



# Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

24<sup>th</sup> October 2025

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# Introduction

Dear Colleagues, Students and Parents,

This has been a fantastic half term, and as we prepare for the half term holiday and Reading Week, I send my thanks to you all.

Thank you to all of my colleagues. Your high standards, engaging teaching, detailed feedback and commitment to students' wellbeing and progress is second to none. Your endeavours are the bedrock of our community, and I send my appreciation for all that you do. Teachers and Associate Staff at Reading School make brilliance look normal. I pray we never take you for granted.

Thank you to all of our Sixth Form students. Prefects – you've been fantastic, and I'm especially grateful to you for contributions at the bus stop, with visitors, and in your role-modelling. Thanks to our New Year 12 students, who have thrown themselves into life here. It's great to hear such positive reports about you all. Thanks also to each of you who've worked hard to keep attendance high – colleagues consistently report excellent focus and discussion in class. Well done!

Thank you to our students in Years 7-11. Whilst the end of term has brought one or two disappointing choices, your attitude has been truly praiseworthy. It's been wonderful to see such good humour, positive attitude and commitment. Your sports matches have been played with great spirit, your music has been wonderful, your poetry deeply moving. Everyone who has observed lessons has been pleased with the temperature of class discussion, and the focus you have shown.

Thank you finally, to our parents. We appreciate your advocacy, your understanding and your partnership. In the next week I'll be extending four invitations to you regarding fireworks, a Commemoration Day, a coffee morning and our gala dinner. I hope we'll see more of each other in the weeks ahead, and would value talking to you at one or more of these occasions. In a range of complex behavioural matters, you have been understanding with each other and with us, and have been there to support concerts and sports, and to meet with staff whenever the opportunity arose. We do not presume your trust, but feel truly grateful for it.

The philosopher Voltaire once said that "Perfection is attained by slow degrees. It requires the hand of time." Time then, can be our friend, if we press on together with a vision, and with determination to be even better yet, but doing so requires all of our imagination, our patience and our resilience.

I wonder how we'll grow as a school, and how we'll improve, if all of us read one book in Reading Week, which fuels our fire, or strengthens our resolve... if all of us read one article that refines our perspective or shapes our direction... if all of us find one resource which deepens our understanding or corrects our course. I've got a stack of books I'm desperate to read and I promise I'll tell you how I've got on. I hope you might share your discoveries too! Parents, perhaps, one or two of you could email me with your Reading Week revelations? I benefit from 'dummies guides' and simple summaries: feel free to email me at [cevans@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:cevans@reading-school.co.uk). I love to think all of us share this opportunity and I do hope that everyone one of you will find yourself lost in a book at some point in the next two weeks.

Some final words on this then, from Roald Dahl and Patrick Ness:

“I is reading it hundreds of times,” the BFG said. “And I is still reading it and teaching new words to myself. It is the most scumdidlyumptious story.”

“Stories are wild creatures... when you let them loose, who knows what havoc they might wreak?”

With best wishes,

**Chris Evans**  
**Headmaster**

# Key information

## All Years

### Non-Uniform Day – Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December

Initiated by Jiji W (13 JTe) and supported by Charity Prefects Vashisht K (13 JTe), Yadveer G (13 SHu), Benjamin H (13 FHo), and Vivaan C (13 JPi), students have led on organising a **Christmas Jumper Day** on **Tuesday 16th December** to support **Alzheimer's Society** - working towards a world where dementia no longer devastates lives.

The event is also supported by Mandy Smith (Deputy Operations Manager) and echoes Jim Jones's remarkable 7-day trek along the South West Coastal Path in memory of Alan Jones and Alan Cartwright, both lost to Alzheimer's.

#### How parents can help:

- Students are invited to wear blue or a Christmas jumper.
- We kindly ask for a minimum suggested donation of £2.00 per student, which can be contributed via the JustGiving link HERE: [Reading School is fundraising for Alzheimer's Society](#)
- Please ensure your child's full name and form group are included in the notes section.
- Cash payments cannot be accepted on the day.

