



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

10th October 2025

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Introduction

Dear Students, Colleagues, Carers and Parents,

How do you measure success?

This is a question every person must answer for themselves in order to identify both their aspirations and their purpose. One of the first things we ask our new Year 7s in their Floreat lessons is: “*What would you like to have achieved after 1 year, 5 years, 10 years and beyond?*”

We want our students to dream without limits and strive for greatness.

Once aspirations are identified, which sometimes takes coaching, students are then asked to consider what behaviours and attributes will get them there:

- What kind of person will you need to be in order to achieve your aspirations?
- What behaviours might truly unlock your potential?

The ancient philosopher Aristotle stated that “*we are what we repeatedly do.*” To his mind, successful and happy people habitualise virtuous behaviours in order to succeed. Aristotle is long gone, but we think he had a point.

The ‘*Four Pillars*’ of Reading School form the foundation upon which we build our development:

Excellence – being the best version of yourself, characterised by consistently high effort

Integrity – doing the right thing, even when no one is watching

Leadership – behaving in a way that helps your team succeed

Community – caring for and helping those around you

Can a group of people fail if they make the Pillars their way of life and live them every day? It’s hard to see how they could. So perhaps this is worth serious thought. As adults in our students’ and children’s lives, we show them what is important through the choices we make, what we praise them for, and what we challenge them on. If we focus on developing positive character traits, the results will come - we know this to be true.

So, what of academic progress? As with every other facet of life, character plays a pivotal role. This year sees us move to a new way of supporting the development of our students’ *Attitude to Learning*. We know we are blessed with a cohort of incredibly bright and capable young people – a focus on character development is how we help them realise their potential.

From this year, students from Years 7 through to 13 will be encouraged to develop in four key areas:

Curiosity – engagement and interest in every subject

Collaboration – the ability to work with and alongside others effectively

Reflection – self-awareness and the ability to identify and address both strengths and areas for improvement

Independence – the growing ability to take ownership and do things for themselves

Do you think embedding these attitudes in your child will benefit them as they grow? We do – wholeheartedly. Not only for the individual, but for the collective. To this end, we ask all parents to look closely at, and discuss, ‘*Attitude to Learning*’ scores with your children at home. We encourage you to recognise their significance and to talk about *how* your children go about their learning – not just *what* they learn or their latest test score.

We will provide further details on what we are looking for in each category so you can see where your child is and what comes next for them. Please note that our expectations are high, and if your child meets them, they will be graded a 3 out of 5.

We encourage high aspirations, so by all means support your child in aiming for 4s and 5s – but know that these grades are rare, as the standard for them is exceptionally high. Equally, we ask you to collaborate with us when 2s are given. Discuss with your child what needs work and support them on their journey, as we will do the same. Please [click this link](#) to gain insights into what is being shared and worked through with students during their Floreat sessions.

If every student leaves Reading School with the character and skills to be happy, successful, and to positively impact the world, we will be delighted. That is our mission. We must recognise that only through depth of character can this vision be achieved.

We look forward to working together on this shared goal and to committing our efforts to making Reading School students the kind of people who will change our world for the better.

Best wishes,

Mr Dave Tridgell
Director of Character

Key information

All Years

Did you know 20% of severe allergic reactions happen in schools?

Off the back of [Anaphylaxis Awareness Week](#) (1st Oct – 7th Oct) we would like to remind all parents, students and staff of the importance of allergy awareness and response.

At Reading School, we have some students and staff with severe allergies including to nuts, dairy, and eggs. Even trace amounts of these allergens can cause life threatening reactions and we can increase the safety for those with allergies by:

- **Avoiding bringing nuts or nut products** into school (this includes items like Nutella, peanut butter and certain snack bars).
- **Reminding your son to never share food** with others, even if it seems safe.
- **Ensuring that medical information** is up to date and that the student services team is informed of any changes.
- **Recognising the signs of an allergic reaction**, such as swelling, difficulty breathing, hives or dizziness, and acting quickly by alerting a member of staff.

