



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

9th May 2025

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Introduction

Dear Students, Parents, Carers and Staff,

This week, I've been struck by a deep sense of pride in our Year 11 and Year 13 students as they embark on the journey of their GCSE and A-level exams. Whether they are aware of it or not, their contributions to the life of Reading School have not gone unnoticed during their time here. Their academic pursuits, leadership and service, sporting and cultural contributions, along with their character, have been felt across the school and helped to knit our community together, while showing younger students what leading with integrity and generosity looks like.

I often speak of life as an unfolding story, each chapter charged with its own triumphs and trials. Exams are simply one chapter among many and if there is one key message I would like you all to take away with you, it is no single paper, no lone grade, holds more weight than any other moment you live. Your laughter in break time with friends, your kindness in and out of the classroom, the deep friendships you forge, the challenges you overcome, the knowledge you accumulate and are able to put to positive use: these are the threads that weave the tapestry of your school life.

My wish would be for all Year 11s and Year 13s to reflect on the following:

Release your burden. You have prepared. You have revised. You have asked questions, sought help, and shown resilience. Now, approach each exam with self-assurance. Let your knowledge flow freely with clarity and focus.

Remember your worth. No certificate or grade can ever capture who you are, your kindness, your creativity, your courage, or your capacity to care for yourself and others. You are already defined by so much more than ink on a page.

Look forward with confidence. These exams are an opportunity to demonstrate what you know, yes, but also to show how you think, how you solve problems, and how you persevere. They are a stage on which you may shine.

To parents, carers, and staff: thank you. Your support, care, nurture and calm words have been a steady presence in the lives of our students. Let us continue to offer encouragement rather than pressure, reassurance rather than expectation.

And lastly, to every student in every other year group: let us champion our Year 11s and Year 13s as they step into their exams.

Let us travel this road together, encouraging one another along. The best is yet to come.

With pride and optimism,

Dr C Evans
Headmaster

Key information

Year 7 only

Grandparents' Day – a reminder

Thank you to all who have already signed up for our **'Grandparents and Relatives Day' on Tuesday 1st July.**

Grandparents and Relative's Day is an opportunity to spend a day with your grandson/son at School, taking part in a variety of lessons throughout the day and experiencing a day in the life of Reading School. By choosing to attend you can contribute to intergenerational connection as the day can foster a sense of belonging across generations, connecting students' school lives with their wider family. By including all relatives, and not just grandparents, the day also creates an inclusive event that acknowledges different family makeups.

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

Safeguarding & Wellbeing

Online Safety Information Session for Parents

Please [click this link](#) in order to access the online safety information session video and presentation which took place on Wednesday 7th May.

Scams

Produced by the Metropolitan Police, '[The Little Book of Big Scams](#)' is a resource for students, parents and carers that raises awareness of some of the, 'ever-evolving ways criminals use to scam the public.' The comprehensive booklet includes:

- Ways in which to protect yourself against all types of online and offline fraud
- Information on what to do if you are scammed
- Help and resources in reporting scams

As the saying goes, "A well-informed mind is the strongest shield" and we hope you find some value in the resource.

Vacancies

Finance Officer – Maternity Cover

We have an exciting opportunity to cover the maternity leave of the Finance Officer, with responsibility for Purchase Ledger and ordering. Our ideal candidate will have Purchase Ledger experience, preferably in a school environment. Please [click here to find out more and apply](#).

Excellence in Physics

Physics Olympiad

National and International Physics Olympiad

Over the past months a group of year 13 students from Reading School have taken part in the Physics Olympiad and follow-up competitions. Several students performed exceptionally well, culminating in Henry K (13L) being selected as one of only five students to represent the country in the [International Physics Olympiad](#). A massive congratulations to Henry on this truly impressive achievement.

Physics Olympiad round 1

11 students took part in the British Physics Olympiad Round 1 in October 2024. Henry K (13L), Nelson W (13S), Max B (13S) and Anish K (13C) all received a top gold certificate, only given to the top 150 students in the country. In addition, Konstantin S (13S) received a gold certificate; Daniel S (13E), Teo R (13E), Prabhav B (13W), and Shameer A (13E) received silver certificates; and Tony L (13W) and Ryan L (13L) received Bronze I certificates.



