



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

24th January 2025

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Introduction

Dear Colleagues, Carers, Parents and Students,

What do you belong to, and why is it important? Why does being able to be part of something bigger than us matter so much?

In recent years, a sense of belonging has become inextricably linked to wellbeing and when we were stuck at home, working online and forced to retreat from common life during the Covid pandemic, it was obvious that not being able to join in, or affiliate with others was to our detriment. I think most students missed the connection often found at school, the camaraderie in the playground or on the sports pitch and most were desperate to get back to face to face and functional relationships!

I played rugby for many years: being a part of a team, having a role that shared accountability to turn up come rain or shine, was more important than the result each week. I was pretty hopeless, and my teammates would probably have been better off without me most of the time, but I always brought plenty of energy and enthusiasm and perhaps in these spaces we gain more from being able to contribute than focussing on the outcome.

This week I have talked with Year 10s who are mentoring Year 7s, watched students in Year 9 share their fencing skills with primary school students, shared in activities led by Year 11s and watched Year 12s supporting primary school aged children in one of our Future Stories math sessions. They are all experiencing personal growth, building connections, sharing their time and deriving fulfilment from giving. Contributions often leave a lasting impact, even if the end result isn't immediately obvious.

There are times in my life I have felt lost; relationships, a sense of purpose and something to belong to have for me been critical at these times.

And so, each year we narrate the importance of belonging and service to our students and create space in the summer for all those in Years 7 to 10, to 'down tools' and be a part of something bigger than themselves.

Year 7 collaborate, create and camp. Year 8 head out and explore a range of enriching activities and exciting experiences away from home. Year 9 go further, longer and harder, but work together and take the lead. Year 10 give back with all 150 students supporting social impact programs in the Reading Area.

Now in its fourth year, we have curated a range of age and development appropriate opportunities that everyone can take part in: critically our Belonging Week offers our students the opportunity to do something new, to build relationships and to live out a shared narrative. We contribute towards the collective good, to bring out the best in each other and to build a sense of togetherness.

We look forward to including our school community in our Belonging Weeks during May and June 2025 and further details can be found in this week's Bulletin.

Tom Evans
Assistant Headteacher



Key information

All years

INSET Day

This is a reminder that this coming Monday 27th January is an INSET Day, when all staff will be involved in training, and there is no school. Boarders should return to school between 6pm – 8pm on Monday evening.

900th Anniversary Assemblies

On Tuesday, 28th January, the Headmaster, will host a series of seven assemblies in Big School. Across the day he will be meeting with each year group of students to reflect on Reading School's history and to share our vision for this year and the future. As part of this occasion, some of our very best musicians will play accompanying music, and guest alumni will present 900th Anniversary pin badges to each student.

The assemblies will take place as set out below:

Tuesday 28th January 2025

Year Group	Time of Assembly	Missing lesson
Year 7s	08.30-9.15	Period 1
Year 8s	09.20-10.05	Period 2
BREAK	10.05-10.20	
Year 9s	10.25-11.10	Period 3
Year 12s	11.15-12.00	Period 4
Year 13s	12.00-12.45	Period 5 / Senior lunch
Tutor Time/Assembly	12.45-13.00	
Year 10s	13.00-13.45	Period 6 / Senior Lunch
Year 11s	13.50-14.35	Period 7

We want to thank the Reading School Parents Association for sponsoring the 900th Anniversary pin badges and the Old Redingensians who have kindly agreed to present the badges during our special 900th Anniversary assemblies.

Giving Days

Our first-ever Giving Day is taking place on 26th and 27th March 2025. Students will be working together over 36 hours as we kickstart our **Beyond 900 Years** campaign. We are raising £28.5 million to shape vital building projects, including sports facilities, expressive arts spaces and a sixth-form centre.

We aim to raise a minimum of £120,000 during our Giving Days through the support of the whole school community and beyond.

This initiative is a pivotal moment for Reading School, as it offers an opportunity to come together to secure a legacy for generations to come. We hope that every student can raise £100 or more, without taxing their parents, and in fifty years when each returns, wizened and grey, they can look at the new Theatre or Art Studio, Sixth Form Mezzanine or swimming pool, and say, "I contributed to that".

