



# Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

17<sup>th</sup> October 2025

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# Introduction

Dear Students, Parents, and Colleagues,

Over the last fortnight our Sixth Form teachers, tutors and team have submitted more than one hundred applications to the most competitive university courses in the world!

My thanks go to all the staff involved in this process.

This is the deadline every year for those applying for Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, and Dentistry, or for courses at Oxford or Cambridge. We are proud of all these students, and of those who will submit applications later in the year or will apply for employment or apprenticeships instead.

This batch of applications has reminded me how lucky we are to part of a community filled with remarkably curious scholars, and I wanted to highlight a few snippets of personal statement to inspire you! These examples show the remarkable range of activity undertaken beyond the classroom by our senior students. These show how fulfilling curiosity can be, and how exciting discovery is.

As we prepare for Reading Week in a fortnight's time, I share these extracts in the hope that they will inspire you as much as they have inspired me.

Read some – and see what remarkable progress Reading Students make; how important humility is and how fundamental it is that we follow our own academic passions!

*I entered the Cambridge Drone Society Aerofoil Design Competition where I designed a CAD model in Onshape of a wing and ran CFD simulations in Simscale to maximise the lift to drag ratio at 0° and 15° Angles of Attack. This proved challenging (as optimising my wing for 0° by implementing a lower taper ratio and minimising washout directly hindered performance at 15°) highlighting the need for compromise, rigorous testing and the real-world problem solving required to achieve this balance.*

*Having witnessed Hong Kong's 2014 Umbrella Movement, I was too young to grasp debates on democracy. Five years later during the Extradition Bill protests, I saw how the law could challenge or reinforce power. Press restrictions and public resistance left me wondering how rights are protected, who defines justice, and how authorities are constrained. I questioned whether limiting freedoms here prevented genuine harm or suppressed autonomy, drawing me to pursue law and explore its tensions with morality.*

*In the Caius Explore Essay competition, I proposed a UK housing plan using modular construction for affordable social rent homes. This deepened my research and critical thinking skills and showed how complex engineering problems involve many interlinked variables. It prepared me for a CREST Gold project with Cavendish Nuclear, where I planned the retrieval, cleaning, and packaging of 1,000 nuclear waste cans. Learning from industry experts, I evaluated decontamination techniques like electropolishing, sharpening my analysis skills.*

*I wrote an article on Politics in Focus proposing solutions to AI and algorithmic driven threats to democracy. I concluded that the structural problem (for this, and related issues,) originates from a monopoly over data and therefore requires an economy wide solution.*

*My interest in stereoisomerism inspired me to make a video titled "Chirality and Its Impacts on Drug Design" for the Biochemical Society's Science Communication prize, exploring the real-world effects of chemical concepts.*

*During my work experience placement at IBM, my curiosity in the applications of quantum physics led me to explore the theory of quantum entanglement while looking at the structure of quantum computers. Moreover, I delivered two presentations to my supervisors.*

*Preparing my own BMO style questions, I found the condition under which three mutually tangent circles may have an outer Soddy circle, and an application of Lucas' theorem to find odd numbers in Pascal's triangle.*

*Determined to solve  $N \times N \times N$  cubes computationally, I used existing algorithms to swap centre pieces and pair edges safely, covering the vast numbers of positions. To visualise the cube, I made a 3D renderer, with projection and a free-look camera, deeming a simple raytracer I made too inefficient. To speed up rendering, I explored interpreters; using a recursive descent parser and AST, I created one for my own language, with if-statements and stack-based variable scoping*

*I applied Simulated Annealing in the UK Maths Modelling Challenge (UKMC) to design a fair scheduling system for an international sports league, achieved gold in the UKMC, and received an honourable mention internationally.*

*For the Instructables First Time Author competition, I designed a pick-resistant lock. I settled on a twin sidebar design and was inspired by Medeco pins to create slider pins that needed to be lifted to the right height and turned to the correct angle to align with the true gate and open the lock. This project taught me how much iteration, planning, and research go into effective mechanical designs.*

*I undertook work at the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory. Throughout the week I designed a tooling board for the manufacture of interlinks used in the staves of the ATLAS detector. Balancing manufacturability, complexity, and cost was challenging but with guidance from supervisors I created a solution that doubled the previous production rate.*