From left to right: Konstantin S, Daniel S, Teo R, Henry K, Nelson W, Max B

Physics and Astrophysics Olympiad round 2



Henry K, Max B and Anish K were invited to participate in both the Physics and Astrophysics Olympiads round 2. These are incredibly difficult, 3-hour papers that test the problem-solving skills of the very best student physicists in the country.

All three students did very well, with Henry K receiving two gold certificates, Anish K (pictured) receiving a gold in the physics competition and a silver in the astrophysics competition, and Max B receiving a silver in physics and a bronze in astrophysics. There were only 33 gold certificates in the Physics Olympiad across the entire country, so having two of them come from Reading School is a substantial achievement.

International Physics Olympiad

Based on the strength of his performances in the round 2 competitions, Henry K was invited to attend the final selection camp for the UK International Physics Olympiad team at Oxford University over the Easter holidays. At the end of this, he was offered a place on the team. We asked Henry a few questions about his experience on the camp and how it feels to be representing the country.

Q: How did your interest in physics begin?

When I was younger, I was always interested in how machines worked. While basic explanations are easy to find, they often overlook the maths and physics that really influence design choices. So, to get a deeper understanding of engineering, I started looking at the physics behind it. That deeper knowledge has helped me in various engineering projects I've worked on since.

Q: How has Reading School helped you on your path to this achievement?

Being surrounded by motivated students and seeing those in the years above take part in similar opportunities, showed me that it was possible with enough hard work and focus.

Q: You spent a week in Oxford on the training camp for the competition. What was this like? What was your favourite part of the week?

The training camp in Oxford was intense, every day lasted about 13 hours, it comprised of back-to-back 2-hour lectures and the occasional 4-hour practical task, all separated by just 10-minute breaks. It was a big shift from a typical school day as you'd reach 3:25 and realise you were only halfway through which really put the workload into perspective. On top of that, we were expected to complete additional work overnight, so most of us were surviving off an optimistic 6 hours of sleep. Despite the how demanding it was, getting to meet students who shared the same passion for physics made it all worth it, eating lunch with Jocelyn Bell was also pretty good.

Q: Were there any challenges you faced over the 5-day course and how did you overcome them?

The biggest challenge was staying motivated. Even though everyone there was incredibly strong at physics, by the end of the week, most of us were questioning our own abilities. The week tested every part of our understanding, it honestly felt like a weeklong university interview. What helped me push through was realising that everyone else was in the same boat. Knowing we all shared that same mental exhaustion made it slightly easier to keep going.

Q: You're going to be representing the country at an international level competition. How does hearing that sentence make you feel?

I'm excited because it means that I'll get to meet people from all over the world who have diverse experiences but share a common passion for solving physics problems.

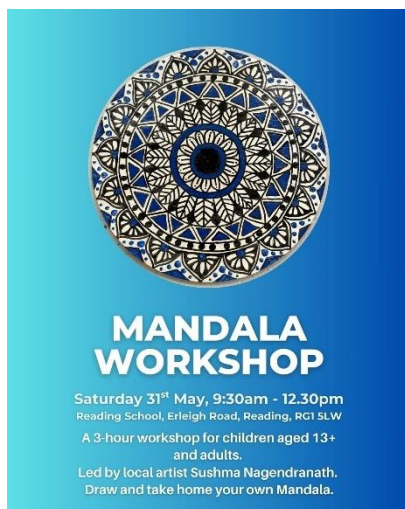
Q: What would you say to anyone in the younger years at the school who would like to improve their physics problem-solving skills?

Isaac Physics is probably the best place to start for most people. I'd then recommend finding an online copy of *Halliday and Resnick: Fundamentals of Physics* and working through it, using YouTube videos to help with the more challenging topics. After that, take a look at Kevin Zhou's and Kalda's handouts. I'd also suggest taking part in Compos, the weekly tutorials really help develop your reasoning. If you're consistent, by the time you reach Year 13 you'll be in a very strong position for entrance tests and interviews for physics-based subjects.

Events

Mandala Workshop

Are you a budding artist? Do you enjoy calm and creative experiences?



Join local Rangoli and Mandala artist, Ms Sushma Nagendranath on Saturday 24th May from 9.30am - 12.00pm where participants will get to design and keep their own unique mandala artwork. Participants will learn the techniques of drawing a mandala from basics and also create a design on a wood circle to take away

Whether you're looking to:

- Tap into your creativity (no art experience needed)
- Explore mindfulness through art
- Learn about the ancient symbolism of mandalas
- Unwind and reduce stress
- Take home something beautiful made by yourself

...then this workshop is for you.

