



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

28th February 2025

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Introduction

Dear students, carers, staff and parents,

At Reading School we talk a lot about the well-being of our students being our number one priority and from working with so many outstanding colleagues, I see this in action on a daily basis through pastoral care; through the work of staff in Auxilium and student services; through the power of sport and exercise; our PSHE guidance; and many other ways besides.

However, this week brought home to me an area of well-being and safety that feels less in our control at school. On Thursday, one of our students was hit by a car while cycling to school.

Thankfully, he emerged from the incident relatively unscathed, with the ambulance crew bringing him to our Student Reception, rather than to the operating theatre. The same cannot be said for his helmet, which had borne the brunt of the impact and had no doubt saved him from significant injuries or possibly worse.

In conversation with the student after the incident, he revealed that he'd almost not bothered wearing his helmet that day and while we're all very grateful that he did, it highlighted the need to put a spotlight on this incident in the hope of ensuring students don't have the same debate before leaving the house and instead it becomes habitual that they take their safety seriously and always wear a helmet.

We know that often students place image and aesthetics over safety. Wearing a helmet can be seen as inherently uncool and staff at the school gates will often see students removing their helmets early while cycling in or even without one at all. However, a meta-analysis of bicycle helmet efficacy by Attewell, Glase, and McFadden (2001) estimated that bicycle helmets reduce the risk of head injury by 60% and brain injury by 58%. Today therefore, I'd like to take the chance to share this stark reminder about the importance of bicycle safety and to implore all parents to ensure that no student gets on their bike, to school or otherwise, without their helmet.

To end I'd like to highlight the words of Virgil, "The greatest wealth is health". Our students have the gift of health and also the gift of choice. We hope this message today helps them to not take this health for granted and to make good decisions to protect themselves and arrive safely to school and safely home each day.

Wishing you all a restful and enjoyable weekend.

Alun Lloyd
Head of Sixth Form

Key information

All years

Year 7 Open Day – 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.

Giving Days Update – 26th to 27th March 2025 – What's Next?

Help make a
lasting
difference on
Giving Day

WED 26TH MARCH &
THURS 27TH MARCH

This week the Headmaster has emailed current parents, former parents, Old Redingensians and Friends of Reading School to share a personal message and ask for their support, [click here](#) if you missed it. Thank you to those parents who have kindly made a donation already or offered match funding support. For those wishing to make an early gift, they can do so here: [Reading School's Giving Day 2025](#). Please do check your junk inboxes in case you have missed any emails.

Thank you to Mr Burman (Parent of Year 7 student) for his timely reminder:

Many UK employers offer **Payroll Giving schemes** and **matching gift programs** to encourage charitable donations by their employees. Payroll Giving allows employees to donate directly from their gross salary, providing immediate tax relief, while matching gift programs enable employers to match their employees' charitable contributions, effectively doubling the donation.

While a comprehensive list of all UK organisations offering these programs isn't readily available, several notable companies are known for their participation (but please double check) by consulting your HR department to see if your organisation might participate in this way.

Allen & Overy	Clifford Chance	General Electric	Octopus Energy	Unilever
Asda	Deloitte	John Lewis	PwC	Visa
Barclays Bank	Ernst & Young	KPMG	Reed	Vodafone
Bank of America	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer	Linklaters	Royal Bank of Scotland	
BBC	Goldman Sachs	Lloyds Banking Group	Sainsbury's	
BP	Google UK	Marks & Spencer	Shell	
British Council	Grant Thornton	Microsoft UK	Standard Chartered	
BT Group	HSBC	National Health Service some Trusts)	Tesco	

Over **1,100 students** have signed up for challenges and have been allocated into groups, which were shared with Tutors yesterday. If any student has not been assigned a challenge, they should speak to their tutor in the first instance or email Mr T Evans.

A huge thank you to those students who have already secured sponsorships for their Giving Day challenges, a great effort so far! But we know we can do even better, and we need your help to make a bigger impact!

