



The Reading School Magazine.

VOL. I.—No. 9.]

OCTOBER, 1876.

[PRICE 3d.]

CONTENTS :

- I. EDITORIAL.
- II. SCHOOL MUSIC.
- III. CAMPING OUT.
- IV. MOUNTAIN SCENERY.

- V. PRIZE DAY.
- VI. THE LIBRARY.
- VII. OCCASIONAL NOTES.
- VIII. CORRESPONDENCE.

EDITORIAL.

IT is with feelings of diffidence that we take up the editorial pen. Change is the established order of things in this world, and changes that have befallen our school have deprived us of the able

The School sent in twelve candidates to the Oxford and Cambridge Certificate Examination held last July, and it gives us much pleasure to state that of these ten succeeded in obtaining certificates. Two more of our deserters succeeded in passing the Cooper's Hill Examination, so that we

Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

09 October 2026

Contents

Introduction	3
Key information	4
Parents Only	4
Interdisciplinary Academic Conference on Friday 23 October 2026	4
All parents and students	4
RSPA 81st Anniversary Quiz Night: postponed	4
All Years	5
Reading Week 2026: what students need to do	5
School Community News	6
Reading School Events	7
Registering for events - a reminder	7
Years 12 & 13 Only - Interdisciplinary Academic Conference 2026	7
RSPA	9
RSPA Annual General Meeting	9
Highlights: Michaelmas Term Week 5	10
October 1876, 150 years ago this month	10

Introduction

Dear Parents, Carers, Students and Colleagues,

Reading School has been educating students since 1125. Examination results matter to us, and our students achieve them. But long after the grade boundaries are forgotten, what stays with a student is the moment when the audience goes quiet, just before the first note, when the musicians either side of them are relying on each other.

You cannot revise for that. You prepare, you trust the peers around you, and you deal with whatever happens. That is why music matters here. It asks students who are used to being measured individually to succeed together, and to keep going when something goes wrong in front of an audience. These are life skills, and few settings teach them as honestly.

This is not a new idea. In March 1957, the Reading School Music Society ended a week of concerts in Big School with Handel's Messiah. The soloists and choir were all from the School, and the orchestra was made up of School musicians and friends of the Society. The magazine report called it, *“ambitious and was honest about the rough edges: the choir sometimes began raggedly and at one point fell behind the orchestra”*. It still judged the performance a fitting reward for everyone involved. Nearly seventy years later, the hall and the lesson are the same.

Yesterday evening, Big School hosted our Michaelmas Concert and students from the Junior String Orchestra, the Junior and Senior Choirs, the Guitar Ensemble, the Orchestra and the Big Band took the stage, alongside solos from George S on cello and Calvin H on piano. My thanks go to Mr Oli Griffin, Director of Music, and Mr James Newman, Teacher of Music, for leading the evening, to every student who performed, and to every parent who came to watch and support.

Lizzie Ayres

Acting Head

Key information

Parents Only

Interdisciplinary Academic Conference on Friday 23 October 2026

A small number of tickets have been made available for parents and carers to attend our inaugural **Interdisciplinary Academic Conference on Friday 23 October 2026** at Reading School. Some of you may have seen the social media posts with the spotlight on our speakers.

Exploring *Failure, Disaster and Near Misses*, the day will feature talks, panel debates, round-table discussions and opportunities to network with leading professionals, academics and fellow delegates across four strands: **Medicine & Public Health; Engineering & Technology; Economics, Finance & Business; and Law, Politics & Public Policy.**

If you would like to attend, please register your interest by completing the short form below by **9:00am on Tuesday 13 October 2026**. If demand exceeds the number of available places, a ballot will take place, with priority given to those with professional expertise in the four conference strands, particularly Law, Politics & Public Policy.

1. Click to see the programme of the [Interdisciplinary Academic Conference 2026](#); and
2. Click here to register your interest in attending: [Interdisciplinary Academic Conference 2026 - Limited Parent/Carer places – Fill in form.](#)

Successful applicants will be notified shortly after the closing date and invited to purchase tickets. **Submitting an expression of interest does not guarantee a place**, but we will do our best to accommodate as many applicants as possible. If you have any queries, please email events@reading-school.co.uk

All parents and students

RSPA 81st Anniversary Quiz Night: postponed

The RSPA Quiz Night planned for Thursday 15 October has been postponed and we are sorry to disappoint everyone who had planned to come.

The RSPA has put a great deal of time and energy into this evening, from organising the prizes and refreshments to building the celebration of 81 years of parent support for the School. We are grateful to the committee and volunteers for all they have done, and for their continued commitment to our community.