Further details will follow in the coming weeks, including how parents might contribute if they are able. There will be opportunities for parents to come on site on Thursday 26th March and join in the excitement. A limited timetable for Year 11 and 13 will persist and details will be shared in due course.

Reading School Open Day

We have not always been as effective as we could be in attracting as many students as possible to apply for entry to Reading School. We want every boy who loves doing their own science experiments in the garden, and who reads for fun, to imagine that Reading School might be the place for them. We really do believe that our school is a remarkable community, but we believe that we need to do more work to appeal as broadly as possible to curious and thoughtful ten-year-old boys across the town.

On Tuesday April 1st, we will therefore be putting on an exciting showcase of some of the most exciting components of life at Reading School and will be offering four sessions to children from primary schools across Reading.

If you love the School, would you consider liking or reposting content advertising this Open Day, or even dropping a letter into your son's former primary school?

More details will follow in due course.

Student Absence Information

Please [click this link](#) in order to view information reminding parents and carers that term-time absences are not permitted without the Headmaster's permission. The information also includes the government's threshold for issuing penalty notices, along with a link to absence reporting information on the School's website.

Addington Road access – a reminder

From Monday 27th January, the Addington Road pedestrian gate will be out of use until further notice. The closure is due to ongoing repair works to South House (Boarding) that are expected to last for three months.

We are advising parents and carers who normally use Addington Road to drop their children off, to continue to do so. Children should then make the short walk from Addington Road to the Craven Road entrance. This advice is suggested to avoid Craven Road becoming congested with vehicles attempting to drop off students.

Years 7, 8, 9, 10

Belonging Weeks 2025

Taking place either side of the May half-term, students in Years 7-10 will participate in a week of structured examinations and a week of enrichment activities. Belonging Week was launched in 2022 and has continued to grow to become an opportunity where students are encouraged to contribute and collaborate in a variety of exciting and enriching ways.

Detailed information for parents is included in the links below:

[Year 7 Belonging Week Parent Letter](#)

[Year 8 Belonging Week Parent Letter](#)

[Year 9 Belonging Week Parent Letter](#)

[Year 10 Belonging Week Parent Letter](#)

Safeguarding, Health & Wellbeing

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Last week we informed parents, pupils and staff of a consultation to make sure our new Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum meets the government's requirements, as well as the needs of our pupils.

The link to the current policy can be accessed by [clicking here](#) and we would welcome any views from members of the school community.

The deadline for feedback on this consultation is Friday 14th February. For all feedback and comments, please contact Ms Lizzie Ayres, (Deputy Headteacher & Designated Safeguarding Lead) by emailing layres@reading-school.co.uk.

Parenting Support Sessions

Parenting can be challenging at the best of times, but even harder with the rise in mental health issues, especially amongst children and young people. The [Compass Recovery College](#) is a mental health and wellbeing organisation based in Reading and commissioned by Reading Borough Council. They provide free workshops and social groups for families in the Reading and surrounding areas who may be affected directly or indirectly by mental health or wellbeing challenges.

The next drop-in session for parents is:

Date and time: 24th February and 24th March, 10am – 11:30am

Venue: The Weller Centre, 110 Amersham Road, Reading, RG4 5NA

For all enquiries, please email compassopportunities@reading.gov.uk

The Digital Digital Dilemma: Keeping Children Safe Online

A series of joint police service free webinars for parents and carers that will focus on sharing information and support on securing and protecting families from online cyber risks and scams (across gaming, social media and via email) will take place throughout January and February 2025.

To book a free place on any of the available dates, please [click here](#).

Reading School Vacancies

Teacher of Biology – for further details, please [click here](#).

Chef de Partie – further details, please [click here](#).

Sous Chef – further details, please [click here](#).

School Community News

Excellence in Scholarship



During the Autumn Term of 2024, students were invited to research, create, and submit pieces of academic work on topics that sparked their interest. They were asked to present their research in the form of a video essay, and over 50 submissions were assessed by subject specialists.

