



# Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

26 June 2026

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# Introduction

Dear Students, Parents, Carers and Colleagues,

I wonder what you have learned through this challenging week? I hope that you've not been thinking too much, because demanding mental tasks require more energy and can raise overall core body temperature by up to 0.5°C. And I hope you've not been moving too much, as a typical workout can elevate our core body temperatures by up to 1.5°C. Perhaps, like me, you've been putting your feet in a bucket of cold water under your desk this week and have been spending slightly less energy on thinking and doing.

Given that so much of our time is normally spent running around and problem-solving, as humans we often forge our identity according to our physical and mental output. My school reports, for example, almost always said, "*Evans will do well if he learns to channel his energy in the right direction.*" Those reports shaped me as someone who defined myself according to what I did. It may be the same for many of us. Our sense of who we are and what we do are inseparable.

So, I wonder as this week ends, and our enforced rallentando leads back towards our normal more frantic pace - who are you when you can't run around and your brain slows down? When your output is reduced, who are you? If you're forced to do less because of weather, surgery or circumstance, who are you?

With thanks for your understanding, patience and support during this unusual week,

Dr Evans

**Headmaster**

# Key information

## All Parents

### The 365 Fund: a parents perspective

Over the past two weeks we have been sharing more about the Reading School 365 Fund, including a message from the Headmaster, examples of the opportunities the fund helps provide for students, and conversations with 150 new Year 7 families at our recent Welcome Evenings.

This week, we would like to share a short video featuring Catherine, a current Reading School parent with two sons who have benefited from the education and opportunities the school provides.

In the video, Catherine reflects on why she believes Reading School offers something that goes far beyond academic success, highlighting the character, confidence and sense of community her sons have developed during their time here. She also explains why she has chosen to support the 365 Fund through regular giving.



*(click the thumbnail to watch video – 2mins 47sec)*

If Reading School has made a positive difference to your son, and you are in a position to help, please consider joining other families in supporting the 365 Fund with a regular contribution. Whether it's £1 a day or any amount that feels right for your circumstances, every gift helps us continue providing the exceptional opportunities that make a Reading School education so distinctive. Thank you to everyone who already supports the 365 Fund. Your generosity is helping today's students, and those who will follow them, to flourish.

We would also encourage those who are already donating to consider whether they can maximise the impact of their gift at no additional cost. [Gift Aid](#), [payroll giving](#), and [employer matched giving](#) schemes can all significantly increase the value of what you contribute without increasing what you spend.

To sign up or find out more, [click this link](#)

Or scan the QR Code to donate to the 365 Fund:



## Years 9 and 10 only

### Finland Trip



Once again we intend to take a small group of Year 9 and 10 students on a wilderness experience to Finland with our long-standing partners 'Adventure Apes'. The dates of the trip are 15 - 20 October 2026.

Participants will travel to the edge of the Arctic Circle to experience the start of Autumn in this magical part of the world.

Everything is taken care of with specialist equipment provided at the venue along with food and transport.

We will fly from the UK on the 15<sup>th</sup> (time tbc) and take 2 planes to get to our destination with a short stop in Helsinki.

16 and 17 October will involve various aspects of adventure training including orienteering, bushcraft, outdoor cooking, hiking and use of a traditional Finnish sauna - the overnight element will be based in an accommodation block with beds and toilet/shower facilities.

18 & 19 October will involve a 2-day hiking expedition in a Finnish National Forest. The distance covered is tbc and may vary according to the weather and the group. The overnight will be in tents at a designated camp site before waking up to hike back to base to relax and celebrate success.

20 October will be our return travel day with timings tbc.

At this stage we are considering whether to have a direct pick-up and drop-off from the airport or whether to arrange transport from school.

The guide price for this expedition is approximately £1500 but could go up or down based on participant numbers and travel costs which are yet to be booked.

If you are genuinely interested in this trip then please complete the 'expression of interest' form below.

Completing the form is not a commitment to send your child and we use it to gauge the viability of the trip and whether to move forward with planning.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this trip then please contact David Tridgell by emailing [dtridgell@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:dtridgell@reading-school.co.uk)



The deadline for expressing an interest is by midnight on Sunday 5 July 2026.

This trip is an unforgettable experience and a chance to immerse yourself in nature and Scandinavian culture with a valuable opportunity to learn more about the world, and yourself.