The RSPA is hoping to rearrange the Quiz Night for a later date, and further details will be shared once they are confirmed. Anyone who has already bought a ticket will be contacted directly by the RSPA about their booking. In the meantime, please contact the RSPA at contactus@readingschoolparents.co.uk with any questions.

All Years

Reading Week 2026: what students need to do

Reading Week gives students five days to work beyond the curriculum, and this year there is a clear task to go with it. Students are asked to choose reading, listening or watching that interests them, then record what they did and what they took from it on Unifrog.

Subject departments have prepared reading lists at a range of levels. Students in Years 10 and 11 should look at the list for the subject they are most likely to choose at A Level. Students in Years 12 and 13 can use the online subject magazines and JSTOR to read around a likely degree subject. Year 7 students should read their Book Buzz book, and might also try something by Chris Bradford, who is visiting the School. The Learning Resource Centre (LRC) is open for borrowing, and the student librarians are ready to help, so we suggest visiting early in the week before popular titles go.

The Mr Cooper Challenge

Mr Cooper has set students a challenge: choose a topic related to one of their subjects that they have not been taught and will not be taught at Reading School, and research it using a variety of sources. The topic can sit close to classwork or be something entirely different. Mr Cooper's own example is "What makes the best 200m runner?"

The findings should be presented as a video of between 8 and 15 minutes. Students do not need to appear on camera. Images, graphs, text and embedded clips, with commentary over the top, all work well. Every video must end with a bibliography slide so that others can follow up the sources. Videos should be sent to Mr Cooper at mcooper@reading-school.co.uk via WeTransfer.

The strongest submissions will join the Reading School Scholarship Programme digital library on Vimeo, where current and future students can watch them. Students who would rather see an example first can browse the library before choosing a topic.

Recording the week on Unifrog

All engagement and impact during Reading Week should be entered on Unifrog, under the activity type that fits:

- Reading, watching or listening for leisure: Other extracurricular activity
- Reading, watching or listening to support study: Extracurricular reading
- Scholarship video: Academic work: individual
- Anything else, such as work experience or a competition: the most suitable option

Full instructions, along with the subject reading lists, are available at the Reading Week page: <https://www.reading-school.co.uk/school/learning/reading-week>

School Community News

The Berkshire Book Award 2027 Launch



Have you read a book published between 1st October 2025 - 30th September 2026? If so, you can nominate it now for the Berkshire Book Award!

The Berkshire Book Award began in 2004 to celebrate the best, recently published books written for young people. This Award is the first of its kind in Berkshire and is unique because young people both nominate the titles and select the winner, and you have the opportunity to nominate a book of your choice!

Participation in the Berkshire Book Award is open to all young people living or studying in Berkshire through their middle and secondary schools.

Students can nominate recently published fiction books using the BBA website [by clicking here](#). The page also includes a list of titles to help remind you of some of the great books that meet the criteria of being published between 1st of October 2025 and September 30th 2026. **Nominations will close on 18th November and the Longlist will be announced on 2nd December.** Participating in this award is a fantastic way to explore new books and authors, so please do get involved.

Reading School Events

Registering for events - a reminder

We have previously shared guidance on registering for School events through The Redingensians website in the Headmaster's Bulletin on 11th September. However, following some recent difficulties with event registration, we wanted to reiterate this guidance and clarify the process for current parents.

The Redingensians website is primarily an **alumni platform for Old Redingensians (ORs)**, providing a way for former students and staff to connect and keep in touch. **Current parents do not have personal online profiles and cannot log in to an alumni account.** However, we also use the website for **event registration and donations**, and current parents can access these services **without creating an account or having an online profile.**

Registering for an event

If you are registering for an [event](#), please select **"Continue as guest"** when prompted.

You **do not need** to create a profile or sign up to the alumni network. Guest registration is completely separate from having an online alumni account.

When registering, please use the **same details the School holds for you**, including your **full name, email address and relevant contact information.**

If we find a **matching record** for you, please select it from the list. If none of the options match, please select "none." This helps us link your registration to the correct record.

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

RSPA Annual General Meeting

The annual RSPA AGM is on **Monday 12 October at 7.30pm** in the School Refectory. The current committee will gather to discuss the year ending and will vote in new members for which the current nominee are listed below.

Please do contact us at contactus@readingschoolparents.co.uk if you wish to put yourself forward or otherwise let us know that you wish to attend. It is a great opportunity to meet current and new committee members.

We will also be taking a vote to extend the number of parents that can apply for a role on the committee, so please do attend if you wish to be part of this vote.

