

2025

# FLOREAT REDINGENSIS

900<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY EDITION





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**Editorial Team:**

Piatrice Hutchinson (Society Office Coordinator)  
Dal Singh (Community Relations Manager)  
Esther Chong (Development & Events Coordinator)  
Jas Chhokar (Development & Alumni Manager)  
Chris Evans (Headmaster)

If you have comments or suggestions regarding this publication, please email [alumni@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:alumni@reading-school.co.uk).

**Photography:**

Dal Singh (Community Relations Manager)  
Darren Lewis (Creative Scrum)  
Student and Staff submissions

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Reading School  
Erleigh Road  
Reading  
Berkshire RG1 5LW  
United Kingdom  
Telephone: 0118 901 5600  
Email: [alumni@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:alumni@reading-school.co.uk)

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# HEADMASTER'S WELCOME

Dear Friends,

Reading School has shaped the lives of tens of thousands of young people and, through them, has shaped the world. Our students have ruled countries, won Oscars, tested parachutes, cured pandemics and painted masterpieces. Generals, inventors and MPs; rugby, football and cricket players; composers, professors and archbishops have walked these corridors. From generation to generation this school has sent young men into the world eager to carry on learning, willing to lead and ready to serve.

In so many ways then, the school is the same today as it was in 1944, in 1870, in 1486 or 1125.

Some clear themes and common experience have emerged from our 900th anniversary. It transpires that aspiration and opportunity are the same today as they were when mortar boards and chalk boards were ubiquitous, and 'smartboards' not yet a science-fiction; that in every era and epoch, teachers who care passionately for their students and their own academic discipline change lives and live on in our memories. That the call to serve society from this place has survived three times longer than the Plantagenets, and that both the curiosity and the mischief of a Reading School student may be transcendent phenomena.

We have greatly enjoyed the fellowship that this year has inspired, and could not be more delighted with the way that celebrations have helped to connect the past, the present and the future. Our school's legacy and impact upon the world are truly remarkable, and this year's events and gatherings have brought many amazing stories bubbling to the surface of our consciousness. Resurrected film from the 1950s, restored friendships from the 1980s and reunions between long serving colleagues have reminded us of the privilege it is to be part of this community. As we bring celebrations to a close, and move into the school's tenth century, what of the future?

Courage and compassion must be core: if we are to serve those who will most benefit from the opportunity we provide, if we are to truly nurture character, if we are to sustain academic excellence and if we are to care for and to protect all the young people who cross this threshold, then brave strategy and genuine care must be non-negotiables.

Curiosity and creativity are critical: if Reading School's students today and tomorrow are to navigate the threats and opportunities of artificial intelligence, if they are to own the algorithms rather than being managed by them, if they are to thrive in a hotter climate, a less civil society or a more tribal discourse, we must nurture imagination and the pursuit of wisdom – not just the regurgitation of answers.







## HEADMASTER'S WELCOME

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Hope and humility are essential: if we are to fulfil our purpose, tomorrow must be shaped by our determination to be better still, to carry on improving, to keep learning with and from our students and to grow more still, more skilled, committed and shrewd!

May I suggest that if this hallowed place could speak or if these bricks could encourage us, perhaps they might whisper the wisdom of Robert Browning's poetry:

**Grow old along with me!  
The best is yet to be,  
The last of life, for which the first was made:  
Our times are in His hand  
Who saith, 'A whole I planned,  
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid!'**

**Here's to the next 900 years.**

**Floreat Redingensis.**



**Revd Dr Chris Evans  
Headmaster**





# ORA PRESIDENT'S REPORT



**Fraser Peck (OR 1999-2006)**

**President of the Old Redingensian Association 2024-2025**

Dear Old Redingensians, members of staff, students, and friends of the wider Reading School family, this past year has been one of great pride and reflection as we celebrated Reading School's remarkable 900th anniversary — a milestone that few institutions in the world can claim. The Grand Reunion was blessed with glorious sunshine and captured everything that makes our community special. Old Redingensians of every generation gathered on the front field, where laughter, camaraderie, and even an impromptu rugby match filled the day. It was a celebration that reminded us how deeply our shared experiences bring the School's history to life.

It has been an honour to serve as President during such a historic year, and I remain continually impressed by the leadership of the new Headmaster, Dr Evans, and the tireless work of the Society Office.

Their commitment to strengthening the ties between past and present students has ensured that the Old Redingensian spirit continues to thrive, not just as a memory of schooldays, but as a living, evolving community. Behind the scenes, the ORA and the Reading School Foundation have begun important restructuring work to ensure that our combined efforts are better aligned to support the future of the School. This modernisation will provide stronger collaboration and a clearer focus on

supporting both current pupils and our global network of alumni. It reflects the same forward-thinking mindset that has allowed Reading School to endure and excel for nine centuries.

As we look towards the close of this anniversary year, I am filled with immense optimism. The past 900 years have shown that Reading School's enduring strength lies not only in its academic excellence, but also in the generosity and resilience of its community. The next chapter will bring new challenges, but I have every confidence that our values will continue to lead the way. The leadership team has set higher standards, focusing on ensuring the School is more than an academic powerhouse. This vision has borne fruit, with ORs leaving with the strength of character required to excel in an ever-changing, dynamic world.

To all who have contributed — by attending reunions, mentoring students, or supporting the Future Stories initiative — I cannot say thank you enough. You are the reason our traditions remain vibrant and our legacy endures.

Here's to the next 900 years of Reading School: may they be filled with the same fellowship and purpose that define the School spirit.





900<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY



**With thanks to every student, staff member, parent, and Old Redingensian, Reading School's 900th Anniversary year has been triumphant.**

We have reunited more than a thousand old boys of the school, and welcomed some who hadn't been back to the school in over 65 years.

We have partied with our neighbours and partners at an extravagant carnival and a delightful gala dinner.

We have been enthralled by a totally unique "Old Redingensians House Music Competition"

We have witnessed an incredible theatrical resurrection of the school's history.

We have dedicated a new stained glass window - the Æthelflæd.

We have buried a time capsule to be opened when the school is 1000 years old.

We have been crowned the State School of the Year in the South East of England for Academic Excellence.

We have produced the country's top two English A Level students, five of the top 100 computer scientists, one of the top twenty GCSE physicists and GCSE economists.

We have earned 1793 A\* - A grades in public examinations.

We have shaped the national conversation about Grammar School admissions.

We have commenced a lucrative and educationally inspirational new partnership in China.

We have triumphed in swimming galas, cross-country competitions and table tennis tournaments.

We have retained our title as national badminton champions for the eighth year in a row.

We have christened a flotilla of new skulls and quads at the boathouse.

We have initiated the UK's only primary school rowing programme.

We have consulted parents and Old Redingensians about improvements and developments to the school's facilities.

We have commemorated the school with royal visit and have welcomed almost 300 parents to observe lessons in school.

We have connected our past, our present and our future.









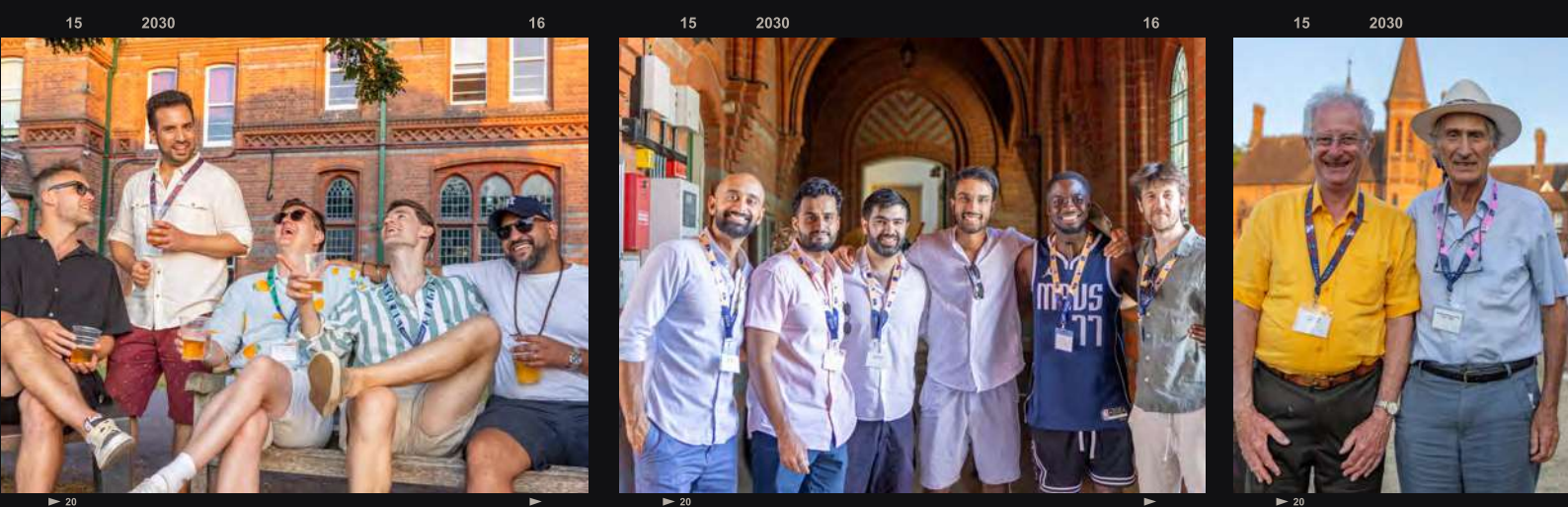
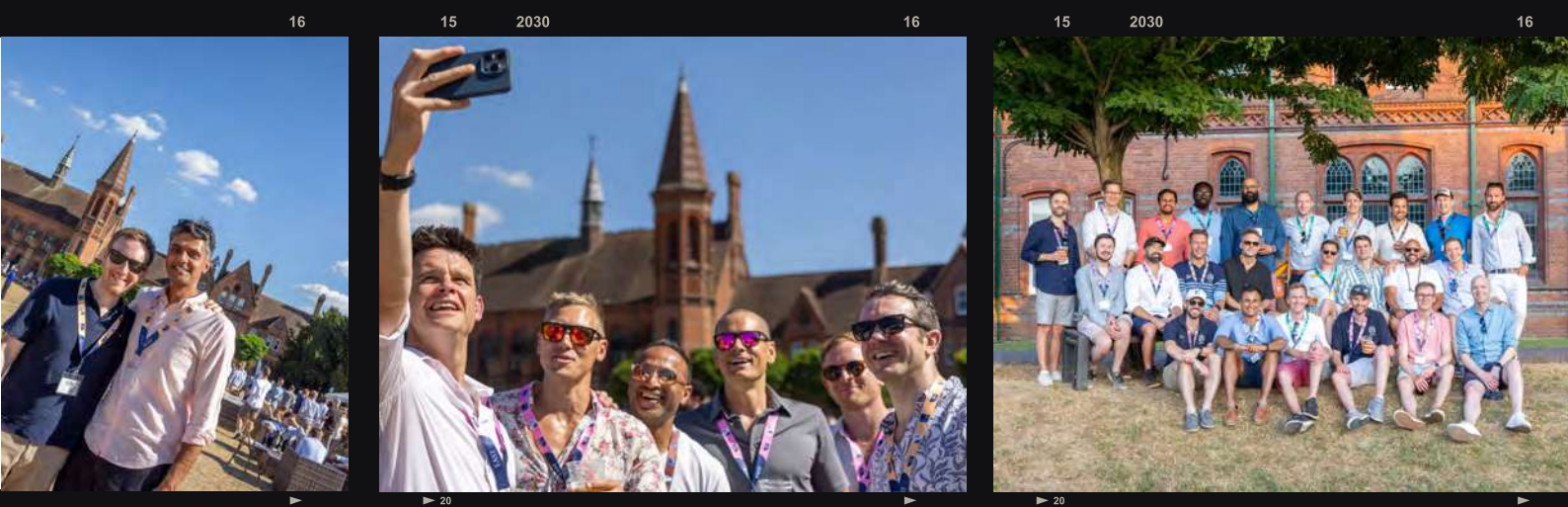
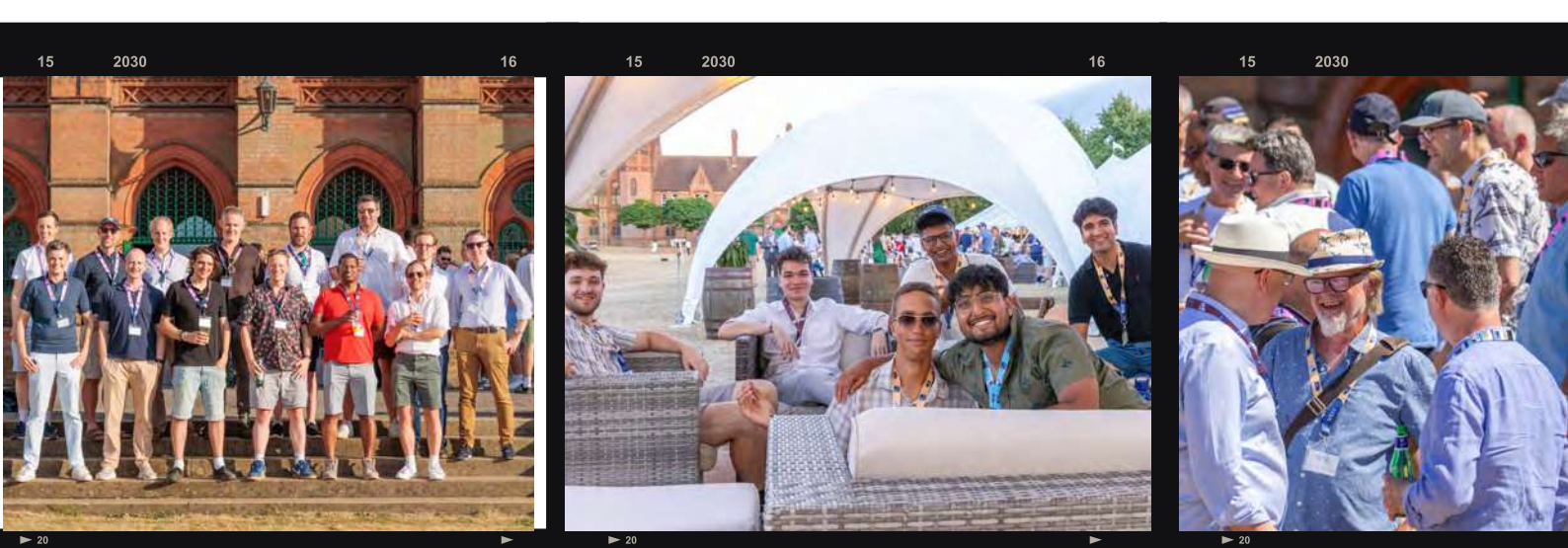
# GRAND REUNION

In October 2024, Reading School sent out a clarion call, inviting our alumni and families from across the world to return and celebrate the School's 900th anniversary — and the response was overwhelming. From our most senior alumni and former staff to our very youngest, the Grand Reunion was a fitting and unforgettable tribute to Reading School's remarkable legacy and history.

Building on the joy of the day, the Headmaster met with each year group within the historic *Big School*. Guests delighted in tours of the site, which featured rich archives spanning the decades — including video footage dating back to the 1940s. There was music from our Chapel Choir, House Band, and Old Redingensians; a spirited cricket match between the Old Redingensians and the 1st XI took place on the historic square; food and drink flowed well into the evening — and, most importantly, friendships were rekindled. The Grand Reunion became a living tapestry of stories, laughter, and a few tears, as we built bridges between our past, present, and future.

The Reading School building has indeed stood the test of time, but it is the generations of students who have made our institution truly enduring. We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who journeyed back, and to the wonderful fellowship of supportive family members. You have not only reminded us of our past but also reinvigorated our vision for the next 100 years.







## Assistant Headteacher and Boarding Housemaster, Alun Lloyd (OR 1998-2005) shares his reflections:

It is rare to be able to say that “Reading School has never seen the like”, when you consider the school’s 900 years of existence. However, this phrase feels well applied to the Grand Reunion, which took place this July.

Following a year of planning, months of dedicated work, and weeks spent praying for dry weather, the school celebrated the largest reunion in its history. The event brought together former students from across the centuries, with Old Redingensians represented from nearly every leaving year since 1497, including one of our oldest alumni, **Ken Mills (OR 1942 - 1947)**. Attendance from the Class of 1989 was particularly remarkable, thanks to the efforts of **Mark Lyford (OR 1982 - 1989)**, who successfully encouraged 58 members of his cohort to return.

With over 1,600 guests, a cricket match pitting the current XI against a combination of ORs from across the years, food and drink, live music, school tours, Headmaster’s words and even a Champagne Fire Truck, the event was filled with energy, nostalgia and joy.

Staff and former students alike shared countless memories of their time at Reading School. To manoeuvre your way through the throng of excited voices in the marquee was to navigate through time itself, as stories from every generation of Reading School student, mingled in pockets of school friends reunited once more on the front field, were shared.

For those who attended and enjoyed the festivities, we hope that this occasion marked the beginning of a new era of even greater connection between Reading School and its alumni. For those who missed out this time, we hope to see you at a future event. While we do not anticipate hosting something of this scale again for a little while, we are always looking for ways to bring together our current students with those who came before them.

We are delighted to have reformed so many positive connections with our community of former students, former staff, and their families who returned for this momentous occasion.

Special thanks must go to our key event coordinator, Piatrice Hutchinson, and the team she works with in the Society Office, particularly Jas Chhokar and Esther Chong, for their tireless efforts in making this event the spectacle it truly was.

Furthermore, many attendees may not have been aware of the generosity of the event’s sponsor, Neil Thomason, without whom it certainly could not have happened.

Here’s to many more years of history and to the future of the school.

**Floreat Redingensis**



# 900<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY ASSEMBLIES

## Celebrating 900 Years: A Legacy of Character, Achievement and Future Ambitions

In January 2025, Headmaster Chris Evans launched our 900th Anniversary celebrations with assemblies reflecting on Reading School's remarkable legacy and enduring values.

He was joined by distinguished Old Redingensians, including **Peter Whitehead (ORA 1966–1974)**, **Angelo Amorelli (OR 1973–1980)**, **Stefan Sanders (OR 1979–1986)**, **Ken Brown (OR 1955–1963 and ORA Archivist)**, and **Richard Walter (OR 1990–1997)**, who helped present every student with a commemorative anniversary badge, generously sponsored by the Reading School Parents' Association.

The Headmaster honoured notable alumni such as **Tom Dollery**, **"Punch" Cowan**, **"Sharkey" Ward**, **Robert Hedley**, **Admiral Sir Charles Elliot** and **Sir George Pinker** — all exemplifying resilience, courage and service to others.

His message was clear: this is your School, and it is your character that makes it great.

He also celebrated current student achievements, including 25 Oxbridge offers, while emphasising that true success lies in character, not just outcomes.



**"This is your school. You make it great. It's only a great school if you grow up to be good men doing good things."**

Chris Evans, Headmaster

Students were introduced to the School's masterplan and expressed excitement for the future, recognising their role in shaping the next chapter of Reading School's story.

As we mark this milestone, we remain committed to being a community where character and contribution define success, inspiring every student to dream big, work hard and make a difference.



**“Being told that the School’s future is on our shoulders as students was unexpected to hear but not unwelcome. Dr Evans’ introduction to our school’s 900th Anniversary celebrations was riveting, touching on the past, present, and future. Even though my year group won’t be here to enjoy and benefit from the school’s ambitious plans and renovations, it’s good to know that we will play a small part in laying the foundations for future generations of children.”**

Year 13 Student









# COMMUNITY CARNIVAL



In July 2025, Reading School hosted a vibrant community celebration, welcoming over 5,000 visitors from across the town. The School community came together with Reading's diverse neighbourhoods to enjoy global food, live music and dance on the Heritage Stage, and DJ sets at the Urban Show.

Families of all ages took part in activities ranging from penalty-shoot-outs, a climbing wall and e-sports, to graffiti art, escape-room challenges, mandala-painting, yoga and sound-therapy sessions. Younger children enjoyed inflatables and storytelling, while older students and adults experienced live demonstrations in sports including badminton, boxing, cricket and rugby.

The day brought people together in a spirit of celebration, creativity and shared community pride — truly offering something for everyone.







# GIVING DAY



Reading School's first-ever Giving Day — a 36-hour fundraising event held on Wednesday 26 and Thursday 27 March 2025 — united our community and raised over £150,000 for the School's continued development.

This Giving Day was about more than fundraising; it was about strengthening community bonds, fostering a sense of belonging, building a culture of philanthropy and ensuring that future generations continue to benefit from the excellence and opportunities that define Reading School.

**Along with more than a hundred Old Redingensians and parents, we were honoured to welcome back Robin Oldland (OR 1941–1951), who came to witness the school in action on this unique occasion. Robin moved to Reading during the War and boarded in South House. He returned to the School for the first time since leaving in 1951. His cheerful enthusiasm was a great source of encouragement to staff and students alike.**





## A School-Wide Celebration of Talent, Creativity and Giving

The Giving Day was a school-wide event, with every student participating and choosing challenges that suited their interests and skills:

- **Academic Challenges:** From a Read-a-thon and a Code-a-thon to 900 games of chess, students engaged in intellectual marathons to test their skills while raising sponsorship.
- **Expressive Arts Activities:** Creative talents shone through, with students building a replica of Reading School, creating a Play in a Day, and performing over 9,000 minutes of music.
- **Community Challenges:** Over 50 students dedicated more than 450 hours to volunteering, visiting care homes, performing for patients at the Royal Berkshire Hospital, and coaching younger students.
- **Sports Challenges:** More than half the school participated in canoeing, rowing, running, hiking, and endurance challenges across cricket, basketball, badminton, football, tennis, and triathlon, pushing their physical limits for a great cause.

Adding to the excitement were “crazy challenge” milestones unlocked by hitting fundraising targets. Students and teachers embraced the fun: teachers performed as a band when the £120,000 target was reached, and all teachers donned fancy dress when £112,500 was raised — both goals were achieved, much to the delight of the students.

## Uniting Generosity Across Continents

The event truly had an international reach, with contributions from countries across the continents:

- Asia: 11 countries, including India, Hong Kong, Pakistan, Singapore, Nepal, Taiwan, China, Malaysia, South Korea, and the United Arab Emirates.
- Europe: 12 countries, including Great Britain, Germany, Belgium, Ireland, Greece, Netherlands, France, Finland, Switzerland, Hungary, Portugal, and Jersey.
- North America: United States, Canada, Cayman Islands, and Bermuda.
- Oceania: Australia and New Zealand.
- South America: Peru.
- Africa: South Africa and Nigeria.

Overleaf are some of the wonderful comments of support received during Giving Day. We are immensely grateful to everyone who participated, donated, and supported the event. The whole school thanks you for your incredible support and partnership.



**Over £150,000 raised  
in 36 hours**



**Over 1800 Donors**

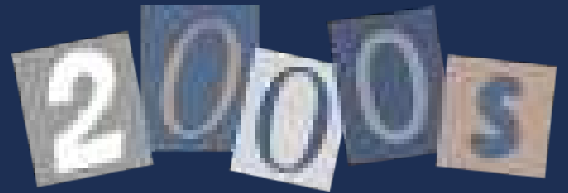


**The donor  
participation award  
goes to West House.**



**The highest total  
amount raised goes  
to School House.**

**Alumni Donors from the  
00s had the highest  
participation rate**



**104 International Donors**



**15/15 Challenges  
Completed**







**Antwi Okyere-Darko**

gave £900.00

Reading

United Kingdom

*“ Congratulations to Reading School on your 900th anniversary, a truly remarkable achievement! Thank you to the teachers, administrators and all the staff for the wonderful education and support you provide to the boys. ”*



**Lili Wu**

Twyford

United Kingdom

*“ Here, boys can spread their wings and soar in the world of knowledge. It's wonderful to witness their growth every day. Many thanks to all the staff for your dedication and hard work. ”*



**JOHN LUKER**

gave £100.00

HENLEY-ON-THAMES

United Kingdom

*“ "900 years and more have passed." I remember singing "800 years ... etc." many times between 1943 and 1950. Floreat Redingensis! ”*



**Adrian Davies**

Ruddington, Nottingham

United Kingdom

*“ Still feel so grateful for everything Reading School did for our son, he left over ten years ago - it's far more than grades, but the ethos, opportunities and life long friends. ”*



**Joanna Basher**

Wokingham

United Kingdom

*“ This is an amazing school that has been the making of both my sons. I am very proud and happy to support the 900 Year anniversary! ”*



**Elizabeth Masters**

gave £250.00

Brimpton, Reading

United Kingdom

*“ Please keeping giving our children a thirst for knowledge and inspire them to do great things and make a difference ”*



**An anonymous donor**

gave £25.00

*“ My son had an amazing journey through Reading school which has helped set him up with many positive attributes, knowledge & tge academic results he needs for life ahead. He has also made some brilliant friends for life & an ongoing committment to volunteer for CCF. Thank you! ”*



**Deepak Ravindran**

gave £100.00

Bracknell (GB)

United Kingdom

*“ Am delighted to support Reading school for all the brillaint work they do for the community. A special thanks to many of the staff that I have had a chance to work with and of course absolutely grateful for the wonderful experience that my son has had studying here and the man he has become. ”*



**Shruti Mohanty**

gave £500.00

READING

United Kingdom

*“ Reading School is an wonderful institution which is shaping not just young minds but also the future of the country and the world at large. I am enormously proud of my son being part of this great institution and I hope the school achieves all it fundraising goals. ”*





**Mohemed Faisal**

Wokingham  
United Kingdom

*“ The school has provided my son with an inspiring environment to grow, learn, and thrive. I'm proud to support this legacy, ensuring future generations continue to benefit from all that this wonderful institution has to offer. ”*



**Nirbhay Kaul**

gave £25.00  
Earley

United Kingdom

*“ Keep giving back to the community by being part of projects like Future Stories because this is what ties our school to the community around it ”*



**Sujit Nayak**

Reading  
United Kingdom

*“ As a parent, it is an honour and a privilege to stand alongside Reading School to support them in their vision for the future at such a historic moment. ”*



**Shilpa Shaw**

Reading  
United Kingdom

*“ Grateful for all that we receive from the school to my son. It is an honour to give back and support such a great and worthy institution in its quest to create the future for generations to come. ”*



**An anonymous donor**

gave £250.00

*“ Proud to give back and pay forward, as an old Redingensian and current parent. The boys need a new swimming pool, a sports hall, a better Sixth Form Centre and better music and performance facilities. Let's get all this for them, the boys after them, and share it with the local community. ”*



**Jacqueline Oyedele**

Reading  
United Kingdom

*“ We are blessed to be a part of such an amazing institution that shapes boys into outstanding men. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to excellence in education. We pray that you continue to thrive and inspire for another 900 years. ”*



**apala guha**

Shinfield  
United Kingdom

*“ The nurturing environment at this school is truly exceptional. The values and principles instilled in these boys will not only support their academic and professional success but also shape them into responsible citizens and compassionate individuals. ”*



**Katie Barton**

gave £25.00  
Binfield  
United Kingdom

*“ Reading School is an inspirational school and full of heritage. We have been delighted to have been involved in the school at 6th Form. Good luck with all your Giving Day Chalkenges. We know you will give it your all. We won't see the new improvements but we hope it will help future students thrive ”*



**Peter Shuttleworth**

READING  
United Kingdom

*“ The school has supported our son in his development in character as well as academically over the last few years and so it is a great opportunity to say thank you and give back to support future students ”*







# ALMA MATER DRAMA PRODUCTION



Reading School staged *Alma Mater*, an original promenade performance written and directed by Benedict Sandiford, award-winning theatre-maker and Head of Drama. The sold-out production ran from 30 June to 3 July 2025 and took audiences on a journey through nine centuries of the school's history, following the Oldest Boy through historic hallways, classrooms, and hidden corners while meeting characters who shaped Reading School's legacy.

Blending humour, drama and heartfelt storytelling, the show brought medieval scholars, war heroes, Headmasters and more to life. Audience members praised it as "phenomenal", "insightful and very enjoyable", and "a brilliant use of the school site," with many commenting on how it deepened their appreciation of the School's history.

*"I've been walking past this building for 20 years not really knowing what's inside and today I was able to walk through it, to learn about its history, and a bit of Latin! It was really, really good, fun, entertaining and engaging. It was great."*







# RIVERSIDE BBQ AT THE BOATHOUSE

Following the Grand Reunion, on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> July, a riverside BBQ took place at Reading School's Boathouse along the banks of Thames River. Following a fire in December 2019, the Boathouse was rebuilt from the ground up and has been operational since 2024. Now equipped with canoes, quad boats, single boats, and paddleboards, it enables Reading School students to participate in water sports that promote physical fitness, teamwork, discipline, self-confidence, mental wellbeing, life skills, and an appreciation of the outdoors. The Boathouse also strengthens Reading School's Learn, Lead, Serve philosophy and supports the wider community through the School's Future Stories Programme, now in its ninth year.

The event saw **Dr Peter Coggan, School Captain of Class of 1962 (OR 1962-1964)** formally launch a quad canoe he kindly donated and named 'Invictus'. Invictus is a double scull used by two Reading School Ukrainian students on Monday afternoons, during Year 11 games and used after school on Mondays by high performing rowers such as **Conall C (12JTYe)** and **Tymur R (13ZMC)**, both of whom are also involved in Reading School's Future Stories programme.

Former Reading School rowers, Old Redingensians, current students and families enjoyed an afternoon in the sunshine and on the river under the supervision of former Olympic rower and coach, **Revd James Stephenson (Head of Rowing and Social Impact)**.









# OR HOUSE MUSIC COMPETITION

Bringing together Old Redingensians from across generations, the event offered a rare opportunity to see former students perform live — some returning to the stage after decades — alongside current pupils in a shared celebration of Reading School's rich musical heritage. From Vivaldi to Ed Sheeran, big band jazz to cinematic classics, every moment captured the power of music to unite and inspire.

Each House delivered a stunning 25-minute programme filled with creativity and flair:

County House, led by **Samuel Lloyd (OR 2010–2017)**, dazzled with an energetic rendition of Mission Impossible, a moving choral performance of And So It Goes, and a beautifully harmonised Slovenian folk song, Vse Najlepše, among other memorable pieces.

East House, under the direction of **Ray Montague (OR 1972–1979)**, featured a powerful reunion performance of Vivaldi's Double Trumpet Concerto, soulful a cappella harmonies, and a lively big band set led by **Peter Gunn** — culminating in a rousing Do You Hear The People Sing from Les Misérables.

School House, led by **George Chen (OR 2011–2018)**, brought cinematic magic with Back to the Future, intricate woodwind chamber works, and a spectacular Piano 8 Hands performance — a dazzling display of coordination and musicianship.

West House, led by **Ewan Millar**

**(OR 2012–2019)**, impressed with a dynamic range from Times, They Are a-Changin' to Raiders of the Lost Ark, and closed their programme with As Time Goes By performed by the Large Chamber Jazz Ensemble — a performance that ultimately secured them the title of 2025 House Music Champions. Congratulations, West House!

From breathtaking solos to powerful ensemble pieces, the evening was a true showcase of Reading School's enduring musical tradition and the strength of its community — past and present.

A heartfelt thank you to all our performers, conductors, accompanists, and supporters, as well as to our dedicated staff, both past and present, whose guidance and enthusiasm made the event possible.

We are also grateful to our sponsors — **the Reading Foundation, the Old Redingensians Association** and the **Sir Thomas Beecham Trust**, which has supported music at Reading School for over 40 years — for their continued belief in nurturing musical excellence. We extend our heartfelt thanks to **Richard Meehan, former Director of Music (2011–2018)**, whose deep affinity with and lasting impact on generations of students were instrumental in making this year's such a success. We simply could not have achieved this without him.

The evening was a testament to the enduring power of music to connect generations, celebrate shared heritage and inspire future performers within the Reading School community.



# 900TH ANNIVERSARY LECTURE SERIES

Three special lectures celebrated Reading School's rich history, from its origins at Reading Abbey to its architectural influence in Victorian Reading, and key moments from 1912 to the present day.



