



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

7th March 2025

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Introduction

Dear students, carers, staff and parents,

As this busy week draws to a close, I really hope it's been a good one for you. At School, we've juggled French exchanges; Mandarin music; chess, football, handball, and badminton fixtures; scaffolding going up around the Chapel; celebrations of excellence in the UK Linguistics Olympiad; preparations for the Senior Physics Challenge finals; admission offers being sent out for next year's Year 7 students; and invitations for Year 5 families to our Open Day on April 1st. Alongside all this, we've been making some really exciting preparations for major upcoming events.

I thought you might like to know that we now have more than 1,000 guests booked in for our 'Grand Reunion' for Old Redingensians in July. We will soon share images of historic graffiti from around the school, calling on the culprits from yesteryear to return for detention on the 12th of July! We continue to have wonderful conversations with those whose lives were transformed by this school. This week, we had an amazing conversation with double Oscar winner Robert Amram, a Hollywood producer and Old Boy of the School. A South House boarder, former vice-captain, and keen cricket and rugby player, he has promised to return from America for the reunion. We look forward to hearing his story.

Having launched our Giving Day appeal last week, I'm pleased to say that more than 100 students have already secured sponsors for their own challenges in support of the school's future, and this fundraising effort is progressing at pace. On Monday, I received a delightful letter from a 91-year-old OR who posted in a cheque to support the campaign. However, so far, only 15 parents have booked to visit the school on the afternoon of Thursday, 27th March. I'd like to remind you that you would be warmly welcomed if you're able to 'pop in.' I'm often told that parents wish there were more opportunities to visit the school, so if you can, please do come and see the whole school in action on the 27th – we would love your company.

Our anniversary was 'teased' in the local press yesterday, where they also highlighted our hopes to develop sports facilities, arts facilities, and Sixth Form Centre. We remain optimistic about submitting a planning application in the summer for the first phase of this work, and in due course, we will need the support of Reading Borough Council residents. I've asked Mr Allen, Mr Griffin, Mr Sandiford and Mr Lloyd to prepare short videos sharing their hopes for the future of these key areas of the school, which we will release during this and coming weeks.

Beyond all this development work, it's clear that we are now at the 'business end' of the academic year. With just seven school weeks to go until the first written exams (and even less time until coursework deadlines and oral assessments for Modern Foreign Languages), the strenuous effort of preparing for public examinations is obvious. Look closely and you will be able to see the steam rising from Year 11 and 13 classrooms!

This is Reading School. We are, at the same time, a mixture of muddy football fixtures and academic rigour, lost property and mind-blowing musical talent, 100-year-old graffiti and 150 new students desperate to join in the fun! Just as each of us is a bundle of contradictions, it's my hope that our school remains a place of diversity and paradox - of brilliant boys who forget their lunch, of scholars and last-minute merchants, of hope for the future and delight in the past.

Dr Chris Evans

Headmaster

Key information

Year 11 and Year 13 only

Exam Timetables

We are pleased to inform you that the summer exam timetables have been shared with Year 11 and Year 13 students and are also available on MCAS.

To help ensure a smooth and stress-free exam period, we encourage you to print off the 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.

All years

Student Support Parent Meetup

On Wednesday 19th March from 2.15pm - 3.15pm, we are holding a meetup session for parents of students on our SEND register. This is a valuable opportunity for you to see Auxilium, meet with the team and talk to other parents.

If you would like to come along, please email studentsupport@reading-school.co.uk by Monday 17th March.

Year 7 Open Day reminder – Tuesday 1st April 2025



We are looking forward to welcoming families with a son(s) in Year 5 during our Year 7 Open Day on Tuesday 1st April. This will be an opportunity for families to tour the school, meet with staff and students, as well as their son(s) getting to participate in a carousel of exciting activities. If you know any family or friends with a son(s) in Year 5 who may be considering Reading School, please do let them know about the event. We would love to meet with families from our local community, to explore how we might help their son(s) in Year 5 flourish, assist with shaping their talents, as well as encourage their curiosity.

