

# Headmaster’s Weekly Bulletin

25 September 2026

# Contents


**Introduction** 3

**Key information** 4

- Year 12 Only 4
- Character & Service Programme 4
- School Community News 5
- Climate Voices: TSL International Student Competition 5
- Could you be Reading School's next Poet Laureate? 5
- Reading School Events 6
- Commemoration Day 2026 6
- Years 12 & 13 Only - Interdisciplinary Academic Conference 2026 7

**RSPA** 8

- Uniform Shop – Grand Opening Saturday 3 October 8
- RSPA 81st Anniversary Quiz 8
- Easy funding and online shopping 8

**Highlights: Michaelmas Term Week 3** 9

- County Silver for Zenpo in U14 Singles 9
- Commemoration Day through the years 10

# Introduction

Dear Parents, Carers, Students and Colleagues,

**A Week to Celebrate Our Boarding Community**

What an opportunity we have had this week to showcase the incredible family feel and sense of community that makes Boarding at Reading School so special.

Since Wednesday morning, Ofsted inspectors have been with us, seeing first-hand what life is like for our boarders by spending time with our students and staff. For me, this has been a wonderful opportunity to show what we know so well: that the real strength of our Boarding community is the people within it. The boarding provision plays an important role in creating a supportive environment for students, with staff working hard to ensure that boarders are well cared for, feel safe and are encouraged to develop their independence and confidence.

Our students have been fantastic. They have gone about their week, sharing their experiences, supporting one another and showing our inspectors just what it means to be part of the Reading School community. We are incredibly grateful for everything they bring to our Boarding community and for the way they make it such a warm, welcoming and lively place to live.

My heartfelt thanks go to our boarding staff, who give so much of themselves every day to care for, support and encourage our boarders. I am equally grateful to our day-school colleagues, who have been such wonderful support throughout the week.

And then there are the families and partners of our staff who live on site. They are such an important part of our Boarding family and often give up so much of their own time and family life to support our students. We are incredibly fortunate to have them. Ultimately, Boarding is about far more than rooms, routines and activities. It is about belonging. It is about friendships, looking after one another, learning to live together and having people around you who care.

This brings me on to another wonderful opportunity to come together as a whole School community: our **Commemoration Service**, which will take place on **Friday 16 October from 13.00 to 15.25**. The afternoon is a chance for parents to come into school, see our students and staff in action and experience a little more of what makes Reading School such a special place (Parents are invited to register for a place by ballot).

Parents will be invited to take part in a series of learning walks around the School, providing an opportunity to see lessons taking place, meet staff and get a feel for the breadth of learning and activity. We will then meet in the Chapel for our Commemoration Service, a historic part of the School year when we pause to reflect on our history, celebrate our community and remember those who have helped shape Reading School over the years.

I hope as many of you as possible will be able to join us. Please see instructions in the event section on how to express your interest in attending.

Thank you.

Lizzie Ayres
**Acting Head**

# Key information

## Year 12 Only

### Character & Service Programme

From September, every Year 12 student takes part in Character & Service, a programme built around genuine contribution to the life of the School. Students choose a strand, from peer mentoring and sports coaching to creative arts support and mentoring younger children through Future Stories, rank their preferences, and are matched with a staff lead and training for the year ahead. The time commitment is modest, around one 45-minute session a week, but the intention behind it is not: building, early and repeatedly, the habit of showing up for people beyond yourself.

Please click this link to find out more, and all enquiries can be emailed to dtridgell@reading-school.co.uk

# School Community News

## Climate Voices: TSL International Student Competition




Calling all Reading School students! Take part in the **Trust for Sustainable Living International Student Competition** and share your ideas on how world leaders can respond to our changing climate and extreme weather.

The competition has a secondary schools category. Last year it accepted essays, opinion pieces, poems, letters, stories, artwork, music, podcasts and videos. The overall winner receives £1,000 and a trophy, and the runner-up receives £500. Every entrant gets a certificate. Finalists will be announced in May, and the top entrants will be invited to the International Student Debates and Awards on 1 and 2 July 2027.