## Reading Abbey and Reading School — Lindsay and John Mullaney

Local historians **John and Lindsay Mullaney** opened the three-part lecture series with a richly informative and engaging exploration of the origins of Reading Abbey. Lindsay, who holds a BA in French and Italian and an MA in Applied Linguistics from the University of Reading, and John, who holds degrees in Philosophy and Theology (Marianum Faculty, Pontifical University in Rome), History and Italian, and an MA in Education from Reading, brought deep academic insight to the session.

Their lecture guided the audience through the earliest evidence of the Abbey's existence, tracing its development up to the reign of Henry VII. Along the way, they addressed the fundamental questions of why, where, and when Reading Abbey was founded, presenting historical sources, theories, and interpretations in an accessible and compelling way. The well-attended event welcomed students, alumni, parents, and members of the wider community, setting a strong and thought-provoking start to the series.





### Alfred Waterhouse and Victorian Reading — Dr Stephen Gage

The second lecture focused on Alfred Waterhouse's architectural legacy and how his designs for Reading School (1868–1874) helped shape Reading's Victorian identity. **Dr Stephen Gage** trained as an architect in the United States. Broadly, his research interests concern the history of urban form in American and British cities, with an emphasis on the evolution of cultural institutions, landscape, and public space in the 19th and 20th centuries. During his lecture, Dr Gage highlighted Waterhouse's influence on educational architecture locally and nationally.



### Reading School from 1912 to Today — Ken Brown (OR 1955 - 1963) and Chris Widdows (OR 1955 - 1962)

ORA Archivist, **Ken Brown (OR 1955-1963)** and ORA Membership Secretary, **Chris Widdows (OR 1955-1962)** delivered the final lecture, which offered a fast-paced journey through modern School history, covering the origins of the house system, the absorption of Kendrick Boys' School, both World Wars, pivotal headmasters, the 1944 Education Act, the closure of the Junior School, and the Quincentenary. Their personal insight brought the school's evolution to life and concluded the series memorably.







# GALA DINNER



ORs, current and former parents, staff, CCF and friends of Reading School came together for an evening that honoured our remarkable heritage and shared commitment to its future. The evening's address beautifully captured the spirit of the occasion: our community is united not only by deep affection for this School, but by a shared dedication to the generations who will follow.

Throughout the night, a live student band featuring **Jesper D (13BSa)**, **Richard W (12ACr)**, **Oscar Z (11W)**, **Kevin A (11L)** and **Bhruhu H (11C)** provided an exceptional soundtrack, performing with verve and talent that kept the atmosphere vibrant from start to finish. The class of 1986 also deserve a mention for being so well represented, and adding great energy to the occasion!

**Tom Whipple (OR 1993–2000)**, Science Writer and Special Correspondent at The Times, gave an exceptional after dinner speech. Warm, witty and insightful, guests were rolling on the floor with laughter about Tom's memories of the school and his reflections on his career. Also, poignantly, Tom challenged those present to consider their own humanity in the light of the remarkable scientific discoveries of the past decade.

The exceptional menu for the evening was prepared by the school's own catering team, who proved yet again how lucky the school is with its teams, and for that matter, how remarkably lucky boarders are given the quality of the food cooked in our kitchen day after day.

In one of the evening's highlights, the headmaster stepped into the role of auctioneer, expertly guiding guests through a series of auction items. These included a professionally framed electric guitar signed by rock legends **Brian May**, **Keith Richards**, **Ronnie Wood**, **Jimmy Page** and **Noel Gallagher**. The Headmaster was particularly grateful to **Francis Terry (OR 1956 - 1963)** for getting the bidding started on a number of items. Whilst not entirely sure who won the helicopter ride, we wish safe travels to all!







# COMMEMORATION DAY



For generations, the Reading School community has gathered for its annual Service of Commemoration, honouring the School's founding in 1125. This cherished tradition offers a moment to reflect on the contribution of those who have served our town and to renew our shared commitment to the school's enduring mission. This year's service carried particular poignancy as we marked an extraordinary milestone: nine centuries of teaching, service and social impact.

On Friday 28th November, Reading School was honoured to welcome **His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh KG KT GCVO** to commemorate both the School's 900th anniversary and its Commemoration Day. His visit marked a historic moment, underscoring the School's vital role in providing exceptional, inclusive education for local children. His Royal Highness's longstanding dedication to supporting young people resonated deeply with students, staff, parents and guests, reaffirming that strong community partnerships lie at the heart of all that is best about Reading School.

During the visit, The Duke observed pupils from local primary schools taking part in Future Stories, Reading School's flagship social impact programme. Designed to raise aspirations, build confidence and widen access to high-quality learning opportunities, Future Stories works to remove barriers so that children from all backgrounds can benefit from the opportunities of a Reading School education.

The visit concluded with a Commemoration Service attended by the Reading School community, representatives of The Berkshire Lieutenancy, MP Matt Rodda, the Mayor of Reading, invited guests and local partners.



## Burying a Piece of Our Future and Our Past



The School community gathered on Commemoration Day for the final ceremony marking the burial of the Reading School Time Capsule. **Mr Ken Brown (OR 1955–63)** and **Mr Ned Holt (OR 1966–72; Former Staff 1982–2012)** accompanied the School’s youngest student, **Tanay J (7C)**, as he lowered the capsule into the historic grounds, commemorating nine centuries of learning, service, and community. Inside the capsule rests a small but meaningful archive, including a letter addressed simply to “The Headmaster — 2125.”

This moment served as a reminder that the stewardship of the School passes through the hands of each generation, and that our responsibility — and privilege — is to pass it on with gratitude, humility, ambition, and care.

As the youngest hands covered the capsule with earth, there was a quiet acknowledgement that what we buried today was more than objects. It was a promise — that in 100 years’ time, when the capsule is opened, the Reading School community of 2125 will uncover not just mementos, but hope, humour, and the unmistakable heartbeat of a School that knows where it has come from, and where it aspires to go.





***“How do we celebrate a 900th anniversary? What’s the right gift, or the right spirit?***

***What’s the right protocol for 900 years of shaping society?***

***Perhaps the right way to celebrate 900 years is through humility that recognises we are here but for a while... My hope is that we're humble enough to say there will be better schools. There will be older institutions. There will be other bricks worth looking at, another stained-glass window to admire.***

***It’s a small thing to be part of this community, so let us proceed with humility. Let us together this day celebrate. Enjoy all that grace, and all that goodness, while proceeding humbly with hope in our hearts, and even though this too shall pass, may we live knowing the best is yet to come.”***

Rev'd Dr Chris Evans  
Headmaster



# THE ÆTHELFÆD WINDOW

Reading School's historic Chapel is a Grade II listed building, completed in 1874 in an Early English Gothic Revival style to the designs of Alfred Waterhouse.

The Chapel contains 21 stained-glass windows, including one featuring Saint Cecilia, which was unveiled by Her late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II on 19th May 1986 to commemorate the quincentenary of the re-founding of Reading School by Henry VII (1486–1986).

As part of Reading School's 900th Anniversary, a new stained-glass window was unveiled by His Royal Highness, Prince Edward, the Duke of Edinburgh on 28th November 2025. The window features Æthelflæd, Lady of the Mercians and daughter of Alfred the Great. The dedication in the window reads: "In memory of nine centuries of students and with gratitude to all those who serve, lead and protect."

The rationale for choosing this Æthelflæd is as follows:

- **Safeguarding:** Æthelflæd was famously called "protector of the Mercians" and guardian of her people. The Chapel includes memorials to many former staff members, but there have been disclosures in recent years suggesting not all of our students in all periods of the school's history have been as well protected and as they should have been.





Æthelflæd's window is dedicated to students and those who serve, lead and protect them.

A powerful illustration of the role of those who safeguard, Æthelflæd reminds us that a school's first calling is to keep its people safe as they grow.

- **Legacy:** The Irish chronicle said that Æthelflæd's "fame spread in all directions". Æthelflæd is unique in Anglo-Saxon England as a woman ruling in her own right and unique in British history in that she passed her power on to her daughter, this remarkable story of unbroken succession invites all in this school to consider how we pass on what we have inherited. Æthelflæd reminds us that we are stewards with a responsibility to future generations.
- **Leadership:** Æthelflæd's role as a pioneering female leader who defended and shaped her realm mirrors the school's longstanding tradition of cultivating leadership and excellence. For over 900 years, Reading School has nurtured character and leadership. Æthelflæd reminds us that leaders serve and shape society. It is also good for boys of the school to recognise the power and significance of female leaders, both in history and in the present day.
- **Peace:** Chroniclers noted that "through her own cleverness, Æthelflæd made peace with the people of Alba and the Britons." Women in Anglo-Saxon England were sometimes called

'peaceweavers', because in a masculine, competitive culture it was often women who negotiated solutions and achieved peace. Æthelflæd proved herself to be a role-model of negotiation in her skilful dealings with Vikings and warring leaders. Æthelflæd reminds us that peace achieves quietly what force never could.

- **Perspective:** In this new window, Reading School proudly commemorates its 900th Anniversary and the founding of the school by King Henry I. Yet Æthelflæd reminds us there is always one more ancient. Born before the Battle of Reading in 871, Æthelflæd was the great, great, great, great, great Aunt (several times removed) of Henry I. Her presence warns our community against hubris and reminds us that the day is still young! The Chapel itself, and this window in particular, invite us to lean on the Ancient of Days, who was before all, is above all, and in whom all things are held together. We walk gratefully into tomorrow, with humility rather than pride.





# HOUSE NEWS



# HOUSE UPDATES



**County House**  
**Dave Tridgell**  
**Outgoing Head of County House**  
**(2021-2025)**



Every choice you make tells the world something about you. In my 4th year as Head of County House, this is the message I think it has been important to reiterate.

It isn't the big things that determine who you are in my opinion. We are all capable of incredible performances and grand gestures from time to time. It is the little things, the small choices we make, that happen with consistency that determine who you really are.

I'd like to express my gratitude for those things first and foremost. For every instance of compassion, every act of kindness, every instance of altruism, those times when 100% effort is clear to see, and when mistakes are turned into genuine opportunities to learn and develop. These are the things we should be looking for and praising.

Achievements should be celebrated. Please spare a moment though to reflect on what elements of character facilitated this success – it will be there somewhere. Can you develop and harness this character trait to succeed again, and across different arenas?

Back to the past year then. Once again my overwhelming feeling is of optimism and pride for those in the House, and gratitude that I got to be a part of it.

I'd like to congratulate everyone that competed for, contributed to, and supported the House this year. This includes every County member of staff as well as the students.

Regarding the House Competition; 4th place finish isn't what we wanted, but we did some brilliant things on the way. Congratulations to School House on winning this year. At this point I'd also like to thank the prefect team who worked hard and contributed in a myriad of ways – often unseen. Working with you is one of the highlights of being a Head of House.

Lastly then, it seems strange to be writing this when I am no longer Head of County House. As I hand over to **Dr Dowle** my final thoughts are as follows:

Being Head of County House has been a privilege. It will go down as one of the most influential and significant periods of my life. What I will treasure most are the relationships built with students, parents and colleagues. Certainly not an easy job – but the sense of belonging and purpose I have felt in the last 4 years is beyond compare. Now I guess it is time to try and be impartial, we'll see how that goes . . .



*“It is a tremendous joy and privilege to be joining County House as the new Head of House. Mr Tridgell’s dedication, hard-work and big heart has been, and will continue to be, a source of inspiration for all in this school, and County House in particular.*

*The values that Mr Tridgell has put in place are strong and longstanding. Celebrating character and integrity, collaboration and leadership, humility and excellence, each of these virtues has been kindled and modelled by Mr Tridgell and his passion for the House.*

*I am grateful to be inheriting a House built on these strong foundations. Let us not ask what County can do for us, but what we can do for County.”*



### LEWIS DOWLE

Head of County House (From September 2025)  
Assistant Chaplain and Teacher of Mathematics





### **East House** **Katie Rosser-Evans** **Head of East House**

As another year draws to a close, I find myself reflecting on what an incredible journey it has been for East House. Looking back at the events of the past year, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude to be part of such a wonderful community. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks and congratulations to every member of East House for their remarkable contributions throughout the year, whether during house competitions, lessons, pastoral care, or in the wider school environment.

A special mention must go to our outstanding House Captains, **Jamie R (OR 2018-2025)** and **Teo R (OR 2018-2025)**, whose leadership and encouragement have inspired so many to participate and excel. Their dedication, along with the support of the East House Prefect Team, has been instrumental in fostering unity and enthusiasm within our House. We wish all our leavers the very best as they embark on their new adventures beyond school.

This year's House Cup competition was fiercely contested, and I am proud to announce that East House achieved a commendable second place. The spirit and determination displayed by our students were truly inspiring. A particular highlight was the House Eisteddfod, where East House secured a clean sweep across all year-group performances and produced a video celebrating the diversity and beauty within the House.



House Music was another memorable occasion, with our talented musicians delivering performances that left a lasting impression on both judges and audience. These showcased the incredible breadth of talent across all year groups. Alongside our artistic successes, our sporting events demonstrated outstanding teamwork and sportsmanship, with many students stepping forward to compete in events they had never tried before.

Our younger students also stepped up this year, particularly Year 9, who began developing their leadership skills by supporting Year 7 during tutor times through team-building activities. Their commitment played a key role in helping our new students feel welcome and settled within the House. Well done, Year 9!

None of these achievements would have been possible without the dedicated staff team within our East House community. Thank you for your unwavering support and encouragement, which enables our students to flourish. I am incredibly proud to be surrounded by such kind, determined, and supportive individuals, both staff and students, and I look forward with excitement to what the next year holds for East House.





### **Laud House** **Laura Clarke** **Head of Laud House**

What a remarkable year it has been for Laud House. As we reflect on the past months, it is heartening to celebrate the many moments that have brought us together as a community. A huge thank you goes to our exceptional House Captains, **Siddhant M (13ELawa)** and **Nidilan S (13ELawa)** from the Class of 2024, for their inspiring leadership throughout the year.

We began with our traditional House Music preparations, setting a lively pace from the start. This year's theme, Hero, inspired our Large Ensemble to perform He Lives in You from The Lion King. Disney magic has become something of a Laud hallmark in recent years, and it was wonderful to see it continue. A standout moment was George G's stunning performance of Csárdás on the saxophone, earning him joint first place in the Senior Solo category.

The sports pitches were equally energetic as our students competed in football, rugby, cricket and athletics. These events not only showcase athletic ability but also encourage leadership from Year 7 upwards, with students captaining the A, B and C teams. It is always a joy to see the bonds that form within tutor groups during these competitions. Our strength continued in the smaller sporting events too, where we secured first place in badminton, ghost and table tennis for the second consecutive year — bringing back fond memories for many Old Redingensians of those lively ghost matches in the school gymnasium. Our strategic prowess was also on display as we retained



the House Chess title, reflecting the depth of talent within Laud House.

A highlight of the year was once again the Eisteddfod. Marking the School's 900th anniversary, the theme of Community inspired powerful and moving performances in the Chapel, and it was fantastic to see so many students take part after months of committed preparation.

After Easter, our new leadership team stepped into their roles, ushering in a fresh chapter under House Captains Alexandru M and Akshay B. Their dedication to nurturing House spirit has been outstanding, and their support for one another has been genuinely inspiring.

The year concluded with House Art, where our talented artists created a stunning landscape inspired by Spirited Away. Their creativity led us to our first House Art victory, thanks in no small part to the vision and leadership of Danyal K.

As I reflect on another year as Head of Laud House, I am filled with gratitude for all we have achieved together. Although I did not expect this to be my final full year in the role, I am immensely proud of the kindness, empathy and collaboration that define Laud House. These values lie at the heart of all we do, and they will continue to guide us as we move forward.





### School House Chris Betteridge Head of School House



After a difficult result in the 2023 House Music competition, two Year 12 students, **James G (13EFo)** and **Ryan L (13JHu)**, started scratching their heads for the next year. Slowly, arrangements were developed, musicians selected and hours spent on rehearsals. Coming off an impressive performance in Eisteddfod and a great start to the new House Cup with Sports day, there was a confidence in the House. **Freeman C (13MKa)** on the Erhu (an ancient Chinese instrument) was just incredible – I mean, made 2 string violin looking instrument sound like a herd of horses galloping! From this to our Large Ensemble, Small Ensemble – bringing in the culture of our community with a classical Tamil piece, sung exquisitely by **Akash R (12MKa)** – to a knockout performance by the band in their attempt at a Queen Medley – we felt we deserved a win in 2024 House Music.

This really set the tone in the House moving forward. Not because we won, but because we acknowledged the work that went in and the performance we were able to produce. The House came together, throwing themselves at everything they did with everything they had. The model was set in House Music and the boys carried it through. **James** and **Ryan** led the House with a great balance of competitiveness and humility. They showed up – at every event, supporting, encouraging, celebrating and building up – depending what was needed.

They laid the foundation for what was to come in April. House event after House event, assembly after assembly, Chapel after Chapel, School House carried themselves with excitement and nerves as the end of the House Cup year approached.

House Eisteddfod 2025. A supreme performance by East House. They were sublime and deserved the win. Aryan Pradeep's solo performance brought a deafening silence to the those in Chapel. We secured a strong position in this competition and ultimately closed out as House Cup winners, in the School's 900th year. For every ball thrown, note struck, word spoke, sentence formed, chess piece moved etc etc, I am so proud of everyone for all they gave to the House this year, it was beautiful to witness the coming together and the joint celebration of an achievement well deserved! I could not be more proud to be your Head of House.

With a new year on the horizon, we look forward to the incredible leadership of our incoming **House Captains, Akash R (12MKa) and Keith L (12EFo)**. I thank them for their time that they will spend in steering this ship, and I wish them all the best in all that they will bring.





### West House

**Jesus Escribano- Sanchez**  
**Head of West House**

This year has once again shown the very best of what makes West House special. Watching students across all year groups support one another, step up when needed, and take pride in being part of the House has been genuinely inspiring. Our senior students, led by House Captain **Prabhav B (13BSa)** and Vice-Captains **Armaan C (13STh)** and **Ezra S (13BSa)**, have set an outstanding example, demonstrating leadership rooted in integrity, collaboration and kindness. They have not only guided but also empowered others to get involved and contribute to the spirit of the House.

Our tutors continue to be an essential part of this journey. Their commitment to pastoral and academic support has strengthened our sense of belonging and encouraged students to strive for excellence while looking after each other. The relationships within West House are something to be proud of; they show that character, respect and effort truly matter.

This year, we have taken part in a wide range of competitions and events, and I have been consistently impressed by the enthusiasm and determination shown by everyone. Whether it was House Music, Eisteddfod, sports, academic challenges or charity initiatives, West House approached every opportunity with creativity, resilience and teamwork. The standard was incredibly high, and the way you supported one another



made it clear that success is measured not only in results, but in how we grow together through shared experiences.

For those who will be leaving us this year, thank you for everything you have contributed. You have helped shape the identity of West House, and you take with you the values we hope will guide you in the future: be thoughtful, courageous, stay curious, and continue to act with respect and compassion. I have no doubt you will go on to make a positive difference wherever life takes you.

To those returning next year, I am excited to continue building on what we have achieved together. West House is strong because each of you brings something unique, and when we support one another, we become greater than the sum of our parts. Let's keep working hard, looking out for each other, and striving to be the best versions of ourselves.

Well done on an excellent year and thank you for making West House a place we can all be proud of.





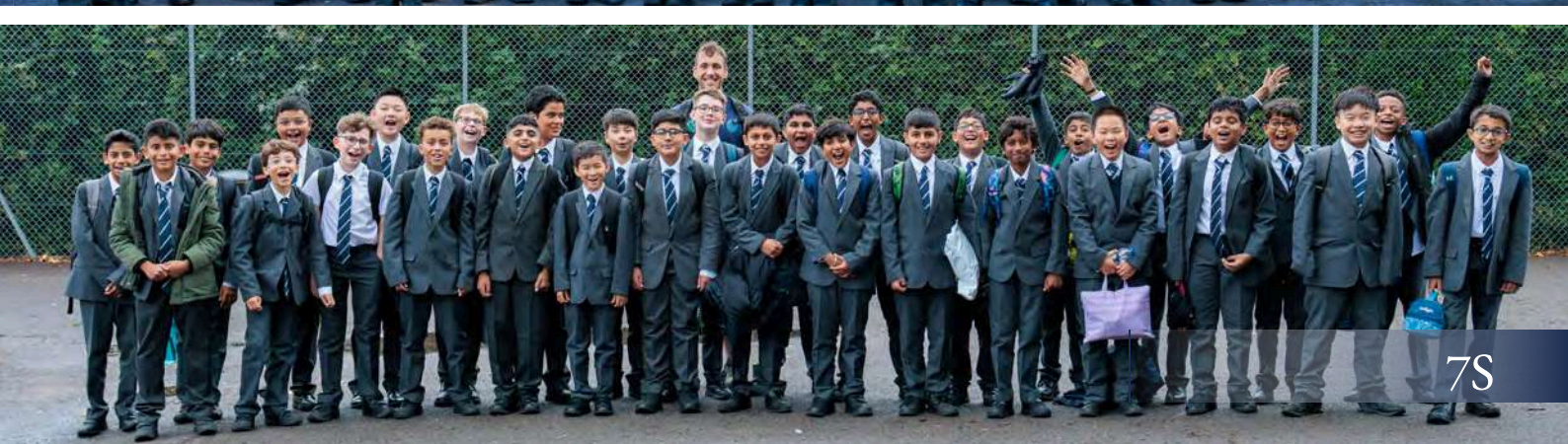
7C



7E



7L



7S



7W



# MEET THE PREFECT TEAM



**Appointed in May 2025, the 2025–2026 prefect team play a vital role during Reading School’s 900th anniversary year and beyond. They will help make this historic milestone memorable for the whole community by supporting key events and initiatives, while consistently upholding the values of the school.**

**Our School Captain, James Titmas, speaks about what he is most excited about in this new role:**

I am extremely fortunate to have been a student at Reading School for the past six years and largely out of gratitude, I wanted to become a prefect to give something back to the school. I am also glad to be able to share this role with my friends, and I hope that some of the work we do will help make the school community an even better place for everyone.

**As School Captain, what legacy do you want to leave at Reading School? Will you build on an existing legacy or create your own?**

One of our goals this year is to ensure that all students have a clear way to give feedback to the school, which we aim to achieve through the Student Council. It is an honour to be part of Reading School’s incredible legacy, and I hope that we will be able to maintain it and contribute to it in some small way.

**What are your future plans and ambitions?**

Looking ahead, I plan to study sports science at university and hope to spend a year abroad to improve my fluency in the languages I am learning. I will also continue to pursue my sporting development, and I look forward to seeing where life takes me beyond university.





***“In my eyes, building personality and giving back to the community are equal in importance to academics. Being a prefect creates the opportunity to take part in these things, from developing soft skills to helping make events and operations go smoothly.***

***A fundamental value that I have grown up with is service. I hope that after I leave Reading School, students care more about giving back to the community. We are very privileged to come to this school and to be in such a safe community, so we ought to pay that privilege forward. It is this mindset that I hope students will continue to hold in future years.”***  
**Aaryen Labana (Vice Captain)**

*“Joining Reading School in Year 12, I have spent less time here than most of my peers. However, I quickly discovered that this school has helped me grow academically but also become a confident and independent thinker. Inspired by the previous leadership team, my aim is to contribute to this strong community. It has been a privilege to take part in many events for the 900th anniversary.*

*As Vice-Captain responsible for the Student Body, I hope to leave a legacy of a stronger student voice and greater collaboration, ensuring every student feels heard through an active and inclusive Student Council. I also aim to introduce new initiatives that encourage leadership, creativity, and interest in the wellbeing of our community.”*

**Karan Singh (Vice Captain)**

*“I have valued the strong sense of community, which motivates us to excel academically and use our strengths to support others. Becoming Vice-Captain would enable me to contribute more widely – to represent, inspire, and lead initiatives that enhance our school community.*

*The Sixth Form Team aims to strengthen future pathways and career guidance and build stronger links with other Sixth Forms. Increasing exposure to diverse careers will help students explore new interests, while partnerships with other schools will promote collaboration and fresh ideas.*

*Celebrating 900 years is a milestone that inspires me to continue the work of past prefects and leave a lasting impact for future generations.”*

**Ji Ji Wu (Vice Captain)**

*“I have always been grateful for the opportunities provided to students by teachers and the time and dedication the senior students put into organising House Events. Being a prefect allows me to support my peers and give back to the school that has built the foundations for my education and my character.*

*The two main targets are working with the Charity Committee to encourage student-led charity events. I would also like to establish a greater appreciation for the community we are in that takes care of us and we are also responsible for taking care of it. This means working with the Sustainability team to push initiatives that ensure the environment we are in is a better place.”*

**Rabin Devkota (Vice Captain)**



# 2025

### Leadership Team

School Captain  
Vice-Captain  
Vice-Captain  
Vice-Captain  
Vice-Captain

James Titmas  
Rabin Devkota  
Aaryen Labana  
Karan Singh  
Jiji Wu

### School Prefects

Events  
External Relations  
Careers  
Sustainability  
Societies Prefect

Aaryan Amrite & Isaac Liew  
Tristan Shuttleworth & Jaden Lau  
Aryan Kumar  
Keegan Barretto  
Kushh Mishra

### Boarding Team

East Wing Captain  
South House Captain

Andrys Lehmann  
Jesper Dane

# 2026



2025



## County House

House Captains

Mentoring  
Well-Being  
Integration  
Charity  
Music  
House Prefect  
Sport

Raghav Nirupama Srinivas & Eshan Jain

Jet Eros Dela Cruz  
Chinmay Bhawe  
Christopher Dula & Delivasilis Lazaros  
Vashisht Khandagale  
James Song & Joel Perera  
Sriram Satheeskumar  
Soham D Das



## East House

House Captains

Sport  
Mentoring  
Well-Being  
Integration  
Charity  
House Prefect

Kavish Sharma & Dylan Burke

Adhav Subramaniam & Ralph Mayall  
Benjamin Luo  
Indiana Storm  
Arnab Pal  
Yadveer Gill  
Parthiv Manne



## Laud House

House Captains

Sport  
Mentoring  
Well-Being  
Integration  
Music  
House Prefect

Alexandru Mihalciuc & Akshay Balaji

Ollie Crew & Daniel Mahmood  
Parthiv Vijarayo  
Srujan Bhat  
Satyam Kumar  
Joel Wilson  
Ben Hart



## School House

House Captain

Music  
Sport  
Mentoring  
Well-Being  
Integration  
House Prefects

Keith Liu & Akash Ramesh

Keith Liu/Akash Ramesh  
Arjit Das  
Ritesh Shetty  
Reuben Omoarebun  
Ayushman Suman  
Avi Srivastava & Emllyn Lee-Jones



## West House

House Captain

Vice Captains

Sport  
Mentoring  
Well-Being  
Integration  
Charity  
Music  
House Prefect

Pranav Parasuram  
Richard Maoro & Robert Kettle

Seth Payne and Sainath Jasti  
Aarush Cheeti  
Harvey Mantann  
Kenodh Perera  
Vivaan Chandra  
Zihan Zhang & Jesper Dane  
Jeremy Cheung

2026





# ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

At Reading School, we empower every student to pursue, discover and explore their interests and passions within each subject, supported by their committed teachers. The following pages showcase the academic achievements within each department.



# SUNDAY TIMES SOUTHEAST STATE SECONDARY SCHOOL OF THE YEAR 2025-2026



Reading School has been named Secondary School of the Year in the South East for Academic Excellence 2026 in The Sunday Times Parent Power Guide.

The school is delighted to receive this award, which recognises the remarkable education young people receive at the school and the character-driven focus that underpins students' outstanding academic achievement.

The award crowns a landmark year for Reading School. Throughout 2025, the school opened its gates to thousands of neighbours, families and alumni for a programme of anniversary events, including a free one-day Community Carnival, a Grand Reunion which brought together current pupils and more than a thousand Old Redingensians, a series of Open Days for prospective families, several public lectures open to the public, and a moving Commemoration Day which featured a Royal Visit by **HRH The Duke of Edinburgh**.



These public celebrations and outreach activities are part of the school's commitment to combining academic rigour with social impact and civic engagement.

Reading School's performance in national league tables and at A-level and GCSE has been consistently strong, underpinning The Sunday Times recognition. This year the School featured prominently in regional and national listings and sustained very high proportions of A\*–B grades at A-level, reflecting the quality of teaching and the intellectual curiosity the School seeks to cultivate in its students. This is particularly significant given the school's ongoing outreach to primary schools, and commitment to increasing accessibility for disadvantaged young people.

**Headmaster, Chris Evans**, commented, *"We are humbled by this recognition. It is an award that reflects the work of a whole community of students, staff, parents, volunteers, partners and Old Redingensians who have given generously of their time, talent and conviction. Though our school is 900 years old, we have been vividly reminded that its true strength lies not in its antiquity, but its impact upon society. We give thanks for all that has gone before, and recommit ourselves to making a difference in the world in the years ahead."*

*Reading School's mission is to make the world better and this award is an encouragement to us to sustain our focus on character, on the nurture of happy young people and on policies that provide opportunity. When processes promote social impact and encourage community, we become more than the sum of our parts."*





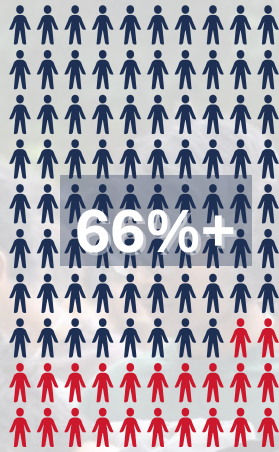




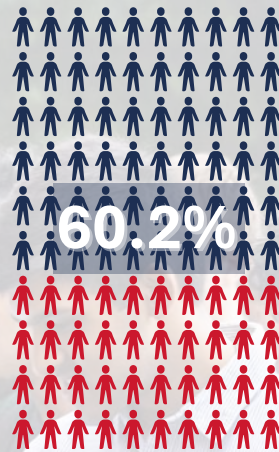
# A LEVEL RESULTS & UNIVERSITY OFFERS



of all grades awarded were A\*- B



of all grades in Classical Civilisation, Computer Science, Economics, Further Mathematics, History, Mathematics, MFL, Music, Physics & Theatre Studies were A\*-A



of students achieved 3 or more A grades



of all grades awarded were A\*

100%



of students achieved A\*-B in Classics, English Literature, French, German, History, Music, Philosophy & Spanish

25



students will read medicine or dentistry and have secured places at top universities.

25



of students secured places at Oxbridge



In our historic 900th year, Reading School is thrilled to celebrate the achievements of each and every one of our students...most importantly, we celebrate the men that our students have become, and the journey that they have only just started. We know that they will take with them the values of curiosity, integrity and dedication to their communities into the world of work and their lives beyond.

Chris Evans, Headmaster





# GCSE RESULTS



of GCSE entries were awarded grades 9-7

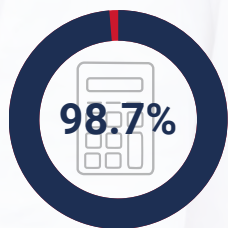


of GCSE entries were awarded grades 9-8



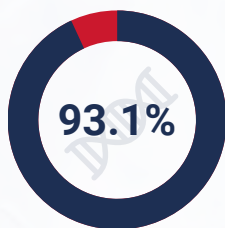
of GCSE entries for Chinese and Electronics were awarded grades 9-7

## Mathematics



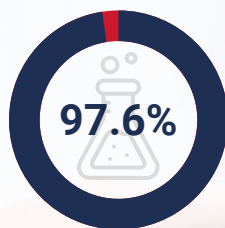
of pupils achieved GCSE Maths at grades 9-7

## Economics



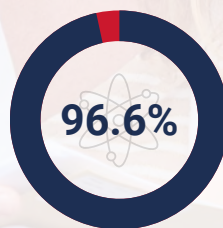
of pupils achieved GCSE Economics at grades 9-7

## MFL



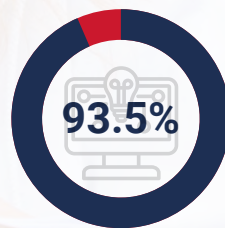
of pupils achieved a GCSE in a Modern Foreign Language at grades 9-7

## Geography & History



of pupils achieved GCSE Geography and/History at grades 9-7

## Computer Science



of pupils achieved GCSE Computer Science at grades 9-8

“

*This is a really close-knit year group of students. They have supported each other while demonstrating excellence and curiosity while developing leadership and empathy. These young men have thrown themselves into mentoring local primary school children through our Future Stories programme, personally grown on expeditions around the world, and have now proven their capacity under exam conditions. We could not be prouder of them.*

Lizzie Ayres, Deputy Head

”







# SENIOR PRIZE GIVING 2025



On Friday 28 June 2025, Reading School proudly celebrated the Class of 2025, along with the return of the Class of 2024, at our annual Senior Prize Giving, held in the Great Hall at the University of Reading. This cherished tradition recognised the outstanding accomplishments of our students across academics, sport, the arts and community service.