[Please click here for the expression of interest form](#)

# School Community News

## Speech Day 2026

This week's Speech Day brought together students, parents, staff, governors, guests, and alumni to celebrate the achievements, character and contribution of students across Years 7 to 10. Throughout the morning, we recognised not only academic excellence but also the qualities that underpin a flourishing education: character, curiosity, integrity, collaboration and service.

More than 230 prizes were presented across academic subjects, sport, character and form achievements, alongside performances from our student musicians and showcases that gave families a glimpse into the rich learning and experiences taking place beyond the classroom. This year's celebration deliberately placed equal emphasis on progress, contribution and community, reflecting our belief that success is measured not simply by outcomes, but by the way students help one another to flourish.



A particular highlight was hearing from three generations of the Oldland family. Nicholas (OR 1988-1990) and Jeremy Oldland (OR 1990-1992) spoke candidly about finding their own paths after Reading School, explaining that while they were not always the strongest academically, the resilience, determination and "hustle" they developed at the School became the foundation of successful international careers. Their message resonated strongly with the audience: character, perseverance and a willingness to embrace opportunity often matter just as much as examination results.

Their father, John Oldland (OR 1954-1961), offered a moving reflection on a life shaped by Reading School. Encouraging students to embrace every opportunity available to them, he reminded them to "be kind" and to cherish their families, concluding with words often attributed to Winston Churchill: "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

As our recent 365 Fund campaign has highlighted, it is these opportunities beyond the classroom: sport, music, drama, enrichment and character development - that often have the greatest lifelong impact.

Drawing the themes together, the Headmaster reminded students that Reading School will always celebrate character before accolades, *"We are a school that will always celebrate the process rather than the outcome."*

He encouraged students to recognise that curiosity, effort and relationships are the foundations on which lasting success is built, and thanked parents for the care, trust and partnership that make this possible.

Congratulations to every prize winner, performer and student who contributed to such a memorable celebration, and thank you to our staff, volunteers, Reading School Parents Association, parents and the many supporters whose generosity helps make occasions like Speech Day possible.

The Senior Ceremony is postponed to Friday 4 September due to the extreme heat on Tuesday. All students from the Class of 2026 (Year 13 leavers) and their parents are warmly invited to join us. Please [RSVP if you are able to join](#).

With the postponement, we understand that some parents and students may wish to collect their yearbooks and hoodies earlier. Please bear with us while we discuss arrangements internally and explore an earlier collection opportunity. Further communication will be shared shortly.

## A Return to National Chess Finals with Joint Third Place Finish



The Reading School chess team headed to their first national championship finals in over a decade on 25 - 26 June 2026. After dominating in the mid-2010s with 3 first-place finishes and 2 second-place finishes, the 2026 team had a reputation to uphold.

The 5-round tournament was made up of the 24 best schools in the country, with many internationally renowned players making an appearance over the 2 days. Seeded 9<sup>th</sup> at the

start of the tournament, [Reading School finished a highly commendable joint 3<sup>rd</sup> with 7 points out of 10](#).

Whilst the team as a whole had successes, there were also very impressive individual performances. Dylan W (11E), playing on Board 1, remained unbeaten against internationally titled players with 2 draws and a win. Harry B (11E) and Ethan L (10C), playing boards 5 and 6 respectively, both finished with 4/5 themselves. Mohit K (12KAv), Moksha S (12SPe), and Saksham R (12EFo), boards 2, 3 and 4, also beat opponents ranked well higher than themselves.

Saksham R shared, *"Playing in my first major national tournament was such an amazing experience. I felt a mix of nerves and excitement, not really knowing what to expect but really eager to give it my best. The preparation was intense and took a lot of focus and concentration. What I'll never forget is the team spirit. We constantly supported each other: lifting each other up after tough losses and celebrating every win together. We made great memories and it felt even more special knowing it was our school's first time qualifying for the National Finals in 10 years, and finishing joint 3rd made it an experience I'll never forget!"*

## UK Ultimate Frisbee



Ultimate Frisbee is a fast-paced, non-contact team sport with an unusual distinction: it is self-officiated, even at elite level. Players call their own fouls, resolve disputes together and are trusted to compete with honesty and respect. This philosophy, known as Spirit of the Game, sits at the heart of the sport.