Below is a list of our committee nominees for 2026/27

Chair: Kerry Kingston
Secretary: Neha Doorwar
Treasurer: Oxana Marcov
Vice Chair: Neil Devanand
Vice Treasurer: Bakhit Dam
Uniform Shop Manager: Jaspreet Dhanjal & Anya Alderslade
Digital Content Manager: Pallavi Chube
Hoodie Manager: Priyanka Sharma
School Lottery Manager: Jaideep Das
Communications Manager: Rohini Luthra
Membership Administration Manager: Daniela
Gift Aid Manager: Yan Lam
Events Manager: Menaka Murthy
Lost Property Manager: Helen Sturk
Committee Fundraiser: Claire Kirby
Committee Fundraiser (& Sound Engineer!): Ben Bryant
HM Notifications Manager: Yogakshi Munjal
Wishlist Manager & Fundraiser: Terri Lorrimore

Highlights: Michaelmas Term Week 5

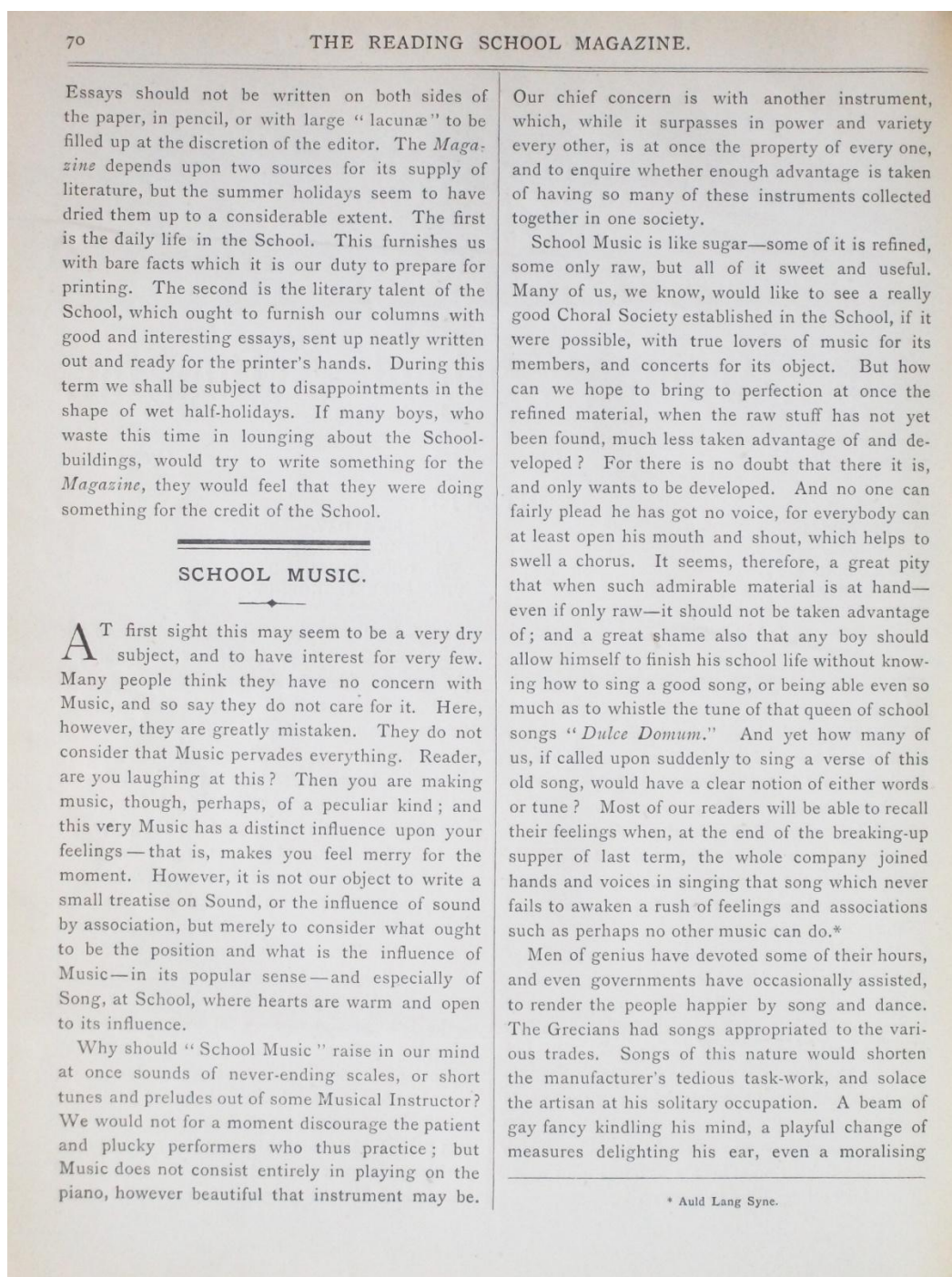
Join the Reading School community online and never miss a moment.



