform standards into effect. Students are not required to wear blazers to school, whilst at school or on their way home. If students do choose to wear an outer layer, however, it should be their blazer.

Students are still required to wear ties, tuck their shirt in and have top buttons fastened.

School shoes must also be worn, apart from in PE and Games sessions, when trainers are to be worn.

Caps or sunhats may be worn outside when sunny, but should not be worn inside. All students should bring a named refillable water bottle to school and fill it up between lessons.

These rules will apply until the end of term.

Poet Laureate

Please find poem by our Poet Laureate Henry R 10E

No god can save us

You asked me, "How did you sleep?"

I said, " How can I? When I was woken by a bang

Of the shootings of the innocent,

The screams as they were hanged.

I can see the remnants of a supercontinent,

Fragmented, pulling apart,

Torn by an almighty hand

Squeezing our breaking heart.

Some try to pull together,

Some push away, most fall,

We're divided into "good and bad"

Meaningful, meaningless, rich and poor.

I can see the strongest figures

Strangling the weak,

When there are people under blood-stained boots

Tell me: How can I sleep?"

"Safe in the knowledge people do what's right?"

"When you've already lost then why would you fight?"

"Understanding that our leaders care?"

"Look me in the eyes, tell me they're fair!

I can only sleep held down by the hand

And gagged by the promise of a better land."

You say, "We can pray", I'll reply, "How?"

"When the world is ablaze, no god can save us now."

NEW! Dungeons & Dragons Club

Love Dungeons & Dragons? Curious about what it's all about? Whether you're a seasoned hero or completely new to D&D, come along to the new D&D Club! Whether you're a pro or a total beginner, everyone's welcome.

✦ Make legendary characters, tell unforgettable stories, roll plenty of dice, and have a laugh with others who love gaming too.

✦ Chill, create, play, chat — no pressure!

✦ No experience needed — just bring your imagination!

✦ Meet new friends, craft your own stories, and be part of something legendary!

 Thursdays after school until 4:30pm |  M1

Drop by and join the fun! Come and start your adventure!

Year 7 only

Grandparents' Day

As your child's first year at Reading School enters its final term, we very much hope that you feel proud of their progress and development. Further, we really hope that you feel a part of the extended Reading School family. We are delighted to give you information about **our 'Grandparents and Relatives Day' on Tuesday 1st July.**

Grandparents and Relative's Day is an opportunity for you to spend a day with your grandson/son at school, taking part in a variety of lessons throughout the day and being part of our life at Reading School. Our students thrive on sharing their school lives with their extended relatives and extended relatives feel a sense of pride and nostalgia being able to re-live their school days alongside their young people.

For further information, please click on the following link: [Grandparents and Relatives Day](#)

Year 11 only

Yr 11 final day before study leave arrangements and update about Big School

Next Wednesday 7th of May, all of Year 11 will have lunch as normal but have a final Chapel from 1pm. They will be dismissed from school directly after the assembly so will have an early finish to the day.

We have also offered the students a chance to visit the refurbishment of Big School which has been finished to allow them to sit their exams in it. We are delighted with the improvements as the décor is far more harmonious and uncluttered than it used to be, and the lighting should have a positive impact on their concentration and the legibility of exam scripts. They have been offered the time over after this week and next week before they go on study leave.

We are really proud of all they have brought to the school, and hope that in years to come they might come back to Big School remembering it positively as a place where significant things happened in their life.

Year 11 and 13 only

Year 11 and Year 13 Exam Timetables

Year 11 and 13 students will have been sent updated exam timetables today that now include their exam venue and any clash arrangements.

Please ensure students check the timetable so they are aware of any changes to timings.

To help ensure a smooth and stress-free exam period, we encourage you to print off this timetable and place it on the fridge or another visible location. This will help everyone stay organised and ensure all students arrive on time for each exam.

We wish all our students the best of luck as they prepare for and complete their exams. With your support, we are confident they will do their very best.

Year 13 only

Yr 13 final day before study leave

Year 13 have their last day on Friday 9th May. It is always a time of conflicting emotions: excitement at the opportunities ahead, nostalgia and reflection about good times shared and perhaps a little trepidation about exams and the world beyond school. Regardless, it's a very important day for students to experience so they can close the book on this phase of their lives and look forward to the next steps they're about to take.

The day will be a little different to normal:

They will have a breakfast in the Refectory at 9:00am followed by chapel at 9:30am.

This will finish at 10:00am at which point they will be able to go home if they wish, or alternatively they do have the option to stay on site until 11:15am so they can say goodbyes to each other, to staff and have the traditional final football match on the front field.

All Year 13s will be off site at 11:15am.