*Last year I competed in the Young Economist Essay Challenge and wrote an essay explaining how removing tariffs increases economic welfare, even if it forces domestic producers out of the market. However, I later researched the UK bioethanol market. Following the removal of bioethanol import tariffs in the UK, one of the two major bioethanol plants closed and the second is now expected to follow. If the tariffs were suddenly reimposed, the UK would be unable to produce its own bioethanol as before and would be forced to accept the higher US market prices.*

Thank you, gentlemen, for showing the fruit of your curiosity. You demonstrate that sometimes in our learning we have to be willing to be wrong, that inter-disciplinary thinking is often the path to unexpected solutions, and that determination and resilience are pre-requisites for discovery!

Wishing all of you every success in whatever lies ahead,

Best wishes,

**Chris Evans**  
**Headmaster**

# Key information

## All Years

### Reading Week – A Reminder

The School's annual Reading Week will take place from Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November – Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November.

It is a fantastic opportunity for students across all years to consolidate what they have studied so far and to explore beyond the curriculum, guided by resources recommended by staff and which can be found in the [Reading Week guide](#). Students are strongly encouraged to get ready before the end of term by familiarising themselves with the Reading Week guide, reviewing suggested reading lists, and choosing books to read and borrow from the LRC before half-term.

[Year 7 Reading Week List](#)

[Year 11 Reading Week List](#)

[Year 8 Reading Week List](#)

[Year 12 Reading Week List](#)

[Year 9 Reading Week List](#)

[Year 13 Reading Week List](#)

[Year 10 Reading Week List](#)

[Societies Book Recommendations](#)

Ongoing guidance will continue to be shared by Tutors with students throughout October.

### Developing Students with the Character and Skills to Change the World for the Better

In last week's Bulletin, Mr D Tridgell, Director of Character, invited the School Community to think deeply about what success truly means, emphasising that it begins with identifying personal aspirations and the character needed to achieve them. At Reading School, students explore this through Floreat lessons, where they are guided to reflect on behaviours that lead to success.

For parents, carers and the wider community, we invite you to watch the video, 'Character Education Explained', which captures the School's vision for developing students not just academically, but as people of strength, purpose, and positive impact. The video illustrates how character underpins everything we do – guiding students to remain curious, collaborative, reflective and independent.

Please feel free to discuss it with your child together as a family – what parts resonated? What have they taken away from Floreat lessons? What areas would you like to see them grow in?



[Click to watch video \(13mins with chapters\)](#)

## Reviewing and Updating Personal Information via MCAS

To help us remain compliant with GDPR requirements, we kindly ask all parents and carers to log into the MyChildAtSchool (MCAS) platform, available as both a web-based service and a mobile app for Apple and Android devices, to review and update their personal information.

Please ensure contact details, medical information, and dietary requirements are accurate and up to date, especially as we prepare for upcoming school trips. Having the correct details on file is essential for the wellbeing and safety of your son.

### Key features of the MyChildAtSchool portal include:

- A secure platform where you can view your own and your child's personal details.
- The ability to update addresses, phone numbers, dietary needs, and medical information via the **Data Collection Form**.
- Easy access to your child's attendance and behaviour records.
- Online viewing of school reports and timetables.
- A convenient way to top up dinner money and purchase items online.

Thank you for keeping your information current and supporting our school systems.

## Year 11 and Year 13 Only

### GCSE and A Level Exam Contingency Day 2026

The awarding bodies have collectively agreed a contingency day for several years now which is always scheduled at the end of the GCSE, GCE AS and A-level exam timetables. The contingency day is in the event of national or significant local disruption to exams in the United Kingdom, being part of the awarding bodies' standard contingency planning for exams. The June 2026 contingency day is at the end of the timetable and scheduled on **Wednesday 24 June 2026**. Students should factor in this date when making plans for the summer.