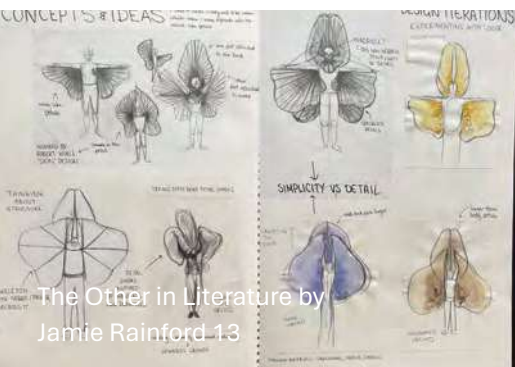
Guests enjoyed an inspiring keynote address from **Dr Angelo Amorelli (OR 1973–1980)**, whose reflections encouraged our students as they look ahead to the future. As we bid farewell to the Class of 2025, whether they are heading to university, apprenticeships, or exciting new career paths, we wish them every success and look forward to staying connected as they embark on the next chapter of their journeys.

We extend our sincere thanks to **The Reading Foundation** for generously sponsoring the ceremony, prizes and refreshments; to the **Old Redingensians Association** and the **Sir Thomas Beecham Trust** for supporting the awarding of prizes; and to the **Reading School Parents' Association** for providing refreshments and offering assistance throughout the event. We are also grateful to the many individual benefactors whose generosity continues to support prizes for our students. Their support helped to make this prestigious celebration possible.





Beauty by Ariana Taylor



The Other in Literature by Jamie Rainford 13



Creatures by Jamie Rainford 13



Landscape and Sky by Maurits



Light & Dark by b



Ruize - China



Creatures by Jamie Rainford 13



# ART

## The Power of Art: Inspiring Creativity and Self-Expression at Reading School

Art and Photography offer greater opportunities for self-expression and creative making than almost any other subject in the school: we are the only GCSE or A Level subject that is 100% coursework. Within the school, we are a smaller department, but the feedback from artists and photographers is overwhelmingly positive in regards how much they enjoy their lessons and how much they value the opportunity to work in a more practical way that contrasts with how they work in many other subjects.

### Art Exhibition - July 2025





*“The GCSE and A-Level Fine Art and Photography Exhibition was a vibrant celebration of creativity and talent. Excitingly, reflecting the expansion of the department, a cohort of both Fine Artists and Photographers exhibited for the first time. Makers displayed an impressive range of work, from intricate drawings and bold paintings to highly innovative mixed-media pieces used for performance and photographic works both digital and sculptural in nature. The work displayed reflected not only technical skill but also individuality and thoughtful exploration of themes, with every artist making a different final outcome.*

*The exhibition clearly showed the dedication, effort, and passion of our young artists, with visitors left both inspired and proud of the exceptional breadth of ideas and standard of work produced. It was a true testament to the hard work and creativity nurtured within our Art Department”*

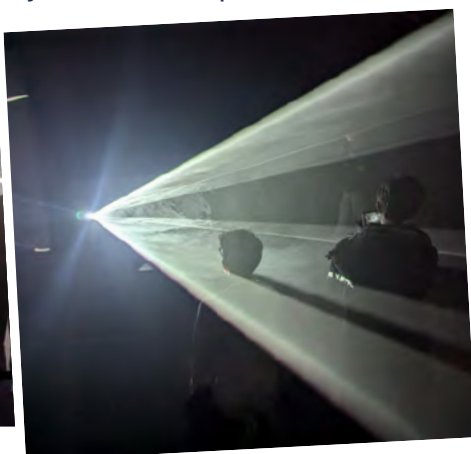
Aileen Creegan, Head of Art



### A Trip to the Tate Modern

GCSE Artists and Photographers enjoyed an inspiring visit to the Tate Modern and Tate Britain. Led by **Head of Art, Ms A Creegan**, the Artists explored Anthony McCall’s immersive Solid Light installation, where visitor movements brought beams of projected light to life, creating shifting three-dimensional forms in space. They also visited Electric Dreams: Art and Technology before the Internet and explored Brutalist architecture, a 1950s–60s style characterised by block-like forms and raw concrete.

Meanwhile, the Photographers visited Tate Britain to view an exhibition of 1980s UK photography, before photographing the striking Brutalist architecture of the Southbank Centre. The trips offered students a rich opportunity to engage with light, technology, architecture, and photography across multiple media.







### Year 10 Art Exhibition at The Blade, Reading

In June 2025, Year 10 Fine Art artists entered a competition run by the Friends of Reading Abbey to create artworks exploring Reading Abbey in the past, present, and future.

**Tobias L (10W)** won the year-group category, with **Akshat S (10W)** receiving a highly commended award. The judges praised the high standard of work across all entries and were impressed by the variety of ideas, styles, and media used, as well as how strongly the pieces reflected the individual creativity of the artists.

The artwork was displayed in the public foyer of The Blade building in central Reading, Abbey Square, RG1 3BE. A private view was held on Thursday 19 June, where artists, parents, carers, and members of the school community celebrated this achievement. The exhibition remained on public display at The Blade until 26 June.



### Reading Abbey: Past – Present – Future

Year 10 artists attended the private view of the winning works for the Reading Abbey: Past – Present – Future art competition, enjoying the full experience, including refreshments. **Tobias L (10W)** won a workshop for the artists, led by **Dr Martin Andrews**, who explored the historical development of hand-illuminated manuscripts and early printed texts.

**Dr Andrews, a printing historian and former Lecturer in Typography & Graphic Communication at the University of Reading**, is a multidisciplinary artist and author with extensive experience designing exhibitions and consulting on period dramas. A particular highlight was handling Middle Ages illuminated texts written in gall ink on parchment, where students could see the hair follicles on the pages.



# BIOLOGY



## British Biology Olympiad 2025

The British Biology Olympiad challenges and stimulates students with an interest in biology to expand and extend their talents. Reading School Year 13 biologists gained an impressive 9 Gold, 5 Silver and 11 Bronze medals in the British Biology Olympiad 2025, run by the Royal Society of Biology.

This year, 18,533 students from over 1,053 schools competed, with a Gold medal awarded to the top 5% of students, a Silver medal to the top 15%, and a Bronze medal to the top 30%.

This year's Gold medallists (pictured below) were invited to the team selection round, which they sat in March 2025 at Reading School. The top sixteen performers from Round 1 and the British Biology Olympiad were then invited to take part in practical training and a further round of selection at the University of Warwick.



**Year 13 Gold Award Winners (pictured above):**

Or M (JPI), Joshua H (LDo), Wai Yan L ( ) Raymond W (JPI), Ethan E (RWu), Archie C (ACr), Arhan C (JHu), Paarth G (JPI) & Keshanth R (ACr).

**Silver Winners:**

Oliver Q (MJK), Edward D (JM), Imtiyaz B (JHu) & Srivallabh S (RCh)

**Bronze Winners:**

Alex C ( ), Yusef Z (STh), Maninder S (JHu), Rohit L (SHu), Aujaswi M (ELawa), Dhruv D (JPI), Rohan O (RWu), Rayan S (RWu), Jude A (RCh), Nok Hei L (JHu) & Kanishk K (SAI).



## Cambridge Biology Challenge 2025

Several students recently took part in the annual Cambridge Biology Challenge, organised by the Royal Society of Biology and supported by the University of Cambridge. This national competition encourages young biologists to apply their scientific knowledge and curiosity by tackling thought-provoking biological questions.

We are delighted to share that a number of students have been awarded Certificates of Merit and Commendation for their impressive performance. Congratulations to **James M (12MC)**, **Daniel X (10S)**, **Ritesh S (12ZMC)**, **Karthik V (10C)**, **Rabin D (12VGG)**, **Adhrit G (11L)**, **Pedram A (10C)**, **Rushil S (11C)** and **Naivedya P (10L)**.

## 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 true team effort, with Aryan contributing his Computer Science expertise to support 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 address these issues, they developed a working demo of an app featuring an AI-powered symptom tracker, a mental-health journal, and a peer-support forum, alongside a wearable patch that monitors biomarkers in real time.

The competition required teams to produce a summary poster and present 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 responded to questions was highly impressive.

***“Regardless of whether they are awarded a top-three place, we are exceptionally proud of the team for their innovation, teamwork, and ambition.”***

Ms Jayne Pickering, Teacher of Biology and Medical School Applications Lead



# CHEMISTRY



## RSC Chemistry Olympiad 2025

The Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) Chemistry Olympiad 2025 is a prestigious competition that challenges students to excel in chemistry, testing their problem-solving skills and creativity through complex real-world scenarios. Budding chemists develop critical problem-solving skills, learn to think creatively, and test their knowledge in new, real-world situations.



This year's national competition involved a demanding two-hour examination, and participating students achieved outstanding results: three Bronze, one Silver, and six Gold awards. Congratulations to **Rupert O (13VGG)**, **Finlay G (13RCh)**, **Joel W**, **Joshua H (13LDo)**, **Max B ( )**, **Keshanth R (13ACr)**, **Ojas J (13ZMC)**, **Or M (13JPi)**, **Raymond W (13JPi)**, and **Abdullah K (13JHu)**.

## Royal Society of Chemistry Schools' Analyst Challenge - June 2025

The Royal Society of Chemistry's Schools' Analyst Competition enables Year 12 students to demonstrate and expand their existing chemistry knowledge, skills, and aptitude for analytical science through practical experiments based on real-world industrial and societal challenges.

Our Year 12 students worked in teams of three to complete three practical tasks, including analysing unknown samples to determine their composition. In previous years, the competition has taken place collaboratively with our partner schools, Kendrick and The Abbey, and we look forward to restarting this collaboration next year.





*“I think it's a fantastic opportunity for our students to be able to broaden their knowledge of chemistry and be able to do practicals that they wouldn't normally get to do in this class. It's been wonderful to see their enthusiasm and I am so proud of how they've applied their existing skills to tackle real-world problems.”*



*Experiences like this not only deepen their understanding but also build the confidence and creative problem-solving abilities that will serve them exceptionally well in their A-level studies and future scientific careers.”*

Miss Rosser-Evans (Head of East House;  
Teacher of Chemistry)

### The Chemistry Race

The Chemistry Race is an annual competition for teams of sixth form students organised by the Department of Chemistry at the University of Cambridge and Rugby School (and supported by the University of Oxford). On Saturday 1st February a team of Reading School Sixth Formers, led by **Miss Rosser-Evans (Head of East House; Teacher of Chemistry)**, **Ms Batty (Teacher of Chemistry)** and **Mr Wheal (Teacher of Chemistry)**, took part alongside 60 other schools from across the UK.

**Rupert R (13VGG), Max B (13EFo) Joshua H (13LDo), Raghav N-S (12MCo) and Parthiv V (12LDo)** all achieved 13th place out of 60.





# Q & A

## WITH ABDUL A (11E)

**Research experience at the Centre of Virus Research**



**A lucky student, Abdul A (11E) got to spend two days at the University of Glasgow to experience techniques commonly used in virus research. The University of Glasgow Centre for Virus Research (CVR) is home to leading virologists, entirely focused on the study of human viral diseases and viruses at the human-animal interface.**

**Tell us more about your two days at the Centre of Virus Research:**

*My mum's sister is a researcher at the Virology laboratory at the University of Glasgow. I've always been interested in her work, and I got the opportunity to go to the University to shadow her and complete some experiments in PCR, which is short for a polymerase chain reaction. It's basically the technique used to make vaccines. It's used to quickly copy short sequences of DNA for vaccines, and you need a large amount which you test on. You can post it into cells, so they fluoresce. I also got to try something called transfection, which is when you inject DNA into cells, and then wait for a few days to then look at under a microscope.*

**What did you take away from your experience?**

*It was great because I want to go onto study medicine and the experience is really closely linked to that path. If I decide I don't want to go straight into healthcare, I can always become a researcher, because now I know what it's all about. I got to also look at some of my aunts' colleagues work which was really cool.*

**What do you enjoy about Reading School outside of academic study?**

*There're so many other opportunities, like Future Stories and Floreat. It's not just about academics. You get lots of opportunities to build good relations and learn how to be a good person. There's also learning how to work well in a team and help other people.*



# CLASSICS

## GCSE Latin

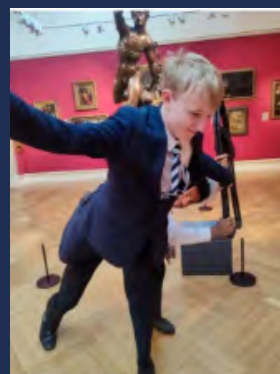
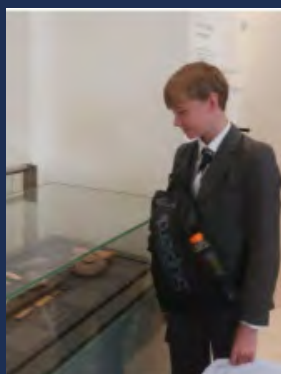
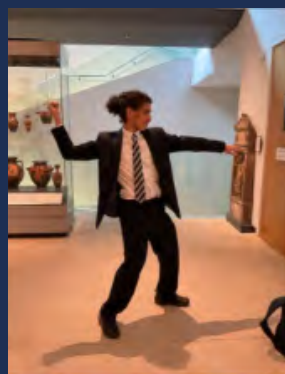
Year 10 Latin students came to Big School to take part in an event exploring the AD 79 eruption of Vesuvius. Led by **Mrs Thorpe (Teacher of Geography)** and supported by the Classics Department, it was an opportunity to extend their study of Latin beyond the curriculum and to combine Geography, Latin, Archaeology, and History through a variety of stimulating activities.

We would like to thank **Katie Manby from the University of Reading**, who attended the event to present to students about the excavations of Pompeii and Herculaneum, as well as her own archaeological research. Her areas of interest include the archaeology of the Roman Empire, artefact studies, museum collection histories, and the scientific analysis of archaeological metals.



## A trip to the Ashmolean Museum

On Friday 2nd May, Year 9 students studying Ancient History and Year 12 students studying Classical Civilisation visited the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford for the day to explore the collections and examine objects relating to their studies.





# COMPUTER SCIENCE

## The National Cipher Challenge

An annual online cryptography competition run by the University of Southampton for secondary school students, the National Cipher Challenge tests participants on increasingly complex ciphered messages, encouraging problem-solving, logical thinking, and a passion for cryptography. The challenge provides an excellent opportunity for students to develop mathematical and computational skills while learning about classical and modern encryption techniques. Two Reading School students won a Silver Medal, awarded to the top 200 students in the country (the top 1%).



**Darshan L (12RCh)** commented:

*"My favourite part of the National Cipher Challenge was the thrill of solving the ciphers programmatically. There was something incredibly satisfying about watching the solution appear on the terminal screen within seconds, all thanks to a few lines of code. It felt almost magical, like unlocking a hidden secret with just a click of a button."*

*The National Cipher Challenge is a fantastic way to expand your mathematical horizons, improve your problem-solving abilities, and strengthen your coding skills, making it an enriching experience for anyone interested in cryptography."*

**Akshith A (12SHu)** commented:

*"Registration for the 2024 Cipher Challenge opened in September, and challenges began in October. The competition consisted of two parallel challenge streams: Challenge A, which was designed for beginners, and Challenge B, which featured more complex cryptographic puzzles scored based on accuracy and speed."*

*It was a challenge we came across randomly, and decided to take part in and we highly encourage those students with an interest in problem solving to get involved with the challenge next September, regardless of what field they wish to pursue, since the experience offered is invaluable."*





## Raspberry Pi Foundation Coding Challenge 2025

The coding challenge, formerly The Oxford University Computing Challenge (OUCC), is an online coding competition run by the Raspberry Pi Foundation in partnership with Oxford University. It is designed to extend and deepen the computational thinking skills students developed during the Bebras Challenge in November.

**Congratulations to Akhilesh S (12W), who achieved a Distinction after taking part in this year's challenge. Akhilesh tells us more about the challenge and his interest in Computer Science:**

*"You have an hour to complete the challenge which has to be done at school. It starts off easy but progresses onto tougher challenges. There are 10 challenges and you have a problem statement and a space to write code and run it, and the website gives back how many points (0-4) you got based on how many test cases were correct."*



"I've always been interested in coding since I was young and want to go onto study it at university. In my spare time I'll read about coding outside of the curriculum and continue to improve my coding skills. I've got a collection of personal projects I research and work on in my spare time."

### Akhilesh on Computer Science at Reading School:

*"We've got student-led coding club and competitions, House Coding Competitions as well as Coding Challenges. During Year 7, you're introduced to the basics, during Year 8 you learn through creative exercises, Years 9 and 10 you explore machine learning and during Year 12, you're encouraged to explore more and more."*

*"I really enjoy how you're not limited. Often you are given freedom to explore topics yourself and show off your findings to the teacher through talking to them or in the given OneNote space for us to write about findings. Many people will start their own websites in Year 12 to display the things they've learnt. The NEA also encourages looking at parts of computer science you enjoy instead of sticking to the syllabus."*



# DRAMA

## The Playhouse Apprentice

Students enjoyed a behind-the-scenes look at the final dress rehearsal ahead of the opening night of The Playhouse Apprentice – the third theatrical collaboration between The Abbey School and Reading School.

Written by **Jessica Swale**, The Playhouse Apprentice is an exhilarating, hilarious and timely story about theatre, bravery, and how a little voice can make a big difference. The joint production would not have been possible without the co-directors, **Cassie Friend** and **Benedict Sandiford**.



## Bringing Shakespeare to Life

The Globe Players, a touring theatre company specialising in performing Shakespeare's works in schools across the UK, visited Reading School as part of their mission to bring live professional theatre to young people and open up a world of drama and literature.

One of Shakespeare's most famous tragedies, Macbeth, was performed in the School Chapel by professional actors, giving students the opportunity to experience the play's themes of ambition, power, and the consequences of moral choices.





# ECONOMICS

## LSE Undergraduate Political Review Essay Competition

Well done to **Adi A (12GT)** for his fantastic accomplishment of being shortlisted in a national competition run by the London School of Economics.

The competition aims to encourage students to explore the field of Political Science and undertake university-style essay writing. According to the LSE it also, 'presents itself as an ideal extra-curricular for students wishing to include this experience in their UCAS personal statements.'

Adi's essay was titled, *'The influence of Artificial Intelligence on the fairness and security of elections in 2024: risks and mitigations strategies.'*



## A Collaborative Economics Debate with Winchester College

Reading School's Economics Department hosted its first ever Year 13 collaborative debate with Winchester College for aspiring economists of the future.

Mixed teams comprising students from both schools debated real-world issues and took questions from the audience, with the event expertly moderated by Shan S (13S).

The first of four debates opened with the motion: *"Universities UK (the body representing Vice-Chancellors) has said that universities are 'essential to economic growth'. Therefore, we should aim to send 70% of school-leavers to university by 2040, and tuition fees in England should rise in line with inflation."*





# ENGLISH

## Poet Laureate for 2024-2025 - Henry R (10E)

Following a tradition dating back to 1668, the **Poet Laureate** position celebrates poetic excellence and national occasions.

**Henry R (10E)** was appointed as Reading School's Poet Laureate for the 2024-2025 academic year following his winning submission, *Here we go again*. His poem reflects on the cyclical nature of history, the repetition of conflict, change, and reconciliation and explores how humanity continues to relive its triumphs and mistakes.

With powerful rhythm and thought-provoking imagery, Henry's work captures both the inevitability of repetition and the hope for reflection and renewal. *Here We Go Again* stands as a striking reminder of how poetry can distil complex truths into just a few lines, offering insight into both the past and the present.



### Here We Go Again By Henry R

History repeats itself,  
Over and over, time and time and time again,  
Allies become rivals, enemies to friends,  
Time takes its toll, the innocent take revenge,  
Relations improve, tensions never end.

History repeats itself,  
Cold's kiss kills the masses,  
Kings' and Captains' campaign collapses,  
Defence dashes the leaders' chances,  
Advances freeze, growth turns to ashes.

History repeats itself,  
Countries rebel, and ask for more,  
Sweet blackberries turn to partners of thorns,  
Knots are untied and ties become unsure,  
"Oceans rise, empires fall".

History repeats itself,  
Tensions increase, nerves forever stay,  
Fear leads to panic, panic to pain, pain leads to  
anger, anger to hate,  
Fates intertwined, a dilemma is made,  
Leaving's impossible, but together there's pain.

History repeats itself,  
Pain comes from pushing, recovery from retreat,  
Trust into treachery, deals of deceit,  
Losses turn to wins, victories to defeats,  
But, in the end, history repeats.

## House Eisteddfod 2025

According to **Old Redingensian Association Archivist, Mr Ken Brown**, Reading School's House Elocution Competition has been running since 1927, when 40 entrants were whittled down in a preliminary round to 13 finalists, who were judged in Big School by distinguished physician and local dignitary **Sir Stewart Abram**. In recent times, the competition was adapted to make it more suitable for the 21st century, becoming House Eisteddfod in March 2013 under the leadership of **Head of English, Mr Baldock**. Elocution was once a formal evening event for a small audience of dignitaries and mainly senior students.



The newer format was designed to open up participation across all year groups and introduce a creative writing component. During Covid, the competition continued virtually, with students submitting video performances, and it has remained an annual fixture ever since.

House Eisteddfod features all five Houses – East, County, Laud, School, and West – and now includes more than 40 performances in the School Chapel in a single day, celebrating music, poetry, creative writing, and dramatic performance.

This student-led event continues to foster House spirit, creativity, and friendly rivalry. In our 900th Anniversary year, the chosen themes were excellence, integrity, leadership, community, participation, and celebration, and we look forward to sharing full performances very soon.

This year's special 900th Anniversary competition required Houses to create a short video presentation of a poem or song lyric on the theme of Celebration.

**Congratulations to East House, winners of the House Eisteddfod 2025.**

### **Performances & Themes**

**East House – Macbeth (Act 4, Scene 3) — Integrity**

**School House – The Man in the Arena — Leadership**

**County House – Julius Caesar (Act 3, Scene 2) — Community**

**West House – Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death — Participation**

**Laud House – Henry V (Act 5, Scene 3) — Celebration**





## 2025 Reading Foundation Mcllroy Essay Competition

The Mcllroy Essay Competition has been running in its current format since 2013, and the English Department would like to thank the School and the Reading Foundation for their continued generous support in funding the £250 prize.

**Joel A (10E) and Sri R V (9C) jointly won this year's Mcllroy Essay Competition** with their responses to the task, *"What I want to celebrate..."*. The judges were unable to separate the two submissions, so for the first time the prize will be shared between two winners.

The essays, which were judged anonymously by a panel drawn from Reading School staff, were considered to be terrifically inspiring and exceptionally well-expressed pieces of writing.



**Sri R V (10W) said,** *"I'm ecstatic to have won the Mcllroy Essay Competition! I entered because I saw it as a unique opportunity to showcase my skills in a different way (and because it sounded like a fun challenge). What made the experience so rewarding was the freedom it gave me to think creatively and develop an idea that truly stood out. I learned how to transform a simple concept into something detailed and original. It was a fantastic opportunity to grow as a writer, especially since I'm usually more interested in fiction, so the shift to a more non-fiction style was a refreshing challenge."*



**Joel A (10E) said,** *"I am absolutely delighted to have won the Mcllroy Essay Competition. This essay was a rare opportunity to talk about something I think is deeply important, that being resilience, something that my mum and dad, who both work in the NHS, show every day, and I think should be celebrated."*

*I think that everyone reading this (if you're a student) should enter it next year. Don't worry about winning, just take it as a chance to write about something you care about, as well as practice an essential skill."*

# GEOGRAPHY

## Model Climate Change Conference 2024

Eight students attended the annual climate change conference at Reading's Civic Offices this week. Mirroring COP29, currently taking place in Baku, Azerbaijan, the event brought together more than 60 students from schools across Reading to represent countries affected by climate change.

**Mrs S. Thorpe, Teacher of Geography**, shared:

*"It was a pleasure to watch the students meet the challenges of debate and negotiation that the Model Climate Change Conference offered this week. Being asked to represent two such controversial nations as the Marshall Islands and Azerbaijan proved no barrier, as the eight students from Years 8 and 9 demonstrated. They engaged confidently with older students from other schools, securing climate-change agreements focused on the issues they identified as crucial. I hope the political leaders at COP29 this month show the same collaborative spirit and commitment to protecting our planet from future emissions as these students."*



## Recycling Revelation: Students Go Behind the Scenes – June 2025

In June 2025, nine students took part in an enrichment visit to the Recycling Centre at Aston Clinton near Aylesbury. The visit, led by the Education Manager, aimed to help students better understand what happens to household waste once it is thrown away. In preparation, each student completed a pre-trip questionnaire exploring their awareness, attitudes, and behaviours towards recycling at school and at home, including keeping a diary over half term to record what they did and did not recycle.





**Maulik S (10L)** summed up the experience from the students' perspective:

*"A group of students from Years 7 to 10 took part in an educational trip to the Aston Clinton recycling centre, accompanied by **Ms Thomas, Dr Young and Mr Edwards**. The visit aimed to deepen our understanding of what happens to the waste we throw 'away' and to highlight the importance of recycling in reducing environmental impact. It also served as an opportunity to reflect on how everyday actions at home and at school contribute to wider environmental outcomes.*

*We learned how a wide range of household waste – including wood, metals, plastics, and garden waste – is sorted, processed, and sent on for reuse or further recycling. What stood out most was how much of what we discard can be reused if handled properly, and how easily small changes in our habits can make a significant difference. It became clear that recycling isn't just a routine task; it's a practical way to reduce waste and limit our impact on the environment. We left the site with a new appreciation for the systems in place to manage waste and a stronger sense of personal responsibility."*

***"I was so proud of our students in the way they prepared for the trip and how they engaged wholeheartedly with the information shared by the Education Manager. They actively listened and asked insightful questions."***

Ms Thomas, Trip Leader

# HISTORY

## Culture and the Cold War with Beck Walker (OR 2014-2021)

In October 2024, **Beck Walker (OR 2014–2021)** returned to deliver a lecture to Sixth Form history students on the impact of culture in the Cold War. Beck examined how music, film, literature, and other cultural expressions influenced international perceptions and political tensions during this period, providing students with a vivid understanding of how soft power and cultural diplomacy impacted global events.



## Reading School Hosts Historical Association Great Debate Heat

In January 2025, Reading School hosted a heat of the **Historical Association's Great Debate**. The Great Debate is a public speaking competition for students in Years 10–13, in which participants deliver a five-minute speech in response to a historical question. Although we have competed in this event before, this was our first time hosting a heat, and we were delighted to welcome staff and students from a range of local schools.

Speakers, including three from Reading School, presented on a wide variety of topics, ranging from trains and Old Redingensians to the BBC archives. The panel of judges comprised historians from the University of Reading, and the winning student from Kendrick School went on to achieve second place in the national competition.

## Insight into International Relations with Ben MacLean (OR 2014- 2021)

In October 2025, **Ben MacLean (OR 2014–2021)** returned to speak to students about his research into the Suez Crisis and modern American international relations. Ben has been studying at the University of Southampton and at Temple University. It was a fascinating talk that offered students valuable insight into the Cold War period, while also highlighting some of the exciting academic opportunities available to those studying History at university.





## **Year 12 & 13 Historians Discover the History and Culture of Vietnam**

The Sixth Form history trip to Vietnam was an unforgettable experience that far exceeded anything we imagined when we first set off. Not only did it deepen our understanding of the country's complex past, which is central to our A-level Cold War studies, but it also provided an incredible cultural immersion.

We began in Ho Chi Minh City, the capital of the South and situated near the largest US army base during the Vietnam War. From the outset, we felt the city's distinct energy and culture. Visiting the War Remnants Museum and the former Presidential Palace sparked some of the most thoughtful discussions of the whole trip. Our time at the Cu Chi Tunnels, crawling through narrow passages and examining ingenious traps and underground systems, helped everyone grasp the realities of the conflict in a way that felt strikingly real.

From there, we headed into the Mekong Delta, which proved to be one of the most memorable parts of the journey. Cruising along the rivers, visiting small workshops and markets, and meeting families who live along the waterways gave us a completely different perspective on Vietnamese life. Students loved sampling local rice delicacies and seeing how communities adapted to the delta's landscape. We were all amazed by how nothing went to waste, even the rice husks!

Our visit to Dien Bien Phu was a powerful highlight. Standing on the actual battlefield, walking through the French positions, and exploring the museum helped everyone connect what they had learned in class to the physical space where these historic events unfolded.

In Central Vietnam, we spent time in Hue, wandering through the imperial citadel and learning about how the city was devastated during the Tet Offensive. Later, in Hoi An, we experienced a completely different atmosphere: lantern-lit evenings, traditional food, and beautifully preserved historic streets. It was a wonderful way to experience Vietnam's cultural richness after our days exploring battlefields and historical sites.

Overall, the trip felt incredibly special. Everywhere we went, students were engaged, curious, and enthusiastic, not just about the history, but about the people, the food, and everyday life around them. It was the kind of journey that brought classroom learning vividly to life and left us with lasting memories and a much deeper appreciation of Vietnam's history and culture. Truly, it was an unforgettable trip, and we will be running this trip every two years from now on.

**Alice Stratford (South House Boarding Deputy Housemistress; Teacher of History)**





### Year 13 Students Attend National Tudor History Symposium

In March 2025, our Year 13 students travelled to **Pangbourne College** to take part in a Tudor History symposium alongside students from schools across the country. They heard from highly regarded Tudor historians, including **Steven Gunn** and **Richard Blakemore**, who delivered engaging talks on a range of Tudor topics.

It was an enlightening experience, and the preparation it inspired played a key role in helping our Year 13 cohort achieve their best A-level results since 2017, reflecting the dedication and hard work of both students and staff throughout the course.

### Exploring History at the Chalke Festival

In June 2025, Reading School attended the **Chalke History Festival**, a national event that attracts world-renowned speakers, living history exhibits, and a wide range of interactive opportunities. Students had the chance to hear from historians such as **Alice Loxton, Nicola Clark, and Phillips Payson O'Brien**, while also experiencing hands-on activities including WWII SOE training and medieval construction techniques.

The festival provided an excellent opportunity for both staff and students to engage with the wider historical community and deepen their understanding of the past.



### Year 10 Historians Explore Berlin's Living History

In July 2025, Year 10 History students headed off on the annual trip to **Berlin**. They enjoyed an enriching experience exploring one of Europe's most fascinating cities, where the history can be felt on every street.

Students visited the **Jewish Museum**, the **Topography of Terror** and **Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp**, among other sites, and returned with a deeper understanding of the history they have studied in lessons.



# MATHEMATICS



## Arkwright Engineering Scholarship Awards – September 2024

In 2024, a record number of Reading School students were awarded the highly prestigious Arkwright Engineering Scholarship, a national programme designed to inspire the next generation of engineers. Three of our Year 12 scholars, **Siddhant D (12EL)**, **Aryan K (12BSA)** and **Rujul N (12ZMC)**, spoke with us about their experiences and offered advice for aspiring applicants.

### What is the Arkwright Scholarship?

*“The scholarship is one of the most respected engineering awards in the UK,” explains Aryan. “The application involves a detailed form, an engineering aptitude exam, and an interview where you present a personal project. Scholars receive financial support, mentoring, and opportunities to develop real engineering skills.”*

### Their Projects

**Aryan’s** project focuses on AI engineering and stock market prediction, an area he hopes to continue exploring with guidance from his Arkwright mentor.