Reflecting on the Scholarship Programme, Mr. Cooper, Head of Classics and Scholarship Lead, said:

"It has been a privilege to watch the research videos submitted by our students. These scholarly works all have one thing in common – their content is from outside the curriculum. This compilation of work represents the very best of what being at Reading School is all about: fostering the intellectual curiosity of students to want to find out more about the subjects they study. The videos themselves have also given the students the opportunity to improve their soft skills by considering how best to present their work and verbally articulate their written research, which will be crucial for all in an interview situation. All students in the school were encouraged to create a research video during Reading Week 2024, with all Year 12 students encouraged to create at least three over the year."

The participating students' efforts were celebrated on Tuesday this week in Big School, with an opening address from the Headmaster and a presentation of certificates by Scholarship Lead Mr. Cooper and Deputy Headteacher Ms. Ayres. The event also marked the launch of the Reading School Scholarship Programme Digital Library, which collates all research videos for current and future students to educate and inspire them. The digital library currently hosts contributions from students in Year 7, Year 10, and Year 12, and it is noteworthy that the submissions from Years 7 and 10 were pitched at a level far beyond their respective year groups.

[To view the first round of submissions to the Reading School Scholarship Programme Digital Library, please click this link.](#)

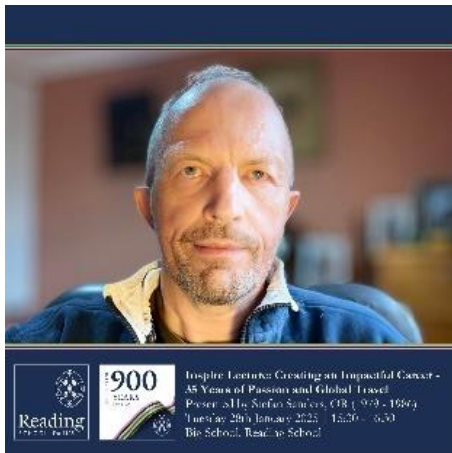
LRC

Berkshire Book Awards 2025

The Berkshire Book Award Shortlist Event 2025 was held at Reading Blue Coat School and six of our Year 8 Book Club members were lucky enough to attend. Students from schools across Berkshire have been voting for their favourite Berkshire Book Award longlist titles and during the event, the shortlist of eight books was revealed. This was followed by a talk from author David Barker about his exciting London Falling series.

Students have until May 2025 to read the shortlisted books and vote for the winner! The LRC Book Club is run by Miss Loft in G3 every Tuesday during Junior lunch.

Upcoming Events



Creating an Impactful Career - 35 Years of Passion and Global Travel

Inspire Lecture: Creating an Impactful Career - 35 Years of Passion and Global Travel

Speaker: Stefan Sanders (OR 1979-1986), a highly experienced professional with over 35 years in the rail industry.

Date: Tuesday 28 January

Time: 3:30pm - 4:30pm

Location: Big School

What to Expect:

- From Economics to Global Consultancy: How Stefan transitioned from an economics graduate to a global consultant in the rail industry.
- The Power of Travel: How international experiences broaden horizons and shape both personal and professional growth.
- A Consultant's Day-to-Day: Insights into the challenges and rewards of working in a global industry.
- Contributions to Global Rail Projects: Stefan's involvement in major projects, including UK rail privatisation and advisory roles across continents.
- Living and Working Abroad: Lessons from his time in Malaysia and Australia, embracing diverse cultures.
- Practical Advice for Students: The benefits of pursuing travel and international opportunities for a fulfilling career.

Register by clicking here: [Inspire Lecture: Creating an Impactful Career - 35 Years of Passion and Global Travel | Events | Reading School Alumni Society](#)

We look forward to seeing interested students at these upcoming Inspire Lectures.

Your Money, Your Future – Rathbones Financial Awareness Course (Year 11 or above only)



Help your child take the first step toward securing their financial future. This 90-minute virtual session, hosted by experienced Rathbones Investment Managers, is designed to provide essential financial insights for 16 to 25-year-olds.

Date: Tuesday 11th February 2025

Time: 16:30 - 18:00

Location: Virtual (a meeting invite will be sent to registrants)

Topics covered include:

- Financing life goals (house, education, pension)
- Career insights into finance and fund management
- Understanding the cost of university and buying a first home
- Risk vs. reward and different asset classes like gold and equities

This course offers practical advice and expert guidance on making informed financial decisions.