## Years 10 and 12 Only

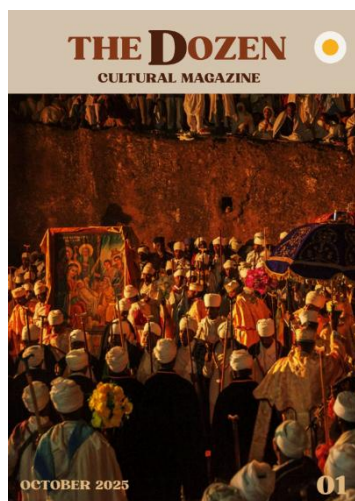
### Finland Trip

We are thrilled to offer an exciting Ski Trip to Finland in 2026 for students in Years 10 and 12. Your child will experience the thrill of a Finnish winter adventure over five days as they get to train with sleds and essential equipment, ski off-trail across frozen lakes and through the wilderness on skin-based skis. This exciting experience builds confidence, teamwork, and resilience - all in a safe, supervised environment.

Please [click this link for more details and express your interest](#).

# School Community News

## Student School Magazine 'The Dozen' Celebrates Diversity and Creativity



This month, Reading School students launched the second issue of *The Dozen*, a cultural magazine written, designed, and published entirely by students. With the theme “*Celebrating Diversity*”, this month’s edition coincides with Black History Month and showcases an impressive range of articles that explore music, art, history, and identity.

Led by Editor-in-Chief Daniel N (12RWu), *The Dozen* offers a thoughtful celebration of creativity and awareness across cultures. From “*The Evolution of Jazz*” to “*Ethio-Jazz*”, from “*A Story Lost to Time*” to “*The Windrush Compensation Maze*”, students have tackled complex issues with maturity and insight. The magazine also features engaging sports coverage, including an analysis of AFCON, and humanities essays that link historical understanding to modern questions of equality.

The team, made up of students from across year groups (pictured on front cover), have worked collaboratively to produce an intellectually rich publication. Click here to enjoy [The Dozen – Issue 2](#).

## Celebrating Excellence in Access and Opportunity



We are delighted to share that Reading School has been awarded the Sutton Trust Fair School Admissions Award at Gold level.

Gold is awarded to schools who have made several determined and significant changes to their admissions policies to ensure that there is fair access to all pupils regardless of socio-economic background. The award is also evidence of Reading School’s commitment to social impact and for ensuring that all young people have access to the best education we can provide them.

The [Sutton Trust](#) is the UK’s leading social mobility charity.

## Imperial College Science in Medicine School Teams Prize



Congratulations to Jiji W (13JTe), Ritesh S (13ZMC), Ayushmaan S (13MKa), Arjit D (13ZMC), and Aryan K (13BSa), who reached the finals of the Imperial College Science in Medicine School Teams Prize in the Cancer Research category.

This was a real team effort, with Aryan lending his Computer Science skills to the Medical Society team. The students began by identifying some of the biggest challenges in cancer care and chose to focus on the isolation and uncertainty that many patients experience.

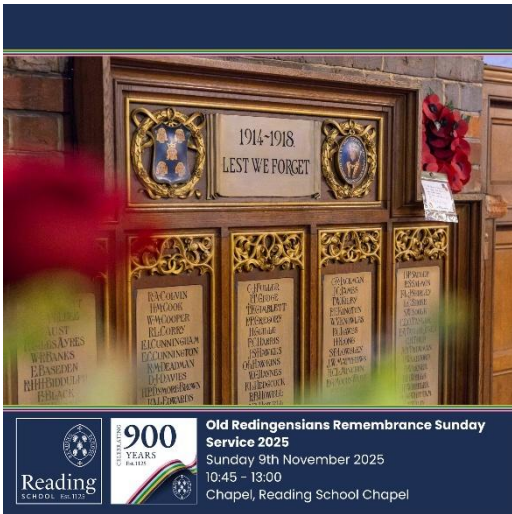
To tackle these issues, they created a working demo of an app that includes an AI-powered symptom tracker, a mental health journal, and a peer-support forum, combined with a wearable patch that monitors biomarkers in real time.

Their entry involved producing a summary poster and presenting their ideas to a judging panel of academics and cancer research scientists. Their presentation could not have gone better, and the professionalism with which they fielded questions was impressive.