In nearly all previous years, Year 13 have got the tone and behaviour right on this last day, recognising it is an opportunity to celebrate their time at school and to leave a positive final impression. Occasionally though they get this wrong and mistake their final day for a day without consequences. Please can parents remind any Year 13s that they need to behave appropriately on their last day, as although it is their final day of school education, they do still have A-levels ahead and they should not do anything to jeopardise their participation in those examinations.

We are looking forward to the chance to say good bye to a wonderful year group who have contributed so much to the school and celebrate their time with us.

Safeguarding & Wellbeing

Online Safety Information Session for Parents

Would you like to know more about current online trends? Would you want a better understanding of the risks associated with social media, online gaming and live streaming? Would you like hear about how you can support your child with their online lives?

If so, parents and carers are invited to a free online safety information session on **Wednesday 7th May 2025 from 4pm – 4.45pm**. Save the date and a link will be shared in next week's Headmaster's Bulletin.

Goring Gap Run:

RAISING FUNDS FOR READING SCHOOL 2025! – Be a Marshal for the RSPA at the Goring Gap Race Event – Sunday 18th May 2025

Hello everyone, the RSPA is looking for volunteers to assist with marshalling duty at 'The Goring Gap race' on Sunday 18th May, in return for your help, the RSPA receives £60 per marshal (with most slots requiring 2 people, paid as £120) and we should raise over £780 to assist School with their current fundraising targets. Currently, the slots are based in Caversham, Tilehurst, Purley, Pangbourne, Whitchurch-on-Thames, Goring and also near to Wallingford.

Last year we raised £1,080 from these, as we were offered more slots close to the event date, which may make it possible to beat this total for 2025 if we can get lots of volunteers.

Please find <https://goringgaprun.com/> if you're interested.

It's a lovely event. Take a deck chair, a flask of coffee, a newspaper or book, and enjoy 3 to 4 hours of basically cheering people on as they run (or walk) past you.

Secondary school age children count as Marshals, if accompanied by a parent, so this is also a way that your child can be with you to help raise funds.

Please contact us immediately, to register your interest. The more interest we have the more slots we can apply for. Kindly email Terri at t_lorrimore@hotmail.com or text to 07810 445474. Terri will co-ordinate a slot for you and then you'll be given the race organiser's email and a location map nearer the time.

Many thanks again for all your support.

The Pre-Loved Uniform Shop opening dates and times

Friday 9th May - 3.30pm - 4.30pm (no on-site parking)

Saturday 10th May - 10.30am-12.30pm (parking available on site)

We would love donations of the following as our stocks are running low:

- All sizes of macron kit- particularly games tops
- Ties in all houses and Sixth Form
- Small size blazers
- Trousers up to age 13
- Shirts up to age 13
- A Level textbooks
- GCSE and A Level Revision books
- GCSE English Lit set texts

In the event of a poor weather forecast the opening will be cancelled- if this happens information will be sent out via WhatsApp groups and classlist.

Hope to see you there!

We are always looking for more volunteers to join our shop team. It is a great way to meet other parents and to find out about more about the school.

If you would like to join the team please email shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk

Best wishes and have a lovely weekend
The RSPA Team

Summer Term – Week 2

To keep up to date with student life at Reading School, click the icons below to follow, be part of, and stay connected with the Reading School community.



Throwback Thursday

Did you know Reading School's "Throwback Thursday" started in February 2022? The now regular social media post seeks to celebrate and share the School's rich history and heritage with current students, staff, parents and alumni. The posts not only help to preserve the school's history but also strengthen the bonds within the Reading School community.



Reading School Football Team (1884-85)

French Exchange

After an unforgettable trip to France in March with our exchange partners and friends from The Piggott School, our Year 10 and Year 12 students were delighted to welcome their French partners to Reading last week.

They enjoyed exploring London and hearing first-hand insights about life at Oxford University from Old Redingensians Sam Miller (OR 2010-2017) and John Spence (OR 2014-2021).



On Tuesday, they spent their final day experiencing school life at Reading School before we said a *fond au revoir* on Wednesday. Some boys are already making plans to visit each other in the future.

The exchange has not only strengthened friendships but also deepened our students' enthusiasm for French language and culture.





Thank you to Mme Fondu and Mme McAllister for running this exchange, and to M. Hersent, Mme Rawlings, Mrs Somerton from the Piggott School who organised this wonderful week and of course our long lasting valued partners at the lycée Jean Guéhenno with Mme Rouland, Mme Cherbonnel and Mme Trubert providing us with this opportunity.

Feedback is important to us and if you have any positive news, comments or suggestions, please contact the Community Relations Office by emailing communityrelations@reading-school.co.uk