Every donation makes a real difference to families affected by dementia and helps fund vital research. Thank you in advance for supporting our students and helping make this day a success.

## Years 10 and 12 Only

### Finland Trip

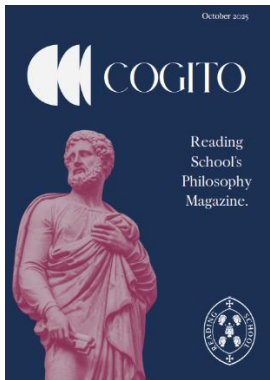
We are thrilled to offer an exciting Ski Trip to Finland in 2026 for students in Years 10 and 12. Your child will experience the thrill of a Finnish winter adventure over five days as they get to train with sleds and essential equipment, ski off-trail across frozen lakes and through the wilderness on 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 'Cogito' Celebrates Intellectual Curiosity and Creativity



Following hot on the heels of last week's cultural student-led magazine, The Dozen, comes Cogito – Reading School's Philosophy Magazine produced and published by students (pictured on front cover) with a passion for exploring deep ideas and critical thinking.

Cogito offers thoughtful reflections on philosophical questions that challenge and inspire and this edition showcases the intellectual curiosity and creativity that thrives within our school community.

October's issue includes essays on:

- **“The Greatest Happiness Principle and Social Stability”** – *Bhrugu H (11C)* critically examines utilitarianism, contrasting it with Natural Law and Kantian Ethics, and proposes his own “Sustainable Multiplier Theory” as a new framework for ethical decision-making.
- **“The Qatar World Cup”** – *Harish B (11L)* analyses the moral controversies surrounding the 2022 FIFA World Cup, from corruption and migrant worker exploitation to environmental and human rights concerns.
- **“Anime Studios”** – *Umar Q (11L)* exposes the ethical dilemmas in Japan's anime industry, including low pay, excessive working hours, and the exploitation of creative talent behind a globally successful art form.
- **“One Must Imagine Sisyphus Happy”** – *Avesta S (11L)* interprets Albert Camus' existential philosophy, exploring how acceptance and perseverance can give meaning to human struggle.
- **“Euthanasia is Morally Wrong”** – *Pedram A (11C)* discusses euthanasia through the lenses of Kantian Ethics, Natural Law, and utilitarian thought, questioning whether ending suffering can ever be morally justified.

Please [click here to read October's edition of Cogito](#).

## Excellence in Karate



We congratulate Nishad V (7W) for his success in the [Goju Karate National Competition 2025](#) where he won two gold medals in the Individual Kata and Kumite categories, along with a silver medal in the Team Kata.

*“The ultimate aim of karate lies not in victory or defeat, but in the perfection of the character of its participants.” – Gichin Funakoshi*

The national-level competition is for junior and cadet competitors aged 6 to 17 years old and participants enter a variety of events including solo performances of pre-arranged sequence of movements (Individual Kata) along with the competitive fighting element of karate (Kumite).

Congratulations Nishad.

## 5 mins with Reading School's Inclusion Officer



At Reading School, our commitment to nurturing every student extends beyond the classroom. This week, we're pleased to shine a spotlight on Reading School's Inclusion Officer, Mr Jonathan Appiah, whose extensive experience supporting young people facing disadvantage and challenges, has brought a valuable new dimension to the School.

In this interview, Mr Appiah shares insights into his 20-year career working with vulnerable children and young people, explains how his role supports students at Reading School, and highlights the importance of helping each individual develop confidence, resilience and a sense of belonging within our community.

### **Q: Please tell us a little of your background before you joined as Reading School's Inclusion Officer**

I've been working with children and young people facing disadvantage for over 20 years, initially with those at risk of offending and supporting young people in the criminal justice system. My work with them involved creating interventions that increased the likelihood of positive outcomes and for them to have a productive life. I have also been working in specialist children's homes for 13 years, helping vulnerable young people to navigate young adulthood successfully. I've also spent a significant time working with care experienced children and young people and supporting them with developing life-skills, increasing their emotional well-being and mental health and being a consistent advocate in their lives.