Booking is required [via the school website](#) or by scanning the QR code.

School Community News

Excellence in Volunteering

Congratulations to Oliver H (10C) who developed his reporting skills as part of completing his [Duke of Edinburgh Award](#), leading to his work being published in 'Tidings' magazine, an award-winning publication providing advice, real-life stories, medical insights, and practical guidance for people with colostomies, ileostomies, and urostomies, as well their families can caregivers.

While preparing for the article, Oliver developed a range of skills including:

- Learning about publishing, organisation skills and article writing – including attending editorial meetings, meeting editorial deadlines and reporting directly to an Editor.
- Completing research into stomas, stoma care and the impact on the wearer;
- Interviewing the subject of the article – dealing with the subject matter maturely and compassionately;
- Finding the “hook” for the article and writing a detailed and interesting article that would appeal to the reader; and
- Working through the editorial process and polishing the article ready for publication.

For the volunteering section of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, an individual needs to give time to help others without payment and the activity itself should benefit a community or cause and it's clear Oliver has achieved this through his contribution to [Colostomy UK](#).

To read the article, [please click here](#) (pages 30 - 31).

Excellence in Biology

Reading School Year 13 Biologists gained an impressive 9 Gold, 5 Silver and 11 bronze medals in [British Biology Olympiad 2025](#), run by the Royal Society of Biology. Receiving a gold medal in this competition demonstrates that a student is one of the most talented young biologists in the country. This year, Gold medallists (pictured below) have been invited to the team selection round, which they will sit on 13th March 2025 at Reading School. The top sixteen performers from Round 1 and the British Biology Olympiad will then be invited to take part in practical training and a further round of selection at the University of Warwick. The top four students from the team selection rounds and the British Biology Olympiad will then be selected to represent the UK at the [International Biology Olympiad](#).



This year, 18533 students from over 1053 schools competed, with a gold medal being awarded to the top 5% of students, a silver medal to the top 15% and a bronze medal to the top 30%.

The British Biology Olympiad challenges and stimulates students with an interest in biology to expand and extend their talents. It enables students to demonstrate their knowledge and to be suitably rewarded with publicly recognised certificates and medals. The International Biology Olympiad (IBO) will be held in Quezon City (Philippines) this year. The IBO seeks to challenge by both theoretical and practical tests some of the top pre-university biology students in the world, with over sixty countries taking part.

Well done to all students who took part, and thank you to Head of Biology, Ms Howson.

Gold Winners	Silver Winners	Bronze Winners
Or M	Oliver Q	Alex C
Joshua H	Edward D	Yusef Z
Wai Yan L	Imtiyaz B	Maninder S
Raymond W	Srivallabh S	Rohit L
Ethan E		Aujaswi M
Archie C		Dhruv D
Arhan C		Rohan O
Paarth G		Rayan S
Keshanth R		Jude A
		Nok Hei L
		Kanishk K

UKLO Excellence



In [February](#), students took part in the United Kingdom Linguistics Olympiad ([UKLO](#)), an annual language-analysis competition open to all year groups. By participating in the competition, our students hone a wide range of valuable skills, including structural thinking, pattern recognition, problem-solving, attention to detail, and lateral thinking. These attributes not only sharpen their analytical abilities but also inspire a deeper appreciation for the complexity of language.

The results for the Advanced UKLO competition have now been received, and we are delighted that so many of our students have received Bronze, Silver, and Gold awards. According to Teacher of Classics, Mrs Haugvik, “It’s a very tough competition, and everyone should be very proud of their fantastic achievement. A special mention goes to Or M and James T, who achieved Gold awards, and will therefore be going through to the next round of the competition.”

We congratulate all students who took part and wish Or and James the very best of luck in the next round.

Events

The Playhouse Apprentice – tickets now on sale



Reading School Drama Department are delighted to announce tickets are now on sale via the links below for our annual Drama collaboration with The Abbey School.