Our staff are trained to use adrenaline auto-injectors (EpiPens) and to follow emergency protocols, but awareness and prevention are the best protection.

Although we are not a 'nut free' school we would like to raise awareness of the impact that bringing nuts into school can have on students and staff who may have allergies. Packaged nuts, peanut butter, chocolate spreads containing nuts, cereal, granola, chocolate bars containing nuts, cakes or biscuits containing nuts, peanut based sauces (like satay) and any food made with sesame seeds can cause severe allergic reactions for those affected by allergens. This list is not exhaustive.

To find out more, please visit nationwide charity for people living with an allergy – [Allergy UK](#)

Reading Week

The School's annual Reading Week will take place from Monday 3rd November – Friday 7th November. The week represents an opportunity for students to focus on reading beyond the curriculum while using a framework provided by the School. Reading can take many forms; for academic development as well as for pleasure, and we would encourage students to use the guidance provided by the School to immerse yourselves in a rich and varied diet of subject matter in order to increase your appreciation for reading and learning at a high level.

To find out more and prepare for Reading Week, please [click this link](#). Guidance will be shared by staff with students throughout October.

Student Support Parent Meet-Up

Parents of students on the School's SEND register are warmly invited to a meet-up session on **Tuesday 21st October from 8:30 am to 10:00 am**. This will be a chance to:

- See the Auxilium
- Meet the SEND team
- Connect with other parents

If you would like to attend, please email studentsupport@reading-school.co.uk by **Friday 17th October**.

Years 7 and 8 Only

Finland Trip

Adventure Apes is an organisation that helps children and young people connect with Finland's unspoiled nature and each other through adventure and learning. Students get exciting opportunities to canoe in freshwater lakes, ice skate, build (and sleep in!) an igloo, snowshoe and cross-country ski. [Click this link](#) to watch a short video.

To express your interest, please [click here](#).

Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 Only

Careers

Students from Years 7 – 11 will have received an email in relation to Monday January 26th 2026 inset day being an opportunity for experience in the workplace. Students are strongly encouraged to make the most of the opportunities on offer to build on their experience and maximise networking opportunities.

Parents can find out more by clicking the following link:

[Reading School Careers Provision](#)

Year 12 Only

Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award

We are excited to announce that we hope to run the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award this year. To make it happen, we need enough students to sign up. If you are in Year 12 and interested in taking on this rewarding challenge, [please click to complete this form](#).

Before signing up, please do look into what the Gold award entails, as it is a big commitment, however will be a worthwhile challenge. Dates will be confirmed after we know if we have enough interest. The form will no longer accept responses at 4pm on 24th October.

If you have any questions, please contact either Ms Loft by emailing dloft@reading-school.co.uk or Mrs Smith by emailing msmith@reading-school.co.uk.

School Community News

Harvest Festival 2025

Did you know Harvest Festival is one of the oldest known festivals in the world – people from across the globe have celebrated harvest time for thousands of years. In the UK, the word ‘harvest’ comes from the Old English ‘hærfest’, which meant autumn. Before grocers and supermarkets, communities relied entirely on the success of their harvest to survive the winter.

- In the USA, Thanksgiving is based on a harvest celebration shared between the Pilgrims and Native Americans in 1621
- China celebrates the Mid-Autumn Festival (or Moon Festival) at harvest time, marked by time with family and friends, mooncakes and lanterns.
- In Ghana, the Homowo Festival means ‘hooting at hunger’ and is a joyful celebration of a good harvest after a period of famine.
- And in India, the harvest festival is known as Makar Sankranti, Pongal or Lohri (depending on the region), celebrated with colourful decorations, traditional food singing and dancing.