Every week between now and when our students undertake their challenges, we will provide them with a breakdown of the leader board below:

- Year group obtaining the most sponsorships: **Year 7 is leading**, followed by Year 8.
- House with the highest participation: **Laud House** is in the lead with *County and School close behind*.
- Top Houses for donations:

1st	Laud
2nd	County
3rd	West
4th	School
5th	East

Can your year group or house take the top spot? Keep reaching out for support and let's make Giving Day a big success!

With 4 weeks to go. Next steps are:

- **Deadline: Friday 21st March** – Get as many sponsorships as possible!
- **Your mission:** Can your year group or house take the top spot? Keep pushing, and let's make Giving Day a huge success! Prepare for your Challenge.
- **Haven't started yet?** Share the sponsorship link below with wider family and friends:
<https://forms.office.com/e/BA1BPawKWn>
- **Reminder:** Parents have been contacted separately - so please focus on friends and wider family!

Let's work together to increase participation and make Giving Day a huge success!

Thank you for your enthusiasm and commitment.

Help make a
lasting
difference on
Giving Day

WED 26TH MARCH &
THURS 27TH MARCH

CELEBRATING

900

YEARS

Est. 1125



2 exciting days
of sponsorship
challenges and
giving!

Year 13 only

Year 13 Yearbooks and Hoodies



Legacy Prefect, Eli T and Ellias M are working with the Society Office to organise the production of yearbooks and hoodies for Year 13 leavers.

We would be grateful if you could remind your young person to complete [the expression of interest form if they would like to purchase a yearbook and/hoodie](#). This will help us determine how many items to produce.

Yearbooks capture the essence of the secondary school journey, filled with candid snapshots, memorable events, and messages from classmates and teachers. It's a treasure trove of memories that you or your young person will cherish for years to come. Similarly, our custom-designed hoodies are a symbol of pride and unity, representing the graduating class of Year 13.

To secure the lowest cost per item, we need at least 100 students to confirm interest. The deadline to do so has now been extended to **Tuesday 4th March 2025**.

Important Notes:

- The form should be completed **by the student** as they'll need **to sign up to the Reading School Alumni Society** to access the form.
- Membership approvals happen every weekday morning. Once approved, they can return to the form using the same link above.
- **Students should use their personal email address** when signing up.

If you have any further questions, or issues completing the form, please email Miss Hutchinson at alumni@reading-school.co.uk, Eli T at u00227@reading-school.co.uk, or Ellias M at u00187@reading-school.co.uk.

School Community News

Reading School's 12th Book Festival



This week marked the start of our 12th annual Book Festival and celebrations began with our Scholastic Book Fair. The Book Fair is a pop-up book shop that we run in the LRC. Titles are selected by the experts at Scholastic to reflect current secondary school trends and are a fantastic way to discover new books and authors. All pupils in year 7 and year 8 were timetabled to visit and the rest of the school were able to visit at break/lunch and after school. The Book Fair will finish after break on Monday, so there is still time to buy a book. The more books we sell, the more commission we receive to buy new books for the LRC!

World Book Day will be celebrated on Thursday the 6th of March and we will mark the occasion with a whole school Drop Everything and Read. This is a fantastic opportunity for the whole school to celebrate books and reading all together and will take place 1.50 to 2.35 that day, so please check that your child has packed a good book to read. To help you choose a good book, our student-led Societies have [recommended titles that they think other students will enjoy reading too](#). World Book Day vouchers have been distributed to all students and can be used in local book shops to get £1 off the cost of a book worth £2.99 or more. You can find out more about World Book Day here www.worldbookday.com/

Finally, we have a wonderful selection of authors visiting school to inspire and enthuse:

- **Nicolas Tredell** will be celebrating the 100th Anniversary of 'The Great Gatsby' with Year 12 English Literature Students on Monday 3rd of March;
- **Sarah Govett** will be sharing her vision of dystopian fiction with all Year 10 on Monday 10th of March;
- **Lewis Dartnell** will be exploring how biology has shaped human history in a talk to all Year 9 and he will be delivering Problem Based Learning Oxbridge workshops to year 12 and year 11 students on Tuesday 11th of March; and
- **Chris Bradford** will end our 12th Book Festival with a bang as he delivers his very popular and interactive Young Samurai and Bodyguard talks to all Year 7 and all Year 8 students on Wednesday 12th of March. Chris is the most popular author at Reading School and his books are always in high demand when he visits. To grab a bargain and to beat the queues, [you can pre-order from his website](#).