This year sees our senior students from Years 10 - 12 delighting us with an Elizabethan caper with serious undertones on the importance of the arts for all. A wonderful, atmospheric ensemble piece, The Playhouse Apprentice will make you laugh out loud as we follow the journey of John Pygge to save his theatre from closure. The performances take place at [South Street Arts Centre](#) where the students’ fabulous work will be adorned by a professional technician, in a professional venue.

[Tickets for Tuesday 18th March](#)

[Tickets for Wednesday 19th March](#)

Inspire Lectures

We are hosting three Inspire Lectures this month, featuring a range of fascinating careers and topics.

Monday 10th March (Senior Lunch, 1:00–1:45pm)

From Reading School to Global Diplomacy - Journey into Public Service [Year 11 and above]



Noam Rosenbaum (OR 2011-2018) is a British diplomat working in Pakistan, his fifth role in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. Noam will deliver an Inspire Lecture on Monday 10th March (Senior Lunch, 1–1:45pm), sharing his journey in public service and insights into careers in international development, diplomacy and national security. He will discuss what it means to work in or alongside the public sector and the diverse opportunities available in these fields. Most importantly, this session will be an open discussion on how individuals can contribute to global progress, where it happens, why it matters and how students can be part of it,

both now and in the future. Register here: [Inspire Lecture: From Reading School to Global Diplomacy - Journey into Public Service | Events | Reading School Alumni Society](#)

Thursday 13th March (After School, 3:45–4:45pm)

Numbers That Matter - A Career as an Actuary [All year groups]



Nicholas Lax (OR 1995-2000), an actuary at Pacific Life Re, has worked across the UK, France and Germany, using maths and data to make critical financial predictions in the global insurance industry.

In this talk, Nick will share his journey from studying Maths to leading research and development in reinsurance, offering valuable insights into the actuarial profession and its real-world impact. He will explore how analytical skills translate into global career opportunities and the importance of adaptability in a rapidly evolving industry.

Register here: [Inspire Lecture: Numbers That Matter - A Career as an Actuary | Events | Reading School Alumni Society](#)

Tuesday 18th March (After School, 3:45–4:45pm)

The quest for the world's highest magnetic field [Year 10 or above]



Dr James Ellison (ETH Zurich) will showcase cutting-edge research into compact HTS magnets and their potential applications in energy storage, battery research and carbon capture.

He will also share insights into his journey from Cambridge to ETH Zurich, exploring how advancements in magnet technology could shape the future of science and sustainability.

Register here: [Inspire Lecture: The quest for the world's highest magnetic field | Events | Reading School Alumni Society](#)

We have been promoting the Inspire Lectures to students across year groups. If you think your child would be interested, please encourage them to register.

Work Experience & Careers

Student Insight: Experience in Engineering

During February half-term, Bhругu H (10C) got to complete work experience with BAE Systems (a multinational defence company) based in Rochester, Kent. Work experience is incredibly valuable for students as it helps them gain insights into different industries and job roles, gives them a sense of what working life is like beyond school, and allows them to test career interests before making post-16 education decisions.

Bhругu shared of his work experience:

“On Monday, we had an orientation session before being placed into the mechanical engineering group. There were three functional groups: mechanical, digital, and manufacturing. On Tuesday, we toured some of the testing facilities while learning about key engineering processes, including the importance of a Product Design Specification - used by engineers to ensure their work meets industry standards.

Wednesday took us to the design shop, where we worked with machinery to design, manufacture, and build from scratch using CAD software. We also took part in a 'Dragon's Den' style challenge, where my group pitched an idea on how to remove space junk. In the end, the judges declared us the winners!

On Thursday, the mechanical engineering group faced a hands-on challenge: designing and building a functioning bridge that met specific requirements, such as holding at least 2kg. Unfortunately, my bridge didn't survive the test! Finally, on Friday, we created a presentation to showcase our work from the past week and reflect on what we had learned. Overall, it was a fantastic experience, and I would encourage anyone interested in engineering to apply.”

For more information about work experience with BAE, [please click here](#).