### **Q: What does the role of Reading School's Inclusion Officer look like?**

Essentially, I help, support and advocate for Reading School students who are experiencing a range of challenges and who would benefit from a targeted one-to-one approach. Challenges could include everything from struggling academically or socially, to concentration in the classroom, challenges within peer groups and attendance. Every young person can face challenges in their lives and, through a coaching approach, I help them create a plan in order to navigate where they want to get to but may not necessarily know how to.

I do a lot of one-to-one performance coaching where I will spend time with a student in order to analyse what the challenges may be for the young person and my approach is to listen openly as they're the experts of their own life – they understand their own experiences, feelings and needs better than anyone else.

Once we've established an understanding, a plan will be created with the young person featuring achievable and realistic goals. We'll start with three major goals and work towards them over a period of time, during which time they will be asked powerful questions that get them to think and problem solve for further situations they may experience in the future, in order to create a tool kit, they can turn to and independently use.

### **What's the most rewarding part of your role?**

Working with children and young people who are experiencing challenges and watching them overcome them by working to a plan. Small wins build confidence over time, and it's brilliant when teachers and parents notice a positive difference. Most importantly, the young person feels more positive. They walk with confidence...their head is up, and they're looking ahead. That's what the work is about.

**What else does your role involve?**

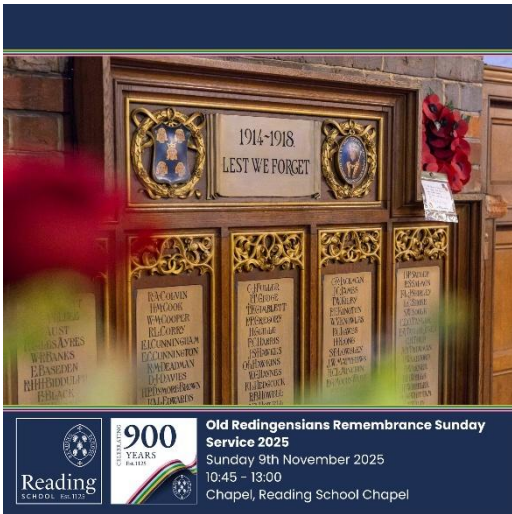
I'm also involved in Reading School's Future Stories programme, and I'll take a cohort of students to local primary schools in order to teach Year 5s and Year 6s dance. Reading School students act as mentors, and they will create fun routines for the primary school pupils, and it develops their leadership skills while aligning with the School's Four Pillars - Excellence, Integrity, Leadership and Community. It's been brilliant to watch our students come out of their comfort zones while they build their confidence, positive self-image and expression, all while encouraging a sense of connection and belonging.

**How can staff and parents access your support?**

Staff and parents are encouraged to contact me directly by emailing [jappiah@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:jappiah@reading-school.co.uk).

# 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



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 open to Parents of Year 7s and 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 – Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2025



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

## Annual update on RSPA Grants to School for 2024/25

In the year ended 31 March 2025, the Reading School Parents' Association donated a grand total of £43,477.73 to the school. This included funding for the following items:

- Specialist sports Camera and performance training software
- Ten Laptops for the LRC
- Three Interactive Whiteboards for the History Department
- Lecture Hall - complete audio-visual upgrade
- Wishlist items donated directly and via parents through Amazon
- A "twin" gazebo, matching one we previously donated
- Pin badges commemorating the 900th year celebrations
- Drinks at the Leavers event

Further details of the impact of our funding can be found on the RSPA website [Impact — Reading School Parents' Association](#) and we are grateful to everyone who has donated time or money to this incredible achievement.

The majority of these funds are raised at our various events and other fundraising initiatives, and without our parent and carers community offering their precious time we would be unable to run any of them. Whilst we always need people to be physically present at our events, we are finding an increasing need for people to take on roles which can be done remotely e.g. promoting our events online.