Encourage your child to register and gain valuable knowledge directly from professionals at Rathbones, one of the UK's leading investment firms. [Click to register here.](#)

Chinese New Year Charity Food Sale – Friday 31st January 2025



Chinese New Year (also known as Lunar New Year) begins on the 29th January 2025, and to mark the occasion, the Hong Kong Cultural Society is hosting a charity food sale on Friday 31st January, outside the LRC during both junior and senior lunch breaks.

Come and enjoy a variety of delicious traditional Cantonese dishes, including sweet puddings, savoury treats, and warm soups!

Please note that only cash payments will be accepted.

All proceeds will support the Royal Berks Charity, so your participation will not only bring festive cheer but also benefit a great cause: [Reading School is fundraising for Royal Berks Charity](#)

The event is led by Joshua H (13LDo) & Charity Prefect, Saad A (13SAI).

If you would like to contribute your own homemade Chinese New Year foods to the sale, please reach out to Joshua H by emailing u00327@reading-school.co.uk.

External events, clubs and classes

Sunday Arts Class

[Arty Class](#) (in association with [Artspiration](#)) have held weekly arts classes every Sunday during term-time at Reading School since September 2023. Classes are run from:

- 9:30am – 11am (Ages 8 to 12 years)
- 11:10am – 12:10am (Ages 5 to 8 years)
- 12:20pm – 1:15pm (Ages 12 to 15 years *with a 10% discount for all Reading School students*)

The 12-week courses are structured and designed to inspire children and young people to explore new art forms along with developing their core drawing and painting skills. The Spring 2025 course will focus on seven visual components: line, shape, space, form, colour, texture and value. The tutor will also explore texture in the line drawings of Vincent van Gogh, the shapes inspired by M.C. Escher's tessellations, and expansive space created by Salvador Dali amongst other.

For all enquiries, please contact Adrienne by emailing artyclasuk@gmail.com.

RSPA

Year 7 Disco Night

To mark the School's 900th anniversary, the RSPA team is looking forward to its first event of the year!

Get ready for the Ultimate Year 7 Disco Night (tonight) which brings together Year 7s and their parents from Reading School and Kendrick School.



To make the event special we have personalised cupcakes for guests to enjoy during an evening of music, laughter, and unforgettable memories!

Event details:

- **Date:** Friday, 24th January 2025
- **Time:** 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM
- **Venue Detail:** Reading School, Refectory

Please note: Sales of tickets is now closed.

The Pre-loved Uniform Shop:

The uniform shop will be open on the following dates:

- Friday 28th February from 3.30 pm – 4.30pm
- Saturday 1st March from 10.30 am – 12.30pm
- Friday 28th March from 3.30 pm – 4.30pm
- Saturday 29th March from 10.30 am – 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