RSPA

Request for second-hand book donations – update

We're delighted to report that the LRC has received many donations of books from families at Reading School in the last few weeks. Around 85 books have already been donated so far and we're very thankful for the support which will benefit our students.

The following list of books will be still needed:

Books to replace old LRC copies

- The Cherub series by Robert Muchamore
- The Murder most unladylike series by Robin Stevens
- The Young Sherlock Holmes by Andy Lane
- Anything by M.G. Leonard especially the Adventures on Trains series
- Simpsons comic books
- The adventures of Sherlock Holmes
- Agatha Christie novels

If you have these at home, and no longer need them, please do consider donating them to the LRC. Please take them to reception marked "LRC - Book Donation" and let the LRC put your unwanted books to good use.

The Pre-loved Uniform Shop

The uniform shop will be open on the following dates:

- Friday 28th March from 3.30pm – 4.30pm
- Saturday 29th March from 10.30am – 12.30pm

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

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

Have a lovely weekend.

The RSPA Team

Lent Term – Week 9

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.



Meet Missy

Missy is the newest member of the Reading School family and she acts as an emotional support dog for students accessing Student Services. After an intensive interview process, Missy has been an integral part of the team and there has been a noticeable increase in students accessing Student Services to see her and say hello. Not only do students get to learn how to interact with our furry friend, she also acts as a calming presence that students benefit from.



Did you know that Chow Chows are one of oldest dog breeds, dating back over 2,000 years to ancient China? They also have unique blue-black tongues, a trait they share only with Chinese Shar-Pei.



Drop Everything and Read 2025

We marked World Book Day on Thursday 6th March with our annual 'Drop Everything and Read' event which gives students and staff the opportunity to spend a period immersing themselves in the joy of reading or listening to an audiobook or podcast.







Reading School vs Park House School

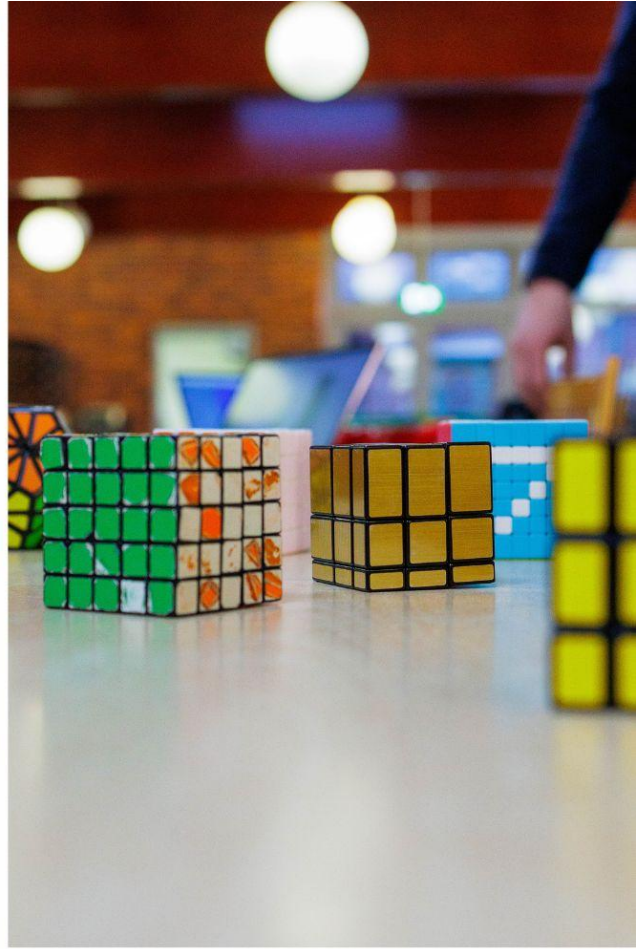
Football season started this week in the sunshine as we hosted Park House School on our newly maintained pitch and our thanks to Head of Operations & Projects, Mr Symonds for getting it ready for the season ahead. Our football team was elated to have come away with a 6 - 1 victory while being cheered on from the sidelines, but what truly stood out was the positive spirit and effort shown by both teams.