Teacher of Biology and Medical School Applications Lead, Ms Jayne Pickering, shared: *“Regardless of whether they are awarded a top-three place, we are exceptionally proud of the team for their innovation, teamwork, and ambition.”*

# Reading School Events

## Old Redingensians Remembrance Sunday Service – Sunday 9th November 2025



Organised by Chris Widdows, Old Redingensians Membership Secretary (OR 1955–1962), and Ken Brown, Old Redingensians Association Archivist (OR 1955–1963), the long-running annual service to honour the service and sacrifice of all those who have defended our freedoms and protected our way of life - especially the fallen Old Redingensians - will take place on Sunday 9 November 2025 at 10:45am in Reading School Chapel.

Armed Forces, and their families, from Britain and the Commonwealth, the vital role played by the emergency services and those that have lost their lives as a result of conflict or terrorism are also remembered.

The service will be led by the ORA Chaplain, Reverend Dr Chris Evans and the sermon will be preached by Mark Amos (School Chaplain). The Lesson will be read by the President of The Old Redingensians Association, Dr Fraser Peck (OR 1999 - 2006). The Act of Remembrance will be read by Ken Brown (OR 1955 -1963) ORA Archivist.

Wreaths will be laid in the Chapel on the 1914-18 War Memorial, the 1939-45 War Memorial and the Kendrick Boys School War Memorial (Kendrick Boys was absorbed by Reading School in 1916).

Reading School students will play the Organ and sound the Last Post and Reveille. The School Choir will be led by Mr O Griffin, Director of Music. The Reading School Combined Cadet Force (CCF) will provide a Guard of Honour.

Light refreshments will be served after the service in the School Refectory at 11:30 to 13.00.

To RSVP, please click here: [Old Redingensians Remembrance Sunday Service 9th November 2025 | Events | Reading School Alumni Society](#)

## Year 7 Music Concert - Tuesday 18th November 2025 (Open to parents of Year 7 students)



Music plays a pivotal role in education at Reading School, fostering creativity and personal growth both in and out of the classroom. We invite you to an evening of performances that showcase the remarkable musical talent of our students.

Organised by Director of Music, Mr O Griffin, this special event will shine a spotlight on our Year 7 students as they present the pieces they've worked diligently on this term. Impressively, they will be performing on instruments they only began learning recently, including strings (violin, viola, cello, double bass), trumpets, trombones, and clarinets.

**Date:** Tuesday, 18th November 2025

**Time:** 18.30 - 19.30

**Location:** Big School, Reading School

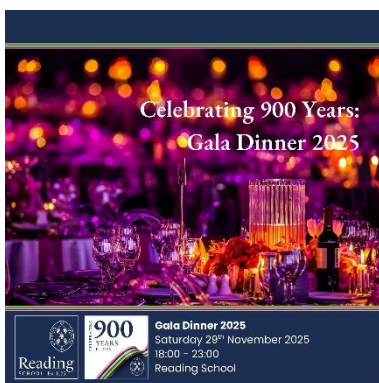
Tickets for this concert are priced **£6 per person (performers do not require a ticket)**. To ensure that all parents have the opportunity to attend, tickets are strictly limited to **1 per performer**.

Register **HERE:** [Year 7 Music Concert - Tuesday 18th November 2025 | Events | Reading School Alumni Society](#)

**Note:** We recommend registering for the event using the email address you have shared with the School in our records.

Come and experience the joy and dedication our young musicians bring to the stage!

## 900th Anniversary Gala Dinner



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](#)

## Careers Convention 2026 – Thursday 5th February 2026

The Reading School Careers Convention is a hugely popular biennial event which supports students and parents exploring career paths and making informed decisions about GCSE, A-Level, and post-school options. The event exposes students to a wide variety of careers, including some they may not have previously considered, as well as connecting students with successful practicing professionals, so they can ask questions, see what paths appeal to them and network with others.

### **Key Features**

- The event hosts 50+ representatives from a broad-range of sectors: accountancy, law, medicine, engineering, IT, health care, architecture and more.

- Keynote speakers from varied fields who give talks sharing their professional journeys and insights. Speakers in 2024 included: Dr Saritha Arunkumar (IBM), Mr Gregg Payne (Oracle), Mr Jonathan Purcell (International Centre of Justice for Palestinians), Mr Levi Tebbutt (KPMG), and Ms Orla Harper (InvestIN).
- Direct access to industry professionals from a wide range of sectors, many of who are Reading School Alumni who can offer relatable insights into career journeys and pathways.

