



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

15 May 2026

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Introduction

Dear parents, carers, colleagues and students,

Yesterday I received devastating news about the death of a local Sixth Form student from Meningitis, and the serious illness of a small number of his close contacts. I have included public health advice relating to meningitis below.

This tragedy reminds us that we are all fragile and our thoughts and prayers are with those who are bereaved, and still desperately unwell.

We often use the phrase “thoughts and prayers” in these circumstances. For you this may be a platitude, a formula, a pleasant-sounding truism. Maybe, even, an empty cliché.

For me, it is an acknowledgment that there are things I can’t change, or fix, or solve. It is an acknowledgement of the profound impotence that exists beyond our thinking and acting, a confession of our utter inability to make all things right.

Across our community there may be some who pray much, and some who wouldn’t dream of doing so. I make no judgement about this, but I readily admit that I often find myself wishing I’d prayed more. I often find that my wing-span has been exceeded, my wisdom exhausted, and my strength depleted. In that space I find myself praying.

I hope that in the background this weekend, beyond the force of our actions, the strength of our arms, or the power of our pens, many of us might be thinking of, or praying for, those local families most affected by loss and grief. And I hope that in the foreground we might each be grateful for those we care for the most.

I hope all our students travelling next week will be safe and happy, and all those wrestling with exams will find peace in their preparation. Parents, your sons are precious. Their exams are less important than their health. Students, your parents are incredible – and worthy of your respect. Colleagues, we are all grateful for you.

If you are able, please do find space in your thoughts or prayers for those who expected their children to be sitting A Levels but are now facing a very different reality.

May God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, courage to change the things we can, and wisdom to know the difference.

Reinhold Niebuhr

Dr Evans

Key information

All Years

Meningococcal Disease (Meningitis) - Local Cases

Reading Borough Council's Director of Public Health has written to schools following three local cases of invasive meningococcal disease (meningitis) in young people in the Reading area, including one death. The risk to the wider community remains very low and there is no need to change school routines.

Know the symptoms. Seek urgent help if you notice:

- A rash that doesn't fade when pressed with a glass
- Sudden high fever, severe headache, stiff neck
- Vomiting, joint pain, dislike of bright lights
- Extreme sleepiness, confusion, seizures, very cold hands and feet

Call 999 or go to A&E immediately if you suspect meningitis or sepsis. Use NHS 111 if unsure.

Meningitis spreads only through prolonged close contact. Targeted antibiotics and vaccinations are being provided to identified close contacts only.

For more information: www.nhs.uk/conditions/meningitis

To read the letter in full [please click here](#).

Additional support for children and young people

A young carer is any person under 18 who provides care to another person because of physical or mental illness, disability, or addiction. This includes siblings and elderly relatives, not just parents. There are over 800,000 young carers in the UK, and probably many more who don't even realise they are carers.

Reading School is committed to ensuring support and inclusion for all of our students. If there is information relating to your child being:

- a ['Young Carer'](#)
- or facing barriers due to English being an additional language

Please contact Ms Ayres by emailing layres@reading-school.co.uk

The Big Future: Share Your Views

The Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza, has launched *The Big Future*, a national survey asking children and young people aged 0-18 about their hopes, concerns, and what they want a good childhood to look like.

With hundreds of thousands of young people set to vote in the next general election for the first time, the survey aims to ensure their voices are heard at a national level.

Students can complete the survey at www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigfuture.

Year 13 only

Class of 2026 Yearbooks & Hoodies – Last Call for Orders!

We would be grateful if you could remind your young person that, if they have requested to purchase a Yearbook and/or hoodie, the deadline for online purchases is **23:59pm on Wednesday 20th May 2026**, after which time the storefront will close.

If they haven't already done so, this is Year 13's **final opportunity** to secure these keepsakes. Please ensure also that any Yearbook orders made on behalf of the student are submitted using **their full name (first and last)** to avoid confusion > [Click here to order](#)

Yearbooks capture the essence of the secondary school journey—filled with candid snapshots, memorable events, and messages from classmates and teachers. They are a treasure trove of memories that you or your young person will cherish for years to come. Similarly, our custom-designed hoodies are a symbol of pride and unity, representing the graduating Year 13 cohort.

Students will be able to collect their orders at the **Speech Day on Tuesday 23rd June 2026**.

If you have any questions or need help with your order, please contact Mrs Alberici at malberici@reading-school.co.uk

Current Reading School Vacancies

Head of History - We are seeking to appoint a dynamic and inspiring Teacher of History who is ready to share their passion for their subject. The successful candidate will be an outstanding practitioner who can nurture wisdom, curiosity and perspective in our students.