Whatever time, skills and ideas you can bring to our organisation, you will be warmly welcomed. If you are able to help in any way, please email [contactus@readingschoolparents.co.uk](mailto:contactus@readingschoolparents.co.uk).

## Your School Lottery - Win an iPhone 17 Pro!



It's time for an upgrade! Play the lottery this week and you'll be in with a chance to win the all-new flagship iPhone 17 Pro. This just-released, top-of-the-range iPhone has an aluminium unibody that maximises performance, battery and durability, with Apple Intelligence, a state-of-the-art GPU for gaming, and the most advanced iPhone camera system ever. Or of course, take the £1,000 cash

alternative! Get your tickets before Saturday 25th October for your chance to win!

### ***How do I enter?***

It's simple just buy one or more tickets before Sat 25 October 2025. Each weekly ticket gives you a chance to win. So more weekly tickets mean more chances to win!

[Support Reading School when you play Your School Lottery - Your School Lottery](#)

Once again, thank you for supporting your RSPA

Have a lovely weekend,

The RSPA Team

# Highlights of the week: Michaelmas Term Week 7

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.



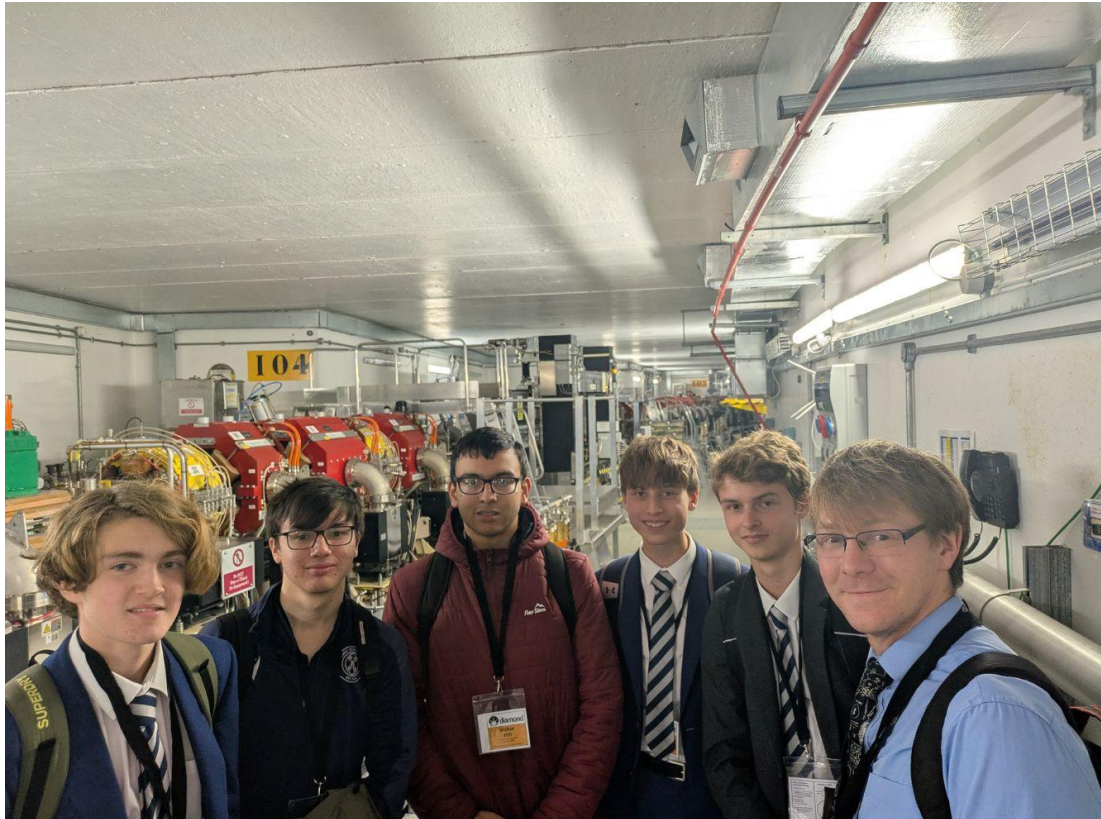
## From Classroom to Collider – Year 12 Visit to Diamond Light Source

On Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 14 Year 12s along were invited to Diamond Light Source, the UK's largest particle accelerator, to tour the facility and learn about some of the cutting-edge science being completed less than one hour away from Reading School.