**Siddhant** created a Python programme that transforms complex functions into simpler approximations using Taylor polynomials, *“In simple terms, it takes a difficult curve on a graph and turns it into an easier one so you can work with it.”*

**Rujul** developed his own programming language designed for code golf — a challenge where the aim is to write the shortest possible programme, *“It’s five to ten times more concise than normal languages like Python.”*



### Advice to Future Applicants

The students are keen to support the next cohort. **Rujul** said, *“Last year we asked a previous scholar for advice and this year, all of us were successful. If Year 11s want tips for the test or interview, they should email us.”* They also emphasised that the scholarship is open to a wide range of engineering interests. *“Even though it’s called engineering, computer science projects are completely valid,”* says **Rujul. Siddhant** added, *“Applying alone teaches skills that help with university and job applications”.*

### Looking Ahead

With industry mentors now supporting them, the scholars are excited about what comes next. *“The scholarship is helping me build the skills I’ll need for my future career. I want to dive deeper into AI engineering and explore more complex algorithms,”* says **Aryan**.

**We thank our scholars for their generosity in sharing their experiences. Their willingness to support younger students exemplifies Reading School’s values of collaboration, integrity and excellence.**



*“The UKMT has always been about finding ways to apply relatively basic concepts to solve problems that seem completely out of reach - until you use the right method.”*

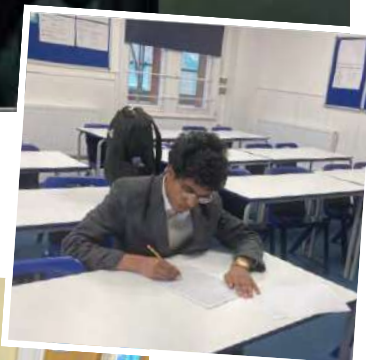
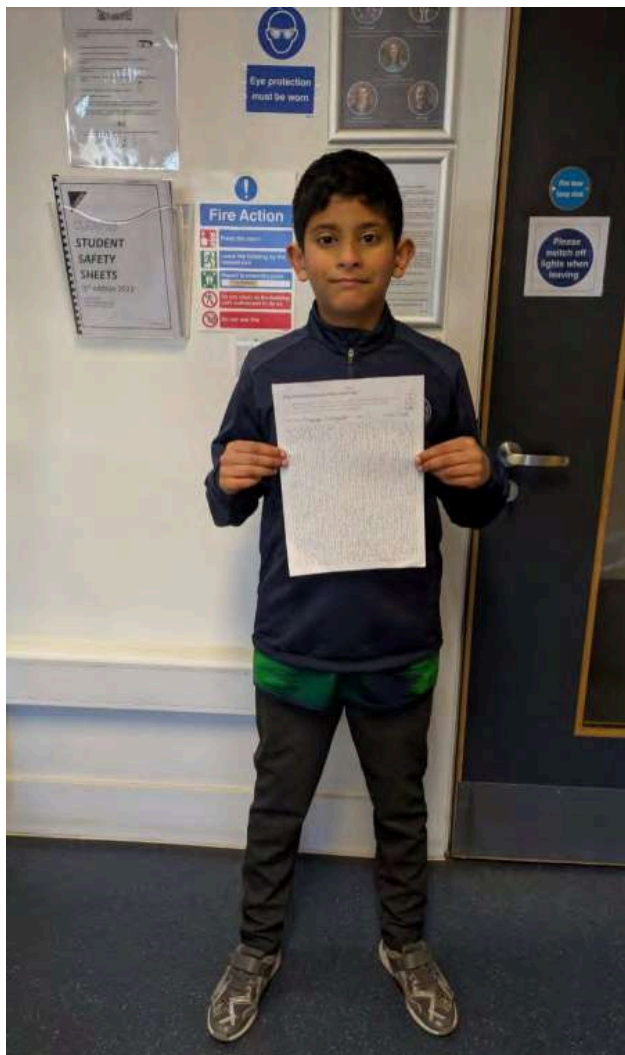
Siddhant D (12EL)

### British Mathematical Olympiad 2025

During the Michaelmas term, several A Level students took part in the first round of the British Mathematical Olympiad (BMO), a highly challenging competition for students in Years 12 and 13. Students who scored at least 10 marks (out of 60) received a Merit, while those achieving 26 marks or higher were awarded a Distinction.

Congratulations to the seven Year 12 participants, **Akshith A (12SH)** scored 6 marks, **Zian C (12EL)** scored 9, **Zong L (12SP)** scored 13, **Rujul N (12ZMC)** scored 15 and **Aryan K (12BS)** scored 20. In addition, **Siddhant D (12EL)** and **Parth G (12LD)** both scored 28 marks, earning a Distinction.

**Konstantin S (13ZMC)** achieved an impressive 49 marks, earning the Silver award and qualifying for the second round of the BMO.



### House Pi Memorisation Competition 2025

Led by Dr Hu (Teacher of Physics), this year's Pi Memorisation Competition saw even more participants than in 2024. The competition showcased advanced memory techniques beyond rote learning, with competitors using the Pi song, pattern recognition, mental imagery, and storytelling to enhance recall by engaging different parts of the brain.



While top participants aimed to memorise over 1,000 digits, the competition rules prioritised accuracy over sheer quantity. In the end, joint winners **Prayrit A (11S)** and **Pragnya K (7S)** (pictured above) each achieved 511 digits. Last year's champion, **Sumi S (11W)**, placed third, followed by **Ethan L (7E)** (pictured below) in fourth.

**Congratulations to School House for winning overall, and to all participants for their outstanding achievements!**



# MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

## UK Linguistics Olympiad (UKLO) 2024

The United Kingdom Linguistics Olympiad (UKLO), an annual language-analysis competition open to all year groups. Students develop a wide range of valuable skills, including structural thinking, pattern recognition, problem-solving, attention to detail, and lateral thinking.



In the Michaelmas term of 2024, many students achieved bronze and silver awards. **Or M (13JPi) and James T (13RCh) achieved Gold awards** and progressed to the next round of the competition.



## GCHQ National Language Competition 2024

The National Language Competition (NLC) is a virtual event where teams from across the UK compete to solve language-based puzzles and score points.

In November 2024, 32 Year 9 students participated in the GCHQ National Language Competition, led by **Mrs G Haugvik (Former Teacher of Classics)**. They tackled a series of challenging linguistics puzzles. All teams performed fantastically. With over 2,000 teams nationally, all our students ranked in the top 25% of the country. Our top three teams came 51st, 52nd, and 67th nationally. A brilliant achievement.

### European Day of Languages 2024 & 2025

At Reading School, the annual European Day of Languages celebrates the four modern foreign languages taught at Reading School — French, German, Mandarin and Spanish.

The Modern Foreign Languages Department marks the occasion each year with creative and engaging activities designed to showcase the importance of language learning beyond the classroom. Students studying French, German, Mandarin and Spanish are invited to take part in interactive events that connect language with real-world contexts, particularly through sport, business, and culture.



The 2024 celebration featured a lively and interactive webinar exploring how language skills are used across the global football industry. Delivered in collaboration with Business Language Champions and Futbol Lingo, the session revealed how multilingual communication plays a vital role in international coaching, commentary, and teamwork.



The excitement continued on the field with a “language football” session led by Year 13 students. The competition allows students of French, German and Spanish to play a 6-a-side football game where all players and the referee have to communicate purely in the language they are studying. From giving instructions to cheering on teammates, English was strictly off-limits, creating a fun and competitive way to put vocabulary into practice.

Many thanks to our Year 13 coaches for giving up their time to inspire our growing linguists: **Matthew O (BSa), McDylan P-E (RCh), Gaurav K (MDa), Ollie B (EFo), Bharat J (STh), Ben H (MCo), Xavier C (ELawa).**





Building on the success of the previous year, the 2025 event took language learning a step further. Year 12 A Level linguists and selected Year 11 students began the day with an insightful webinar highlighting how multilingualism opens doors in international sport, before taking to the pitch for a hands-on coaching experience.

Students learned key football vocabulary, from player positions and tactical phrases to lively referee exchanges, before running their own training sessions entirely in French, German, Mandarin or Spanish.



The matches were all very close, starting with a Spanish win against France (1-0), followed by a French win against Germany (1-0) and finishing off with Spain confirming their victory against Germany (1-0). Each group demonstrated impressive teamwork, enthusiasm, and accuracy, keeping up with Madame Fondu's famously high expectations for both language use and collaboration.

Big thanks go to **Mr J Sanchez** and **Tom K (13E)** for refereeing the games and **Mr F Shaw (OR BSa)** and **Mr O Griffin (Director of Music)** for the great atmosphere created by the drumming by our amazing drummers **Kevin A (10L)**, **Rayan M (10W)** and **Aarush P (8W)**.

### OR Harry Manocha (2012-2019) on Studying, Working, and Living Abroad

We welcomed back **Harry Manocha (OR 2012–2019)**, who delivered a presentation to Modern Foreign Language students about living, studying, and working in Spain. Harry graduated from the University of Bristol with a BA in History and Spanish.



### Enriching Modern Languages Trips

In October 2024, Year 8 students took part in a **cultural and homestay trip to Salamanca, Spain** during Reading Week, immersing themselves in Spanish language and culture.

In November 2024, **Year 8 and Year 11 students visited the Château de la Baudonnière in Normandy, France**, experiencing a full immersion in French language and culture. All activities, including lessons, excursions, meals and evening entertainment were conducted in French. The trip provided students with authentic, real-world opportunities to develop their French skills and prepared them for the exchanges in Years 10 and 12.



### Operation Language 2025

Reading School hosted its biggest ever A Level Languages event, 'Operation Language', run by BLC, with five schools and 94 students taking part. Alongside peers from Kendrick, The Abbey, The Holt and Downe House, our linguists explored how language skills can be applied in the workplace, focusing on the World Health Organisation. Keynote speakers **Alison Brunier (WHO)** and **Sophie Heywood (Reading University)** shared their experiences and highlighted the opportunities Modern Foreign Languages can offer.



Teams worked under tight deadlines to complete morning challenges: collecting information and producing, in a foreign language, a presentation, website, and social media campaign to raise awareness of a health issue through a new "International Day of...". In the afternoon, students presented their work orally, interpreting in real time for peers studying different languages.



In March 2025, Year 10 and Year 12 students took part in our **long-standing exchange with Lycée Jean Guéhenno in Fougères**, organised by **Mme Fondu** and **Mme McAllister**. Students participated in local visits and work experiences while hosting their French partners at Reading School. The French students were welcomed to Reading the following week, organised in collaboration with **Piggott School**.



### Reading School Debating Team Triumphs at Joutes Oratoires Lycéennes

The Joutes oratoires lycéennes is a French debating competition for sixth-form students, with regional heats leading to the national final at the Institut français du Royaume-Uni during the Mois de la Francophonie.

In January 2025, with the support and guidance of Mme Fondu, the Reading School team, **James T (RCh)**, **McDylan P-E (RCh)**, **James G (EFo)**, and **Gaurav K (FDa)**, won all their regional debates at **Marlborough College**, reaching the final against **Wellington College**. With just 15 minutes to prepare for the motion '*A benevolent dictatorship is always preferable to a weak democracy*', they emerged victorious and qualified for the national final — a historic achievement for the school.

At the national round in London, they debated '*The digitisation of works of art makes them accessible to all*' and '*The exploration of space is a necessity for humanity*', before progressing to the grande finale against St Paul's School on the motion '*Science must always have the last word*'. Judged on argument quality, language, persuasion, and teamwork, the team were crowned national winners.



# MUSIC

## House Music Competition 2024



In November 2024, Reading School proudly its House Music Competition at the Hexagon, Reading. The much-loved event brought together remarkable performances from each of the School's five houses, filling the auditorium with energy, artistry and friendly rivalry.

Guest adjudicators, **Mr Richard Meehan**, former **Director of Music (2011–2018)**, and virtuoso trumpeter **Ms Emily Ashby**, faced the difficult task of assessing performances of exceptional skill and creativity.

The final scores revealed just how intense the competition was, with only a few points separating first, second and third place. After a thrilling evening of music, passion and house spirit, School House were named winners of the Reading School House Music Competition 2024!

| House  | Position |
|--------|----------|
| School | 1st      |
| East   | 2nd      |
| County | 3rd      |
| West   | 4th      |
| Laud   | 5th      |



## House Music Competition 2025

On 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2025, Reading School returned to the Hexagon for 90th Annual House Music Competition.



From sweeping strings to bold brass, from breath-taking soloists to electrifying bands - our musicians gave us a show we'll never forget. The compères' humorous, confident delivery tied the evening together seamlessly, providing clarity, warmth, and professional pacing between acts.

In a historic first for the competition, this year introduced a live audience voting system, enabling guests to vote for their favourite houses across key performance categories. This innovation added an exciting interactive element to the evening, heightening audience engagement and sparking vibrant discussion during intervals.

This year, Laud House emerged as the standout performers, demonstrating exceptional musicality across every category. Strong solo performances, refined ensemble work, and outstanding compering support solidified their commanding lead.

| House  | Position |
|--------|----------|
| Laud   | 1st      |
| County | 2nd      |
| West   | 3rd      |
| East   | 4th      |
| School | 4th      |



### Sergey D (7W) Triumphs in International Piano Competitions

In September 2024, **Sergey D (7W)**, won the Grand First Prize at the Golden Piano Talents Competition in Bezisten, North Macedonia. Competing against pianists from 60 countries, Sergey impressed the judges with his performance at this prestigious international event, which supports and motivates young musicians of all ages and backgrounds.

In June 2025, Sergey reached the finals of Geneve Musicale in Geneva, performing with a professional

orchestra for the first time. He was awarded 2nd prize, an achievement his mother described as “hugely valuable for his development.” Sergey D, said, *“I met so many amazing pianists from around the world. Playing with an orchestra was a little nerve-wracking, but great fun. Thank you, Reading School, for supporting me!”*



### Joshua O (9W) accepted onto the National Youth Choir

**Joshua O (9W)** was accepted onto the prestigious National Youth Choir following a highly competitive nationwide audition. The judges praised Joshua’s *“confident, mature, well-prepared performance.”* A special thanks to **Director of Music, Mr O. Griffin**, and **Teacher of Music, Mr J. Druce**, for supporting Joshua on his singing journey.

### Raphael N (12SP) wins Brunel Trophy – Woodley Festival of Music & Arts

Congratulations to **Raphael N (12SP)** who was recently awarded the Brunel Trophy by the Woodley Festival of Music & Arts for the best performance in recital classes. Raphael is also a previous winner from 2023.







## Chapel Choir Head to Tuscany

During Reading Week 2025, Mr O. Griffin (Director of Music), Mr J. Newman (Teacher of Music), and Mr J. Druce (Director of Chapel Choir & Peripatetic Music Teacher) took the Reading School's Chapel Choir on their second annual overseas tour to Tuscany, Italy.

They provided music for three Catholic Mass services in Montecatini, Lucca, and Empoli, and visited landmarks including the Leaning Tower of Pisa, Boboli Gardens, the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence, the historic walled town of San Gimignano, the house of opera composer Giacomo Puccini in Lucca, and the Piazza del Campo and Duomo in Siena.

*"I found the trip extremely interesting due to the combination of cultural elements and the religious aspects of the choral services. It allowed me to immerse myself in a new environment where culture defined the tour—something I have rarely experienced outside the choir."*

Anon

# THEOLOGY & PHILOSOPHY

## Philosophy Day 2024: What is a Good Life?

Year 12 students enjoyed a thought-provoking day of Theology and Philosophy at Reading School, exploring the timeless question: ***“What is a good life?”***

***The event featured an inspiring line-up of speakers. Aftab Habib, England international cricketer and County***

***Championship winner, shared how motivation and perseverance can transcend sport, showing that ambition and resilience are key to a meaningful life. Imam Anees Ahmed from Wokingham Mosque*** encouraged students to focus on gratitude and positivity, suggesting that true happiness comes from cultivating contentment.

**Reverend Martin Davy from Holy Trinity, Theale**, challenged students to consider whether there is an objective good in the universe, prompting deep reflection on morality and ethics. The day concluded with **Professor David Oderberg from the University of Reading**, who drew on philosophers such as Aquinas, Spinoza, and Mill to highlight the pursuit of knowledge, creativity, and beauty as essential elements of a fulfilling life.

Throughout the day, students engaged enthusiastically with the speakers, asking insightful questions and debating complex ideas — a true celebration of intellectual curiosity at Reading School.

## Philosophy Day 2025: Do we have a soul?

Year 12 students took part in a fascinating and intellectually rich Philosophy Day 2025 at Reading School, centred on the profound theme: ***“Do we have a soul? — Immortality of the soul, artificial intelligence, and robotics.”***

The event brought together distinguished speakers from the University of Reading, who guided students through some of philosophy’s most enduring and contemporary questions.





**Professor David Oderberg**, a leading scholar in metaphysics and ethics, explored classical and modern arguments for the existence and immortality of the soul. Drawing on thinkers from Plato and Aquinas to contemporary philosophy of mind, he invited students to reflect on what it means to be a conscious, moral being in an age of technological advancement.



**Dr Jumbly Grindrod**, an expert in philosophy of mind who has published numerous articles on technology and artificial intelligence, examined whether machines could ever possess consciousness or a “soul.” He challenged students to consider how developments in the use of long language models (LLM) in AI and robotics might reshape our understanding of personhood, identity, and moral responsibility.

Throughout the day, students engaged in lively discussion and debate, posing insightful questions about the nature of consciousness, the limits of human understanding, and the ethical implications of creating intelligent machines.

Philosophy Day 2025 was a celebration of critical thinking and curiosity — an opportunity for students to explore the intersection of ancient philosophical inquiry and modern technology.

### The Ethics Cup 2025

In January 2025, Reading School’s Year 12 Ethics Cup team competed in the regional finals at Caterham School, Surrey, against 12 other schools. Scoring an impressive 296 points (just three behind the winners), they debated issues such as the ethics of computer games and workers’ strikes.





The team, **Indiana S (Captain) (SHu)**, **Oliver C (SPe)**, **Harvey M (ACr)**, **Yadveer G (SHu)**, **Adi A (MKa)**, **Aaryan A (MDa)** and **Liam G (ZMC)** was praised for their quick thinking, teamwork, and thoughtful responses. Guided by **Ms Geraldine Ng**, who also runs the Philosophy Lab for Year 9 students, they honed their ethical reasoning and debate skills in an inspiring and intellectually rich event.

### Student School Magazine Cogito Celebrates Intellectual Curiosity and Creativity

**Cogito**, Reading School's student-produced Philosophy Magazine, showcases a passion for deep ideas and critical thinking. The October 2025 edition showcases the intellectual curiosity and creativity that continue to thrive within our school community.

The latest edition of Cogito features a series of thought-provoking essays exploring morality, meaning, and modern ethics.



Highlights include **Bhrugu H's (11C)** critique of utilitarianism through his original "Sustainable Multiplier Theory," and **Harish B's (11L)** examination of the ethical controversies surrounding the 2022 Qatar World Cup. **Umar Q (11L)** investigates exploitation within Japan's anime industry, while **Avesta S (11L)** reflects on Camus' philosophy in One Must Imagine Sisyphus Happy. Finally, **Pedram A (11C)** tackles the moral complexities of euthanasia through multiple ethical frameworks.



# PHYSICS

## British Physics Olympiad 2024-2025

### Round 1

Eleven students competed in Round 1 of the British Physics Olympiad (BPhO) in October 2024. **Henry K (13L)**, **Nelson W (13S)**, **Max B (13S)**, and **Anish K (13C)** achieved top gold certificates—awarded to only the top 150 students nationally—while **Konstantin S (13S)** also earned gold. Silver certificates went to **Daniel S (13E)**, **Teo R (13E)**, **Prabhav B (13W)**, and **Shameer A (13E)**, with **Tony L (13W)** and **Ryan L (13L)** achieving Bronze I.



### Round 2

**Henry K**, **Max B** and **Anish K** were invited to participate in both the Physics and Astrophysics Olympiads round 2. These are incredibly difficult, 3-hour papers that test the problem solving skills of the very best student physicists in the country. All three students did very well, with Henry K receiving two gold certificates, **Anish K** receiving a gold in the physics competition and a silver in the astrophysics competition, and **Max B** receiving a silver in physics and a bronze in astrophysics. There were only 33 gold certificates in the Physics Olympiad across the entire country, so having two of them come from Reading School is a substantial achievement.

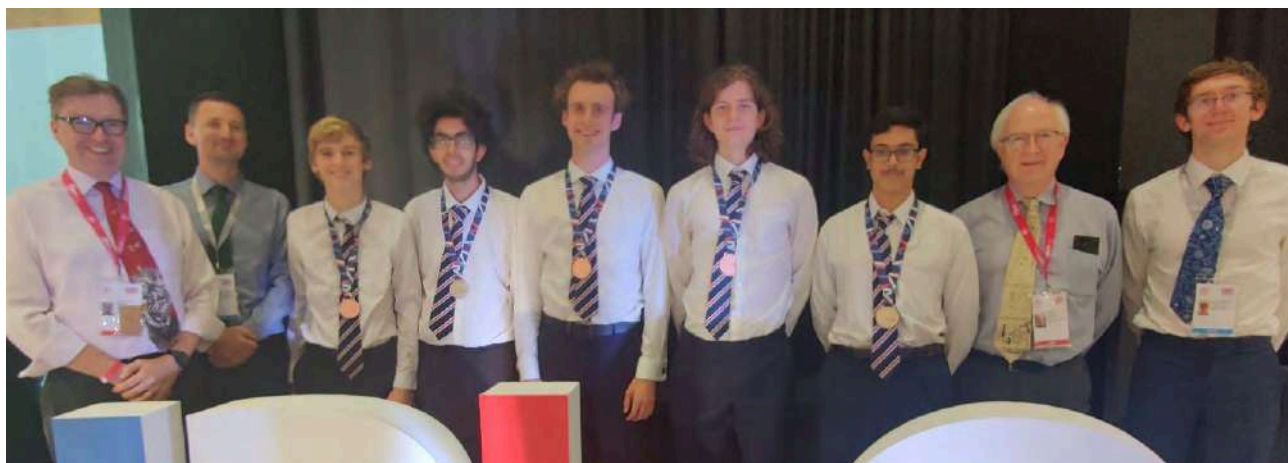


### International Physics Olympiad 2024-2025

Based on the strength of his performances in the round 2 competitions, **Henry K** was invited to attend the final selection camp for the UK International Physics Olympiad team at Oxford University in April 2025. He commented:

*“The training camp in Oxford was intense, every day lasted about 13 hours, it comprised of back-to-back 2-hour lectures and the occasional 4-hour practical task, all separated by just 10-minute breaks. It was a big shift from a typical school day as you’d reach 3:25 and realise you were only halfway through which really put the workload into perspective. On top of that, we were expected to complete additional work overnight, so most of us were surviving off an optimistic 6 hours of sleep. Despite the how demanding it was, getting to meet students who shared the same passion for physics made it all worth it, eating lunch with Jocelyn Bell was also pretty good.”*

**Henry K’s** outstanding achievements meant he was offered a place on the team. In July 2025, he represented the UK at the International Physics Olympiad in Paris, tackling both a five-hour practical and a five-hour theoretical exam, and was awarded a bronze medal. Henry has since progressed to study Engineering at the University of Oxford.







### Trip to CERN

During Reading Week in October 2024, Reading School's Physics Department led 14 aspiring physicists on a three-day trip to CERN in Geneva, Switzerland; the world's largest particle physics laboratory and home of the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), where the Higgs Boson was discovered in 2012.

Students received a guided tour from CERN scientists, visiting the Synchrocyclotron (CERN's first particle accelerator), the Data Centre (birthplace of the World Wide Web), and LINAC 2, a linear accelerator that once fed into the LHC. They also took part in a hands-on superconductivity workshop, using liquid nitrogen to cool materials to  $-200^{\circ}\text{C}$  and observing phenomena such as magnetic levitation.

As well as visiting CERN, students also had a tour of the Swiss Plasma Centre, a nuclear fusion research facility, and the Einstein Museum, part of the historical museum in Bern.

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

In October 2025, 14 Year 12 students visited the Diamond Light Source, the UK's largest particle accelerator, for an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour. The students explored the cutting-edge research being carried out less than an hour from Reading School, gaining a fascinating insight into the real-world applications of physics and engineering.



**Saksham R (12EFo)** reflected: *“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.”*

Martin W (12EFo) added: *“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.”*

## Reading School Students at Rutherford Appleton Laboratory

### RAL School Science Prize 2024

In December 2024, Reading School students across multiple year groups had the opportunity to explore their passion for science through two inspiring events at the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory (RAL), one of the UK's leading centres for scientific research.



In the RAL School Science Prize, 20 students from Years 7 and 8 each submitted a 500-word essay on 'Why I Love Science'. Out of more than 150 entrants, **Hamza M (7W)**, **Amogh B (7S)** and **Shaurya D (7C)** were selected as finalists.

During the final at RAL, they toured the ISIS neutron and muon source before presenting creative video essays that demonstrated their scientific knowledge and enthusiasm. The event was judged by leading scientists from across RAL, and although our finalists did not win the overall competition, reaching the final was a remarkable achievement that showcased their passion and originality.

### Science in Your Future Day - Trip to RAL

In February 2025, 15 Year 10 students returned to RAL for the 'Science in Your Future' Day, accompanied by **Ms Steedman**, **Mr Hung**, and **Dr Lewis-Brown**. The event gave students valuable insights into STEM careers, featuring talks from early-career scientists working at the Boulby Underground Laboratory and hands-on workshops on solar-powered cars and biological modelling. The day concluded with a tour of the Diamond Light Source, one of the UK's most advanced particle accelerators.

Both events highlighted the curiosity, creativity and ambition of Reading School's young scientists, who continue to engage with cutting-edge research and innovative learning beyond the classroom.

*"I really enjoyed the RA laboratory trip, as it was a fascinating introduction to the practical applications of science and engineering. The highlight of the trip was the guided tour of the Diamond Light Source, where we got to see various research apparatus and areas."*

**Edward Y (10W)**





### Williams Racing Trip

Year 12 students recently visited the **Williams F1 STEM Experience**, gaining a fascinating insight into engineering, technology, and potential STEM careers within motorsport. The visit included engaging activities such as the e-sports lounge and a hands-on workshop where students worked in teams to design and build a nose for an F1 car using a set budget and materials. This challenge tested their engineering knowledge, creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving skills, providing a real-world application of STEM principles. Students described the experience as “absolutely incredible,” highlighting the supportive staff, practical challenges, and opportunities to explore careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.



# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

## Kenwick Sports Pathway: Inspiring the Next Generation of Athletes

The first cohort of 15 Year 7 students on the Kenwick Sports Pathway (KSP) enjoyed their first visit to our partners, Go Perform. The KSP is a pioneering programme designed to develop students not just as athletes, but as individuals, combining personal growth with sporting excellence.

Led by Head of PE & Sport **Steve Allen**, Assistant Headteacher **Tom Evans**, and ex-GB rower and sport performance psychologist **James Stephenson**, the pathway takes a values-led approach that allows student-athletes to thrive.

Each term, students take part in exciting activities like climbing in Michaelmas, boxing in Lent and rowing in Summer to develop resilience and teamwork along the way. The programme encourages students to see sport as more than a game, connecting them to a journey bigger than themselves and highlighting the social impact sport can have.

Thanks to partnerships with **Go Perform** and **Fitlife**, students' fitness and commitment are closely monitored and supported, ensuring they have the guidance and resources to reach their full potential.





# LEARNING RESOURCES CENTRE

In March 2025, Reading School hosted its **12th Annual Book Festival**, continuing its tradition of celebrating the joy of reading. The festival, made possible by **The Old Redingensians Association**, brought together notable authors to inspire and engage students. This cherished event highlighted the school's commitment to fostering a love for literature and intellectual curiosity.

Special thanks to our **School Librarian, Mrs L Kesteven**, and **Library Assistant, Daisy Loft**, for their dedication, and to **The Old Redingensians Association** for their invaluable support.

## Chris Bradford

Reading School favourite, **Chris Bradford**, author of the Young Samurai, Bodyguard and Soul series returned to deliver his Young Samurai talk to Year 7 and Bodyguard talk to Year 8.

During his visit, he also met with the Book Club and presented prizes to the winners of the short story competition.

Chris's books continue to be hugely popular with students — The Way of the Warrior is the third most borrowed fiction book this year, Hostage is fourth, and The Soul Hunters ranks twenty-fifth.



“ I thought the talk was really amazing. It was engaging, fun and interesting. I especially enjoyed the bit where he talked about all the different fighting styles.

Prithwish, 7E ”





## Lewis Dartnell

**Prof. Lewis Dartnell**, Oxford graduate and Professor of Science Communication at the University of Westminster, delivered a talk to all Year 9 students based on his bestseller *The Knowledge: How to Rebuild Our World from Scratch*. The session offered stretch and challenge, with students exploring topics in space, science, and research, and enjoying a Q&A at the end.

Ahead of the talk, Year 9 pupils read one of his books and carried out research on him during an HPQ lesson, giving them a deeper insight into his work and writing process.

“It was great; he challenged our knowledge to develop critical thinking, and I learnt a lot in the process.  
Christopher, 12JTE

”

## Sarah Govett

Year 10 pupils enjoyed a visit from Oxford graduate and author **Sarah Govett**, whose dystopian works include *The Territory* trilogy and *We Go On Forever*. She co-wrote the feature film *T.I.M.*, which premiered on Netflix UK in August 2023, and her first adult thriller, *Believe*, is due in June 2025.

Ahead of the talk, students explored dystopian fiction in a lesson that included reading passages from Sarah's work and a research task to find out more about the author. The session provided an engaging introduction to the genre, complementing their English GCSE studies.



“It was amazing to hear how Sarah Govett went from a law student to a tutor, and then to an author, and how perfectly each role fell into place.

Sree, 10S

”



## World Book Day 2025 & Drop Everything and Read 2025

We marked World Book Day on Thursday 6th March 2025 with our annual Drop Everything and Read event, which gives students and staff the opportunity to spend a period immersing themselves in the joy of reading, or listening to an audiobook or podcast.



## Poetry on the Stairs: Celebrating Creativity and the Power of Words

Over the past seven years, Poetry under the Stairs has inspired students at Reading School to share their creativity in celebration of National Poetry Day.

In 2024, students performed poetry, prose and haikus, with a student-led panel recognising emerging talent. The intimate setting beneath the stairs was filled with energy as peers and staff cheered on performers.



The 2025 event showcased an even wider variety of works, from poems and sonnets to limericks and raps. The highlight was the announcement of Reading School's new Poet Laureate, **Prithwish D (8E)**, who received his award from **Mr Baldock, Head of English**. The event was organised by **Deputy Head Pupil Librarian, Sid M (12ELa)**, with the support of the Pupil Librarian Team. Across both years, the event has provided a vibrant platform for students to discover their voices, share their creativity, and celebrate the power of words.



## Harry Potter Triwizard Tournament 2024

We welcomed both Kendrick School and The Abbey to our annual Harry Potter-themed quiz on Tuesday afternoon. The event would not have been possible without the support of the Learning Resource Centre team, student and staff volunteers, and our Catering Team.



## House Reading Quiz

House Captains and Prefects from County House, East House, Laud House, School House and West House teamed up with a student from each year group to take part in a quiz on five books they had all been asked to read in advance. The list included: Skulduggery Pleasant (Landy), Gone (Grant), What If? (Randall), The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, and Inheritance Games.

Round One tested general book knowledge and determined the order for Round Two. Round Two focused on four of the prescribed books, with questions worth 1, 2, 3, 6 and 8 points. Round Three comprised a single, challenging question based on the fifth book. Teams could choose to gamble points – a true test of strategy and resilience!

The quiz was organised by Head Pupil Librarian **Edward Yan (10W)**, with support from the rest of the Pupil Librarian Team.



# WOODWORK

This past year has seen the rebirth of woodwork at Reading School. The sessions have taken place in Junior School's former kiln room and we have been using Engineering equipment that had been stored under the Lecture Theatre since the introduction of Computer Rooms into E1-4, as well as the old Science benches that were redundant after the new Science block was built. As part of the Elective programme, all Year 10s have been on a rotation of 'life skills', one of which has been an introduction to carpentry with **Mr G Fairchild (Assistant Head)**.