**Submit your entry by:** Monday 22 February 2027 by emailing your creative piece to Ms Isaq - **tisaq@reading-school.co.uk**

**Read the full competition brief:** TSL International Student Competition – Competition Brief

## Could you be Reading School's next Poet Laureate?



The Poet Laureate has been a tradition in the UK since 1668 when the first Poet Laureate was appointed by the Monarch to write verses for significant national occasions. Poets such as William Wordsworth, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Carol Ann Duffy and Ted Hughes have all held the position; Simon Armitage is the current Poet Laureate for the nation.

Applications for the post of Reading School's Poet Laureates (one junior and one senior) are now open for any student across the school community from Year 7 up to, and including, Year 13. The positions will be for a fixed term of one academic year serving from October 2026 to July 2027.

The Reading School Poet Laureates will be expected to write at least one poem every half-term that is shared with the whole school community. Poems may be linked to school, local or national events; current affairs; or be on a topic that the poets wish to explore. There is opportunity and scope in these positions for the Poet Laureates to become involved in school-wide poetry initiatives, including National Poetry Day, as well as our Creative Writing Clubs.

If you would like to apply for these positions, please write a poem based around the theme of **Curiosity**.

**All poems should be no more than one A4 page and submitted via email to Mrs Mann**
**cmann@reading-school.co.uk**

**Clearly state whether you are applying for a junior- (years 7-10) or a senior (years 11-13) position.**

Closing date for applications is Friday 9 October 2026

# Reading School Events

## Commemoration Day 2026




Following the success of the 2025 Commemoration Day, we are pleased to once again open the school to the Redingensian community for Commemoration Day on **Friday 16 October 2026** from 1pm. Parents and carers are warmly invited to join us in commemorating the founders and benefactors of Reading School.

**On the day**

**1:15pm** – Arrival and Registration with tea/coffee served in Music School

**1:45pm** – Student-led learning walks across the school

**2:45pm** – Commemoration Service in the School Chapel

**3:25pm** – Departure

You'll be welcomed with tea and coffee in the Music School by Acting Headmaster, Lizzie Ayres, before setting off on a student-led learning walk, a rare and genuine window into a normal school afternoon. Each walk takes in three subject lessons (around 20 minutes each) across different parts of the school, giving you the chance to see teaching in action and chat informally with staff and students along the way.

The afternoon draws to a close with a moving service of praise and thanksgiving in the School Chapel, led by School Chaplain Mark Amos.

This really is a rare chance to step inside the life of the school on an ordinary teaching day and to stand alongside our whole community as we mark this important occasion together.

**How to register your interest**

Places are limited, and we expect demand to be high, so please don't delay. Please complete the form below to register your interest in attending:

**Commemoration Day 2026 - Parent Ballot Entry – Fill out form**

If the number of requests exceeds our capacity, places will be allocated by random ballot to keep the process fair for every family.

**A few important details:**

- Only adults (parents, carers, or family members) may register interest. Regrettably, we are **unable to accommodate children** at this event.
- Entries close **9:00am on Friday 2 October 2026**.
- **Successful applicants will be notified by Friday 9 October 2026.**
- Submitting an entry registers your interest but does not guarantee a place. We will do everything we can to welcome as many families as possible.

Thank you for your understanding, and we very much hope to see many of you there as we celebrate Reading School and its community together.

## Years 12 & 13 Only - Interdisciplinary Academic Conference 2026




We are pleased to let you know about an exciting opportunity for our Sixth Form students to attend our inaugural **Interdisciplinary Academic Conference, during Reading Week on Friday 23rd October 2026**.

This conference brings together alumni, academics and leading professionals **from medicine and public health, law, politics and public policy, through to engineering and technology, economics, finance and business** to explore how failure, disaster and near misses shape innovation, safety, leadership, ethics and decision-making.