For more information about the role and to make your application, please [visit our recruitment portal by clicking here](#).

School Community News

Reading School Drama NEA - Year 12 Devised Performances

Today, Year 12 students rehearsed and presented devised theatre pieces as part of their A level Drama NEA (Non-Examined Assessment), which counts for 30% of their final A level grade. Students were tasked with creating original theatre linked to the methodology of a chosen theatre practitioner, working as a group or duo. Crucially, the work was entirely student-led; with Mr Jenkins' (Director of Drama) role as teacher, to step back and let students drive the process.

The first performance drew on the work of Jerzy Grotowski, described as a highly practical practitioner whose methods focus on stripping theatre down to its essentials primarily the relationship between actor and audience, and pushing actors toward deep physical and emotional truth.

The second performance was influenced by Dario Fo, who developed a highly energetic, political, and audience-focused style of theatre. His methods are very different from Grotowski's; they are comic, satirical, and rooted in popular performance traditions, especially Commedia dell'arte.

Following today's rehearsals, Mr Jenkins shared:

“As their teacher, I am incredibly proud of the way this Year 12 group is developing both cohesion and originality in their theatre work. They are working collaboratively with maturity and creativity, shaping ideas into clear, unified performances that demonstrate real artistic intent. Their willingness to explore a range of practitioners and rehearsal techniques is enabling them to build their own distinct creative styles. It is particularly rewarding to see how thoughtfully they are making acting, design, and staging choices that effectively communicate their intentions to an audience. Their commitment, curiosity, and growing confidence as theatre-makers is something to be truly celebrated.”



Reading School Events

Speech Day 2026



Reading School is delighted to introduce the inaugural **Speech Day 2026**, taking place on **Tuesday 23rd June 2026**, kindly sponsored by the *Reading Foundation*. This new event brings together the former Junior and Senior Prize Giving ceremonies into a single day celebrating our students.

The day will include:

- **Junior Celebration (09:00–12:00)** for Year 7–10 students and their parents/carers
- **Senior Celebration (13:30–17:30)** for Year 13 students and their parents/carers

The Junior Celebration will feature prize giving, speeches, performances and student showcases by year group across a range of subjects and activities. The Senior Celebration will include prize giving, presentation of A-Level certificates, student performances and guest speakers, followed by refreshments.

Students receiving individual prizes will be notified separately by email, no later than Monday 15th June.

Please note that the School will not be running timetabled lessons on Speech Day. Year 12 students will instead complete structured independent study tasks at home, with a small number of incoming prefects supporting the event during the day.

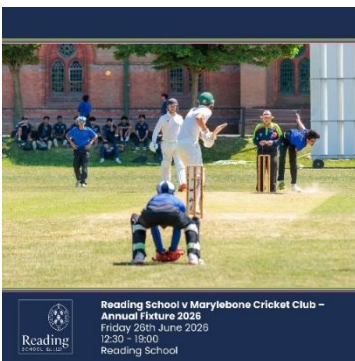
Further details are included in the letter sent earlier this week. Parents/carers are warmly invited to attend and are kindly asked to confirm attendance by **9:00am on Friday 5th June** via the links below:

[Junior Celebration](#)

[Senior Celebration](#)

If you have any queries regarding the Speech Day, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Chong at events@reading-school.co.uk.

Reading School v Marylebone Cricket Club 2026



Now in its 129th year, this historic fixture has been proudly contested since 1898, making it one of Reading School's most enduring sporting traditions.

Come along for a fantastic afternoon of cricket. Parents are invited to join us **from 3:15pm for the second session**, where you can watch the match and enjoy pizza and ice cream from on-site vendors. From around 5:00pm, there will also be friendly taster cricket sessions for anyone who would like to take part. Simply bring a blanket, settle in and enjoy a relaxed picnic while watching the cricket.

Date: Friday 26 June 2026

Time: 12:30pm – 7:00pm

Venue: School Field, Reading School

Booking: [RSVP by clicking here](#)

External Events

Summer Coding Club – Early Bird Sale



FunTech will once again be returning to Reading School to deliver their summer technology camps, giving children aged 7 to 17 the chance to code, create and build exciting digital projects.

With over 30 years' experience, FunTech makes coding fun and purposeful, helping children design games, code robots and create digital worlds while developing real coding skills in small classes. From Minecraft and Roblox to Python, Java and AI, each course turns children's interests into valuable technical skills.