Thanks to the generosity of the **RSPA** and their fantastic Amazon Wishlist, all students have been able to get hands-on experience with hammers, drills, planes and chisels. With the aim of creating a Christmas decoration, students had an introduction to the language of tools, and the risks – both in terms of health & safety but also ineffective use and the implications for cost/resources. In the workshop, they then worked in pairs through a series of lessons planned to introduce a different skill each time, and plenty of opportunity to try it out.

Beyond the collaboration and perseverance required for safe and effective carpentry, we hope that these simple skills and experiences will prompt students to try this outside of the School gates too.

**If you have any equipment sitting unused in the shed, or have contacts who could help with resources, please contact Mr G Fairchild at [gfairchild@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:gfairchild@reading-school.co.uk).**



# ENTRANCE TEST

## Breaking New Ground

Many of you will remember the anxiety and delight of arriving for your first day at Reading School, or indeed accompanying your little boy to the gates of ‘big school’. This is the beginning of a joyous 5-7 years of broad, rich, challenging and exciting education, one that we are proud to offer. For the admissions team here, while that is the end of our involvement with those students, we also share that joy and delight, for we have achieved our aim – that is, we have enabled boys who will most benefit from a Reading School education to access it.



***“Our admissions policies and processes seek to ensure that Reading School serves its local community, broadly reflecting the diversity within the town, providing opportunity for the disadvantaged and achieving social impact through enabling admission to this school for those who most benefit from the education we provide.”***

We were delighted in October, therefore, to receive recognition of those efforts from The Sutton Trust, in the form of their ‘Gold’ Fair Admissions Award.





Gold is awarded to schools that have made determined and significant changes to their admissions policies to ensure fair access for all pupils, regardless of socio-economic background. This award also recognises Reading School's ongoing commitment to social impact and to ensuring that all young people have access to the best possible education.

### **How has Reading School achieved fairer access for all pupils?**

Granting maximum and unlimited priority to families eligible for the Pupil and Service Premiums (and those with Social or Welfare needs) - RS Admissions Policy;  
Redrawing our catchment area to prioritise postcodes in the most deprived local communities;

- Inviting children (both boys and girls) from under-represented local primary schools to receive mentoring from our senior students throughout the year;
- Prioritising applicants who demonstrate both academic ability AND sporting aptitude;
- Collaborating with primary schools and the local authority to update and shift perceptions of selective education;
- Promoting a healthier narrative around entrance test preparation - FSCE - 10 Tips for our Year 7 Entrance Test;
- Aligning our entrance test more closely with the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum – for example removing Non-Verbal Reasoning whilst incorporating content from KS2 Foundation subjects;
- Innovating and diversifying test content to reduce any advantage gained through tutoring for predictable test formats (Familiarisation Guide and for parents).

In what has been a busy 2025, November saw Headmaster, Dr Evans and Director of Admissions, Greg Fairchild, present at the inaugural Future Stories conference, held at Birmingham Cathedral, where Dr Evans spoke powerfully to his grammar school peers from across the country about how the 11+ admissions process is a unique opportunity to give and fulfil early hope, rather than needing to wait until A Level results day, while Mr Fairchild spoke of how brave and innovative entrance test design beats tutoring every time.

This sparked the attention of national media, culminating in the publication of two articles in The Sunday Times, where provocative headlines sat above meaningful contributions from Dr Evans about the innovative work that Reading School are doing to shake up grammar school entrance testing:

### Is the 11-plus making your child stupid?

The exam is now gamed, turning children into bots and making them less intellectually curious. A new style admissions process could be the answer



Louise Kodes, Education and Early Years Editor | Friday December 05 2025, 6:00am, The Sunday Times

***“Reading School, a grammar school in Berkshire, has created a new style of admissions process where the subjects tested can change year to year, from geography to history. Maths and English are also tested but only on topics taught in the national curriculum.”***

***“[Dr Evans] said: ‘A ‘grammar school or bust’ mentality with tutoring starting at the age of seven produces children who have a functional view of education — simultaneously capable of significant processing while exhibiting less curiosity. Since the***

***1990's evidence has shown that non-verbal and verbal reasoning is based on a monolithic view of intelligence.”***

Nine schools are now using Reading’s admissions test via its Future Stories Community Enterprise. **Evans said, “It tests curiosity and creativity whereas, we think, VR and NVR broadly do the opposite and reward coaching, predictability and parental investment.”**

Without ever sacrificing high academic standards, we believe we can better reflect our local community. We believe that entrance test innovation beyond English and Maths, improved relationships with local primary schools and more targeted communication with elements of our community that are either unaware of Reading School or have outdated ideas about its admissions process, are crucial.

We are therefore delighted to welcome Phillipa Irving as Admissions Officer, whose attention to detail and advertising background will bring huge benefits to this approach. However, this means a fond farewell to Admissions Officer, Penny Hickman, who has been instrumental in overseeing the significant recent changes – she is the person behind the email you received that day in March when you officially became a Reading School boy, and her diligence and humour will be much missed.

From posting adverts on local Facebook pages, to organising Open Days, visiting primary schools, administering over 1000 test registrations, running three sessions of entrance tests and responding to thousands of emails from anxious parents, the work of the Admissions Team is often unseen, but increasingly important in ensuring that Reading School serves its local community.





# SPORT, CLUBS & SOCIETIES





### County Speed Swimming Championships 2025

The Berks & South Bucks ASA held the County Speed Swimming Championships over two weekends in January 2025, with several Reading School students proudly competing.

**Aaron D (8S), Eryk K (7E), and Artem B (7E)** all took part in the 12–13 years category, competing in individual and/or relay events. Artem achieved two bronze medals (100m and 200m backstroke), while Aaron also secured two bronze medals (200m freestyle and 200m butterfly), along with achieving personal best times in all the events for which he qualified.

### English Secondary Schools Swimming Championship 2025

Reading School's Swimming Team proudly competed in the South East Division qualifying round of the English Secondary Schools Swimming Championship at St George's School, Ascot, in September 2025, facing strong competition from Wellington College Prep, Edgbarrow School, The Forest School, and Reading Blue Coat School.

Last year, our **Junior Team – Taksh C (7W), Eryk K (8E), Josh W (8C), and Toby S (8C)** – won both the Freestyle and Medley Relays. This year, they once again showed great determination, triumphing in the Freestyle Relay, while the Medley Relay was a thrilling contest, with Edgbarrow School finishing just hundredths of a second behind.

The **Intermediate Team – Aaron D (9S), Rutwik B (10E), Aditya P (10L), and Shreyas K (10W)** – demonstrated commendable perseverance, while the **Senior Team – Adi A (13MKa), Ji Ji W (13JTe), Kai T (13E), and Aarav R (10W)** – produced strong performances, finishing second in both of their races, with Reading Blue Coat School taking first place.







### Marylebone Cricket Club vs Reading School's 1st XI - June 2025

Reading School hosted the MCC for their historic annual cricket fixture, a tradition dating back to 1898. After last year's landmark victory, the team entered the match confident and eager to perform.

MCC batted first after winning the toss and made a fast start, reaching 80 in the first ten overs. Reading recovered well, led by strong bowling performances from **Ritesh S (13ZMC)** (5–91), earning him an invitation to Lord's, and **Bhavik K (10L)** (2–29), restricting MCC before a late surge took the visitors to 294–8 declared from 45 overs.

Reading's reply began promisingly, with openers **Akshay B (13CMA)** (56) and captain **Eshan J (13VGG)** putting on 56 for the first wicket. At 71–1 at tea, the game was evenly poised. However, a collapse after the interval saw wickets fall rapidly, despite resistance from **Dhruv P (12JPI)** and a late counterattack from **Bhavik K (10L)** (26 off 12). Reading were bowled out for 165, with MCC's **James MacGowan** taking 5–46.

Although the result did not mirror the previous year's success, the team showed resilience, spirit, and pride, earning praise from the MCC for both performance and sportsmanship. The fixture remains a cherished tradition, reflecting the enduring values of Reading School cricket.

The match was attended by **former Head of History and Head of Sixth Form, Ned Holt (OR 1966–1972)**, alongside **MCC cricketer Joel Walker (OR 2006–2011)**, adding an extra touch of Reading School heritage to the event.









## National Squash Championships 2024-2025

Reading School Squash Club entered teams in all three age groups of the 2024–2025 National Schools Squash Championships. Each team competed in two stages: the initial round in November/December 2024 and the Plate competition in January/February 2025. This was only the school's second year in the competition, with the boys facing significantly more experienced opposition.

Across all categories, the teams demonstrated impressive determination, skill and sportsmanship. The KS3 squad — **Vihaan T (9W)**, **Vihaan G (9W)**, **Aarav R (9W)**, **Maxim H (9S)** and **Kaushal N (8S)** — delivered an outstanding performance, coming close to reaching the National Plate Finals.

The KS4 team comprised **Varnesh R (10W)**, **Henry R (10E)**, **Abraham S (10C)**, **Oscar Z (10W)** and **Maxim H (9S)**, while the KS5 team featured **Henry R (10E)**, **Oli B (13RW)**, **Dan S (13RW)**, **Teo R (13SP)** and **Vighnesh U (12EL)**.

All three teams competed exceptionally well and should be proud of the way they represented the school, with the KS3 team's near-qualification for the National Plate Finals a particular highlight.

## Advait N (7S) is runner-up at the Badminton England Junior National Championships

**Advait N (7S)** was runner-up at the Badminton England Junior National Championships, held at the National Badminton Centre in Milton Keynes in November 2024. Advait brought home two silver medals after reaching the finals in both the Boys' Singles and Boys' Doubles events. He was also selected to represent England as part of the U13 team competing in the Badminton Planet Youth Tournament in the Netherlands in December 2024.





### James S (12JT) competes in the 2024 European U19 Junior Badminton Championships

**James S (12JT)** continues to go from strength to strength after the YONEX German Ruhr U17 International 2024 Tournament. James competed in the men's singles and mixed doubles events, winning the mixed doubles alongside his partner, Sofie, held in October 2024.

James also represented England at the 2024 European U19 Junior Championships, which took place in late November 2024. Remarkably, he was the only competitor selected by Badminton England who was under 17 years of age.

### Reading School Double Winners at the 2025 Badminton England National School Championships

Congratulations to Reading School's Badminton champions: **Kaushal N (9S)**, **Akhil G (11W)**, **Aditya V (10L)**, **Jimmy B (12SAI)**, **Emin B (12JTE)**, **Advait N (8S)**, **Nived N (12MKa)**, **Arhant Y (9W)**, and **Vihaan G (10W)**, who triumphed at the Badminton England National Schools Championships in April 2025.

A special mention goes to **Mr Steve Pedlow (Teacher of Mathematics)**, whose expert coaching over several years has guided the team to repeated success, and to all the parents whose support helped make this achievement possible.





### Toby S (8C) celebrates British Triathlon Championships Success

**Toby S (8C)** competed in the British Triathlon Super Series, proudly representing the South-Central region. Toby's journey into triathlon began through his love of cycling and running. Inspired by watching the triathlon at the Tokyo Olympics in 2021, he decided to join Reading Rascals, a local triathlon club, which has provided both a competitive challenge and a welcoming community.



### Nishad V (7W) Wins Gold at the Goju Karate National Competition 2025

Congratulations to **Nishad V (7W)** on his outstanding achievements at the Goju Karate National Competition 2025, where he won gold medals in both the Individual Kata and Kumite categories, as well as a silver medal in the Team Kata event.

The national competition is open to junior and cadet competitors aged 6 to 17 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).



# Q & A

WITH JAMES D (10E)

***Congratulations to James D (10E) for achieving a 1st Dan black belt in the Korean Martial Art, Taekwondo.***

***We spoke with James about his achievement:***



**Can you tell us more about your black belt achievement in Taekwondo?**

*I just got my black belt a month ago during a day grading which means spending a whole day being assessed, starting at 8am and finishing at 5:30pm. The day starts with a theory paper where you have to complete translation from English to Korean and from Korean to English. There're also some questions about different aspects of Taekwondo including patterns and rules that we follow which you have to go onto practically demonstrate later in the day. The practicals include being able to demonstrate self-defence, for example being able to manage yourself if someone grabs you, as well as sparring against an opponent and finishing off with jumps and kicks. The day is finished with a spirit test, which is basically testing your mental and physical strength.*

**How long have you been practicing Taekwondo?**

*About 10 years now. I originally got into Taekwondo because my mum was looking for something for me to do, and she found a local class and the rest is history.*

**Does Taekwondo have a real-world application?**

*Yes, the self-defence aspect can be used real-world. Basically, if someone grabs you, you'll have effective techniques to use and know how to use them. It's all about unarmed combat and being able to defend yourself against someone who may be armed.*

**What's Taekwondo given you?**

*I think it's given me a clear moral compass, because it teaches you a lot about what you should do and what you don't do. We also have the five tenets, which is, courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self-control and indomitable spirit. So those are the things we live by. And then we also have the oath, which is, I should observe the tenets of Taekwondo, I shall be courteous towards others, I should demonstrate integrity, to persevere despite difficulties, having self-control and an indomitable spirit.*







### South Africa Cricket Tour 2025 – February 2025

During the 2025 February half term, 26 students from Years 9–13 travelled to Cape Town for a ten-day cricket tour. Led by **Mr Blade, Mr Betteridge, Mr Allen, Mr McGall and Mr Edwards**, the squad embraced a superb combination of competitive fixtures and rich cultural experiences, proudly representing Reading School throughout.

Over the course of the tour, the boys played four matches against renowned South African schools: **Wynberg Boys' School, Rondebosch Boys', Reddam House Constantia and Pinelands High**. The teams rose to the challenge with distinction. The First XI claimed a standout victory over Wynberg Boys', successfully chasing 217 thanks to an exceptional 135\* from **Avi Pasikanti**. The Second XI also impressed, securing two well-deserved wins against Reddam House Constantia and Pinelands High.

Beyond the cricket, the group immersed themselves in the extraordinary landscape and sporting heritage of **Cape Town**. Highlights included a professional coaching session at the Gary Kirsten Cricket Academy, a visit to the **Stony Point Penguin Colony, a Peninsula tour**, and a demanding but rewarding ascent of **Table Mountain**. These experiences strengthened team cohesion and offered students a valuable window into South African life.

The tour was an overwhelming success, with students demonstrating maturity, commitment and exemplary sportsmanship throughout. It was a journey marked by learning, camaraderie and unforgettable memories—an experience that reflected immense pride for all involved.

**Ryan Blade**  
**Head of Cricket; Teacher of PE**





*“Our 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.*

*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.”*

Avi P (13MDa)





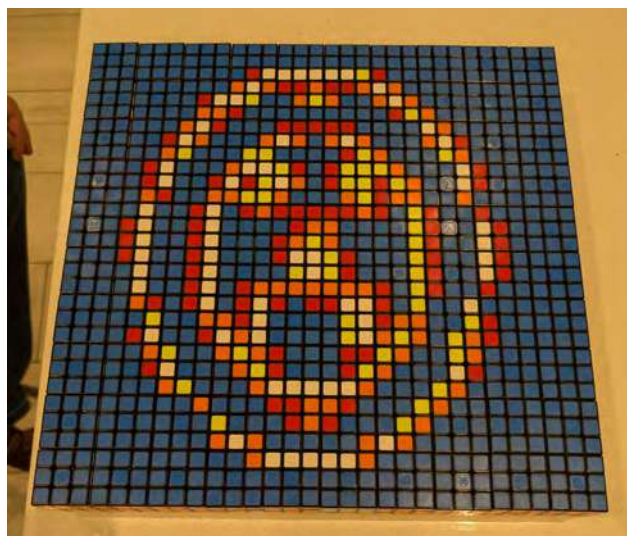
### Warhammer Club

Warhammer Club is supported and led by a keen group of Year 8 students who join in with model making and gaming after school on Fridays. We are a member of the Warhammer School's Alliance and we hope to participate in one of their gaming tournaments in July. The last time we competed, back in 2019, we came 5<sup>th</sup> in the National School's Kill Team tournament final.

### Junior Book Club

The club is open to Year 7-10 and there is a mix of regulars from these years who attend. They run weekly quizzes and they participate in Book Awards. Last year, we took some year 8 students to Reading Blue Coat School for the launch of the 2025 Berkshire Book Award Shortlist. This year, we are hosting the shortlist event with pupils from schools across Berkshire due to attend. The 2025 BBA winner, Mark Illis will be giving a talk and the students will have the opportunity to discuss the shortlist with like minded book enthusiasts from other schools.





### Speedcubing

In November 2025, **Austin H (9L)**, with the support of **Mrs L Clarke (Teacher of Mathematics)**, took over from **Yassine D (9L)** to organise the Speedcubing competition.

The event featured three age categories—Juniors, Colts and Seniors—ensuring wide participation across the school. Held in the refectory, the competition was supported by a dedicated team of volunteers who assisted with setup and cube scrambling. Using standardised scrambles, the scrambler ensured that each group began with identical configurations. A runner delivered each scrambled cube to its competitor, while a judge instructed participants to start, timed their solves, recorded the results on scorecards and returned them to the scrambler for the next round.

After the final solves were completed, all scorecards were collated and the data entered into an Excel spreadsheet, with **Mrs Clarke** reviewing the final results. Reflecting on the experience, **Austin** said, “I felt proud to have led a House event in Year Eight. I hope to continue this this year, so get practising your cubing!”



### Reading School Islamic Society

The ISOC is a society for Muslim students, primarily centred around prayer but also offering words of encouragement and community support through its Teams chat. The society is lead by senior students, **Nader E (13MKa)**, **Amaan B (13SAI)**, and **Hashem E (12ZMC)** and juniors, **Rayyan J (10W)** and **Abodi K (9W)**.

*“Things have been going very well this year with ISOC. We are consistently holding weekly Friday prayers. The Khutbahs (speeches) for the Friday prayer have covered a wide variety of topics. However, the main focus has been on important virtues in Islam, such as community and humility. There have also been speeches explaining parts of the Qur’an, such as Surah al-Fatihah (the opening chapter of the Qur’an) and the last few verses of Surah al-Baqarah. We have had many students help in leading the Friday prayers amongst both seniors and juniors, which is great to see.”*

Nadar E (13MKa)



### Christian Union (CU)

It has been a wonderful year for Reading School’s Christian Union (CU)! Both senior and junior students meet weekly and have enjoyed time together through games, fellowship, and opening the Bible. Last Advent, members helped to decorate the Chapel Christmas tree ahead of our first CU Carol Service. The event featured much-loved carols accompanied by **Mr A. Dimmick (Head of Digital Learning)** on the guitar and a talk from **Xavier C (13 ELAWA)** and, of course, mince pies to finish.

Throughout the year, the CU explored St Mark's Gospel—an eye-witness account of the life of Jesus of Nazareth—while Junior CU enjoyed an array of games, from Mafia and Imposter to Empires and Opengusser. In July 2025, they rounded off the year with a sunny summer party filled with lively matches of Ninja and Catch the Dragon's Tail, alongside plenty of drinks and snacks.

The new academic year began with Launch, an afternoon of games, refreshments and a welcome talk from **Rev'd Dr C Evans (Headmaster)**. In November, eighteen students joined **Mr M Amos (School Chaplain)** and **Dr L Dowle (Teacher of Mathematics)** on the CU trip to Reboot City, an apologetics conference run by the Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics (OCCA), headed by **Professor John Lennox**.

The boys enjoyed talks on topics ranging from the historicity of the Bible to spiritual experiences—and sampled an impressive number of doughnuts and Domino's along the way!

Whether you are a Christian or simply curious about Christianity, you are very welcome to join us for our weekly lunchtime gatherings. Please contact **Dr L Dowle** for more information.

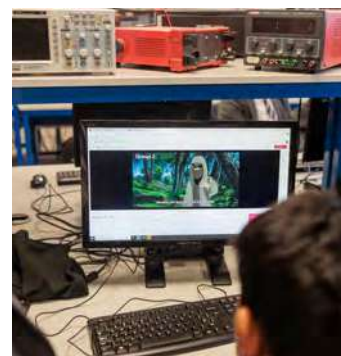
### Anime

How realistic do you think the Japanese animes are? Do ninjas really run without swinging their arms? Are those patterns on the kimonos designed by the author?

Why are these animes popular in recent years? How do we compare the western comics and the Japanese mangas in terms of character design and storyline? More importantly, how did the author come up with those ideas?

This elective, run by **Mr V Cho (Cover**

**Teacher)**, offers an opportunity for students to delve into the creative process of character design through the analytical lens of popular mangas. The curriculum is structured to foster critical thinking and creativity. It has been designed to be interdisciplinary, to bridge art and design, drama, gender studies, cultural studies, English literature and mathematics.





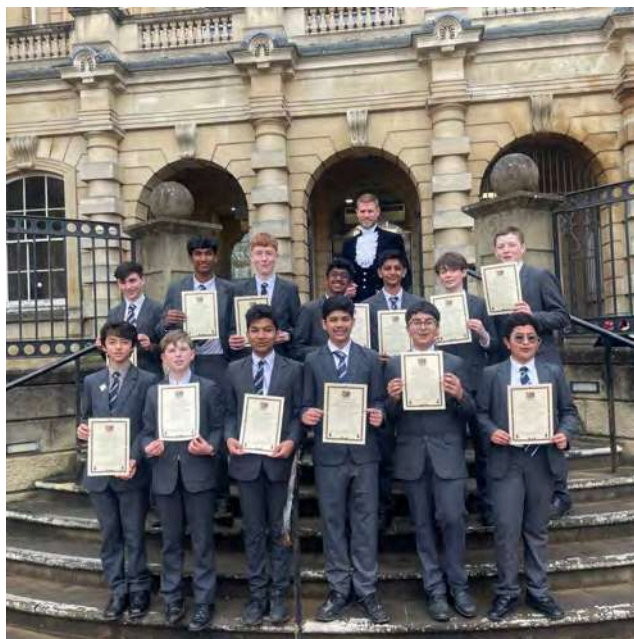
## Year 8 & 9 Berkshire Magistrates' Court Mock Trial Competition

The Berkshire Magistrates' Court School Mock Trial Competition is an annual event in which students take on the roles of magistrates, lawyers, legal advisors, defendants, witnesses and ushers to participate in a criminal case held in a real courtroom.

In March 2025, 13 of our Year 8 and Year 9 students took part in the competition, and we are delighted to share that our team won their heat and progressed to the finals, held in May 2025. This achievement would not have been possible without the support and guidance of **Dr Stefan Fafinski (OR 1978–1985) JP DL** and **Dr Emily Finch**.

**Samarth M, Shreyas K, Darsh P, Neel K, Kacper L, Joshua O, Aarav K, Lucas Y, Toby B, Owen S, Rutwick B, Austin H and Dawood S** represented Reading School superbly in the heats, led by Dr Stefan Fafinski and Dr Emily Finch, with additional support from **Head of History, Mr Whitehorn**, and **Library Assistant, Ms Loft**.

Although the team did not go on to win the final, they finished third overall out of ten schools from Berkshire, Hampshire and Oxfordshire, placing just behind Piggott (2nd) and Emmbrook (1st).



***“Their dedication and meticulous preparation really came through on the day, and they showed their legal mettle in the courtroom. Their passion and clarity shone through in their work, and they displayed great calmness and confidence in a high-pressure situation.”***

Mr Whitehorn (Head of History)

Reflecting on the team's success, **Dr Fafinski** shared, *“The boys gave it absolutely everything; there was very little more they could have done to raise their game... It's about poise, flexibility and teamwork. And in that respect, the boys were truly exceptional — supporting each other throughout, congratulating, encouraging and commiserating in equal measure. It would be unfair to single anyone out, but we were incredibly impressed by Rupert T (9C), who stepped in only last Wednesday to fill a vacancy, got up to speed in just three days, and performed brilliantly.”*

# COMBINED CADET FORCE (CCF)

## Rohan O'C (13RW) & Harry P (13FH) awarded an Army Officer Scholarship award

**Rohan O'C and Harry P** were both awarded an Army Officer Scholarship award after being recognised for possessing exceptional leadership potential and securing a confirmed place to train as an Army Officer at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst.



*"The Army shares a lot of the same values as Reading School, such as respect for others, discipline, integrity, leadership, commitment and service...I felt like I could draw on a lot of my experience at School, especially our values, and I think a lot of it, especially as an Officer, is about being a role model. As a sixth form student, I feel like that's something I've tried to do as a Prefect, to be a role model for students in lower years and also my peers."*

*"I joined back in Year 9 and I'm now in Year 13 so that's nearly 5 years. Joining was an independent choice even through my dad was a Cadet at Radley College. I remember him saying, 'you know, one of my best school experiences was joining the Cadets' and the fact that there were Kendrick girls did sway my decision my original decision to join!"*



## Edward K (10E) earns his Powerboat Level 2 qualification

In April 2025, **Edward K** for earned his Powerboat Level 2 qualification. His achievement showcases both his initiative and the opportunities available through the Combined Cadet Force at Reading School. Edward commented, *"It gives me a great sense of pride to be able to represent the School in this way as it is not in just an academic or school environment, which shows for me that you can take what you learn in school in lessons like Floreat, and apply it to real world experiences. So, in that sense it means much more to me than just the qualification as I feel as if I've done the school justice as one of its students and future Old Redingensian."*







## Reading School CCF Contingent Banners Parade



Reading School CCF paraded their new Contingent Banners for the first time on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025 ahead of a Chapel Service and Blessing with HRH The Duke of Edinburgh present. This parade marked the 900th anniversary of Reading School and the 125th anniversary of Reading School CCF. The unit started as a Royal Engineers Cadet Corps in 1900.

The Inspecting Officer, Brigadier Thammy Evans QVRM VR, Director of Army Personnel, led the inspection and 94 Cadets were on parade. A further 120 Cadets from Recruit Company completed route lining duties.

***"In 25 years of service as a Cadet Adult I can honestly say I have never been prouder. This was a parade of unparalleled excellence and our Cadets have done themselves, their school and the National Cadet movement proud."***

Contingent Commander Lt Col John Flexman





# LECTURES & TALKS

# INSPIRE LECTURES

At Reading School, we are committed to equipping our students with the insight and inspiration they need to explore meaningful careers and make informed choices about their futures. One of the ways we do this is through our Inspire Lecture series, which brings together alumni, parents, and industry professionals to share their experiences and advice. We are hugely grateful to one of our most committed Old Redingensians for funding this programme.

## TMUA Support Session for Economics with Dev Goyal (OR 2014-2021)

In September 2024, **Dev Goyal (OR 2014–2021)** returned to Reading School to deliver a session for Year 13 students considering applying to the University of Cambridge. Dev is a recent Economics and Management graduate from the University of Cambridge and is currently studying for a Master's degree at the University of Oxford.



## AI in Healthcare with Tads Ciecierski-Holmes (OR 2009-2017)

**Tads Ciecierski-Holmes (OR 2009–2017)** returned to Reading School to explore the role of artificial intelligence in the future of medicine. A graduate-entry medical student and Economics graduate from the University of Cambridge, Tads offered students a fascinating look at how AI is transforming an early diagnosis and personalised treatment to improving access in low- and middle-income countries. He explained how innovative AI tools are being developed to tackle real-world healthcare challenges, highlighting both the opportunities and ethical questions the technology presents. Students left inspired, gaining a deeper understanding of the intersection between medicine, technology, and global impact.







### Data & Maths in Football with Sanjay Arulchelvam (OR 2012–2019)

How do data and mathematics shape the beautiful game? **Sanjay Arulchelvam (OR 2012–2019)** addressed this in his lecture, “Scouting for Success: How Data and Maths are Shaping Football’s Future.” Currently Data Scouting Manager for the Saudi Pro League, Sanjay combines his passion for football with data analytics to help clubs recruit talent and build competitive squads.

He introduced students to the cutting-edge world of football analytics, showing how algorithms and statistical models are used to identify hidden talent and inform strategic decisions. Sanjay’s talk demonstrated the exciting career opportunities that exist at the intersection of sport, data, and technology, inspiring students to think creatively about combining their interests.

### Exploring Languages and International Relations with Kaloyan (Kalvin) Gavrilov (OR 2020-2022)

In November 2024, Kaloyan Gavrilov (OR 2020-2022) returned to Reading School to deliver two Inspire Lectures, sharing his experience of studying International Relations with French at the London School of Economics.

Kalvin spoke about how his passion for languages grew into a valuable academic and professional asset, offering practical advice to students considering language-based degrees. He gave an insightful overview of International Relations and its relevance in an interconnected world, emphasising the importance of communication and cultural understanding. He also shared helpful guidance on university applications, student life, and language course choices.



### Actuarial Careers with Nick Lax (OR 1995–2000)

From mathematics to global finance, **Nick Lax (OR 1995–2000)** shared his journey as an actuary in the international insurance industry. His lecture explored how actuaries use probability and risk analysis to solve real-world problems and influence sectors including insurance, banking, healthcare, and climate change.

Nick emphasised the importance of problem-solving, adaptability, and business acumen, encouraging students to step outside their comfort zones, embrace travel, and experience new cultures to broaden their perspectives. Over 50 students from Reading School, Kendrick School, and The Abbey attended, leaving inspired by the real-world impact of actuarial careers.



### Sustainability - A Path to Impactful Careers with Current Parent, Amit Saxena

In January 2025, students were joined by **Amit Saxena**, a current parent and Principal Partner Technical Specialist at IBM, for his lecture. Amit shared insights from his 22-year career in technology, exploring how sustainability and ESG initiatives are shaping modern business practices.

He highlighted opportunities across sustainability consultancies, CSR, sustainable finance, and public sector roles, as well as career pathways within IBM, including business, technical, and degree apprenticeship routes. Students were inspired to see how careers in sustainability offer both purpose and impact, encouraging them to think creatively about how they can contribute to global challenges.







### **35 Years of Passion and Global Travel with Stefan Sanders (OR 1979-1986)**

In January 2025, **Stefan Sanders (OR 1979-1986)** shared his remarkable journey and insights from his 35-year career in the rail industry. A highly experienced rail and transport strategist, Stefan currently serves as the Network Rail Client Relationships Director at Arup.

Stefan guided students through his career, from his early days at British Rail to his current role as a global rail consultant, shaping transport systems worldwide. He reflected on how Reading School laid the foundations for his success and how his passion for travel influenced his career choices.

He shared insights on the challenges and rewards of working internationally, emphasising that pursuing a career driven by passion makes the journey more fulfilling. Stefan highlighted the value of developing deep expertise, networking early, and embracing travel to gain a broader understanding of the industry and its global opportunities.

### **An Introduction to Government and Politics with The Right Honourable Sir Ranil Jayawardena**

In February 2025, The Right Honourable Sir Ranil Jayawardena presented an engaging and thought provoking workshop. Students from Years 9 - 12 had the opportunity to engage with Sir Ranil Jayawardena directly while getting to explore how government works, engage with real-world political insights, and discuss key issues.

Sir Ranil Jayawardena, former Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and MP for North Hampshire, shared his unique perspective and experiences while sparking thoughtful discussions on politics and key national issues.



***“Sir Ranil’s talk was extremely useful in understanding both the intricacies and challenges of a life in public service. His thoughts on the importance of compromise and communication in a modern political landscape were especially interesting.”***

Harvey M (12ACr)

### Financial Awareness: Your Money, Your Future with Rathbones Group Plc.

In February 2025, over 40 students attended a virtual financial awareness session with **Daniel Money and Elizabeth Hart, CFA, Investment Managers at Rathbones Group Plc.** The session focused on essential personal finance skills, from planning for university, explore unconventional career paths, buying a home to understanding risk, investing wisely, and navigating the stock market. Students also received career guidance, learning about roles in the finance industry, key skills to develop, and the importance of networking.

*"This session opened my eyes to the importance of thinking about money early. I never realised how much planning goes into things like university costs, buying a home or saving for the future. It's not just about earning money, it's about managing it wisely."*

Year 13 student

### The Faith and Reason Lecture

#### The Origins of the Universe: Philosophical Implications from Modern Cosmology with Dr William P Wilkinson

The Faith and Reason Lecture Series, hosted by the Chaplaincy Team, are a termly set of lectures exploring the interplay and complementarity of religion and science, recognising that both speak to - and emanate from - the same light of Truth. In October 2025, the first lecture was delivered by **Dr William P 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's address to a packed Lecture Theatre looked at the question of what the universe is before considering recent cosmological understandings, drawing on Newton, Einstein and Le Maître. The once controversial and now widely accepted 'Big Bang' Theory proposed by the Catholic Priest



Le Maître shook the scientific community. Dr Wilkinson explored the philosophical questions that began to arise of what an origin for the universe would mean philosophically. His talk is available on Reading School's Vimeo channel. The forthcoming Faith and Reason Lecture (March 2026) will explore the question of humanity in the age of AI. All students are invited to explore these meaningful and insightful talks.