The event always welcomes professionals from our parent community (or colleagues of parents) to consider speaking at the Careers Convention to share their career journey and industry insights. To express interest, please [complete a short sign-up form](#). Examples of some previous talks by speakers are included at the end of this Bulletin.

For all enquiries, please contact Deputy Headteacher, Ms Lizzie Ayres by emailing [layres@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:layres@reading-school.co.uk). Student and parent sign-up details will be shared in due course.



Reading School Careers Convention 2024

## Open Coffee & Chat with the Headmaster



As part of a new series of events for parents and carers, you are warmly invited to join our informal gathering with the Headmaster and members of the Senior Leadership Team. The termly event will feature:

- An opportunity to chat directly with the Headmaster and to hear the latest updates from the School
- Meet with other parents from your son's year group
- A chance to share feedback or suggestions on how we can continue to improve

**Venue:** Refectory, Reading School

Each family may bring up to **two adults**, and **students or siblings** are welcome at the after-school and Saturday sessions. As capacity is limited, please book your place using the link below:

- **Thursday 13 November 2025**, 8:30–9:30 AM – Register [HERE](#)
- **Tuesday 27 January 2026**, 3:45–4:45 PM – Register [HERE](#)
- **Saturday 16 May 2026**, 9:30–10:30 AM – Register [HERE](#)

**Note:** *We recommend registering for the event using the email address you have shared with the School in our records.*

We look forward to meeting with you.

# 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 17<sup>th</sup> October, 3.30 - 4.30pm
- Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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 6

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.