In the UK, there has been a long-held tradition of schools and churches collecting food for those who might not have enough. Reading School upholds this tradition and has an annual collection of food which is donated by those from the whole school community who wish to, and are in a position to, give and share. This year, our Harvest Collection will be for [ReadiFood](#), Reading’s emergency food parcel service that has been operating for over 25 years. ReadiFood delivers emergency food parcels across the Reading area and they endeavour to avoid developing dependency, by working closely with agencies to discover the best way of supporting individuals and families.

We are inviting students, parents, carers and staff to bring in any of the following item’s w/c Monday 13th October – Friday 17th October. All items can be dropped directly to the Chapel where green baskets have been left by the altar.

Tinned tomatoes	Drinking squash
Tinned vegetables (carrots, peas, sweetcorn etc.)	Coffee
Tinned fruit	Dried noodles
Cooking oil	Dried lentils
Tinned meat	Dried couscous
Pot noodles	Plain flour
Long-life or UHT milk	Sanitary items
40s tea bags	Shampoo
Basmati rice	Conditioner
Rice pouches	Hand soap
Cartons of juice	Shower gel

The Berkshire Book Award 2026



The Berkshire Book Award began in 2004 to celebrate the best, recently published books written for young people. The Award is the first of its kind in Berkshire and is unique because young people both nominate the titles and select the winner. Thousands of young people from over 90 Berkshire schools have taken part.

The Aim of the Berkshire Book Award is to contribute to young people's achievement by:

- encouraging them to develop a love of reading and become lifelong readers
- encouraging social inclusion by organising events and activities for young people

Research has shown that a love of reading is more important to young peoples' educational success than either their family's wealth or social class. Supporting young people to take part in the Award is one way in which schools can encourage young people to read more, improving their educational opportunities and encouraging social responsibility by giving them a major say in running the Award.

Participation in the Berkshire Book Award is open to all young people living or studying in Berkshire through their middle and secondary schools.

Students can nominate recently published fiction books [using the BBA website](#). This page also includes a list of titles to help remind students of books that meet the criteria of being published between 1st of October 2024 and September 30th 2025. Nominations will close on 12th of November and the Longlist will be revealed on November 19th. Students in year 7 and year 8 will all get the opportunity to try books from the Longlist during library lessons in November, so this is a fantastic way to discover new authors and an amazing opportunity to contribute to a local Book Award.

Reading School Events

Faith and Reason Lecture Series



The Reading School Chaplaincy Team is delighted to host the first termly Faith and Reason Lecture, exploring the relationship between science and religion. This lecture will be presented by Dr William J Wilkinson, Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society and Lecturer in Mathematics at the University of Brighton, whose academic interests span physics and cosmology.

Dr Wilkinson will consider modern cosmological insights into the origins of the universe and reflect on their wider philosophical and theological implications, offering an engaging perspective on how science and faith intersect in addressing some of life's most profound questions. Light refreshments will be served after the lecture and all students and staff are welcome.

The Origins of the Universe: Philosophical Implications from Modern Cosmology

Date: Thursday 16th October 2025

Room: Lecture Theatre

Time: 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Click here to RSVP: [The Origins of the Universe: Philosophical Implications from Modern Cosmology - Thursday 16th October 2025 | Events | Reading School Alumni Society](https://alumni.reading-school.co.uk/events/view/orchestra-soloists)


Reading School Orchestra & Solo Showcase 2025





Organised by Mr O Griffin (Director of Music) and the Music Department, we are delighted to invite you to a concert showcasing the exceptional musical talent of our students.

Programme Highlights:

- Tchaikovsky** – Piano Concerto No. 1, Movement II. Soloist - Zi Han Zhang (13W)
- Strauss** – Radetzky March
- Plus**, soloists from throughout the school

 **Date:** Monday, 13th October

 **Venue:** Big School, Reading School

 **Time:** 18:00 – 19:00

 **Tickets:** £5 adults | £3 concessions

RSVP: <https://alumni.reading-school.co.uk/events/view/orchestra-soloists>

Please use the email address we have on record for you at the school when registering.

We warmly encourage families to join us for this celebration of music and student achievement. For any questions, please contact the Events Team at events@reading-school.co.uk.