# FRANK TERRY MEMORIAL LECTURES

Presented by The Rt Hon Andrew Smith (OR 1962 - 1968)  
November 2024



We were delighted to welcome **The Rt Hon Andrew Smith (OR 1962–1968)** back to Reading School as the guest speaker for the Frank Terry Memorial Lecture 2024.

The Rt Hon Andrew David Smith (OR 1962–68) delivered this year's lecture. A former Cabinet Minister, Andrew Smith was educated at Reading School and awarded the Sir Thomas White Scholarship to St John's College, Oxford, where he gained a BA and BPhil.

He served as a Councillor on Oxford City Council for 11 years from 1976 before being elected MP for Oxford East in 1987. During his parliamentary career, he served in Tony Blair's government, first as Minister of State for Employment and Disability Rights (1997), then as Chief Secretary to the Treasury (1999–2002). In 2002, he was promoted to Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, a position he held until 2004. Re-elected for Oxford East in 2005, 2010 and 2015, he served in Parliament until his retirement in 2017.

Andrew Smith is remembered for his work in reducing child poverty during his time as Secretary of State, as well as for his support of the rights of Gurkhas to remain in Britain. He introduced the Pension Credit and Pension Protection Fund, championed the rights of the disabled, and sponsored the New Deal, which helped young and long-term unemployed people into work.

### **Presented by the Rt. Hon. Lord Young of Old Windsor, GCB, GCVO November 2025**

**Lord Young of Old Windsor, GCB, GCVO**, who delivered the 2025 Frank Terry Memorial Lecture, brought with him a distinguished career in public service at the highest levels of government and the Royal Household.



An Old Redingensian (South House, 1978–1985) and student of the late Frank Terry, he began his career at Barclays in International and Trade Finance, rising to senior advisory roles before joining Buckingham Palace in 2004. He went on to serve as Principal Private Secretary to Queen Elizabeth II, supporting seven Prime Ministers, working closely with world leaders, and overseeing the transition to the reign of King Charles III.

Following The King's Coronation, he was made a Life Peer and now serves in the House of Lords as a Crossbencher and Permanent Lord in Waiting. Alongside his parliamentary duties, he chairs a Global Family Office practice and is a senior adviser to a Swiss bank.

Lord Young offered students an inspiring insight into the many paths life can take beyond school. He reflected on his varied career and encouraged students to embrace opportunity wherever it appears. His message reinforced the values at the heart of Reading School and provided a powerful reminder that success is not defined by a single route, but by character, curiosity and the willingness to seize the unexpected.







**His insights resonated strongly with students, staff, and alumni. George G (12CMA) commented:**

*“The Frank Terry Memorial Lecture was a stimulating, insightful peek into what life can look like after sixth form. As students, and I am especially guilty of this, we often get caught up in the excitement and anticipation of university and future study, and forget that, no matter what trajectory our journey takes after Reading School, success and fulfilment can always be found, even in unexpected ways.*

*The Right Honourable Lord Young brought this motion to life, and this particularly stood out to me in one of his quotes: “The less trodden path is no less full of opportunity”*  
*Lord Young embarked upon an engaging tale reminiscing on his old school days, to his experience starting out as a junior banker, and on to his prestigious roles as a private secretary and member of the House of Lords!*

*As an aspiring law and politics student myself, I found Lord Young’s journey fascinating, and a real inspiration for all, not only through his field of work which coincides with my aspirations, but through his honourable virtues. From bottom of his history class to junior banker, to private secretary to Her Majesty The Queen, Lord Young is a prime example of how incredible success is not mutually exclusive with modesty and humility. He is an example to all boys of Reading School, embodying all four of our pillars: excellence, integrity, leadership, and community.*

*The Frank Terry Memorial Lecture was thought-provoking, motivational, and eye-opening, and I have the utmost respect for those, like Lord Young, who despite having achieved immense success and having met remarkable people, remain humble and genuine*  
*His talk was followed by an engaging question-and-answer session, during which he encouraged students to pursue opportunities with...*

*We are grateful to Lord Young for returning to Reading School to share his remarkable journey and for helping to inspire the next generation during this special anniversary year.”*





# BELONGING WEEK

## 2025



### A Celebration of Community and Leadership



Belonging Week is designed as a purposeful experience that fosters character growth, community, and inclusion among students. It reflects Reading School's mission to develop not only academic excellence but also character and community spirit.

Through diverse and inclusive activities, students grow personally, strengthen bonds, and contribute meaningfully to others, supported throughout by staff who help make the programme memorable and impactful.

While Belonging Week may look like a series of trips from the outside, every activity is carefully planned with clear intention. Each experience builds on the character education and Floreat work introduced in Year 7, enhancing students' sense of identity, empathy, leadership, and community.



### Year 7:

Year 7 students had an action-packed week, enjoying a variety of Future Stories activities including science workshops, Cumulus challenges, Stubbers adventure, Rock climbing, Canoeing, Rowing, trips to Dinton Pastures, the Science Museum and Copenhagen and sports like football, cricket, and athletics. The week was a mix of outdoor adventure, STEM experiences, and teamwork-focused challenges, helping them bond and explore new interests.



### Year 8:

Year 8 students also participated in Cumulus, Rock climbing, Stubbers, Canoeing, Reach workshops, and Howstean activities, alongside sports such as football and cricket. These experiences encouraged collaboration, resilience, and creativity, while giving students the chance to engage in practical challenges and develop leadership skills.



### Year 9:

Year 9's schedule included Science workshops, Canoeing, Stubbers, Rock climbing, Reach, Howstean, and trip to Copenhagen for Rowing and Athletics. Students also enjoyed team sports and outdoor challenges. The mix of academic, physical, and adventure-based activities gave them the chance to strengthen friendships and explore personal skills.





### **Year 10:**

Year 10 students had the opportunity to work with Year 4 pupils visiting from local primary schools. They supported them in completing activities in hands-on Science, robotics and outdoor cooking. Over the week two hundred and sixty Year 4 pupils attended from for different primary schools. The primary schools which attended were English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School, Battle Primary Academy, Whitley Park Primary School and St Mary and All Saints Church of England School.

During their visit the focus for Year 4 pupils was to promote curiosity and teamwork in their learning, and to challenge them both academically and personally. The focus of the week for Year 10 students was to give their time to support others and make a positive contribution to the local community. Year 10 students worked in a position of responsibility where they had the opportunity to develop and use their interpersonal skills such as teamwork, empathy and communication skills.



### **Sixth Form (Year 12/13):**

While much of Belonging Week focuses on Years 7–10, Sixth Form students supported younger year groups in leadership and mentoring roles, helping to facilitate trips and workshops and fostering a sense of community across the school. All Year 12 students also complete a week's work experience during Belonging Week.





**“I spent Belonging Week one with Year 10s who all went off to work on different activities including sports and life-skills. What I observed was that they not only worked on improving their own skills, but they also improved their coaching and leadership skills through encouraging others to be able to participate in that activity or sport. I spent a lot of time with the footballers in Week 1 and we engaged with around 240 primary school students with the boys leading on all of the activities planned and adjusting for different abilities and SEN needs. It was fabulous to see our boys really owning their sessions and making sure that everybody got something out of it. It was really special.”**

Mrs Clarke, Head of Laud House







**“It's about being courageous, considerate, generous, and recognising that when you pitch in with your unique skills and contributions to a group, that group becomes better. It's about our boys working out what they're good at and also sharing their gifts with each other through activities and conversation.”**

Mr Tom Evans (Assistant Head)





COMMUNITY &  
PARTNERSHIPS



# COMMEMORATION SERVICE 2024

On a crisp October afternoon light filtered through the stained glass of Reading Minster Church as the community gathered for our annual Commemoration Service, marking the anniversary of Reading School's foundation in 1125. The atmosphere was one of reverence and reflection, as nearly nine centuries of learning, leadership, and community service were honoured in this timeless setting.

The service began with the Bidding Prayer, led by our School Chaplain, Mr Mark Amos, followed by the Lesson read by School Captain Paarth G (13JP). The Chapel Choir, under the direction of Mr Oliver Griffin (Director of Music), Mr James Newman (Teacher of Music), and Mr James Druce (Peripatetic Music Teacher), filled the church with a resonant and uplifting sound that echoed through the historic space.

Our Guest of Honour, Reverend Seminarian Luke Theobald of the Archdiocese of Birmingham (OR 2003–2010), had travelled from Rome to deliver the Sermon. He joined Headmaster Chris Evans in leading the service, bridging past and present in a moving reflection on the School's enduring values.







Outside the service, the familiar peal of bells rang through the air, announcing the occasion to the wider community. Ever wondered who's responsible for the ringing of the church bells during Commemoration Service? The St Mary's with St Laurence Society of Change Ringers, including our Teacher of Physics and Maths, Mr C. Lewis-Brown, alongside Old Redingensians and parents of former pupils, brought the church to life. Among them were Giles Winter (OR 1966–1973), Dan Page (OR 2014–2021), and Doug Beaumont (OR 1965–1973), whose practiced hands guided the intricate patterns of the ringing.

This tradition recalls the legacy of Ian Judd (OR 1962–1969), who organised the ringing for many years, dedicating 40 years of his professional life to Reading School. Ian passed away in 2022, yet his memory lives on in every bell that sounds, connecting generations past and present in a shared moment of commemoration.





# 2024 -2025 CHARITY OF THE YEAR ROYAL BERKSHIRE HOSPITAL



Reading School was proud to announce its partnership with Royal Berks Charity, choosing it as the School's Charity of the Year. The collaboration aims to support the hospital's crucial work in providing vital healthcare services to our community while engaging students in meaningful charitable activities.

Royal Berks Charity is the sole charity wholly dedicated to supporting Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust which provides healthcare services from seven sites across Berkshire and South Oxfordshire. Through generous donations and fundraising the charity aims to make a difference in the lives of patients and their families by funding projects that enhance patient care, support research and innovation, provide additional and state-of-the-art medical equipment, create inviting environments and support the wellbeing of staff.

From September 2024, students, staff, and the wider school community of Reading School will participate in various fundraising and volunteer initiatives to support its neighbour, the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust. The goal is to raise awareness and funds to assist in supporting patients within the neurology departments at both the Royal Berkshire Hospital and West Berkshire Community Hospital.

It is dedicated to fostering academic excellence alongside having an explicit focus on creating opportunities for its students to demonstrate service in the community. The partnership featured a series of events and initiatives throughout the academic year which included a series of student-led events to raise funds for the hospital.



**"We are thrilled to support Royal Berks Charity as our Charity of the Year and this partnership is a fantastic opportunity for our students to continue to demonstrate our school values and ethos, which includes the importance of community service and giving back. Our school community is committed to making a positive impact in the local and wider area."**

Lizzie Ayres, Deputy Head

### **Year 7 and New Year 12 Welcome Coffee Morning in Support of the Royal Berkshire Hospital**

Reading School hosted two Coffee Mornings this academic year, in September 2024 and March 2025. Today, we were delighted to welcome our parent community to the Year 7 and New Year 12 Welcome Coffee Morning, held in support of our Charity of the Year, the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

Parents were greeted by the Headmaster, Dr C. Evans, alongside key staff members and our student ambassadors. In his address, Dr Evans spoke about the School's 900th anniversary—a significant milestone in our history—and highlighted the privilege of their children joining Reading School during a year of celebration. He reflected on the enduring values that have shaped our community for centuries and the meaningful opportunities students will have to engage with these traditions throughout their time at the School.



### Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI): 2024 & 2025 Highlights

Across two evenings in November 2024, 30 dedicated medical professionals, many from the Royal Berkshire Hospital, volunteered their time to run virtual mock MMI interviews for 35 Reading School students and 10 students from partner schools, including **King's Academy Binfield, The Sixth Form College Farnborough, Denefield Sixth Form, The Open University, and St Bartholomew's School & Sixth Form.**



Fast forward to November 2025 and our MMI programme continues to flourish. This year, 43 students took part via Zoom, including 11 from our local partner schools, **Maiden Erleigh, The Abbey, and The Piggott School.**

A dedicated team of 24 medicine and dentistry students and professionals generously volunteered their time to deliver a full set of virtual mock MMI circuits.

We extend our sincere thanks to our Old Redingensian volunteers:

**Dr Tim Young (OR 1979–1986), Dr Sam Krauze (OR 1997–2004), Dr Yusuf Karmali (OR 2006–2013), Dr Sunil Tailor (OR 2007–2013), Dr Andrew Prowse (OR 2011–2018), Dr Shameer Noori (OR 2010–2017), Dr Sebastian Young (OR 2010–2017), Dr Roy Wang (OR 2011–2018), Nirbhay Kaul (OR 2017–2023), Angelo Augustine (OR 2014–2021), Rohan Nambiar (OR 2017–2024), Sher Gakhal (OR 2013–2020) and Nikhil Patel (OR 2013–2020).**

We also thank clinicians from the **Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust** and members of our parent community for championing these opportunities. Their expertise offered invaluable preparation for our aspiring healthcare professionals. As our 900th anniversary celebrations conclude, we remain committed to providing meaningful opportunities for our students and are grateful to the volunteers whose generosity strengthens this programme year after year.



***“I found the online MMI medicine practice session to be an excellent way to prepare for my upcoming interview. The scenarios provided were diverse and realistic, giving me a solid idea of what to expect. The feedback was clear and constructive, allowing me to understand my strengths and areas for improvement. The session also helped me build confidence in structuring my responses and thinking on my feet. Overall, it was an invaluable experience that has left me feeling more prepared and at ease about the interview process. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to participate in this session.”***

Kanishk K, Year 13, Reading School

### **Dr Jun Zou visits Reading School**

In January 2025, **Dr Jun Zou (Visiting Scholar at the University of Reading’s Institute of Education & Director of Shaoxing University)** visited Reading School to inform her research into the differences between British and Chinese secondary schools. Dr Zou spent the day with the English Department while getting to observe classes across different year groups. She commented, *“In China, teachers tend to lecture more and play a central role in delivering content whereas at Reading School, the approach is more student-centred with teachers encouraging active participation and independent thinking. Furthermore, the curriculum in China is standardised by the Ministry of Education with teachers following a prescribed syllabus to complete teaching tasks with each lesson often covering a significant amount of content. At Reading School, I observed that teaching content aligns with the requirements of GCSE exams with teachers having more autonomy to design and adapt lessons based on their preferences and the needs of their students.”*

We would like to thank Dr Zou for her learning visit where ideas on different approaches to education could be exchanged in the spirit of curiosity and collaboration. This enriching exchange highlights the value of cross-cultural dialogue in education and fosters mutual understanding and innovation in teaching practices.

### **Thames Valley Air Ambulance Concert 2025**

This year’s Thames Valley Air Ambulance Concert highlighted the talents of performers from Reading School and Kendrick School. As a cherished student-led tradition, the event aimed to raise funds for the Thames Valley Air Ambulance. Started over a decade ago in gratitude for the service’s aid to a student, the concert featured a memorable performance by the Concert Band, who played Gustav Holst’s Second Suite in F for Military Band.

This year's event raised approx. £2000 from ticket sales, raffle and donations.



### Social Enterprise Hub Finale 2025

The Social Enterprise Hub was created by **The Abbey School** in partnership with **Henley Business School** and Reading School in 2022. The project empowers mixed teams of sixth formers to create social enterprises under the guidance and support of entrepreneurs and lecturers from Henley Business School. All participating students took part in an 8-month project during which time they received hands-on, real-world experience in entrepreneurship, business management, teamwork and problem-solving.

In May 2025, all teams gathered at the University of Reading to present their pitches to a panel of judges tasked with selecting the strongest ideas for funding. For the first time in the programme's history, the judges were so impressed by the quality of the presentations that they elected to fund every single pitch.







### Grandparents & Relatives Day 2025

Our annual special event took place today as we welcomed families into the Reading School Community while celebrating intergenerational bonds.

Our Year 7s invited their grandparents and family members to Reading School and acted as ambassadors to share what the life of the school looks like during a typical day. From observing micro-organisms under the telescope to Computer Programming in Python – grandparents and families spent their day on a carousel of interactive and engaging activities alongside their grandchildren. Thank you to our staff for ensuring our families had a visit to remember.



### Reading Ukrainian School Lastivka

Reading Ukrainian School Lastivka is named after the swallow that lives between two worlds and reflects the journey of many of our children, who still call Ukraine home while building a new life in the UK. Founded on 23 February 2019 under the umbrella of the Reading branch of the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain (AUGB), the school has grown to 56 students, most of whom arrived due to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

In April 2024, Lastivka found a new home on the grounds of Reading School, and in April 2025 it was officially registered as a Community Interest Company (C.I.C.). All our teachers are dedicated volunteers, united by a shared mission to support children in preserving their language, culture, and identity.

Lastivka currently teaches children aged 4 to 15, grouped into Foundation, KS1, KS2 and KS3 cohorts. The school offers a vibrant curriculum that includes Ukrainian language, literature, and an integrated Ukrainian heritage programme (history, geography, and traditions). Lessons take place every Saturday, both in person and online, and are enriched by extracurricular activities such as a computer literacy club, board games, and arts and crafts workshops.

We are proud that Lastivka is a registered member of the Association of Ukrainian Teachers in Great Britain, and is officially verified by the Ministry of Education of Ukraine as a school providing the Ukrainian component of the national curriculum.







### A Strong Partnership with Reading School

Reading School has become a true home for Lastivka and a steadfast supporter of the wider Ukrainian community in Reading. Beyond hosting our weekly lessons, the school generously provides space for cultural events and includes Ukrainian groups in wider school celebrations.

During Reading School's 900th Anniversary Community Carnival, Lastivka's volunteers led a traditional pysanka (Easter egg) workshop and an exhibition of Ukrainian embroidery. The Ukrainian choir Kryla (Wings) and the Ukrainian dance ensemble Balamuty performed on the main stage, bringing vibrant elements of Ukrainian culture to the heart of the School community.

### Looking Ahead

On 13th December 2025, Lastivka held its traditional Ukrainian Christmas Nativity in the Reading School Refectory — our third year celebrating in this warm and welcoming space. The performance will include kolyadky, schedrivky and, of course, a visit from St Mykolay. Alongside our students, there were many children and guests from both the Ukrainian and wider Reading community.





# HUA WAN READING SCHOOL, GUANGZHOU

We are thrilled in this edition of Floreat Redingensis to introduce our new partners from Guangzhou, China. For many years Reading School has been developing meaningful partnerships with educational experts across the world. As part of this drive, the **Reading School Overseas Partnership Company Limited** was established in 2018 to support the development of commercial opportunities when these arose.

Having built relationships in China since that date, school leaders have spent the past 12 months negotiating a formal partnership in Guangzhou, which will support development within our school financially, and will expand our international connections.

The team at Huawan education are now building an international high school, shaped around the holistic development of character that is at the heart of Reading School's philosophy.

We are very pleased then, to have had the chance to interview Mr Wu, General Principal of Huawan education.

**Mr Wu, thank you so much for visiting Reading School, and for being interviewed for our Magazine. As we introduce the Huawan team to our community, might you explain the education philosophy that underpins Huawan's work?**



Hua Wan School was established in 2011 as an ambitious project backed by the local government to drive up academic standards. We partnered with educators from South China Normal University to create this school. Aspiration was therefore high from the outset and we gave ourselves this mission:

*“Cultivating outstanding young people of our time through holistic education.”*

This means we aim for students to develop in all areas through whole-person education. Students should succeed not only academically but also in their personal character and overall competencies. We want them to receive a well-rounded, high-quality education.

In the five years we've been running the school, our teaching has gained recognition from the community. In just four years we've grown to have nearly 4,000 students and almost 500 staff members. We've achieved outstanding academic results and have proven that our approach meets social needs.

**It's a great joy for us to hear that schools across the world are also focusing on character education. What drew you to the Huawan team, Mr Wu, and what have you enjoyed most as a principal in your long and illustrious career?**

I have worked in education for over forty years. I began in higher education and later moved into secondary education. The thing that has brought me the most satisfaction in my career is nurturing generation after generation of outstanding students who contribute to society.

Whenever I see students achieve success, I feel immense joy.

At this later stage in my career, I joined the Huawan team because of its philosophy. I wanted to bring my experience to this school, because it has the right foundations, and I knew I could help it become even more exceptional.

I have also strongly recommended and actively promoted our collaboration with Reading School, because if this collaboration succeeds, it will be the high point of my career! Partnerships between schools like ours are absolutely essential if our students are to shape society on the global stage. I am very pleased that our team will be able to promote Reading School's excellent educational practices across China and, indeed, the world.

**Thank you for your encouragement Mr Wu. Could you expand a little on why you think holistic education is so important to this generation of Chinese students?**

Chinese education in recent years has experienced many twists and challenges. Today, China pays great attention to education, and in China we are focused on achieving balanced and high-quality development in compulsory education for all students. In many regions around the world, education is unequal—good schools are very good, and weaker schools remain weak.

This has been the case in China too. Our economy has grown rapidly, but educational development has not always kept pace. Previously, these inconsistencies meant that in some regions schools were overly focused on exam performance and 'rote learning', neglecting students' overall development.

If want to provide a comprehensive, complete education that helps children to develop in all areas, then holistic education is essential, for the core of this approach is enabling students to grow in every aspect as a human. Society needs healthy, happy and well-rounded individuals with strong overall competencies. So, we think our goals and Reading School's approach are perfectly aligned, which is why we value this collaboration so highly.

To put it another way, Chinese students today need not only strong academic ability but also better overall personal qualities and both of our visits to Reading School have shown us that your school had genuine care for children's growth and personal development. To see this kind of care, and character focus at one of the most academically successful schools in the country is hugely reassuring.





**We feel that same sense of reassurance Mr Wu. In the UK, people sometimes imagine that Eastern education models put academic excellence above all else – but it’s clear from your work that you see personal development as a foundation to build upon. In Reading School we often say that our priorities are safety, then wellbeing, and then happiness, and that success follows when these fundamentals are in place. Please might you tell us your views on this approach.**

In China, our approach is essentially the same. We also emphasise “safety first”—without safety, there can be no education. Safety includes physical safety and the safety of students’ development, especially mental health. Students today often face heavy psychological burdens and academic pressure, which can impact their wellbeing. Therefore, the meaning of “safety” has expanded. It includes both physical and mental safety. We firmly uphold and implement this principle.

Wellbeing naturally includes physical and mental health. Only when safety and wellbeing are secured can children enjoy happiness and pursue their future. Society has entered a phase where we can all be more aware of our own physical and mental needs. It’s only when these are met that any of us can they have the foundation for a happy life and a successful career.

**Mr Wu, your team have talked quite often about this being a 100 year partnership. Could you tell us what your hopes are for our collaboration across this timespan?**

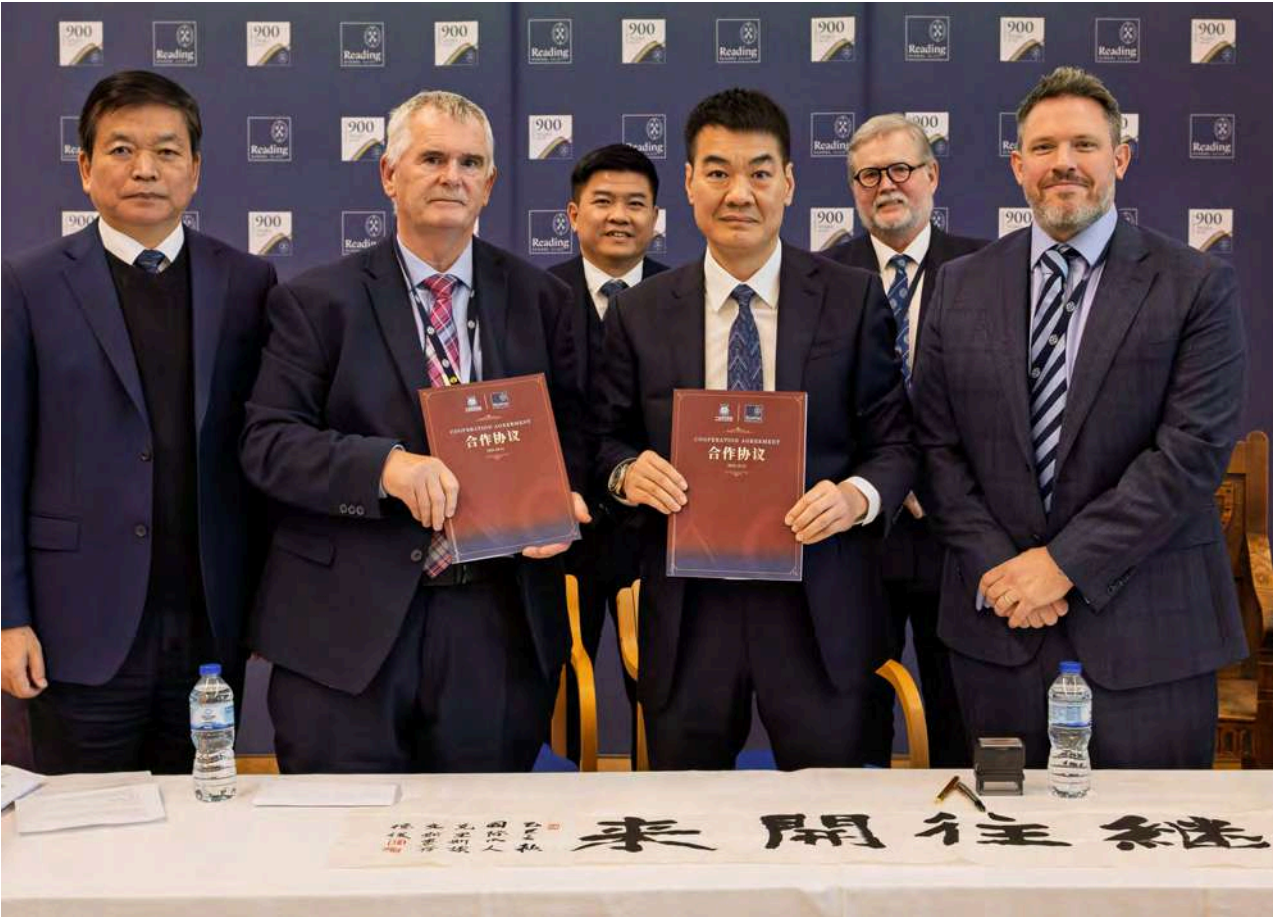
We chose this partnership because we share your vision. Currently, through this collaboration, we are introducing international educational concepts into our existing school to enrich our curriculum and educational model. Our aspiration is that this partnership enhances our educational standards and enriches our educational philosophy.

We are also establishing an international school, bringing advanced global education to our region. This school, linked so closely to what is already delivered in Reading, will be unique in Guangzhou. We want children to receive an outstanding education from an early age and believe that that must be grounded in strong academics, a deep sense of identity, and an international outlook.

The future of the world will be shaped by open communication and understanding, and future citizens will be global citizens. Our strategic partnership then is necessary if local children are to enjoy high-quality international education. Our hope is that children will remain connected to their roots, and will be deeply grateful to our school for guidance and support, but that ultimately, they will go on to contribute to the world.

Above all, we see this as a collaboration for students—for their futures, and we hope students from both schools can broaden their horizons through future exchanges, resulting in a greater understanding of each other’s culture. We are sure that our international connections will also help Reading School students go further.





China has 5,000 years of culture and a broad diverse spirit. We imagine that our own country's rapid development is widely recognised across the world, and that the work we do together will help Reading School pupils better understand China and the world.

Together, we'll influence even more children, giving them deeper understanding of the world, and providing opportunities for a world class education right at their doorstep.

### **Finally, may we ask what advice would you give Reading School students?**

From our two exchanges, we've found that Reading students are open-minded, independent, and are outstanding at communicating their opinions. Their performances in many situations have impressed us. However, since they are still in secondary school, I hope they will also live with their eyes wide-open and will be humble enough to continue learning about the world, including China.

I would encourage Reading School students to travel abroad during holidays, and to build relationships with people from different backgrounds so they can better understand the world.

I would also say that we have noticed how rich Reading School's curriculum is. We visited your boat house this morning and I thought it was wonderful. As many students as possible should involve themselves in these sorts of programmes

and I would remind all your students that sporting activities are crucial for personal development. The UK is famous for football, so we would love to see more students playing games and participating in diverse activities.

So, I say this to Reading School students: you are part of a school that carries forwards the UK's strongest traditions and offers the broadest imaginable range of activities. Throw yourself into sport and music as well as studies, for the skills you learn in those aspects of school life will be what propel Reading School students onto the world stage.

### **Do you have any closing remarks Mr Wu?**

Our visit today is to sign an agreement with Reading School, to participate in and to witness Reading School's 900th Anniversary celebrations. This milestone is extremely rare in the history of a school. We wish Reading School a successful 900th anniversary and hope it cultivates even more outstanding graduates who contribute to the world.

We have also presented small commemorative gifts which have been placed in your time capsule and preserved. A hundred years from now, when our names re-emerge from the dust as long-forgotten witnesses of this historic anniversary, we hope our two schools will still maintain this warm friendship.

We wish Reading School continued success in every possible sense.







## WITH ANDREY D (10W)

**Leveraging a passion for 3D design, Andrey D (10W) transforms Reading School's iconic Waterhouse building into a fundraising masterpiece for the school's 'Beyond 900' campaign:**

**How did you come up with the idea of creating a 3D model of Reading School's Waterhouse?**

So, in the beginning, I heard about the Giving Day fundraising, and I thought that it's not enough to just donate say £10, because it's such a large amount that we need. And I thought 'I have a passion for 3D printing' and 'I enjoy being creative' so I decided to combine those two things to create something interesting so that it can be sold with the proceeds going to Reading School's 'Beyond 900' fund.

**What originally sparked your interest in 3D printing?**

I've been into it for a pretty long time, since primary school, when my parents bought me a 3D printer, and now I'm just 3D printing interesting things and modelling them using free software. So, for the model, first I created a virtual version of Reading School using 'Tinkercad', using shapes like a pyramid, a cube and a sphere, which you can manipulate and combine into one cohesive object. And for the writing on the top, I had to learn how to convert a Word document into the 3D model, so that was an interesting process.

**You seem to have grasped very well the School's values – can you share some of your views about them?**

I think the values are very important because they put an emphasis on something apart from just Excellence...like Community. During Giving Day, I felt a real sense of community because I found donors, told them about our Giving Day, and when the days came, I felt a real sense of community during them. We were all doing something for one common cause. My challenge was debating for 900 minutes. Debating is another one of my interests. I think that it's a very good way to find out other people's views and enlarge your own perspective.

**Are there any other ways you've felt a sense of Community at School?**

During Electives – which are when you and the other people in your class discover something new together, such as cooking, starting fires, survival skills, canoeing, for example, canoeing was probably my favourite because I'd never done it before, and the other people in my elective also hadn't done canoeing before, so discovering that together gave me a real sense of community.