FunTech has also launched its new **AI Vibe Coding** course for students aged 13+, helping them use AI to turn ambitious ideas into impressive coding projects.

FunTech's Early Bird offer is currently running, with **£150 off all summer camps while spaces last.**

For families balancing summer plans, FunTech also offers:

Flexi Camps

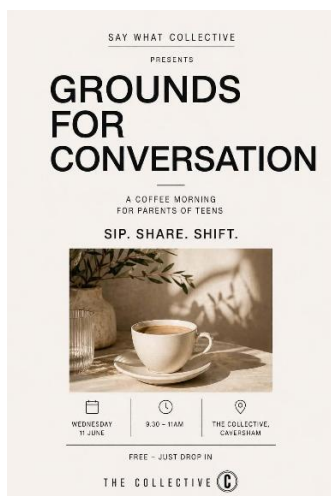
Designed for hybrid-working families, Flexi Camps keep the full week experience while allowing children to attend from the centre or home on different days.

Camp Swap

Families can secure the Early Bird rate now and change the camp date, location or course up to two weeks before the camp start date.

[Explore courses and book here.](#)

A Morning for Parents Who Have Questions, Not Answers



Grounds for Conversation is a free drop-in morning for parents of teenagers - a chance to slow down, get out of the house, and think through the stuff that keeps you up at night. With other parents who get it.

Sip good coffee. Share what's really going on. Shift something - even just slightly.

The one rule? Only open questions. No advice. No fixing. Just honest conversation over really good coffee.

Wednesday 11 June | 9.30-11am The Collective, Caversham, RG4 7AA

Free to attend - just turn up.

RSPA

Goring Gap Marshalling Fundraiser for RSPA - Update

Last weekend saw our fifth year of marshalling at the Goring Gap event to raise money for the RSPA. So many parents and children added their support that between us we are expecting to raise well over £1k! (Total to be announced soon, once the post event admin is complete.)

It was an early start for some of our volunteers, but the weather was warm and sunny on Saturday as we waved and cheered the participants on. Extra thanks go out to the volunteers who took their positions on the chillier Sunday event, but we still had plenty of smiles all round. It's hard not to smile when you're clapping and cheering the runners, and the feedback we receive from them is equally heartwarming with many saying that we help to make this event their annual favourite.

Our thanks go out to: Katy & Jonah, Edyta & Kacper, Clare & Kasper with sister Catherine, Julie, Peter & Richard, Kerry & Bertha, Jayne, Nish & Veena, Sushant & Vivaan, Melanie & Barnaby, Pallavi & Suman, Satvick & Shriyans, Keerthi & Terri who all gave their time so generously on the day.



We welcome all volunteers for next year, but we are also currently looking towards our next event on 31st May at Green Park, Reading. We will raise another £250 if we can supply volunteers to manage the bag drop, and hand out the prizes, medals and teddies to the runners.

Please do email t_lorrimore@hotmail.com if you wish to volunteer.

We are especially looking for some year 12 students to volunteer. Their help can be part of their university statement as a charitable activity, raising money which we provide for Reading School.

We are also delighted to announce that the monies raised will go towards installing a designated outdoor learning area in the school grounds, as part of the varied and unique floreat and electives programme, Future Stories, and opportunities for outdoor study, rolled out by Reading School.

Year 13 Replica Tutor Group Photos

The RSPA is delighted to share a special fundraising project for the Year 13 cohort.

In the weeks leading up to study leave, the RSPA worked with Reading School to recreate the tutor group photographs taken when this cohort first arrived in Year 7. The result is a set of images that place the same group of students side by side, five years on.

All proceeds from this project will go directly to the RSPA and be used for the benefit of students and the School.

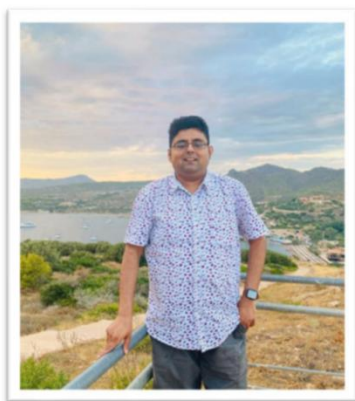
Details and how to order

- Photos are all ONE size, A4, and available for £20
- Sample images available for all houses
- For further information please contact Kerry O'Brien by emailing kerryobrien2004@yahoo.co.uk
- Please email your request indicating your son's house; payment details will be forwarded.
- All photos will be printed over the exam leave period and can be collected from School on Speech Day taking place on Tuesday 23rd June 2026.