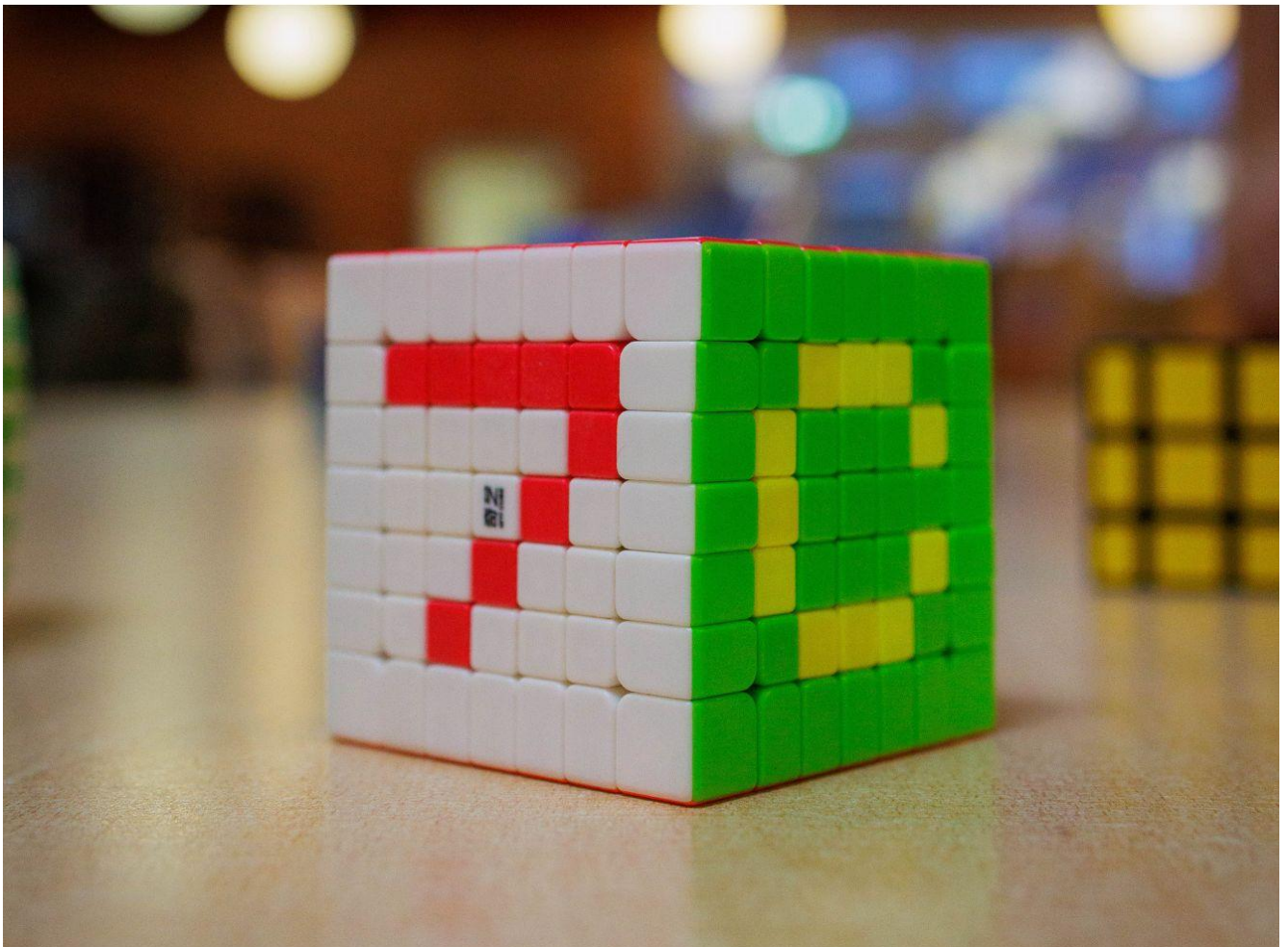


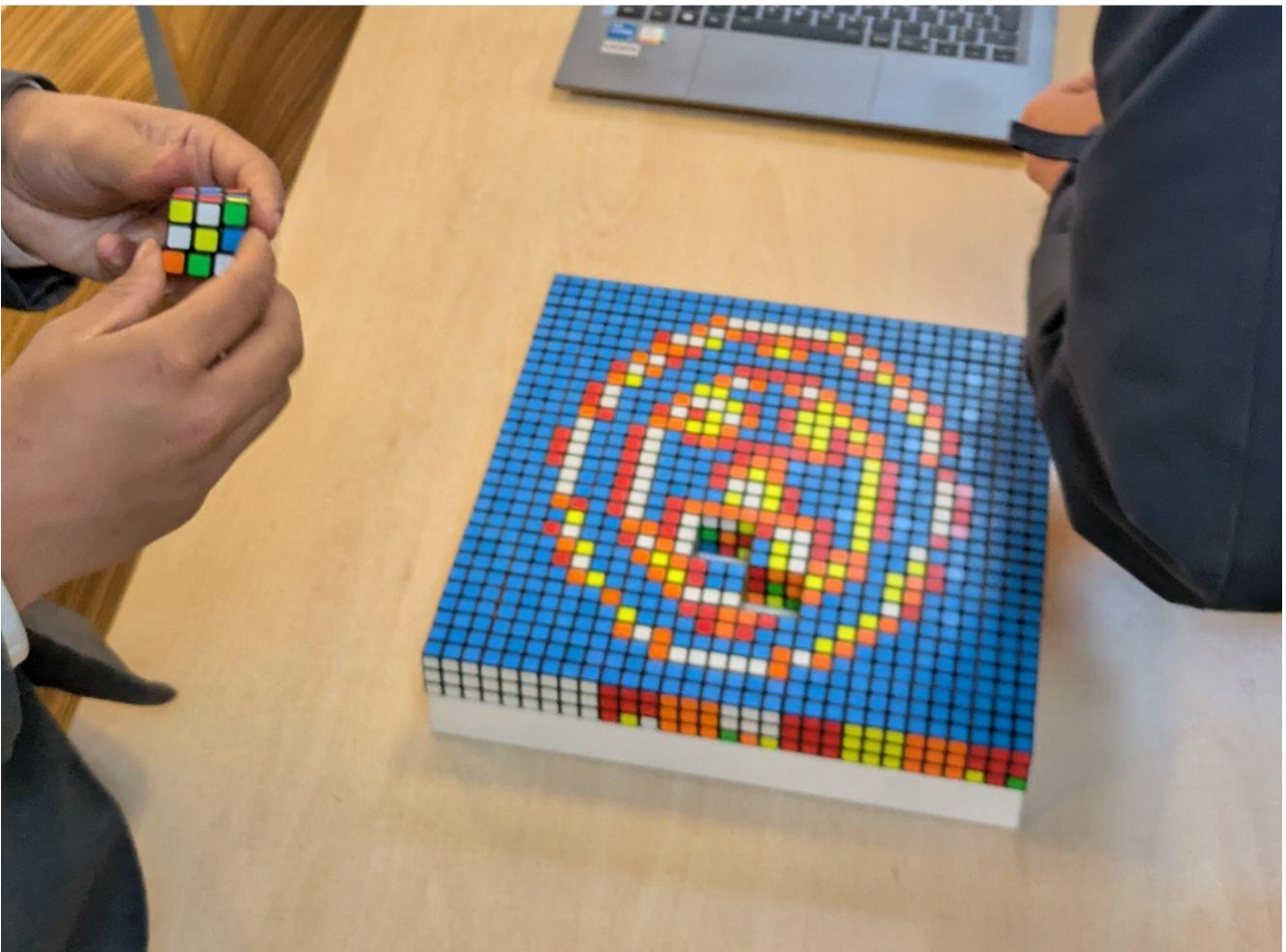
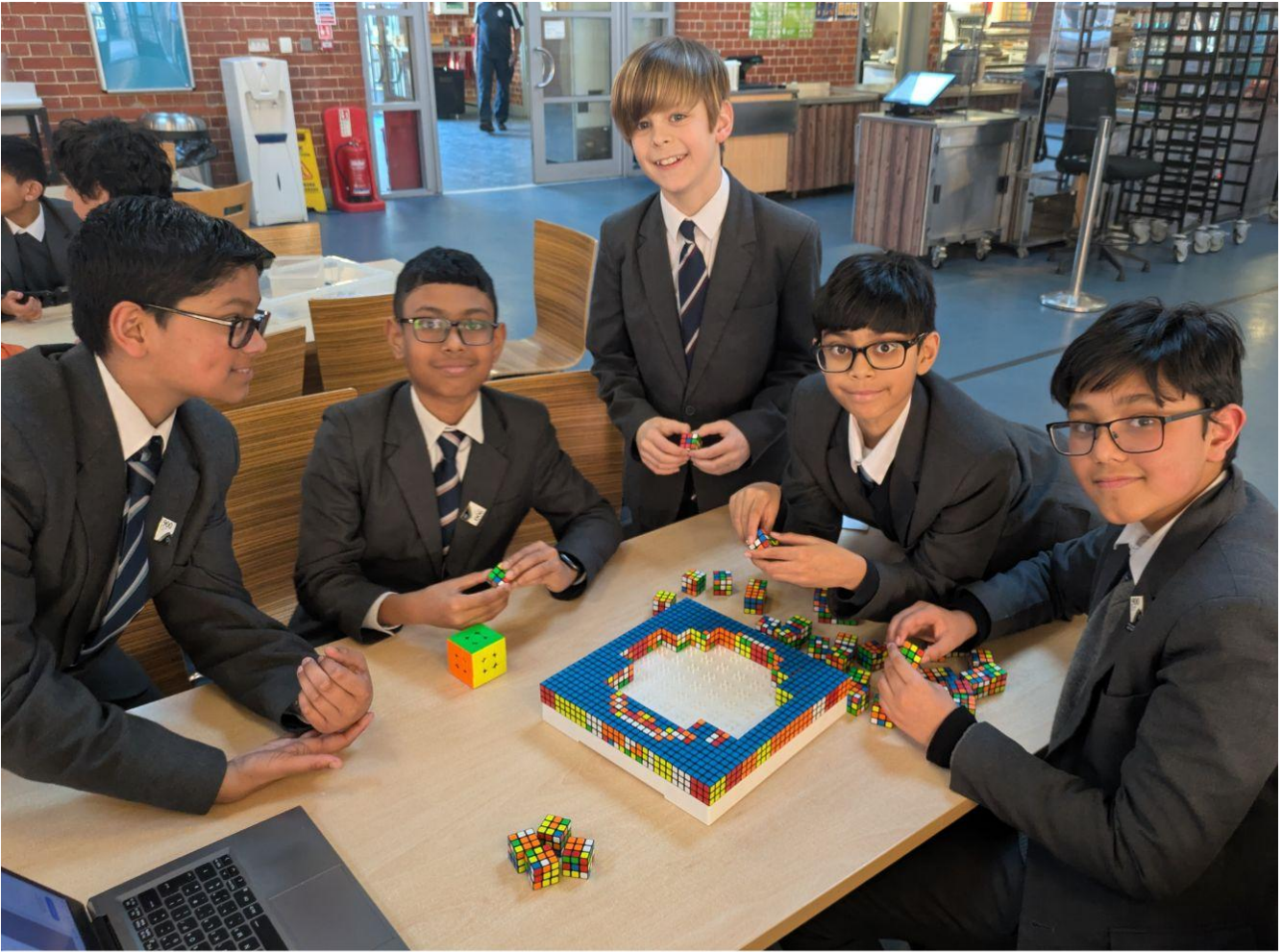




House Speedcubing Challenge







United Kingdom Linguistics Olympiad

Well done to all students and we look forward to keeping you updated



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