Last week in Birmingham, Haris S (11W) and Yash K (11W) competed in the U17 Open division of the Ultimate Frisbee Junior Outdoor National Championships, representing Reading Genesis alongside teammates from The Windsor Boys School. Facing some of the strongest sides in the country across a demanding semifinal and final, the team finished first out of 24 competing teams - national champions for the first time.

Haris shared, "We are very grateful for the coaching of Mr Whitehorn and Mark Bignal throughout the years. It has given us the skills to place 1st out of 24 teams in the UK in our division."

## A-Level Geography: Changing the Way We Think About Disasters

Six A-level Geography students attended a lecture by Professor Ilan Kelman of UCL, author of *Disaster by Choice*, hosted by The Abbey School on Monday 22 June. Professor Kelman challenged the idea of "natural disasters", arguing that disasters are shaped by human vulnerability and preparedness rather than nature alone.

Through examples such as earthquake-resistant buildings, tsunami shelters and community education, he demonstrated how effective planning can significantly reduce risk. He also highlighted extreme heat as the greatest future global hazard, explaining how it intensifies other risks, from severe storms to disease. The lecture gave students a deeper understanding of disaster geography and the vital role that policy, education and resilience play in protecting communities.

Will B (12VGG) commented, "Before this lecture, I thought of disasters as purely natural events, but Professor Kelman showed me that it is human preparedness and resilience that truly determine the outcome."



# Reading School Events

## Sports Day 2026



On Wednesday 8 July, the Reading School community comes together at Palmer Park for our eagerly awaited annual Sports Day. The long-standing event takes place as a full-day competition for every year group, creating an exciting festival of House spirit, athletic achievement and friendly competition.

Throughout the day, students compete in a full programme of track and field events, including sprints, middle-distance races, relays, high jump, long jump, javelin and shot put. Every performance contributes valuable House

points, with students encouraged to give their best while demonstrating resilience, determination and sportsmanship.

The day also showcases the leadership of our senior students and Year 10 GCSE PE pupils, who support the smooth running of events by officiating and assisting staff throughout the competition. Parents and families are warmly welcomed to support competitors, while student-run charity stalls add to the atmosphere.

We wish all competitors the very best of luck and look forward to another memorable day of sporting excellence, teamwork and House pride.

Please [click this link to access Sports Day information](#).

## External Events

### Summer Coding Club



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.

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](#) - £100 off using code: 26REA100

# RSPA

## Speech Day Junior Ceremony



A hearty congratulations to Reading School for successfully rolling out their new format Speech Day on Tuesday 23 June. Several members of the RSPA committee and some kind volunteers braved the heat of the morning to staff the cake and drinks stall.

Many thanks to our Chair Kerry for securing the most perfect spot for this, a table with both shade and breeze as the temperatures soared, but we were able to keep our cool.

Also for Kerry’s contribution of a phenomenal amount of beautiful and fun home-baked cakes, matched only by Helen for her contribution of a variety of sumptuous chocolate brownies.

Funds raised will go towards the installation of an irrigation system to the front field, and as the sun beat down it was fair to say that everyone there took on board the importance of ensuring that the field remains playable, and safe, in the increasingly hot summer months.

We’re looking forward to our next events, these being the Year 7 welcome picnic on 10 July, and the Seniors Speech Day - now postponed to 4 September. We will then announce our total raised but with everyone's generosity on Tuesday we are off to a fabulous start!



Hopefully we will see you there, and in the meantime we wish to thank Kerry, Terri, Jayne, Pallavi, Yogakshi, Menaka, Jaspreet and Oshama for their help on the day, plus the excellent work by our Year 12 volunteer prefects Yicheng L, Jaden L, Ataberk V, Theodore Y and Riyansh H.



## Pre-loved Uniform Shop – opening times

The pre-loved shop opening days have had to change. Please zap the QR link and save the link so that you always have up-to-date information about the next opening dates. Donations of good quality uniform items, particularly sports kit and ties, are welcome anytime via Reception or Student Services. Thank you for your continued support.



### **Summer term opening times**

- Thursday 9 July (Year 7 Induction Day) 3.00pm - 4.30pm
- Saturday 1 August, 10.30am - 12.30pm
- Wednesday 26 August 6.00pm - 7.00pm

If you have any questions and want to get in touch with the shop team then please email us at [shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk](mailto:shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk).