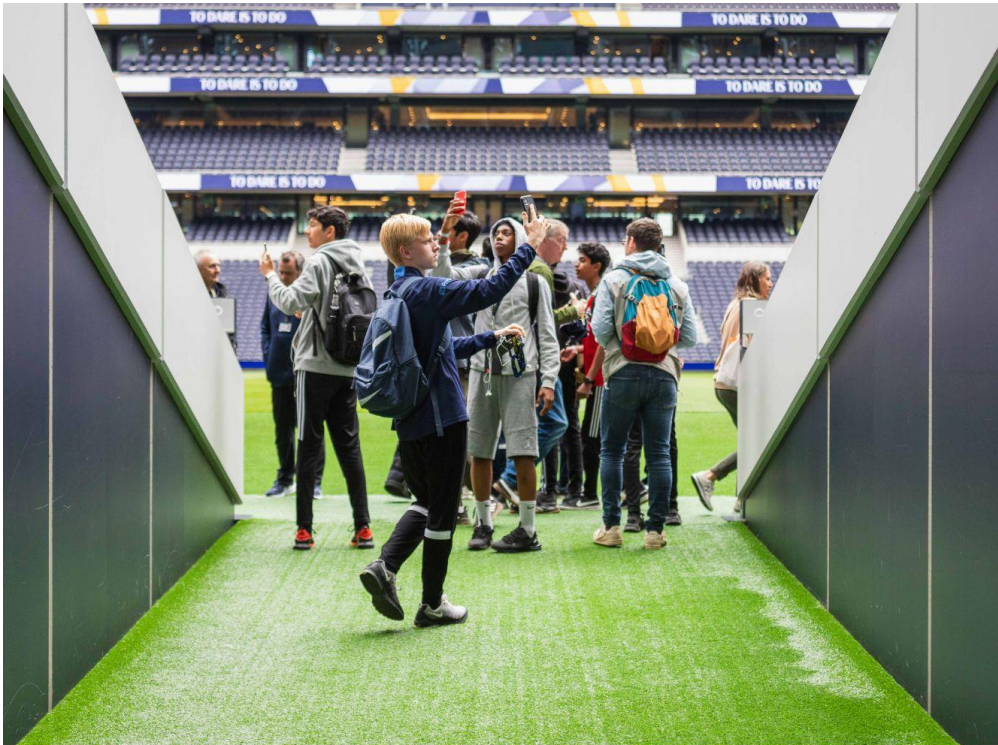
Lent Term – Week 3

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.