There will be book sales and signings after each event so please ensure your child brings cash with them if they wish to purchase a book on the day.

We would like to thank the Old Redingensians Association (ORA) for their generous funding of the Book Festival.

We had it coming

By Henry R

We always felt the fire,
Flickering, ticking over,
Everyone knows the closeness,
But hopes for freedom.

It never goes unnoticed,
I could feel it as I wrote this,
You fear it, everyone knows it could
break out,
Any second.

We all think the end beckons,
Calling like the wolf,
Coming as the leopard,
If we ever stop and
Look back, see scorched earth
Turnt black, lose the pack,
Crack! Gone.

But if it were always there,
Waiting caref'ly,
Burning bright,
But never quite
Bringing night,
Are we right?

To run from what had never caught us,
Shivering together, with our sons and
daughters,
Fearing what our parents taught us,
Having never thought of
Some way to put it out.

We've been singed but not burnt alive,
Cut but not felt the knife
On our hearts.
We've been bruised, broken, butchered,
But made it through,
Sliced right open, tortured,
And somehow, still,
Never killed.

I've felt deaths of boys and girls,
Millions more will come,
I've seen language lose its words,
Traditions come undone,
I've watched many wars unfurl,
But so will everyone,
In the modern world,
I don't feel bad.

We'll always feel the fire's crackle,
And the reaper's humming,
Always taste the poison apple,
Hear the distant sound of drumming,
I don't think our end's soon to happen,
We should all stop running,
But if I'm wrong, when it's all over,
At least we knew,
We had it coming.

Swimming in support of Cancer Research UK & Marie Curie



For the past five years, Adi A (12MK) has been taking part in a family challenge alongside his mother and father – a Swimathon challenge which is swimming distances ranging from 400m to the Triple 5K. A personal best of swimming 5k (equivalent to 600 pool lengths) and raising £952 was achieved by Team Adi in 2022.

'Water you waiting for? Dive in by [clicking this link](#) and make a splash by supporting Team Adi to achieve their goal for this year's challenge!

[Cancer Research UK](#), [Marie Curie](#) and the [Swimathon Foundation](#) play a vital role in advancing cancer research, providing care for individuals facing health challenges, and promoting swimming as a way to stay healthy and active.

Giving Day – Appeal reminder for LEGO Bricks



As part of our Giving Day celebrations, a team of talented student engineers, architects, and designers will take on the exciting challenge of recreating as much of Reading School in LEGO as possible!

Thank you to students and families who have already donated, and we welcome any and all donations of spare LEGO bricks - whether it's 9 or 900, every piece will help bring this ambitious project to life. As a special touch, those who donate bricks will have the opportunity to place one of their own minifigures in the final display once the model is complete.

Donations can be brought to the LRC office anytime during the school day. If you have any questions, please contact Mrs Rix-Drummond at sdrummond@reading-school.co.uk.

Please note: We will be unable to return donated bricks after the project is complete. Thank you for your support.

Events

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.

Careers opportunities

Year **10 to Year 13 work experience** opportunities with **HSBC** are now open for application.

Deadline for applications is 4th March and this process is highly competitive.

Click the link for mor information: [UK Work Experience Programme | HSBC Holdings plc](#)

Insight to BDO - The World's 5th Largest Accounting & Professional Services Firm provided by Young Professionals

Tuesday 11th March, 5pm - 7pm - Years 12 and 13

Virtual event with BDO This insight event will be to showcase all the opportunities BDO have on offer for students this year including their Apprenticeship, Graduate and Work Experience opportunities.

Register Now to Secure Your Place: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BDO-Virtual>.