Date: Saturday 24th May

Location: Reading School, Art Class 1

Time: 9.30am - 12.30pm

Cost: £20 (all materials are provided)

To book: email sush.mn@gmail.com

Ms Nagendranath is also a Year 7 parent who very kindly offered to run the workshop with all proceeds raised being donated to the School's Beyond 900 Fund. A heartfelt thank you to Ms Nagendranath for generously sharing her time, talent and creativity in support of [Reading School's Beyond 900 Fund](#).

The Workshop is a third-party event and not one organised by Reading School.

Careers

How To Find Work Experience - Free Webinar for Students & Parents



Everyone knows how important it is to gain work experience in order to boost your CV or university application. The hard part is actually finding work experience opportunities, and especially ones that are genuinely useful!

To help with this, Investin is running a free webinar for students and parents on how to find and make the most of work experience on Tuesday 20th May from 6pm – 7pm. The session will explore what "counts" as work experience, what types of opportunities are out there, and how to perform and reflect on the experiences students gain, in order to boost future applications.

Click [here](#) to register for free. If you are unable to attend live, please register to receive the recording and event resources.

Please note the career opportunities and resources shared by Reading School are provided for informational purposes only. Inclusion of any external organisation, employer, or opportunity does not constitute an endorsement or recommendation by the school. Students and parents are encouraged to independently

verify the legitimacy and suitability of any opportunity. Reading School is not responsible for the practices, terms, or outcomes associated with any external offering.

Discover Apprenticeships at the Royal Household



The Royal Household is offering real, paid “earn-while-you-learn” apprenticeships across a wide range of roles - each designed to fill key skills gaps and give meaningful, on-the-job experience. You will study with leading training providers, benefit from in-house Learning & Development programmes, and be mentored by expert colleagues.

To find out more, [please click here](#).

RSPA

Goring Gap Run – Last Call



Be a Marshal for the RSPA at the Goring Gap Race Event – **Saturday 17th May** and **Sunday 18th May**.

Hello everyone, the RSPA are still looking for volunteers to assist with marshalling duty at The Goring Gap race. In return for your help the RSPA receives £60 *per marshal* (with most slots requiring 2 people, paid as £120) and the money raised all goes to help our fabulous school.

The slots are based between Caversham and Goring. Please email Terri at t_lorrimore@hotmail.com or text to 07810 445474 and she will co-ordinate a slot for you and send out a location map a few days before the event.

You can spend few hours with nature, take a deck chair, a flask of coffee, a newspaper or a friend, 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 [click this link](#) to find out more about the event.

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.

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

GCSE and A Level Students

Our best wishes to all our students who are taking GCSE and A level exams. They all are brilliant, and we all are proud of them. On behalf of all school community, we wish them a bright future.

Best wishes and have a lovely weekend.

The RSPA Team

Summer Term – Week 3

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.



Big School Refurbishment

As we continue to develop school facilities, we are pleased to share that the refurbishment of Big School has been completed. The historic room that serves as one of our exam spaces now provides a well-lit area with new AV system and is a space that students taking exams will benefit from.





The MFL Tournament Cup 2025

France, Germany and Spain returned to face each other this week in an annual three-way football tournament with a twist. Led by head of MFL, Mme Fondu and her team, the competition allows students of French, German and Spanish to play a 6-a-side football game where all players and the referee have to communicate purely in the language they are studying.



“It has been an intense few weeks for our senior linguists with the speaking exams taking place and worth 30% of their A Level grade. So, it was great to let off some steam and celebrate the end of an era with the whole Languages Society on the last day of speaking exams with our traditional Football League Tournament!” Mme Fondu



The matches were all very close, starting with a Spanish win against France (1-0), followed by a French win against Germany (1-0) and finishing off with Spain confirming their victory against Germany (1-0).
¡Enhorabuena a España!







All players had to communicate only in their studied language and could use "golden cards" to spice up the game!



Big thanks go to Señor Sanchez and Tom K (13E) for refereeing the games (we promise that Mr Sanchez was not biased 🙄) as well as Joel A (11C) and Adrian W (11E) for stepping up when the games overran. Further thanks also go to Mr Shaw and Mr Griffin for the great atmosphere created by the drumming by our amazing drummers Kevin A (10L), Rayan M (10W) and Aarush P (8W).