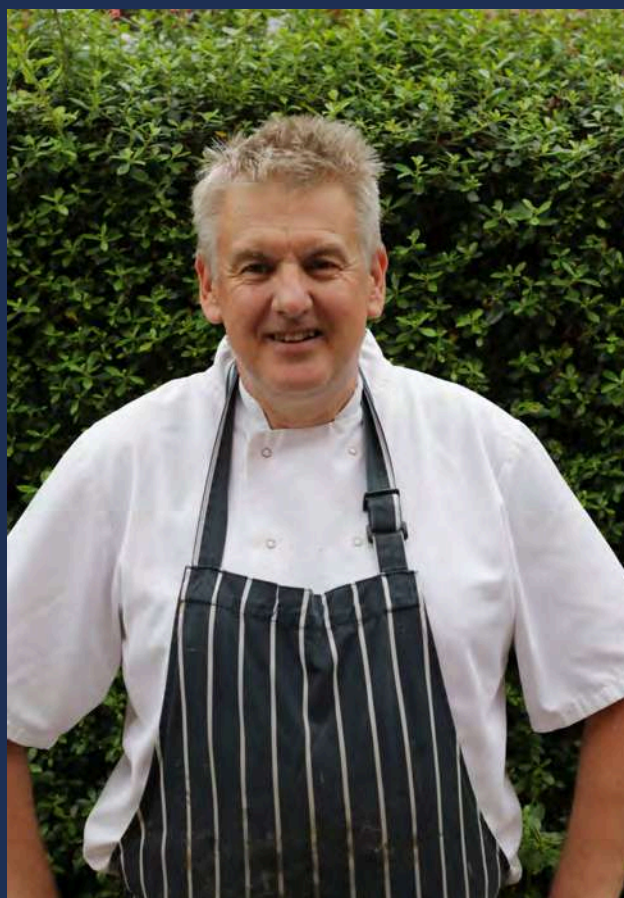
# STAFF LEAVERS 2024-2025

We bid farewell to the following staff members, whose dedication and contributions have significantly impacted the Reading School community. We are grateful for their hard work and commitment during their time here, and we extend our best wishes for their future endeavors.

| Last Name           | First Name | Joining Date | Leaving Date | Job Title                                                  |
|---------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jahn                | Sabine     | 04/01/2021   | 02/09/2024   | Exams Officer                                              |
| Lenaghan            | Andrew     | 01/09/2022   | 06/03/2025   | Catering Team - Chef de Partie                             |
| Postlethwaite       | Julie      | 01/01/2001   | 07/05/2025   | Teacher of English                                         |
| Haugvik             | Gillian    | 01/07/2019   | 01/06/2025   | Teacher of Classics, HPQ Coordinator, Boarding House Tutor |
| Hill                | Matthew    | 01/09/2024   | 31/08/2025   | Teacher of Mathematics, Future Stories Maths Lead          |
| Hillairet-Humphries | Elina      | 01/09/2017   | 31/08/2025   | Teacher of Spanish and French                              |
| Romano              | Rose       | 01/09/2005   | 31/08/2025   | Teacher of English                                         |
| Robson              | Ashley     | 01/09/2005   | 31/10/2025   | Chief Executive Officer                                    |
| Griffiths           | Stephen    | 16/05/2012   | 19/12/2025   | School Counsellor                                          |
| Hickman             | Penny      | 04/09/2017   | 30/12/2025   | Admissions Officer                                         |

### In Loving Memory of Andrew Lenaghan

**Andrew Lenaghan (Chef de Partie)**, joined Reading School in 2022, instantly making a difference to our catering team. Beloved by boarders with whom he built brilliant relationships, Andrew was as good with people as he was with food! Following a period of ill health, which Andrew faced with incredible bravery, Andrew retired in April 2025. As Andrew arrived for his final day at Reading School, the drive was lined with students, who formed a guard of honour for him as a quiet tribute of respect and affection. This is a moment that will be forever etched in our memories.



Just weeks after his last day at the school, Andrew sadly passed away on Tuesday 8th April 2025.

Andrew was deeply loved by staff and students alike. His commitment, humour, courage, and unwavering good cheer in the face of profound adversity were an inspiration to everyone who had the privilege of knowing him. We considered him to be our dear friend as well as our colleague. Andrew had an extraordinary ability to lift the spirits of those around him, often with a kind word, a mischievous joke, or a thoughtful gesture. His dedication to his work and his care for others left an indelible mark on our community, reminding us of the importance of resilience, compassion, and humanity in every aspect of life.

Andrew was laid to rest on 1st May 2025 at the West Berkshire Crematorium. The service had standing room only, as neighbours, local councillors, members of clubs to which he belonged, staff and students came to pay their respects.

We remember him with gratitude and affection, honouring his courage, warmth, and care.

With deepest thanks for a life well lived.



### Ashley Robson retires after 20-year service at Reading School

After two decades of exceptional leadership, unwavering loyalty, and dedicated service, as Deputy Head, Headmaster, Head of Boarding and latterly, CEO, Ashley Robson retired from Reading School in October 2025.

Over the past 20 years, Ashley has played an integral role in shaping the school community. Through his steadfast commitment, wisdom, and passion for education, he has made an indelible mark on the lives of students, staff, and families alike. His leadership has helped guide the school through challenges and successes, always with integrity, vision, and a deep sense of purpose.

Ashley's retirement marks the end of a remarkable era, and while we are sad to see him go, we are filled with gratitude for all he has contributed. His legacy will be felt for many years to come, both in the traditions he upheld and the progress he inspired.

His influence has been particularly significant in our focus on character education, international partnerships and sport. Regarding the latter, **Head of PE, Mr Steve Allen** writes, *"Much of my time with Mr Robson has been spent on the side of football pitches. His passion for our students and for football has always been infectious, and he has always attended 1<sup>st</sup> XI matches. Supposedly assistant coach but certainly the most vocal coach, he has been an incredible motivator of our boys on the pitch.*

*Two particular matches come to mind.*

*Winning the Gibbs Cup final against Windsor Boys at Thatcham Town FC in 2019 was an incredible achievement but I will never forget Mr Robson's reaction to us giving away a penalty in the last minute of the game when we were winning 4-3! Luckily for us Windsor missed the penalty, and we won the match, so everything was ok!*

*The second memory is how proud Mr Robson was last summer for leading the Year 8 football team to victory in the annual Shrewsbury School tournament. We have been attending every summer for more than 10 years and this was our first victory. Mr Robson has driven up every summer and is so well known, loved, and respected by all the staff from schools across the UK who attend every year.*

*Thank you Mr Robson for all the incredible opportunities and memories."*



**Chris Evans shares his sense of gratitude to Ashley:**

*“When I first joined Reading School as a teacher in 2008, I had an awful lot to learn about classroom management, and I really struggled with one particular class. Eventually, with the students as exasperated as I was, I went to Ashley for advice. In the blink of an eye he solved my problems, taking two students I just couldn’t get through to, and teaching them himself in his office for the next four months. Were it not for his patience, understanding and support, I don’t think I would have made it through my first six months as a teacher.*

*Since then, his integrity and commitment have been a consistent source of inspiration to me, and I know that neither I, nor the school can repay our debt for Ashley’s exceptional service. He steered us away from a myopic focus on results, and nurtured an outwards facing spirit that will continue to enable continuous improvement in the school for many years to come.”*

*It would be impossible to reprint in this edition all the messages of thanks for Ashley from staff and parents. Instead we wish him every happiness and fulfilment in the next chapter of his journey. May retirement bring new adventures and time to enjoy the things he loves most.”*





### **Rose Romano (2005-2025)**

Rose left Reading School in August 2025 so that she can enjoy her retirement. Rose has taught English at Reading School since 2005 and we will be losing a wealth of knowledge in her departure. We wish Rose all the very best for the future.

*“Rose Romano dedicated twenty years of her career to the English and History departments, and inspired a generation of students with her enthusiasm for her subjects as well as a passion for protecting nature and her environmental advocacy. Rose was an empathetic influence in the lives of her tutees, and her will to support all students in her care stretched well beyond the doors of Room Five and the boundaries of lesson timings. She has also left a legacy for the next generation of students and colleagues in the generous encouragement and advice she shared with younger colleagues in the English department, and her absence has already been felt by the team in the term since her retirement.”*

**Robert Baldock (Head of English)**



### **Julie Postlethwaite (2001-2024)**

Julie retired in August 2024 after 23 years at Reading School. She was an integral part of the very early days of Future Stories, co-ordinating groups of local primary school students with our 6th formers to be inspired by Maths, English and a wide range of other subjects. She continues this work now, advising on the current entrance test.

*“Julie never seemed keen when crowned with the title Literacy Consultant, perhaps just seeing herself as a teacher, but her knowledge of English teaching from primary school through to GCSE, which she has imparted on so many students throughout the years to build their confidence, demonstrates the aptness of such a title. Julie is equally at home working 1:1 with a student who struggles to get thoughts on paper, to leading groups of primary school students, teaching whole classes and examining GCSE papers. She can transform handwriting with a few tricks and has a talent for drawing out the talent of others, enjoying nothing more than a debate with an enthusiastic student. Julie is a legend! She is both wise and interesting and has been a joy to work with.”*

**Sophy Rogers (Head of Student Support, Teacher of Classics)**



### **Elina Hillairet-Humphries (2017-2025)**

Elina will be re-locating to Spain and consequently leaving Reading School. Elina has been an outstanding colleague and an integral member of the Modern Foreign Languages team for 8 years. This is an exciting moment for her personal and professional life as she will be moving to Spain with her family at the end of the academic year.

*“For me personally and professionally, it is difficult to see Elina go as she has been a rock in the MFL department, driving Spanish forward like no one else had before. Under her leadership, Spanish grew, from a new A Level which had just been introduced to a well-established and thriving department, inspiring many students over the years to take up Spanish at GCSE, A Level and university. She has constantly gone above and beyond, not only leading Spanish, but also running cultural events at school, organising inspire talks, events with other local schools, and leading on countless residential trips to Spain to immerse our students in the language they study. She has also contributed significantly to the French department, teaching KS3 and KS5 classes, and showing the same passion to share her love of languages with all.”*

**Ms E Fondu (Head of Modern Foreign Languages)**



### **Gill Haugvik (2019-2025)**

Gill started in September 2019 after completing her second PGCE placement at Reading School. It was obvious from the very beginning that she had what it takes to become an excellent teacher and that she would be an excellent fit for our school. She has been a valued member of the Classics department and a keen supporter of the MFL department. Since leaving, Gill has become Head of the Classics department at Liverpool College.

*“Gill served as a Classics PGCE mentor, led trips, and in recent years oversaw the UK Linguistics Olympiad and the GCHQ language challenge for Year 9. She ran many support sessions, co-created GCSE Ancient History resources, and taught Classical Greek and Greek myths. A wonderful colleague, she brought real positivity and joy to the team. Her impact reached far beyond Classics: she supported MFL on numerous trips, taught Geography for a year, taught Latin at The Abbey twice a week, led the HPQ, and was an active member of the boarding community. We offer our heartfelt thanks for her service and wish her every success in the future.”*

**Mark Cooper (Head of Classics)**



# FUTURE STORIES



This year, our Future Stories programme has continued to develop in scope and breadth, with students and staff collaborating to create a range of meaningful opportunities for local primary school pupils. Partnership is at the heart of our work, and we recognise what a privilege it is to work alongside schools, staff and students from different parts of Reading, sharing our resources and shaping a collective vision for holistic education, built on shared values and the creation of opportunity. In striving to be a school that makes a positive impact on its community, we have worked with more than 2,000 primary school pupils this year, many of whom take part in activities at Reading School every week.

## Future Stories Impact 2024-2025



### **MATHS:**

**Around 450 primary school pupils took part over the year.**



### **SCIENCE:**

**260 pupils from four schools accessed science sessions.**



### **ROWING:**

**Around 450 pupils took part in rowing workshops, and 45 learnt to row at the boathouse.**



### **CHARACTER:**

**Around 45 pupils a week take part in character sessions at Reading School.**



### **TEAM BELONGING WEEK:**

**1,300 primary school pupils took part in sport, music, science and other activities during a single week in May.**



### Maths and Science:

On a weekly basis, Year 11 and 12 students work with pupils from local primary schools in Maths mentoring sessions (in-person and online). Over one hundred Year 12 and twenty-six Year 11 students are currently involved with this. The primary schools involved with Maths mentoring are **English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School, Battle Primary Academy, Whitley Park Primary School, New Town Primary School, Moorlands Primary School, Katesgrove Primary School and St Mary and All Saints Church of England School.**

The focus of these sessions is stipulated by the individual primary school, with some choosing pupils to attend who need extra support with their baseline Maths. While other schools choose to send gifted pupils for additional academic challenges.

During these sessions, primary pupils have the opportunity to work 1:1 or in small groups with a student mentor, developing both their academic and interpersonal skills. Mentors have the opportunity to be in a position of responsibility and work with someone different to their peers. During their time as mentor, they develop and use skills such as communication, empathy, listening and positive attitude.

During Belonging Week in May 2025, Year 10 students had the opportunity to work with Year 4 pupils visiting from local primary schools. They supported them in completing activities in hands-on Science, robotics and outdoor cooking.

During their visits, the focus for Year 4 pupils was to promote curiosity and teamwork in their learning, and to challenge them both academically and personally. Year 10 students worked in a position of responsibility where they had the opportunity to develop and use their interpersonal skills such as teamwork, empathy, and communication skills.

### Clara Heston (Future Stories Mentoring Lead; Teacher of Chemistry)



### Residentials and other activities:

The cost of overnight residentials is too high for some schools, especially those in disadvantaged areas. We have worked with **Whitley Park Primary School** to provide them with a residential experience by camping on our front field. We hire tee-pee tents and collaborate with the school to bring in external providers who deliver an unforgettable program of activities. Members of our staff, supported by students, also offer STEM sessions, and our fantastic catering team provides breakfast, lunch and dinner. This is something we may look to extend to more primary schools in the future, as there is a clear need for it and it helps ensure that all children can experience a residential, regardless of their background.

Sports Day is one of the most memorable parts of a child's school experience, but not all schools have the outdoor space needed to host such an important event. To help, we have opened our front field to local primary schools, giving them access to a large, safe and well-maintained green space for their Sports Day activities. It has been wonderful to see pupils, staff and families come together on our grounds, and we hope to continue supporting local schools in this way for years to come.

**Louise Dimmick (KS2-3 Transition Officer, FS Primary School Liaison)**



### Rowing programs:

Lead from the front then, lead from the side then, lead from the back. Skills that the Future Stories students at rowing are learning. After a few weeks, they had learnt to row enough to then coach primary school students. Yes, they are coaching them to row but really they are coaching them to be resilient, believe in themselves, work as a team, look after each other and maybe even look into their own souls and be proud of what they see.

An example of what they are up to: M is a student in year 6 at a local primary school. He struggles at school and at home. The Reading Boys Future Stories students encouraged him and helped him go out rowing in a safe way. M had some tears because he was a long way out of his comfort zone.



The next session, M was the first to volunteer to get out on the water and he smiled a lot. The next session, M realised and was being encouraged as the person that picked up the sport the easiest. The smile was something out of a picture book! The Reading students noticed that M might well have felt pride for the first time in his life. They also reflected that M might seek that feeling in all other areas of life from now on.

### **James Stevenson (Head of Rowing and Social Impact)**



### **Character sessions:**

Our aim in these weekly sessions is to provide opportunities for genuine character growth. Whether the activity involves ropes and carpet tiles, or canoes and paddle boards it is really just about creating situations where positive character traits can be practiced, developed and affirmed. It is wonderful to be able to offer local children the chance to enjoy a wide variety of team building and leadership activities, things we do a lot of as a school; we want the young people we work with to take home the knowledge and belief that they can consistently contribute positively both as an individual, and as part of a team.

Obviously, we are also providing leadership opportunities for some of our students who help us deliver these sessions. We are asking them to put their own Floreat learnings into practice. Can they facilitate positive culture, an ethos of kindness, effort and reflection? We support and coach them as they do the same for the participants. It is amazing to watch them in action and a privilege to be a part of the program.

### **Dave Tridgell (Director of Character)**



# FSCE CONFERENCE



Now in its 5th year as the Entrance Test provider for Reading School - as well as an ever-growing number of other Grammar Schools across the UK - FSCE welcomed Mr G Cowell to the team in January 2025 to help strengthen relationships with their existing partner Grammar Schools and forge connections with new ones.

The focus for FSCE this year has been developing and trialling exciting new test content and implementing a digital assessment platform to facilitate online testing, both on site in schools and at candidate's homes via remote proctoring.

Additionally, FSCE brought together over 30 Grammar Schools from across the country for a packed agenda at their Inaugural Conference: "Exploring Future Pathways for Grammar School Admissions".

The conference took place at the stunning Birmingham Cathedral on the 17th November 2025 and helped not only share FSCE and Reading School's mutual vision and drive for innovation and inclusivity, but crucially sparked broader conversations amongst Grammar School leads about positive change and progress rooted within local, regional and national social mobility initiatives.



**VOICES  
OF OLD  
REDINGENSIS**



# THE OLD REDINGENSIAN ASSOCIATION COUNCIL

2025

|                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| President            | Dr Fraser Peck (OR 1999-06)<br>fraserpeck@gmail.com                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Past President       | Jeremy Chadwick (OR 1979-86)<br>jeremychadwick@icloud.com                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Vice President       | TBA                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Secretary            | Ned Holt (OR 1966-72) (Staff 1982-2012)<br>nedholt54@gmail.com                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Chairman of Council  | Lt Col Andrew Tuggey CBE DL (OR 1958-66)<br>andrew.tuggey@outlook.com                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Treasurer            | Richard Taylor (OR 1988-95)<br>richard.taylor@lpi2.co.uk                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Membership Secretary | Chris Widdows (OR 1955-62)<br>cwiddows@aol.com                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Archivist            | Ken Brown (OR 1955-63)<br>kcbrown11@aol.com                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Estates Advisor      | John Short (OR 1956-64)<br>jhshort@btinternet.com                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Other Councillors    | Nick Burrows (OR 1969-76) (Legal)<br>Richard Griffiths DL (OR 1957-64)<br>Rev Dr Chris Evans (OR 1990-97) (Headmaster and Honorary Chaplain)<br>Simon Oliver (OR 1969-71)<br>Arthur Truslove (OR 2003-08)<br>Peter Whitehead (OR 1966-73) |

2026



# WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE FUTURE

The last few years have proved beyond any doubt that the broad community of parents, former parents and Old Boys of the school are crucial to Reading School's mission.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, it was this community that helped support the school's outreach work, and at the outset of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, it was this community that supported charitable giving and made it possible for the school to create a network of more than 50 host families. In our 900th Anniversary year, the school has been strengthened and delighted by the bonds, the affection and the loyalty expressed by Old Redingensians and former parents of the school – powerfully evident in the Grand Reunion and the Old Redingensians' House Music Competition. Indeed, even a cursory flick through this magazine's pages reveals incredible interaction between students past and present. On one page you'll see **Peter Whitehead (OR 1966-1973)** handing out badges, on another **Ned Holt (OR 1966-1972; Former Staff 1982-2012)** digging a hole in the cricket square, on another Professor **Martin Parsons (OR 1963-1970)** displaying remarkable stained glass, and on another **Lord Edward Young (OR 1978-1985)** inspiring the next generation to make the most of the unexpected opportunities life throws at us!

Sustaining a supportive community of those who love Reading School has therefore become absolutely critical to the

school. With a number of the most loyal members of the Old Redingensians Association Committee retiring from office or needing to reduce duties slightly, the ORA has made the decision to delegate some of its functions with the school and with the charitable foundation (The Reading Foundation) which owns the school site and which underpins our work. Subject to approval from the Charity Commission an element of 'merger' between these two wonderful charities will be undertaken in the Spring. The school extends its deepest thanks to all of those Old Redingensians who have served through the association's committee over the years.

In the background, the school will therefore be supporting some of the key tasks that the Association's Committee have managed, and the Society Office, will be relaunched in January as the Redingensians Office. The mission of this team, led by **Jasbir Chhokar (Alumni and Development Manager)**, remains unchanged: connecting our past, our present and our future. With the help of esteemed ORs, Chris Widdows and Ken Brown, the Redingensians Office will be learning the ropes regarding ORA membership communications, supporting enquiries from ORs, ensuring appropriate tributes and notifications in memoriam and, through the new heritage committee, working to protect archives and promote the remarkable history of the school.

One crucial element of the Old Redingensians Association Committee's work in the past decades has been to provide advice, perspective and wisdom to headmasters and leaders of the school. This task must be sustained, and to achieve this, the current committee and any others ORs who are interested will be invited to join an Old Redingensians Advisory Committee. The ORA president and the Headmaster will work jointly to ensure that this group is invited to meet for lunch or for dinner three times a year, including at venues around the country to facilitate engagement.

There cannot be many schools in the world with a prouder history, and the voices of those who have benefitted from, and have shaped Reading School must remain integral to its future.

It is therefore hoped that in the years ahead, all Old Redingensians and all the members of the Old Redingensians Association will continue to feel a keen sense of belonging to this place and to its people, and that the new Redingensians Office can continue the crucial work that has been so tirelessly fulfilled by the ORA committee – to whom the school gives its sincerest thanks.



**Revd Dr Chris Evans**  
Headmaster

### Meet the Redingensians Office:



**Jas Chhokar**  
Development &  
Alumni Manager



**Piatrice  
Hutchinson**  
Society  
Coordinator



**Esther Chong**  
Events &  
Development  
Coordinator



**Dal Singh**  
Community  
Relations Manager



# OLD REDINGENSIANS VICE PRESIDENT



**As the Old Redingensians Association enters a new era, one significant gap is left in its ranks.**

With Fraser Peck entering his second year as president, a Vice President is sought who will join in with conversations about the future of the school and help bring Old Redingensians together. This role requires only modest time commitments, but would ideally suit someone willing to take on the role of President for a year from September 2026.

Any Old Redingensians who are willing to serve in this role are invited to email Andrew Tuggey (ORA Chairman) or Fraser Peck (ORA President) who would be delighted to have an informal conversation with any prospective individuals.

The school and the Old Redingensians Association would both be hugely grateful to any individual willing to contribute to our community via this unique role.

# A SHOOTING STAR

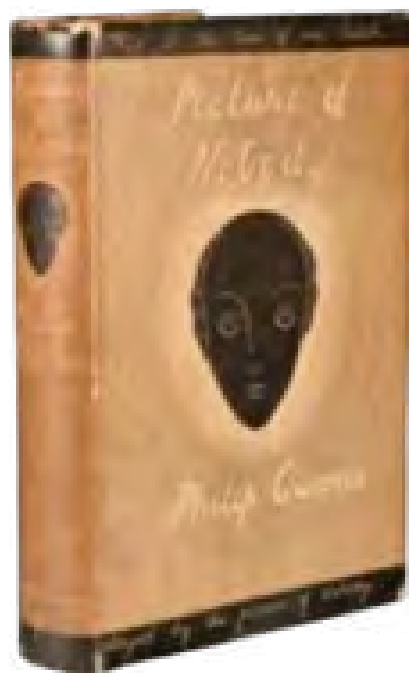
By Ken Brown (OR 1955-63) ORA Archivist

**P E (Philip) Owens** was at School, in West House, from 1916-19. He was born in Leyton, Essex, the son of John and Lucy Owens, on 16 November 1900 and entered the School with his brother Charles who was less than two years his junior. They were both in the Officer Training Corps and Philip was also a sub-librarian, secretary of The Meteorological Society and served on the magazine committee.

On 10 June 1945, Sergeant Philip Owens of the Intelligence Corps, husband of Mary Owens of Tadworth, Surrey lost his life in Greece at the age of 44, and the literary world lost one of its brightest emerging talents.

Philip became a poet, novelist, translator and editor during the 1920s and 30s, his work appearing in anthologies and literary journals. He wrote a novella *Hobohemians* in 1929 and was retained by the prestigious publisher Putnam to translate from the German Hans Fallada's novels *Wolf among Wolves* (1937) and *Iron Gustav* (1938).

However, it was Philip's book *Picture of Nobody* (1936) that propelled him into the limelight. "A witty reimagining of Shakespeare in 1930's London written with great brio and panache" "One of the strangest, most accomplished, and most remarkable one-offs in English fiction"



"Picture of Nobody is a masterpiece and a very strange one too" "This uncompromising, passionate voice should be heard with respect" "The book is brilliant" were some of the critical views expressed.

It will be reissued in time for Christmas with a paperback version following next May; if you want one of the rare original first editions there is one currently being offered for sale – at £1,750...

Philip was also judged to be on the brink of joining the first rank of British poets but sadly we shall never know just how prominent he might have become in the literary firmament. I have no image of him at present but intend to seek further.





# A SPOTLIGHT ON HASTINGS EDWARD HARINGTON

**READING SCHOOL'S ONLY VICTORIA CROSS WINNER**

**By Michael Naxton (OR 1959-1967)**

When I first walked into Big School as a wide-eyed eleven year old in September 1959, it seemed enormous; only as time passed did I realise that, whilst it was indeed an imposing space, it was not, in fact, that big! In addition to the stained glass shields in the window tops, the other feature which instantly took my eye – as I was very keen on history – were the ‘tea-trays’ adorning the walls. Affectionately named for their distinctive shape and size, each one carried the name of an illustrious old boy of my new school, and they fascinated me. Some names were familiar – Daniel Blagrove for example, after whom Blagrove Street in Reading’s town centre is named – but most others were less so. That said, the one which grabbed my immediate attention was the tray named for Hastings Edward Harington, VC. I knew very well what ‘VC’ stood for, most boys of my era did, and it was not long before I discovered that HEH (as I will refer to him from now) was the only former pupil of Reading School to have won the world’s most famous award for bravery. How could I have known then that, after leaving School, I was going to spend most of my career studying these coveted medals and the remarkable men who have won them, one of whom was our own Hastings Edward Harington.

**Hastings Edward Harington, V.C., (1832-1861)** was born on 9th November 1832, the son of the Rev. John Harington. First educated at home by his father, he then attended Reading School, going from here to the Military College at Addiscombe, Surrey (modern Croydon). This establishment, founded in 1809, was where young officers destined for military service in India were trained under the auspices of the East India Company, and it functioned until 1861 when it was closed following the demise of the East India Company after the so-called Indian Mutiny, apparently known as the First War of Indian Independence today (heaven knows what my old history masters would have made of this!). Whilst at Addiscombe, HEH's conduct was frequently commended as 'Exemplary', and he received prizes for 3rd Place "for the Artillery" [presumably the theory & practice of gunnery], 1st Place in Latin and 2nd Place in Hindustani. Besides these successes, he was admired by his classmates and, despite some religious fervour - no doubt the product of being born into an Anglican vicarage - one of them wrote of him:

***'...The very look of the man told you he was upright, in the Bible sense of the word; I was with him at Addiscombe, and even there he kept himself undefiled. I wish all Christians were like him - he was on a grand and noble scale...I saw his father once at Paddington Station. I and some other young fellows were talking about Addiscombe, and he came and asked us if we knew his son. I was glad to see the father of such a son...'***

*With his training complete, HEH left England in September 1852 and, upon arrival in*



*India, began his life as a Regimental Officer, mainly serving at Peshawar and Sialkot. Another comrade during this period also wrote admiringly of his devout nature:*

***'...I never met in this country [India] a more thoroughly high principled and well- disciplined young man. He is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, and by his diligent and devout observance of all holy ordinances he is an example to many, and we delight to welcome him to a little meeting held every Wednesday evening for prayer and reading the Scriptures...He seems very studious and determined to avoid debt, to which end, in the Artillery, he must use considerable self-denial. Yet he puts by something for God's work, and brings something monthly, for the Peshawur (sic) Mission.'***



His commission in the Bengal Artillery restricted most of his military activities to the vast and fertile area of north-east India, including the province of Bengal itself. After five busy years in India however, and by which time he had been promoted to the rank of Lieutenant, he was granted 60-days leave of absence and he decided to go and visit exotic Kashmir. Arriving to explore the city on 18th May 1857, he had hardly begun when, on the very next day, he received orders to rejoin his regiment as unrest amongst native Indian soldiers was speeding rapidly across the sub-continent. Young Lieutenant Harington found himself 'in the thick of it' almost as soon as he was able to get back to his regimental base and was first in action at a place called Trimmo Ghat where, during General Nicholson's offensive to head off rebels en route to Delhi, HEH was wounded for the first time. A shot in the foot may not sound significant today, but in the fetid heat of India and in the days before antibiotics, HEH was lucky to recover so easily. Soon back in action, this time during the Siege and Assault of Delhi, he again displayed the gallantry for which he was becoming known.

Wounded twice more at the legendary Relief of Lucknow, where a large British force had been assembled to relieve the beleaguered city, HEH left his own fascinating account of his exploits leading to the award of his Victoria Cross. In the event, one of his fellow officers left a rather better account as follows:-

***'During the Relief of Lucknow we were together nearly the whole of the time in a most dangerous position. A gun was***



***playing on us from a distance of about 25 yards. He was sent to silence it, which he did, and the work required all his coolness. He masked our gun by putting the muzzle through a hole in the wall their round shot had made. The first round brought down the whole wall and left us exposed. Round after round was exchanged, until the enemy's gun gave in. On that afternoon we stormed a thatched Hospital and a Mosque, from which the enemy kept up a constant fire. They were taken, but the Hospital was fired, and we had to retreat. A poor Drummer, wounded, was left for hours behind a wall in a garden. A hot fire was kept up on the garden. Harington with two others rushed out and brought in the wounded man. For this he was recommended for the Victoria Cross, but got it from the universal vote of his brother officers, to whom was given the pleasing task of electing the bravest of the number. Harington deserved two Crosses.'***

What is of added interest here is that HEH was initially denied his VC as it was believed he had been killed in action [at that time and indeed up until 1902, the rules regulating the awarding of VCs applied solely to living recipients].

When it was discovered that HEH was, after all, alive, his brother officers unanimously voted that he should receive the VC under Clause 13 of the regulations, namely that awards could be “selected by the officers engaged....”. This was a somewhat controversial procedure which need not concern us here – sufficient to say that HEH received his just reward to the acclaim of all who knew and had served with him. The award was announced to the world in the London Gazette [essentially the government’s newspaper] on 24th December 1858, along with those to four other men of the Bengal Artillery who had also distinguished themselves at the Relief of Lucknow. By the time these VCs were formally “gazetted”, the so-called ‘Mutiny’ was over and the mighty East India Company was in its death throes. Tragically, so was HEH who, worn down by the interminable heat and undoubtedly weakened by the bullet wounds to his foot, head and back whilst campaigning, caught cholera at Agra in July 1861 and died aged just 29.

I have spent my entire career handling and studying VCs and I rediscovered HEH’s when I was writing my History of Reading School in time for the Re-Foundation Celebrations in 1986. Put in touch with the then owner of HEH’s VC, a direct descendant who was, by then, a retired general, he gave me permission to use the portrait of his ancestor in my book (and also illustrated in this article), at the same time assuring me that the medal would “never leave the family’s hands”. Clearly things changed: succeeding generations have different priorities and, as a result, Hastings Edward Harington’s VC, accompanied by his

Indian Mutiny campaign medal, was put up for sale last year. Offered by Spink, the London auctioneers, in their sale on 18th April 2024, lot 142, it sold for £142,000 (hammer price), spot on its pre-sale estimate. Sadly, the buyer remains anonymous but that is often the way. Of more significance however, HEH’s story is now far better known thanks to the absolutely splendid 12-page entry in the auction catalogue and I am indebted to Spink for their kind permission to use both illustrations and extracts from it in this article.





# OR SPOTLIGHT

**Andrew Tuggey (OR 1958-1966)**

**We shine a spotlight on Old Redingensian and chair of the Old Redingensians Association, Andrew Tuggey (OR 1958 – 1966), CBE, DL. We spoke with Andrew about his aims to support homeless veterans:**



**Q: Can you share a little about your connection to Reading School**

*I am a former soldier and was at Reading School from 1958 – 1966, in East House. My younger brother Nick and I lived with our parents very close to the School off Upper Redlands Road. Our father was Headmaster of Cintra Secondary Modern School which used to be on Basingstoke Road, a school now long gone. After Reading School I entered the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst in January 1967, commissioning into the Royal Engineers in December 1968.*

*I had a fantastically enjoyable military career, picking up a civil engineering degree along the way, marrying my wife Clare, with whom I have three sons with, in 1974, and serving all over the world – Canada, Germany, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Northern Ireland, and finally eastern Europe with the Foreign Office. We have been privileged to have spent six years serving with Gurkhas, which has led to our lifelong links with the Gurkhas and Nepal. When I left the Army in May 2003, we had settled in Monmouthshire in the Welsh Marches.*

**Q: Where has your career also taken you?**

*In January 2004, I was appointed Chief Executive of an interparliamentary association, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK in the Houses of Parliament. For the next 13 years I led, and learnt from, a team of young, enthusiastic and dynamic people working with parliamentarians across the Commonwealth in the fields of parliamentary strengthening, legislation, human rights, climate change, the representation of women, the alleviation of poverty, violence against women and girls, modern slavery, and parliamentary diplomacy.*

*During my time at Westminster, I also had the honour to be appointed a Deputy Lieutenant, later Vice Lord-Lieutenant, of Gwent and in 2015 I was appointed High Sheriff of Gwent. Very excitingly, in Her Majesty The (late) Queen's Birthday Honours in 2016 I was awarded the CBE for the Commonwealth work and my support for communities in south-east Wales.*

### **Q: How do you still support Reading School?**

In 2019 I was invited to join the Old Redingensians Association Council (ORA), and in 2020 was elected President of the ORA for two years, after which I was elected Chair.