900th Anniversary Gala Dinner – Venue Update



We are delighted to announce that our **900th Anniversary Gala Dinner** will now take place at **Reading School**, making this special celebration more accessible for everyone. Join fellow parents, Old Redingensians and friends of the School for an elegant evening of **fine dining, live entertainment and lasting memories**.


With a **reduced ticket price of £75 per person**, it's the perfect way to mark this milestone in true Reading School style before the festive season begins.

The evening will include:

- A welcome drinks reception to reconnect with friends and the wider community
- A three-course gala dinner with house wine provided at each table
- A keynote address from Tom Whipple (OR 2000–2007), Feature Writer at *The Times*, Science Writer and Special Correspondent
- Live entertainment from our talented students and Big Band
- A silent auction featuring exclusive prizes and experiences
- A luxury raffle draw in support of the *Beyond 900 Fund*

 **Venue:** Refectory & Big School, Reading School

 **Time:** 6:00 PM – 11:00 PM

 **Tickets:** £75 per person

Reserve your place: [Gala Dinner - 29th November 2025 | Events | Reading School Alumni Society](#)



We are especially proud to highlight the contribution of **Akshaiyan S (12JHu)**, co-founder of the clothing brand *Life of Tamil*, who is generously supporting the event by donating a selection of limited-edition items for our online auction/ raffle.

His creativity and entrepreneurial spirit are a wonderful example of the talent within our student community.

If you would like to contribute items, large or small, to support the event, please get in touch at events@reading-school.co.uk

RSPA

Pre-Loved Uniform Shop

Reading School's Pre-Loved Uniform Shop is a long-running initiative managed and run by Reading School Parents' Association volunteers. Located in the building to the rear of the Walled Car Park (opposite the School Chapel), the shop offers a wide range of affordable, pre-owned school uniforms, sports kit and GCSE/A level revision books.

Opening Times

- Friday 17th October, 3.30 - 4.30pm
- Saturday 18th October, 10.30am - 12.30pm

NO parking is allowed on site on **Friday** openings. Parking is available on **Saturday** in the Walled Carpark.

*Please note shop opening is weather dependent, in the event of a poor weather forecast the opening may be cancelled.

Donations and Volunteering

The shop relies on donations of clean, good-quality uniform items. If you have items to donate, please contact the RSPA at shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk. High priority items currently include:

- Macron sports kit (all sizes)
- Ties (all Houses including Sixth Form)
- GCSE and A Level revision books

Volunteers are always needed to help with sorting and selling and if you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to the same email address above.

Have a lovely weekend,

The RSPA Team

Highlights of the week: Michaelmas Term Week 5

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.



European Day of Languages

There are often multiple events that take place during a week at Reading School, some of which we cannot always showcase during the week they take place, but that won't stop us from sharing them!

On Friday 26 September, the European Day of Languages took place, and to mark the event, our A Level linguists in Year 12, along with some of our most talented linguists in Year 11 attended an event organised by the Modern Foreign Languages department in collaboration with Business Language Champions and Futbol Lingo.



They attended an insightful webinar on the importance of and the range of ways to use language skills in the football industry, before taking to the field to put principles into practice. Year 12 linguists ran an inspiring football coaching session for the Year 11 students, and it was delivered entirely in the language they are studying at GCSE (French, German, Mandarin or Spanish).



After learning the key vocabulary needed on the pitch (names of positions, instructions, even some complaints to the ref!) each language organised a training session which was as fun as it was challenging to keep up with Mme Fondu's high standards of language use on the pitch!



Coaches then gave a passionate pep talk and discussed tactics in their studied language before the event took a competitive spin with 2 inter-language matches being played. Team France won against Germany and team Spain won against China, concluding this fun morning with a dramatic penalty shootout!



Many thanks to Mme Fondu, Ms Senftlechner, Mr Sanchez and Mr Wu for their guidance as football managers/language experts for the day!



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