We look forward to seeing you there!

### **Committee role vacancy**

There is a vacancy coming up for the role of Hoodies Manager, currently held by Jayne Sturge. We are seeking another member of the school community to take up this role preferably before the end of the school year whilst Jayne is currently in post. Jayne is responsible for taking orders for the popular hoodies online and at various school events and then distributing the hoodies accordingly. Jayne has had much success in this role in her years as Hoodies manager, but it would be possible to run this largely from home if you have other commitments...making it an easy way for you to help us raise funds for school.

You will be part of an active and friendly team, spending time with other parents in different year groups, which can be very beneficial for all. We have regular meetings and social functions, so it's not all work and no fun! For some of us, our boys will be leaving the school this year and so the focus must be on finding other parents/carers who would love to be involved in this wonderful group and keep this amazing community together for many more decades to come.

If you would like to find out more about this role then please get in touch at [contactus@readingschoolparents.co.uk](mailto:contactus@readingschoolparents.co.uk) or come and speak to us at one of our few school events before the end of term.

# Highlights: Summer Term Week 10

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



**Facebook:** ReadingSchoolOfficial **Instagram:** @reading\_sch **LinkedIn:** school/reading-school

## Speech Day 2026

*"There is no better day than today to say thank you."*

John Oldland (OR 1954-1961)













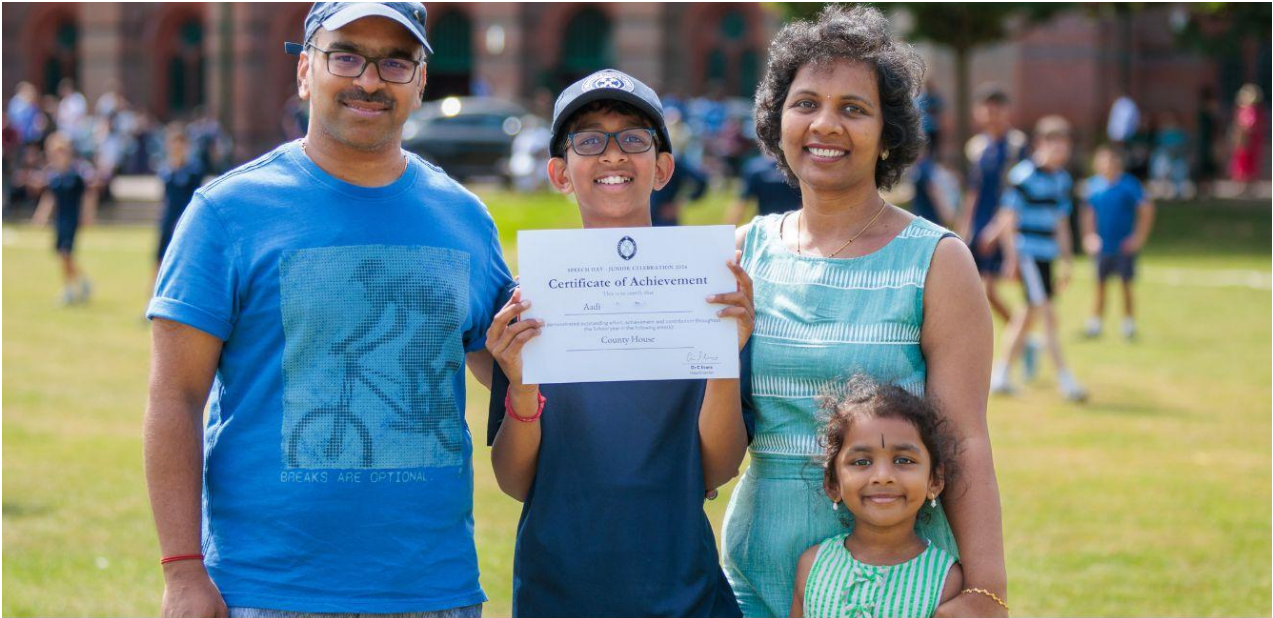












Feedback is important to us and if you have any positive news, comments or suggestions, please contact the Community Relations Office by emailing [communityrelations@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:communityrelations@reading-school.co.uk)