Thank you for your support.

The Team

Introducing our School Lottery Manager, Jaideep Das



Hi everyone, I'm Jaideep, father of Ivan in Year 10. I have been a proud member of RSPA since 2022, when my son joined Reading School in year 7. Coming from the background of Security Management & Intelligence, and as an EMEA Director of Physical Security I spend most of my time during work travelling to and from Europe. When not at work, I always try to involve myself in community work while helping others.

When I first came to know about RSPA on social media, I was really excited to join as I found out how other members of this small committee were doing a fantastic job which has a knock-on positive impact on both students and the school community. I had a chance to meet the then Chair of RSPA, who informed me about the suitable vacancies that I could apply for. With a positive mindset, I applied for the position and successfully got involved, and I feel proud being a part of this wonderful dynamic team.

My role in RSPA combines strategic business acumen with a strong sense of social purpose which involves all year-round fundraising through a weekly online Lottery for parents who want to get involved and support the school's fundraising efforts. It's a unique and effective way to unite parents, teachers and students to support the needs of the school community. Whether its additional funds needed for extra resources or to run extra- curricular activities, or even planning for outdoor learning, every pound donated helps to achieve the school's fundraising goals. And by giving and supporting the educational needs of all students, parents also have a chance to win and be rewarded.

I enjoy this role because I am passionate about making a positive impact in the school community, and I value both the strategic work and the excitement of the weekly lottery. Joining the RSPA is a great way to strengthen our community spirit, and the welcoming, inclusive network of parents, carers and staff creates a real sense of belonging. It also supports year-round fundraising and initiatives that improve learning resources and benefit all children. I fully encourage you to get involved and join this fantastic team... *“You can’t change the whole world alone, but together we can make a difference”*.

Best wishes

Jaideep and the RSPA Team

Highlights: Summer Term Week 5

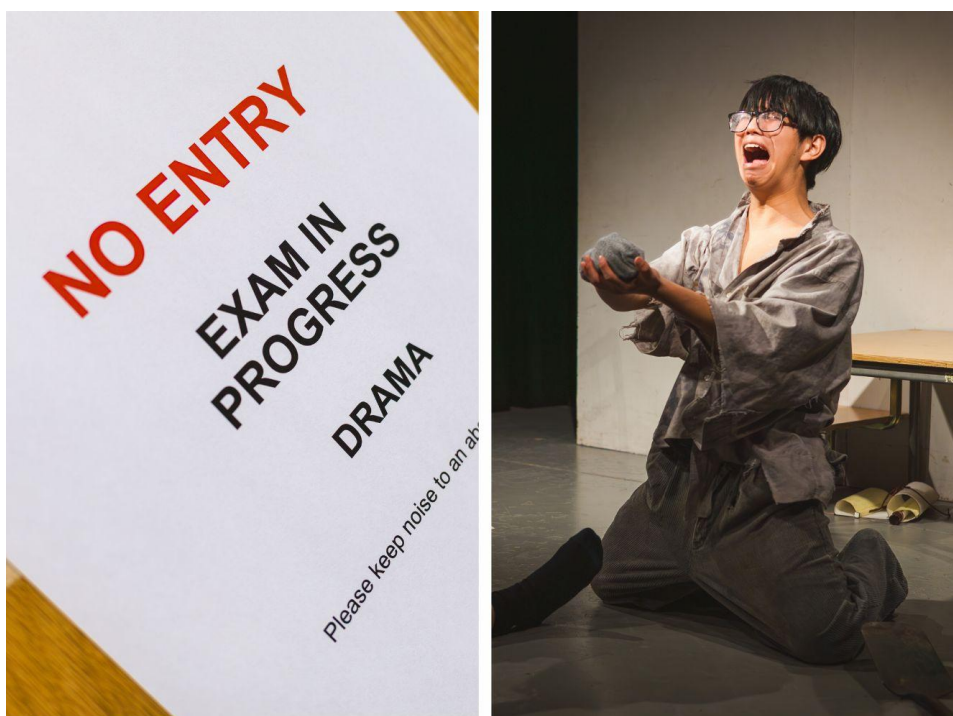
Join the Reading School community online and never miss a moment.



Facebook: ReadingSchoolOfficial **Instagram:** @reading_sch **LinkedIn:** school/reading-school

A Level Drama: Student-Devised Performances

From Grotowski to Fo

















Feedback is important to us and if you have any positive news, comments or suggestions, please contact the Community Relations Office by emailing communityrelations@reading-school.co.uk