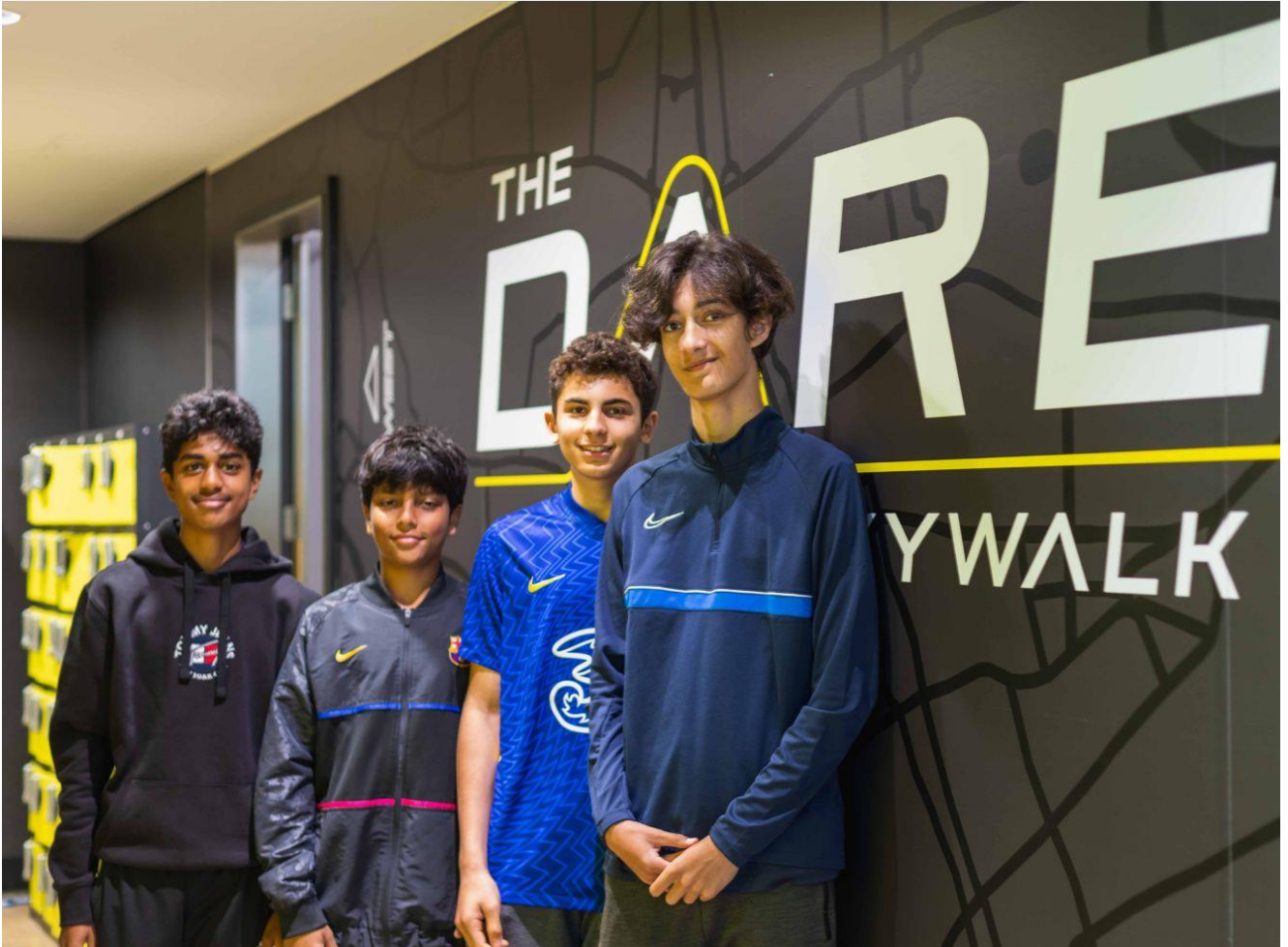


Belonging Weeks 2023 & 2024

Experiencing personal growth, building connections, and deriving fulfilment





