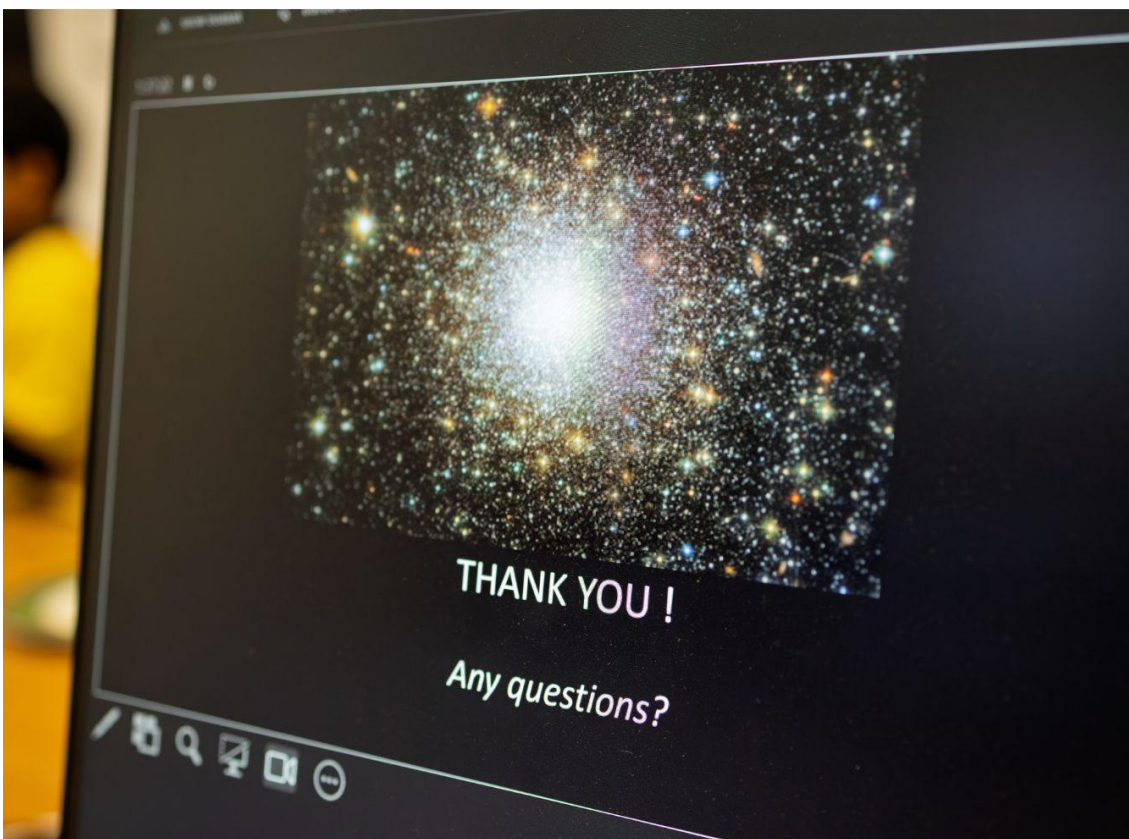
## The Inaugural Faith & Reason Lecture

The Reading School Chaplaincy Team was delighted to host the first termly Faith and Reason Lecture on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> October. The lecture, which explored the relationship between science and religion was presented by Dr William J Wilkinson, Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society and Lecturer in Mathematics at the University of Brighton.



Dr Wilkinson's talk, entitled "The Origins of the Universe: Philosophical Implications from Modern Cosmology", explored the development of the 'Big Bang' theory, the fierce opposition that it received before its acceptance in the scientific community, and the consequences such a theory holds for our understanding of the universe.

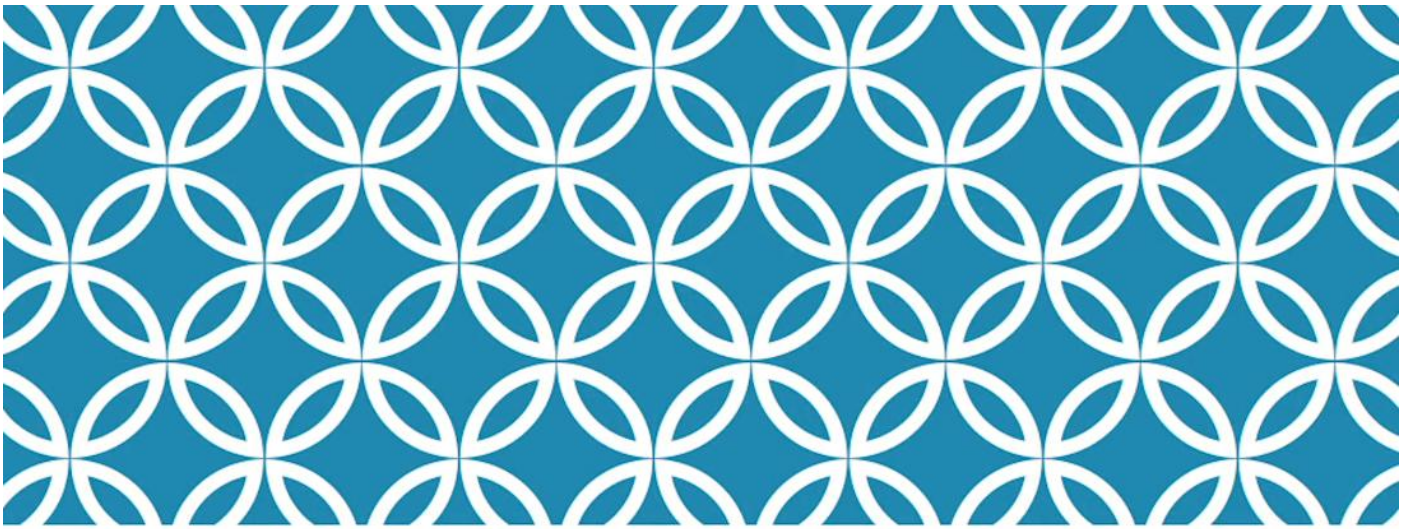
We would like to thank all students, parents and ORs who attended the event, and look forward to sharing details of the next Faith & Reason lecture soon.



## Reading School Careers Convention 2022

Keynote Session #1 – Mr Martin Millmore, *From CERN to Google*

Click thumbnail to watch session (17mins)



## MARTIN MILLMORE | Career Path

Keynote Session #2 – Mr Michael Wilson, *Finance Careers in a Digital World*

Click thumbnail to watch session (25mins)



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](mailto:communityrelations@reading-school.co.uk)