RSPA

Book Donation for the LRC – a reminder

Reading School will soon be hosting Future Stories sessions with pupils from a partner primary school. To support these sessions and to update the LRC, there are some extra books needed. If you are decluttering your home, please can we request that any of the following books are taken to reception marked "LRC Future Stories".

Books for the Future Stories sessions

- Peter Brown the Wild Robot series
- The Sad Ghost Club comics
- Michael Morpurgo, Kaspar Prince of Cats
- Dog Man
- Bunny vs Monkey
- Mega Robo Bros Real Pigeons
- Fact books about Sharks
- Ultimate Heroes (Ronaldo and Messi)
- Tom Gates series
- Wimpy Kid series

Books to replace old LRC copies

- The Cherub series by Robert Muchamore
- The Percy Jackson series by Rick Riordan
- The Heroes of Olympus series by Rick Riordan
- The Murder most unladylike series by Robin Stevens
- The Young Sherlock Holmes by Andy Lane
- Anything by M.G. Leonard
- Simpsons comic books
- The adventures of Sherlock Holmes
- Agatha Christie novel

The Pre-loved Uniform Shop

The uniform shop will be open on the following dates:

- Friday 28th February from 3.30pm – 4.30pm
- Saturday 1st March from 10.30am – 12.30pm
- 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