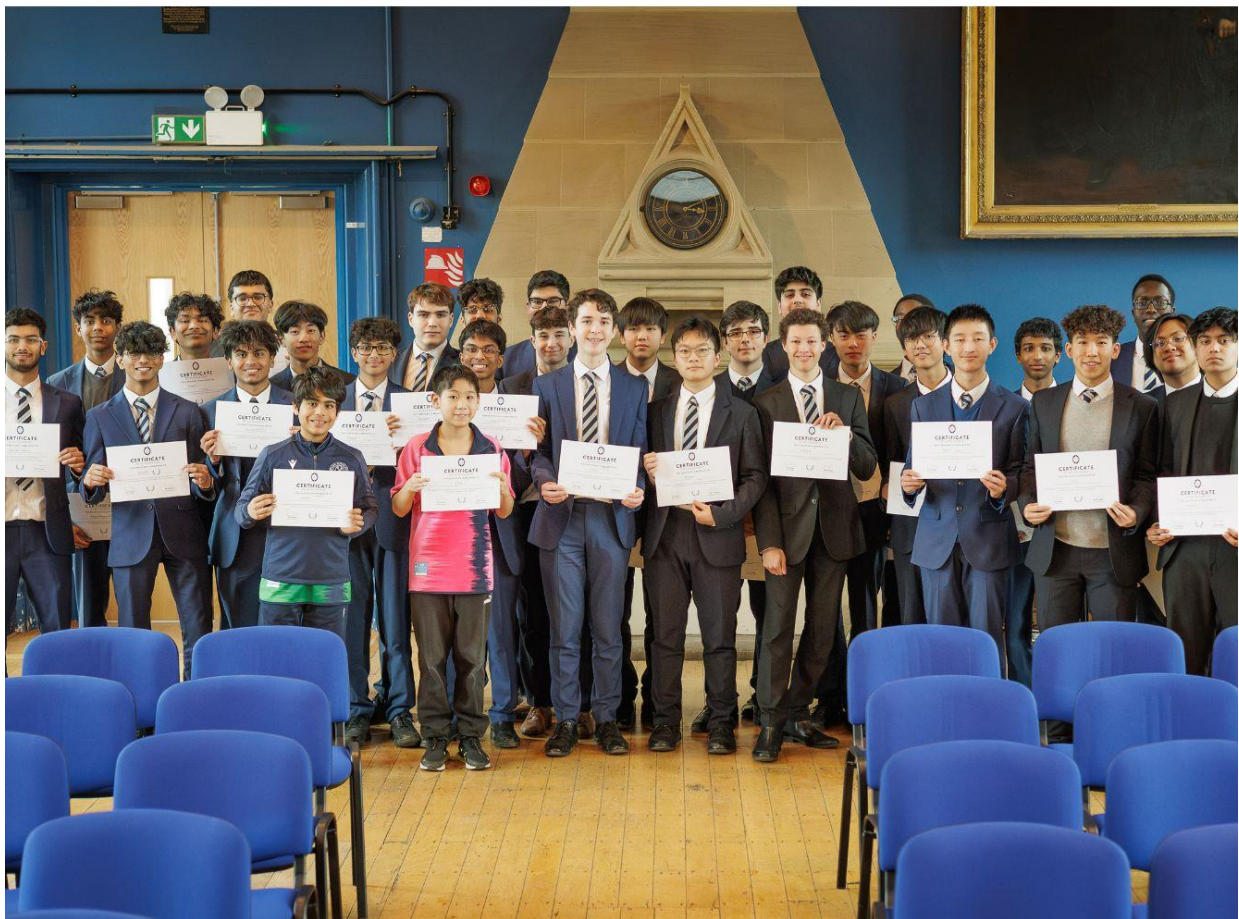




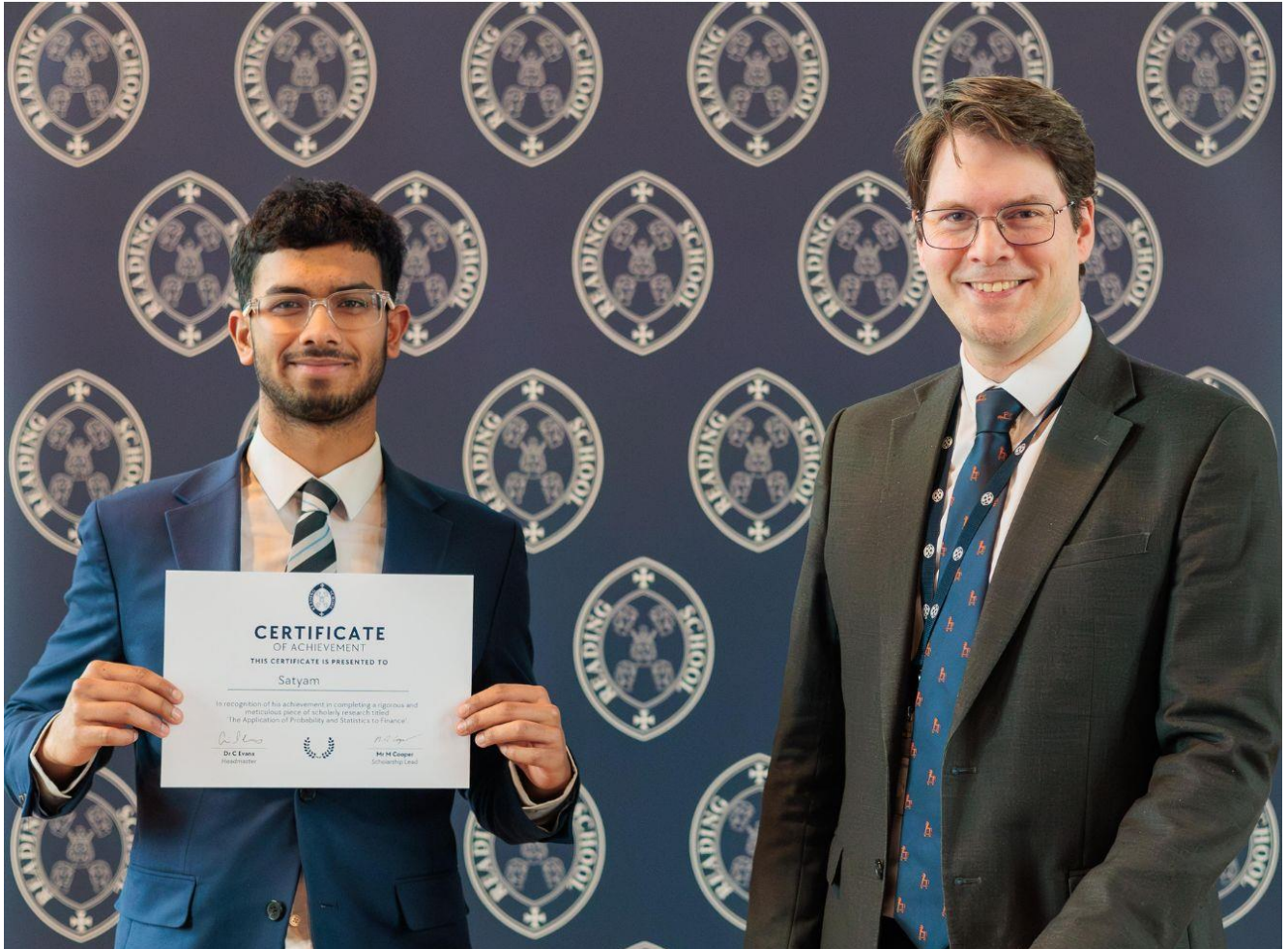
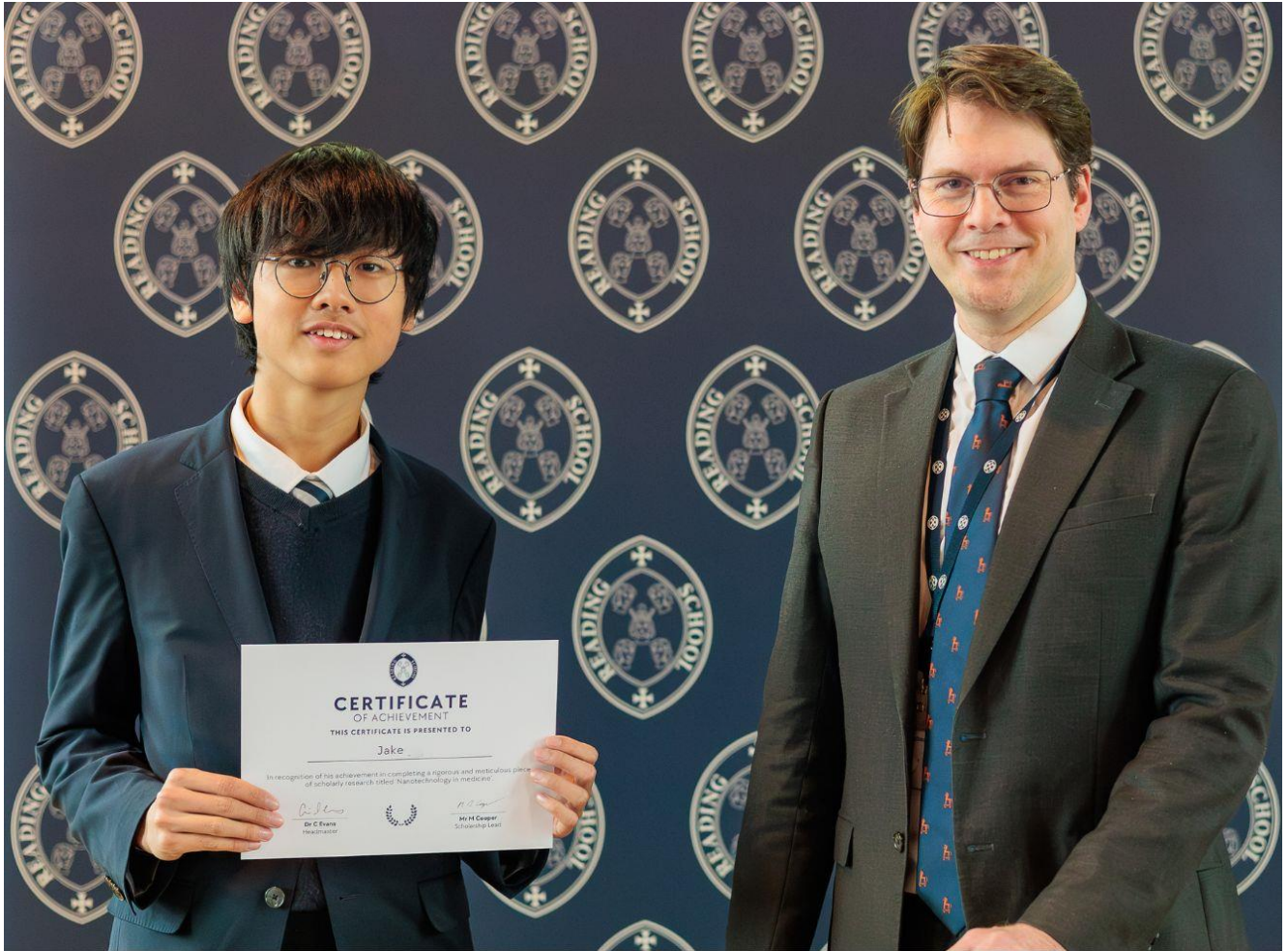


Reading School Scholarship Programme

An event to recognise student achievements and launch the Reading School Scholarship Programme Digital Library











Berkshire Book Awards 2025

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.