### **Q: In closing, how has Reading School impacted your life?**

*Looking back, I recognise, appreciate and value how the core values of Reading School – excellence, integrity, leadership and community – sustained and supported my personal journey. Other values, such as understanding the importance of appreciating and celebrating the work of others, and thanking them for what they do, fold into those core values, values that were so clear on the happy smiling faces of all of us who attended the wonderful celebration of Reading School's 900th anniversary on Saturday 12 July 2025.*

On Friday 14 November, Andrew participated in the BIG Sleep on Salisbury Plain at Stonehenge to raise funds for Alabaré, a Salisbury-based charity working to end the cycle of homelessness for veterans in South West England and Wales.

He extends his thanks to the Redingensian community for so generously supporting and contributing to the cause. Andrew began with a target of £10,000 but surpassed it significantly, raising a remarkable £18,420.00 via JustGiving. With Gift Aid, this amounts to approximately £21,860.00.



Andrew was one of four Alabaré ambassadors in Wales. A total of 119 participants slept on concrete under the canopy of the Visitor Centre. However, as a former member of the Reading School CCF, Andrew felt duty-bound to sleep outside, exposed to the elements. With the right kit, he was probably more comfortable and warmer than many of the others. Dawn at the stones proved a particularly special moment, and he heard moving stories from the client veterans who joined them about the impact of Alabaré's work.

The funds raised will be divided between Alabaré's homes in the South West and in Wales, supporting its vital work with veterans.





# REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICE



Organised as usual by **C J (Chris) Widdows (OR 1955-1962)**, Membership Secretary of The Old Redingensians Association, with the invaluable co-operation and support of the Society Office, this year's service was a particularly moving tribute to those Old Redingensians who sacrificed their lives in the service of their country.

As in recent years the contribution by the Combined Cadet Force, through Contingent **Commander Lt Col John Flexman**, was tremendous and integral to the proceedings. Our particular thanks go to **Captain Alasdair Matthews (OR 2005-2012)**. The Service was led by the ORA Chaplain and Headmaster, **Revd Dr C J (Chris) Evans (OR 1990-1997)**, and the address was given, in warmly appreciated style, by the **School Chaplain, Mr Mark Amos**.

The lesson, from Isaiah, was read by **Chris Widdows** and The Act of Remembrance spoken by **K C (Ken) Brown (OR 1955-1963)**, ORA Archivist who, after the laying of the wreaths by **Maya (Sixth Form Kendrick student)** on the Kendrick War Memorial, **Jeremy Chadwick (OR 1979- 1986)** Past

President ORA on the 1914-18 War Memorial and **Captain Alasdair Matthews** on the 1939-45 War Memorial, spoke of the service to their country over 900 years of old boys of the School of Reading. He took one man to represent all of them: **Captain Edward Hastings Harington VC**.

The words of the Headmaster and of the School Chaplain; the singing of the choir under the **Director of Music, Mr Oliver Griffin** and, not least, the wholehearted singing of the congregation throughout and, magnificently, the School Song with its new first line of '900 years' made this a most memorable service indeed. In addition to the choir, two boys of the School made respectful, beautiful, and indispensable contributions to this poignant memorial; **Sergey D (8W)** who played the organ and **Kalvin M (13JTe)**, a trumpeter who reached the heart.

After the service, the congregation moved to the Refectory for light refreshments and reflection on the service and where some of the stained glass related work created by **Dr Martin Parsons (OR 1963-1970)**, Past President Old Redingensians Association was on display.







## Christmas Card Affinity Campaign

### 2024

Launched in 2021, the Christmas Card Affinity Campaign is a special initiative that connects our Old Redingensians (ORs) aged 64 and over with our current students through personalised Christmas cards.

This annual project strengthens our engagement with Old Redingensians (ORs) aged 65 and over worldwide by sending them a Christmas card written by our students. Our alumni in this age group are often the hardest to reach, as many do not engage with digital communications or social media. A handwritten Christmas card offers a meaningful, personal touch that resonates deeply with this generation and strengthens the bond between current students and our older Reading School community.



**“I was really happy to have won, and it was something I’d worked really hard towards and put a lot of time and effort into. It makes me feel happy to be part of the community and I feel really proud.”**

Arjun K (8C)

For the 2024 campaign, Year 7 and 8 students were invited to design the artwork for the card’s cover. The winner of this year’s competition is **Arjun K (8C)** (pictured above), whose beautiful design was chosen to feature on the card.

Over 350 cards were sent last year across the UK and Ireland as well as to recipients in North America, Europe, Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand. We’ve received several touching responses from ORs, who wanted to personally express their heartfelt gratitude and appreciation. These messages have been shared with the students, enriching their sense of community and connection.

### 2025

This year, 407 Christmas cards have been handwritten by students in Years 7, 8, and 9 and posted to ORs aged 65 and over across the UK and around the world. We hope each card brings a little warmth and joy to your Christmas season.

A special thank you goes to local artist **Therese Lawlor** (Therese’s Paintings) for generously providing the beautiful artwork featured on this year’s card.

## Keep In Touch

To help us ensure this campaign continues to reach you, make sure you keep in touch with us, and your classmates by joining the Reading School Alumni Society and update your current contact detail. We also ask that you opt in to receive postal communications, so we can keep you included in future mailings and ensure your Christmas card reaches you safely.



### OR Visit - Richard Stone (OR 1962-1969)

In September 2024, **Richard Stone (OR 1962-1969)** returned to the school for a visit that included the Chapel, English Corridor, Big School, the Refectory, and the New Science Building. During his tour, he shared many fond memories of his time as a student, playing football in the Quad, singing in his final House Music Competition, and taking part in school productions such as *The Pirates of Penzance* and *Patience*.

Richard has also kindly forwarded several items for the school archive, including a photograph from the 1963 production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Patience* and a programme from the 1968 House Music Competition, in which he sang a solo for County House.

### OR Visit - Tony Rowlands (OR 1975-1982)

We were thrilled to welcome back Tony Rowlands (OR 1975–1982), who returned to Reading School in September 2025, exactly 50 years after he first joined in September 1975. Tony was accompanied by his lifelong friends John Miller (OR 1975–1982), Nick Toll (OR 1975–1982), and his brother, Kevin Rowlands (OR 1978–1985), all of whom boarded together in West Wing.



It was their first visit since leaving and the group enjoyed a nostalgic tour of the school, reminiscing about their time as boarders and sharing cherished stories of life at Reading School. It was a real pleasure to host them and to hear their reflections on the history, friendships and legacy that continue to shape our community.



## Reading School Rugby Festival

The Reading School Rugby Festival has become a much-loved annual celebration of sport, community spirit, and the enduring bond between Old Redingensians (ORs), staff, students, and recent leavers. Across both 2024 and 2025, the festival brought together players and supporters from across generations, creating vibrant days filled with sunshine, camaraderie, and outstanding rugby.

Each year, the festival opened with a lively and inclusive touch rugby match that welcomed players of all ages and abilities. Whether joining the action on the pitch or cheering enthusiastically from the sidelines, the atmosphere was one of friendly competition and shared school pride. A particular highlight of both years was the spirited staff vs recent leavers fixture, featuring members of the Class of 2024, whose energy and enthusiasm helped set the tone for the day.

A cherished tradition of the festivals has been the return of two esteemed former teachers: **Mr Bob Lewis (Former Deputy Headmaster & PE Teacher, 1976–2010)** and **Mr John Oakes (Former South House Master & Head of Biology, 1970–1997)**. Their presence added depth and nostalgia, as they presented awards, reconnected with the community, and shared fond memories of their years at Reading School. Their reflections served as a meaningful reminder of the legacy, history, and deep-rooted connections that continue to shape our school community.

In 2024, the festival marked the long-awaited comeback of the Clacy Cup, awarded for the first time since 2008. The honour went to **Adam Woodcock (OR 2017–2024)**, named ‘Player of the Match’ as a recent leaver. The cup was presented by Guest of Honour Mr John Oakes, adding tradition and gravitas to the moment. The same year also saw the introduction of the J. Fulwell Rugby Cup, awarded to **Joe Tett (OR 2010–2017; Teacher of PE)** for his outstanding performance representing the teachers and ORs. This new cup, generously donated by **Jonathan Fulwell (OR 1998–2005)**, celebrates his unwavering support of Reading School rugby, from funding crucial equipment to supplying kit and match balls.

Both festivals were made possible thanks to the dedication and organisation of **Mr Matt Kearle (Head of Rugby)**, **Miss Katie Rosser-Evans (Teacher of Chemistry and Rugby Ambassador)**, and the Society Office. Their hard work ensured smooth, memorable events that brought joy to all who attended. Our thanks also extend to the staff, students, families, and ORs whose support—whether through playing, spectating, or volunteering—helped make each festival a true celebration of Reading School spirit.

Our Rugby Festivals stand as a testament to the strength of our community, the power of shared tradition, and the lasting legacy of rugby within our school. We look forward to continuing to build on this momentum in the years to come.









**A faithful visitor to the school’s annual Rugby festival, and wonderful friend to the community, Bob Lewis continues to inspire the school almost fifteen years after he and his wife Theresa left their roles in the school and in South House. Recently, Bob went on a rummage in the PE department, for some particularly precious memorabilia:**

*“When I left Reading School in 2010, I left a number of items behind in the PE office. I’ve often wondered about them, and decided this year to see if I could find them. There were three shirts from boys who had had particular sporting success. When I left these shirts were displayed in a glass cabinet alongside other sports trophies in my office. I’d always hoped they would inspire boys who had misbehaved or were straying off the straight and narrow.*

*Stories of Redingensians who have succeeded despite the odds, or who struggled in one area of life, but excelled in sport can often remind us what everyone is capable of, and what any of us can achieve with dedication and hard work.*

*The original 2 shirts which I had framed were an England U16 Rugby Shirt given to me by Michael McCarrick in 1995, and an England rowing shirt worn by Chris Lloyd in England Rowing 8 that won the Gold Medal in the Manchester Commonwealth Games in 2002.*

*A third shirt that we added later, was donated by Tom Fright. Tom left Reading School in 2008 but returned later to visit me at school and donate his Northern Ireland athletics vest, asking that it be placed alongside the others because they had inspired him “not only to achieve international honours but to become a better person.”*

*You cannot imagine what it meant to find these three shirts last Friday hidden away in a P.E store cupboard, after having retired over 15 years ago. They mean so much to me, and I hope small stories of success like this might carry on inspiring future generations too.”*



# SCHOOL RULES c. 1970

- REMEMBER**
1. The purpose of school rules is to ensure the smooth running of school life.
  2. YOU are responsible for the reputation of the school.
  3. The best kind of discipline is self-discipline.
  4. Ignorance of the rules is not accepted as an excuse for breaking them.

## Section A. CONDUCT.

1. Ragging, and unseemly behaviour are forbidden in the school buildings, school grounds and in the streets. The basis of sound conduct and good manners is consideration for others. Disorderly or unmannerly conduct outside will be treated as a school offence.
2. Litter must be deposited in the proper receptacles provided in the school grounds and buildings.
3. No boy may bring to the school premises any catapult, fire-arm or toy pistol, ammunition for these, water pistols, fireworks, knives or any other article which the Headmaster may decide to be undesirable.
4. School uniform, as prescribed, must be worn on all journeys to and from school and on official school occasions.
5. Boys are forbidden to smoke on the premises or while in school uniform, or to have any smoking material in their possession.
6. Rings and other ornaments are not to be worn with school uniform.
7. Cards and any form of gambling are forbidden.

## Section B. BOUNDS.

The following are out of bounds:-

1. All bushes, shrubberies and grass verges.
2. The School Field, except to those engaged in games.
3. The school premises, including cycle sheds after fifteen minutes from close of school save by special permission, or attendance at an official school activity.
4. The school buildings: (a) before the outside bell at 8.25, (b) during the break and dinner hour.
5. The roofs of all school buildings at all times.
6. The fences and walls of Morgan Road Ground.

## Section C. FORM ROOMS.

1. Boys may not enter form rooms other than their own except on definite instructions, or in accordance with the time-table.
2. The master's "territory" is out of bounds except to boys appointed to perform routine duties.
3. No boy may interfere with the form room property — absentee slips, board cleaners, chalk, etc., unless appointed by a master to do so.
4. In the absence of a master the form captain takes charge and issues any necessary instructions. For this duty he has the authority of a Monitor.

## Section D. ROUTINE.

1. If a boy is given a detention it is his personal responsibility to do it on the first possible occasion. It must not be postponed without permission of the master or prefect concerned.
2. Detention takes precedence over all School activities.
3. No boy is allowed to leave the grounds during break without permission.

## Section E. CYCLES (including MOTORS).

1. The Highway Code must be strictly observed.
2. Boys wishing to come to school on motor cycles must obtain permission from the Headmaster.
3. All cyclists must enter by Addington Road and dismount before crossing the pavement. Similarly when leaving. It is a privilege of Prefects, Monitors and Boarding House Monitors to ride bicycles in the school grounds.
4. Cycles must be left only in the cycle sheds.

## Section F. PROPERTY.

1. No boy may open the locker or desk of any other boy, nor may he remove, borrow, or in any way interfere with the private property of another.
2. It is forbidden to cut, write on, or in any way deface school buildings, school furniture, or other property including text books.
3. It is the duty of every boy to co-operate in securing sensible use of school property and in preserving orderliness.
4. Finds and losses must be reported without delay at the Bursar's Office or to a master or prefect as may be most appropriate.
5. Boys are forbidden to barter or to have any money transactions with one another.

## Section G. GAMES.

1. Regulations with regard to games are on the notice board in Cloisters.
2. Informal ball games are forbidden except in the main quadrangle. Hard balls may not be used.
3. Unless required for other purposes, the Quad is available for informal games after school, provided that boys change out into games clothing.
4. No Quad. games may be played when Big School is in use for examinations, and other formalities. A "No Games" notice is then displayed.



# OR SPOTLIGHT

**Tads Ciecierski-Holmes (OR 2009 – 2017)**



**Tads Ciecierski-Holmes (OR 2009 – 2017) has been making significant strides in global healthcare initiatives and community service over a series of transformative experiences.**

## **Quality Improvement at the Uganda Cancer Institute**

In July 2024, Tads collaborated with the Uganda Cancer Institute's pediatric team on crucial Quality Improvement projects. Alongside a fellow medical student from Cambridge, Tads focused on enhancing multidisciplinary tumor board meetings and auditing pediatric solid tumor pathology reports. This hands-on work involved extensive data collection over a four-week period, providing a solid foundation for ongoing remote collaboration to continue improving patient care.

## **Supporting the Kanyike Project**

During the same period in Uganda, Tads visited the Kanyike Project health center as a representative for their UK-based trustees. This visit involved delivering donations of children's vests from the UK and gathering essential information for upcoming grant applications. The Kanyike Project, dedicated to improving healthcare and education in Uganda, greatly benefited from his involvement and support.

## **Expedited Courier for Zion Medical Centre**

In a unique turn of events, Tads played a crucial role in assisting the Zion Medical Centre by delivering a key for a vaccine fridge from the UK. This key, essential for the operation of their



new vaccine services, enabled the centre to begin offering critical vaccinations. He highly recommends students consider volunteering at Zion Medical Centre for a variety of roles, including secretarial jobs, social media management, and healthcare assistance.

### **Coaching Uganda's Modern Pentathlon Team**

Adding to an already impressive resume, Tads leveraged his experience as a competitive Modern Pentathlon athlete and qualified shooting coach to support the Ugandan national Modern Pentathlon team. Coaching a shooting session before the team headed off to the African Championships in Egypt, he was inspired by the athletes' dedication and resilience despite limited resources.

### **Radiology Placement in Christchurch, New Zealand**

Recently, Tads completed a four-week placement with the radiology team in Christchurch, New Zealand. This experience, part of an ongoing commitment to medical excellence, provided valuable insights and skills that will undoubtedly benefit his future medical career.

### **Ongoing Research and Data Analysis**

Currently engaged in various research projects, Tads continues to contribute to important studies, including a collaborative project between researchers from Mbarara and Southampton on antenatal couples counseling in Uganda. Despite the data analysis work being somewhat tedious, his dedication to advancing medical knowledge remains unwavering.

**Do you have an inspiring story?**

**Would you like to share your professional expertise with our students through a short talk, workshop, tutorial or inspire lecture?**

We deeply value the support from our alumni. The commitment of individuals who share their wisdom, expertise and inspire philanthropic giving helps highlight the crucial role in shaping Reading School's future. For more information on how to get involved, please contact **Jas Chhokar, Development & Alumni Relations Manager** at [alumni@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:alumni@reading-school.co.uk).



# ORA GOLFING SOCIETY

## Autumn Meeting

There are regular reports in the national press about golf courses scheduled for closure, usually to make way for housing developments, and Maidenhead Golf Club is one such example. The course occupies a prime site close to the town centre and will close at the end of December 2025, with members moving to Mill Ride Golf Club near Ascot. As befits a long-standing local golfing society such as ours, we try to bid farewell to such old friends; Maidenhead was our second such event, the first being our farewell to Reading Golf Club in 2020.



The fifteen Golfing Society members participating arrived at around 9.15am for coffee, bacon rolls and randomised team selection. Golf commenced just before 10.30am in five teams of three. We welcomed two new members, Andrew Mills and Philip Davies, and wished them well on their first outing with us.

Maidenhead Golf Course was founded in 1896 and has long enjoyed a strong reputation. The sun shone brightly all day, and the tees, fairways and greens were all in excellent condition. Everyone present agreed that it was deeply sad to see such a fine course disappear to make way for housing – many mature trees and a wildlife haven now face an uncertain future.

Upon our return to the clubhouse we were greeted by five non-playing guests representing the OR Association, past playing members of the Society and current playing members on sick leave. Trophies were presented by a founder member of the Society, Rodney Huggins, who had travelled from Reading at the age of 89 to be with us. Rodney was kind enough to remark on the Society's obvious good health.

The Society Secretary, Michael Barrott (pictured), distributed the trophies and prizes as follows:

### Lowest gross score:

- **Chris Forrest (OR 1979-1986)**

### Highest Stableford points:

- **Chris Forrest (OR 1979-1986) - 37**
- **Andrew Mills OR 1967-1974) - 33**
- **Neil Hunt (OR 1979-1984) - 33 (on countback)**

**Highest Stableford team score (best 2 players to count on each hole)**

- **Chris Forrest (OR 1979-1986), Nick Burrows (OR 1969-1976), Ian Canning (OR 1966-1973)** - 81 points
- **Neil Hunt (OR 1979-1984), Tony Richards (OR 1963-1970), John Camidge (OR 1977-1982)** - 72 points

Nearest the pin on the 10th - **Steve Barton (OR 1965-1973)**

Nearest the pin on the 13th – **Andrew Mills (OR 1967-1974)**

Longest drive on the 18th - **Neil Hunt (OR 1979-1984)**

Particular congratulations to **Chris Forrest** for his very first golf competition wins and to **Andrew Mills** for an outstanding performance on his first outing with the society.

The Society's next fixtures are at **Henley Golf Club in March 2026** and **Newbury & Crookham Golf Club in October 2026**.

If you would like to join this thriving Society please contact its **Secretary, Michael Barrott**, at [michael.barrott@btinternet.com](mailto:michael.barrott@btinternet.com).



Old School Tie (left) Silk £20  
OR Association Tie (right)  
Polyester £15 Silk £20

Available from:  
Chris Widdows, 21 Bulmershe Road,  
READING, RG1 5RH  
[cwiddows@aol.com](mailto:cwiddows@aol.com) or 07876 228682





# IN MEMORIAM

**By Ken Brown (OR 1955-1963) ORA Archivist and Chris Widdows (OR 1955-1962) ORA Membership Secretary**

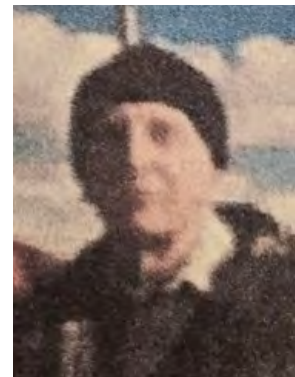
**Since the 27 deaths reported in The Old Redingensians Association April 2025 Newsletter we have received notification of the deaths of the following (full obituaries will be kept in the Archive):**



**R W (Richard) Billington**  
**(1950-1957 East Wing)**  
Dip Chem Tech (Hons)  
Industrial Chemist and Lecturer  
University of London  
Died 29 December 2023 aged 84



**C M (Malcolm) Buchanan**  
**(1950-57 East Wing)**  
Transport  
Planner/Civil Engineer  
Died 2 October 2022 aged 83



**M W (Michael) Cresswell**  
**(1946-51 County)**  
Agriculturalist  
Farmed in Australia from 1971  
Died 30 May 2025 aged 90



**M E (Michael) Digby FRICS**  
**(1944-50 West Wing)**  
Chartered Surveyor  
Died 30 May 2025 aged 91



**C D (David) Escott-New**  
**(1961-68 East)**  
University of Warwick  
Schoolmaster and Magistrate  
Died 22 June 2025 aged 74



**P J (Peter) George**  
**(1953-60 East)**  
Consulting engineer  
Died May 2025 aged 83



**G M G (Gerry) Knight**  
**(1943-52 West)**  
Businessman  
Died 7 June 2025 aged 91



**Sqn Ldr (Retd) D (David) Lawrence**  
**(1949-56 East)**  
Chartered Secretary  
Died 24 August 2025 aged 86



**J B (John) Monk**  
**(1940-52 West/East)**  
Alderman Ex Mayor Milton Keynes  
Died 22 May 2009 aged 76



**D (David) Ormrod**  
**(1957-64 County)**  
Solicitor  
Died 27 September 2025 aged 79



**C L (Colin) Reynolds**  
**(1955-63 East)**  
Headmaster, JP  
Died 31 August 2025 aged 81



**C P (Christopher) Smallbone**  
**(1944-54 West)**  
Company Director Milwards  
Shoes  
Died 19 August 2025 aged 89



**Rev A C (Alan) Stockbridge MBE**  
**(1942-52 County)**  
Clerk in Holy Orders  
Died May 2025 aged 91



**G R P (Raymond) Thomas**  
**(1942-50 East Wing)**  
Farmer and Guesthouse Proprietor  
Died 18 July 2025 aged 93



**D J (David) Warburton**  
**(1977-82 County)**  
Musician, Businessman and former  
Conservative MP for Somerton and  
Frome  
Died 26 August 2025 aged 59





**Dr I L (Ivor) Watts MBE**

**(1936-44 West)**

Medical Doctor

Died 18 March 2025 aged 98

**Compiled by Ken Brown (1955-63), ORA Archivist and Chris Widdows (1955-62), ORA Membership Secretary**

We were unable to verify some aspects of our research as replies to certain enquiries had not been received by the printing deadline.

We apologise if there are any errors in the foregoing and shall welcome and acknowledge any corrections.

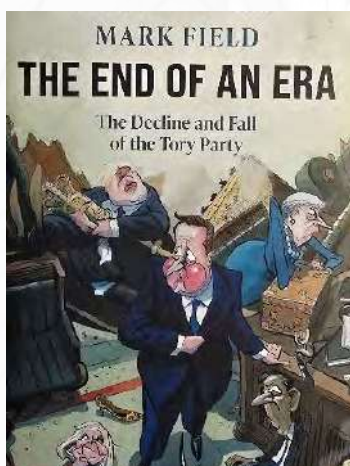
**Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis.**



If you would like to report the bereavement of an Old Redingensians, please email Ken Brown at [kcbrown11@aol.com](mailto:kcbrown11@aol.com) and C J (Chris) Widdows at [cwiddows@aol.com](mailto:cwiddows@aol.com).

Please also contact the Society Office by emailing [alumni@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:alumni@reading-school.co.uk) so we can inform the school community.

# THE OR BOOKSHELF



**Mark Field**

## **The End of an Era**

Subtitled 'The Decline and Fall of the Tory Party' this 2025 book contains fascinating insights and is very well written by the former Conservative Member of Parliament for the Cities of London and Westminster. Mark was in West House 1976-83.

**Publisher Backbite Publishing Ltd (£25).**

**Hardback xvii + 409 pp illustrated.**

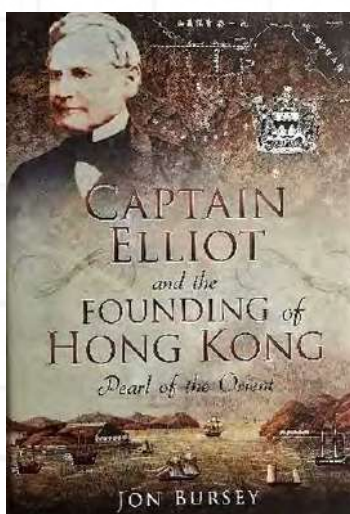
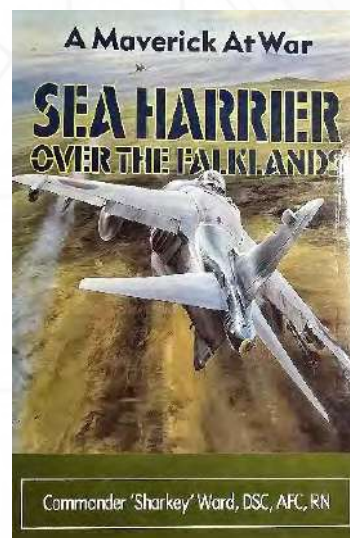
## **Commander 'Sharkey' Ward DSC AFC RN**

### **Sea Harrier Over The Falklands**

N D (Nigel) Ward (East Wing 1955-62 and former School Captain) died last year which has prompted me to revisit his 1992 book (and to reflect on his heroic and significant service in the Falklands War). Highly recommended.

**Publisher Leo Cooper**

**Hardback xvii + 299 pp Illustrated.**



**Jon Bursey**

## **Captain Elliot and the Founding of Hong Kong**

I mentioned this book when it was published seven years ago. Now that most of us know refugees from Hong Kong it is worth recalling that the Island became a British possession through the original negotiations of an Old Redingensian, Charles Elliot, who, with his brother Gilbert, was at the School under Dr Valpy.

**Publisher Pen and Sword (£25)**

**Hardback xvi + 274 pp Illustrated.**





# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

KARRIMOR



# PHILANTHROPY

Throughout 900 years, Reading School's success has depended on the kindness of benefactors.

The school's bidding prayer lists the following individuals, whose gifts were particularly significant in shaping the school:

**Henry I, King of England;  
Hugh de Boves, Abbot of Reading;  
Henry VII, King of England;  
John Thorne, Abbot of Reading;  
Sir Thomas White, Lord Mayor of London, the founder of Scholarships to the College of  
St John the Baptist in the University of Oxford;  
William Dene;  
Elizabeth I, Queen of England;  
William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury;  
John Kendrick;  
Richard Valpy and Robert Appleton, sometime Head Masters;  
George William Palmer, Privy Councillor;  
Joseph Wells, Warden of Wadham College in the University of Oxford;  
William Conrad Costin, President of St John's College in the University of Oxford;  
Alfred Edgar Milward.**

More recently, the school has received remarkable support from a number of families and individuals, and most impressively from over 1600 donors who supported the students in their giving day challenges in March. In 2026 the school will reach out to ask for help with our appeal to improve Sport and Expressive Arts facilities. For now though, for any who would like to support the school, we highlight three ways in which you might join an unbroken chain of philanthropy that spans ten centuries.

Please do reach out if you'd like to discuss leaving a legacy, are able to make a small monthly contribution to fund crucial elements of our school's life that are not funded by the Department for Education, or would like to donate to the Beyond 900th Fund, which is growing day by day in anticipation of building plans. Details and QR codes are found on the following pages.

Every student and every staff member in the school is grateful for your support.



# THE 365 FUND



£365 a year or  
£30 a month = £1 a day

+



Gift Aid  
25% of donation

=



£456.25  
a year

The 365 Fund was established more than a decade ago to support academic, pastoral and co-curricular provision that is not funded by the Department for Education. Small donations on a regular basis provide opportunities that enable our students to extend their aspirations, skills and range of interests.

We believe that every child deserves to reach their full potential and we strive to offer exceptional opportunities in academic disciplines, arts, drama, music, sports and electives. Without the 365 Fund we couldn't deliver Football fixtures, Rugby matches, mock trials, the amazing work of the LRC, or many of our clubs and societies. Moreover, the Department of Education has just announced that it is withdrawing funding from the fourth A Level that many of our students choose, and sustaining these opportunities now depend entirely on donations.

Imagine Reading School without cricket. Imagine Reading School without practice interviews for those applying to study medicine at university. Imagine Reading School without a choir. Imagine Reading School without a library.

Each of these, and so much more, is funded by donation alone. Each is increasingly important given the reduction in opportunities for young people in wider society, and because our work makes an ever increasing impact in the lives of young people from more disadvantaged backgrounds.

Every contribution you make to Reading School makes a significant difference to our students. A small monthly contribution to the 365 fund helps us sustain our remarkable provision and guarantee opportunity for every one of our students.

Thank you for your support.





# BEYOND 900 YEARS

The Beyond 900 years campaign has been established to ensure improvement to Reading School's Sports facilities, Expressive Arts spaces, and Sixth Form provision.

Since 2018 our senior students have been National Badminton Champions despite having no Badminton court. This year our junior swimmers beat Wellington College and Bluecoat School in swimming galas despite our pool being out of service since it was drained on 8th December 2015. Our thespians have no stage, and our artists have limited light and limited studio space.

Our goal in this generation must be to address these deficiencies and improve much, much more. Starting with the renovation of the swimming pool or construction of a Sports Hall, the Beyond 900 campaign exists to drive these improvements, and then to build an expressive arts centre that secures the future of creativity in our curriculum, and gives imagination a home at the heart of the school. It is our shared responsibility to develop Reading School's site in a way that honours our history and ensures future generations learn in an environment befitting of our heritage.

A gift to the Beyond 900 years campaign will shape the future of the school for many generations to come. Be a part of the journey.





# THE 1125 SOCIETY

The more we learn about Reading School's history, the more obvious it is how much so many of us owe to those who cared for us, taught us and led us. A repeated refrain from Old Redingensians is, "Reading School was the making of me."

For some, it may be that leaving a legacy to Reading School could be a way of giving thanks for the opportunities we have received, and 'paying forwards' this gratitude in a way that impacts future generations. The 1125 Society has therefore been established to support and acknowledge those who are kind enough to make this sort of contribution to the future of the school. The school would not be here today with the generosity of our forebears, and in this 900<sup>th</sup> year of the school's history it is our responsibility to ensure that the students of tomorrow are equally provided for.

The goal of the Legacy Society is that Reading School continues to shape society over the next 100 years, so that when our successors celebrate the school's Millennial anniversary, Reading School boys in that far off generations will be able to look back on this time with gratitude.

If you are considering leaving a gift or have already left a gift to Reading School in your Will, please do contact us. We want to ensure we understand your wishes and are able to use your bequest in the best way possible. We want you to be assured that our unwavering commitment is that all legacies, whatever their size, will directly benefit the school and its pupils. Moreover, we also want to thank you during your lifetime and celebrate your generosity. All those who have pledged will be invited to join the 1125 Society.

Taking care of loved ones is an important priority when planning a Will but including a bequest to charity can also lessen the burden of inheritance tax on your executors. We recommend that you work with a Solicitor or Tax advisor before making any decision. By including a provision in your Will to support Reading School, you will be leaving a lasting impact on future generations.

Thank you for thinking of Reading School.

**Please reach out to [alumni@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:alumni@reading-school.co.uk) if you'd like to discuss your bequest.**

Floreat Redingensis









© Reading School,  
Erleigh Road,  
Reading RG1 5LW

T: 0118 9015600 | E: [alumni@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:alumni@reading-school.co.uk) | [development@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:development@reading-school.co.uk)

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