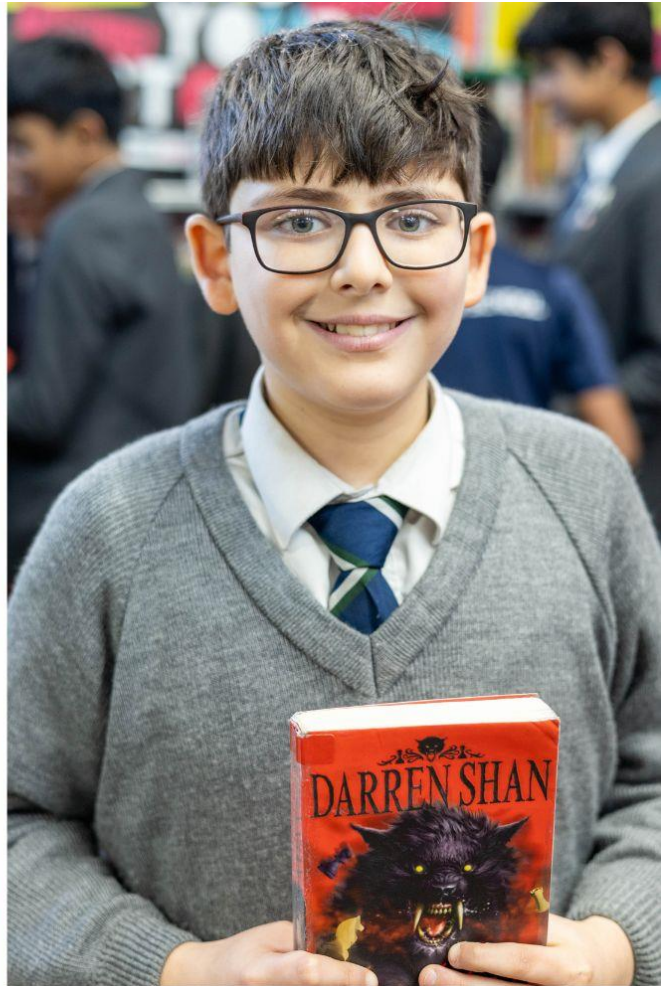
Lent Term – Week 8

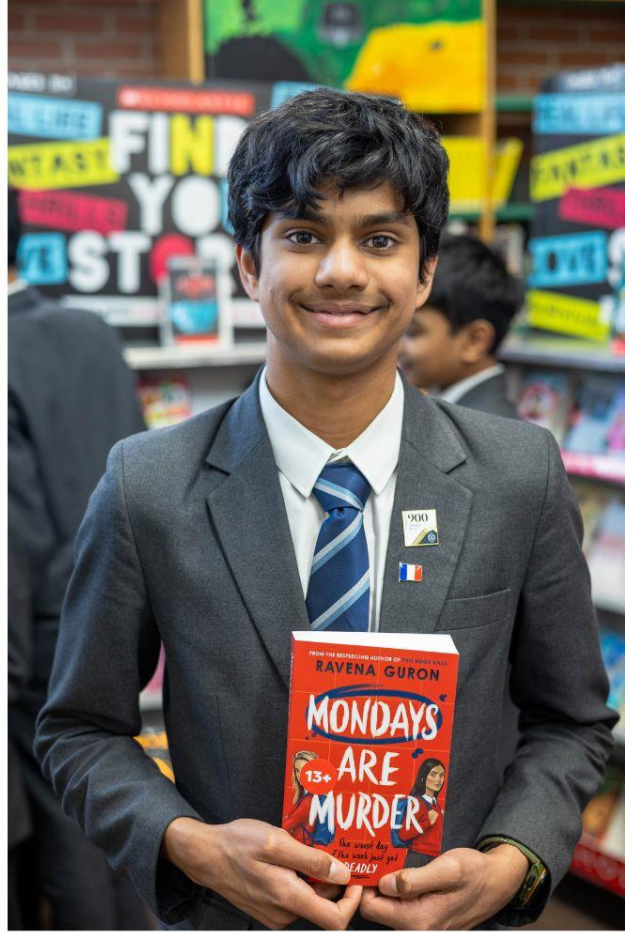
To keep up to date with student life at Reading School, click the icons below to follow, be part of, and stay connected with the Reading School community.



Reading School's 12th Annual Book Festival begins here!







Year 7 & Year 8 Floreat Trip to Finland

A group of eager Year 7 and 8 students embarked on an unforgettable journey to Adventure Apes in Finland on a trip that challenged them, inspired them, and brought them closer together. From the moment they arrived, they embraced the spirit of adventure—stepping out of their comfort zones to take on thrilling outdoor challenges, navigate breathtaking Finnish landscapes, and support one another.



Beyond the adventure, students immersed themselves in Finnish culture, experiencing the warmth of togetherness - a value deeply rooted in the country's traditions. Whether bonding over shared meals while cleaning up after themselves to working together in groups, they discovered that true adventure is not just about the challenges faced, but the connections forged along the way. By the end of the trip, they returned with a newfound sense of confidence and an enduring appreciation for the world beyond their own.



Thank you to trip leaders Dr Young, Mrs Rix-Drummond and Mr Till.



South Africa Cricket Tour 2025

26 lucky students headed out for an exciting 11-day trip to Cape Town, South Africa led by Mr Allen, Mr McGall, Mr Blade and Mr Edwards.



"I would like to thank Mr Betteridge, without whom, none of this would have been possible. We all enjoyed this trip immensely and learnt a significant amount from the South African culture. All the teams we played and watched from the sidelines taught us what true brotherliness looks like and the schools were all welcoming and great hosts." Kunal J



“Our recent cricket trip to Cape Town was an unforgettable adventure that blended the excitement of the game with the beauty of South Africa’s landscapes. Some of our standout highlights was visiting the Waterfront for dinner most nights, The food was spectacular and the views even better, the atmosphere was perfect, every night felt like a celebration. But nothing could compare to the thrill of playing our match against Wynberg Boys. Not only did we enjoy the satisfaction of a well-earned win, but it was also incredible to beat such a prestigious school.” Avi P



“As we reflect on this trip, we’re incredibly grateful for the opportunity to volunteer at Pinehurst Primary School, introducing the kids there to cricket and seeing their faces light up was truly special. We were also incredibly grateful for the chance to train at the Gary Kirsten Academy, learning from world-class coaches, and even meeting the man himself. And, of course, we can’t forget the privilege of playing against top schools like Rondebosch and Wynberg. Competing against such high-class opposition taught us invaluable lessons that we’ll continue to carry with us. One last thing we are grateful for on behalf of the whole team is the staff that came on this trip. Mr Blade, Mr McCall, Mr Edwards, Mr Allen and a special thanks to Mr Betteridge who made this unforgettable experience all possible.” Avi P



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.