**Date:** Friday 23rd October 2026 (Reading Week)

**Time:** 8:30 – 16:45 with optional networking and dinner until 22:00

**Location:** Reading School

Please find the full **details of the programme, speaker line-up and ticket pricing** on the conference website: Failure, Disaster and Near Misses · Interdisciplinary Academic Conference 2026 · Reading School

**This event is currently only open to Old Redingensians, with some tickets made available for Year 12 & Year 13 Sixth Form students who would like to attend alongside this wider audience.**

It's a valuable opportunity to hear from leading speakers, learn about current developments in an array of fields, build a network and it can also be a strong addition to UCAS applications or personal statements.

**How to Register your Interest**

As places are limited, sixth form students will need to register to be considered for a space at this conference by completing this form: Interdisciplinary Academic Conference 2026 - Limited Sixth Form Places – Fill out form

1. Students **must use their school email address** when completing the form
2. If demand exceeds the number of available places, **random selection will take place via a ballot**. Priority will be given to those who can attend the full day.
3. **All students who registered their interest will hear back by Friday 9th October 2026.**
4. **Successful students will receive instructions on how to book their ticket. Tickets are a flat rate of £37**, whether attending one session or the whole programme. Catering is included throughout.
5. **Tickets must not be purchased until students have received an official invitation to attend.**

For any queries, please contact Miss Hutchinson at events@reading-school.co.uk.

# RSPA

## Uniform Shop – Grand Opening Saturday 3 October




The RSPA Uniform Shop has a new home! We're busy settling in beside the Music School, and we're excited to welcome you and your family during our next opening times:

**Friday 2nd October**: 3.30pm – 4.30pm (no parking on site)

**Saturday 3rd October**: 10.30am – 12.30pm

To find us, after entering the school from Erleigh Road, turn left immediately and walk past Music School. The shop is clearly labelled and in the next building on the left.

All parents/families and carers are warmly invited to our new well stocked shop. Please note cash is preferred to avoid card transaction fees.

Please come and meet the RSPA team and Shop Managers Jas & Anya who have worked very hard to get the shop ready for you all. Some of our committee members will be there if you would like to have a chat about getting involved in some way.

To celebrate there will be tea & coffee, cold drinks, cakes & cookies and other refreshments for sale on the day. All proceeds from the shop and refreshments go to support our boys and our school - so please join us and give generously!

## RSPA 81st Anniversary Quiz




To celebrate this amazing achievement, we would like to welcome all parents, student, staff, families and friends to a quiz in the School Refectory on **Thursday 15th October at 7pm.**

Whether you are a first timer or a regular quiz goer this event is suitable for all and promises to be an entertaining evening. We are organising a raffle with some lovely prizes and there will be a variety of hot & cold food and sweet treats, as well as drinks for sale, with all proceeds from the event going towards the RSPA and ultimately to the school for the benefit of all the boys.

Further details including a booking link and QR code are below. Please join us and support your RSPA, and let's look forward to a further 81 years!

**Click here to book**

## Easy funding and online shopping

You can raise donations for Reading School Parents' Association by shopping online or instore and now even more places, from restaurants and supermarkets, to days out and gifting (via gift cards) using **Easyfundraising**. Each purchase raises money for the RSPA. Please scan code to find out more and register and start raising much needed donations.

# Highlights: Michaelmas Term Week 3

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

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

## County Silver for Zenpo in U14 Singles

Congratulations to Zenpo C (9C), who won a silver medal in the U14 Singles at the Berkshire Badminton Tournament, which saw junior players from across the County compete against one another on Sunday 20 September.

Zenpo is part of a strong badminton tradition at Reading School, which is played across all year groups through our co-curricular programme. We wish him continued success.



## Commemoration Day through the years









AWARENESS
RECYCLING
COMMUNITY
SUSTAINABILITY
Peace
Cranes





























**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**