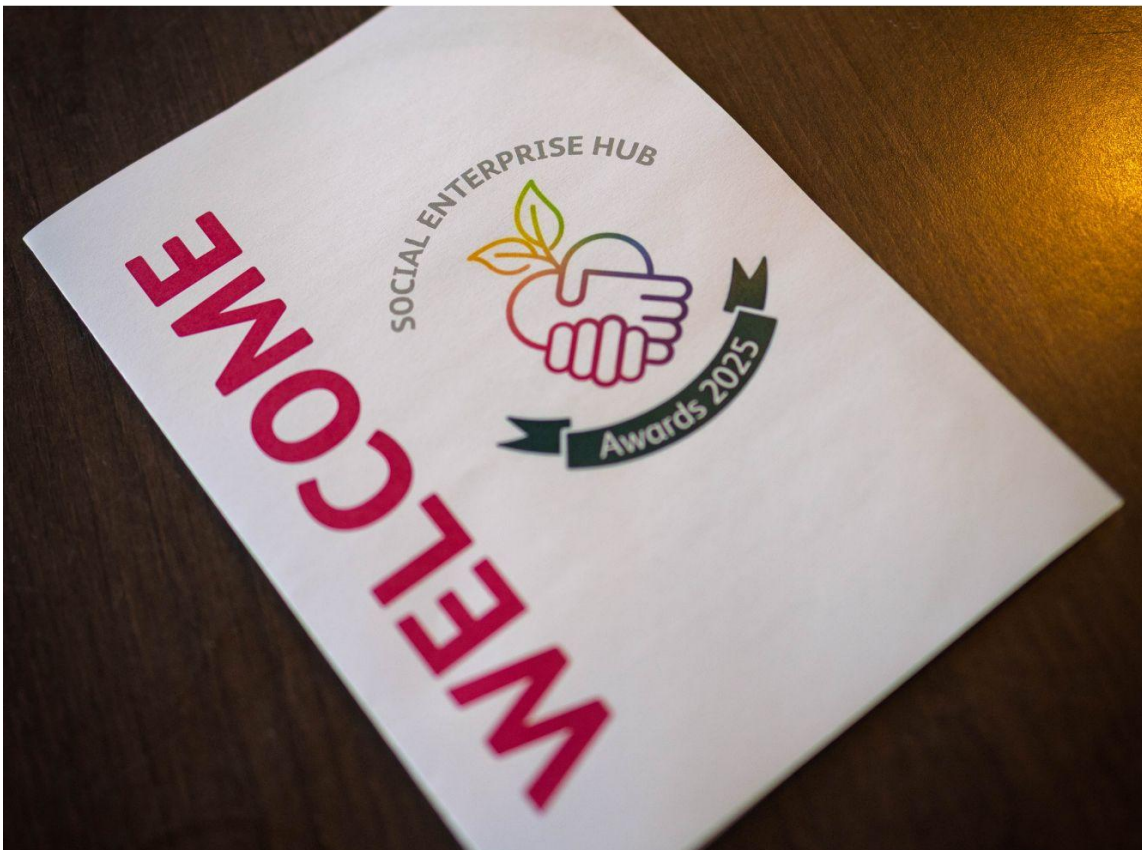


And finally, to our MFL teachers for providing these opportunities and building the excitement around our linguists' community!



Social Enterprise Finale 2025

The Social Enterprise Hub was created by The Abbey School in partnership with Henley Business School and Reading School in 2022. The project empowers mixed teams of sixth formers to create social enterprises under the guidance and support of entrepreneurs and lecturers from Henley Business School. All participating students took part in an 8-month project during which time they received hands-on, real-world experience in entrepreneurship, business management, teamwork and problem-solving.



On Thursday 8th May, all the teams gathered at the University of Reading in order to present their pitches to a panel of judges who would decide which were strong enough ideas to be funded.



For the first time since the programme has been running – due to the strength of the pitches made, the judges decided to fund every single pitch made.



We look forward to sharing more details of the winning ideas next week.



A trip to the Ashmolean Museum

On Friday 2nd May, Year 9 students studying Ancient History and Year 12 student studying Classical Civilisation went to the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford for the day, to look into their collections and explore objects relating to their studies.



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