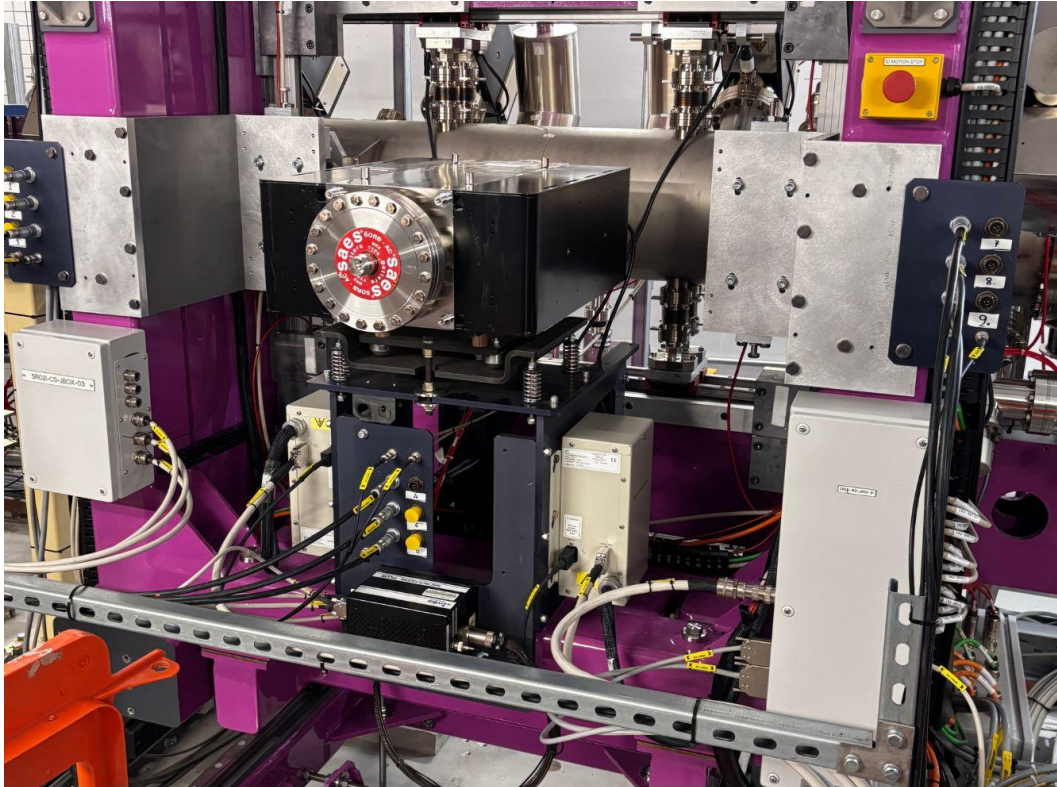
“From the electron gun to the wide array of powerful magnets being used to accelerate the electrons, every part of the facility brought physics to life. I really liked the various demonstrations and experiments they showed us, such as seeing the internal protein structure of an artificial sweetener in incredible detail: it completely blew my mind! However, my favourite part was learning about the different types of magnets being used because not only is it very fascinating but it also ties quite well with what we will study during our A-level Physics course.”

Saksham R (12EFo)



“The Diamond Synchrotron was spectacular, engaging and a real insight into the scientific machinations that bring us modern discoveries, life-saving technologies and the advanced knowledge that humanity holds of the world around it. Whether it be the massive redirecting magnets or the data on drug interactions with proteins, it's a testament to the wonder of science and a fantastic experience for any Physics student that I would highly recommend.”

Martin W (12EFo)



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)