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

October 1876, 150 years ago this month

The Reading School Magazine asks why a school full of voices has no choir, and proposes that songs be handed down "by voice and memory".



70

THE READING SCHOOL MAGAZINE.

Essays should not be written on both sides of the paper, in pencil, or with large "lacunæ" to be filled up at the discretion of the editor. The *Magazine* depends upon two sources for its supply of literature, but the summer holidays seem to have dried them up to a considerable extent. The first is the daily life in the School. This furnishes us with bare facts which it is our duty to prepare for printing. The second is the literary talent of the School, which ought to furnish our columns with good and interesting essays, sent up neatly written out and ready for the printer's hands. During this term we shall be subject to disappointments in the shape of wet half-holidays. If many boys, who waste this time in lounging about the School-buildings, would try to write something for the *Magazine*, they would feel that they were doing something for the credit of the School.

SCHOOL MUSIC.

AT first sight this may seem to be a very dry subject, and to have interest for very few. Many people think they have no concern with Music, and so say they do not care for it. Here, however, they are greatly mistaken. They do not consider that Music pervades everything. Reader, are you laughing at this? Then you are making music, though, perhaps, of a peculiar kind; and this very Music has a distinct influence upon your feelings—that is, makes you feel merry for the moment. However, it is not our object to write a small treatise on Sound, or the influence of sound by association, but merely to consider what ought to be the position and what is the influence of Music—in its popular sense—and especially of Song, at School, where hearts are warm and open to its influence.

Why should "School Music" raise in our mind at once sounds of never-ending scales, or short tunes and preludes out of some Musical Instructor? We would not for a moment discourage the patient and plucky performers who thus practice; but Music does not consist entirely in playing on the piano, however beautiful that instrument may be.

Our chief concern is with another instrument, which, while it surpasses in power and variety every other, is at once the property of every one, and to enquire whether enough advantage is taken of having so many of these instruments collected together in one society.

School Music is like sugar—some of it is refined, some only raw, but all of it sweet and useful. Many of us, we know, would like to see a really good Choral Society established in the School, if it were possible, with true lovers of music for its members, and concerts for its object. But how can we hope to bring to perfection at once the refined material, when the raw stuff has not yet been found, much less taken advantage of and developed? For there is no doubt that there it is, and only wants to be developed. And no one can fairly plead he has got no voice, for everybody can at least open his mouth and shout, which helps to swell a chorus. It seems, therefore, a great pity that when such admirable material is at hand—even if only raw—it should not be taken advantage of; and a great shame also that any boy should allow himself to finish his school life without knowing how to sing a good song, or being able even so much as to whistle the tune of that queen of school songs "*Dulce Domum*." And yet how many of us, if called upon suddenly to sing a verse of this old song, would have a clear notion of either words or tune? Most of our readers will be able to recall their feelings when, at the end of the breaking-up supper of last term, the whole company joined hands and voices in singing that song which never fails to awaken a rush of feelings and associations such as perhaps no other music can do.*

Men of genius have devoted some of their hours, and even governments have occasionally assisted, to render the people happier by song and dance. The Grecians had songs appropriated to the various trades. Songs of this nature would shorten the manufacturer's tedious task-work, and solace the artisan at his solitary occupation. A beam of gay fancy kindling his mind, a playful change of measures delighting his ear, even a moralising

* Auld Lang Syne.

verse to cherish his better feelings—these ingeniously adapted to each profession, and some to the display of patriotic characters and national events, would contribute something to public happiness. Such themes are worthy of a patriotic bard, of the Southey's for their hearts, and the Moore's for their verse. Fletcher, of Saltoun, said, "If a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make all the laws of a nation." The character of a people is long preserved in their national songs. "God Save the King" and "Rule Britannia," are, and I hope will long be, our English national airs. If the influence of song then is so great upon a nation, what must it be upon a school, where equal tastes, equal feelings, and equal age draw so close the bands of sympathy? Would not a common stock of songs serve to purify the taste, elevate the feeling, and quicken the sympathy, besides ennobling character by their pure and manly sentiment?

Our practical suggestion then is, that every instrument in the School shall be awakened from its long silence, and thoroughly cleaned and tested by its owner, in the following manner:—Let several boys bring their instruments together, and try them upon some of those well-known choruses and songs which every school-boy knows, or ought to know, such as, "Dulce Domum," "Auld Lang Syne," "Rule Britannia," "The Bay of Biscay," "The Three Jolly Postboys," "The British Grenadiers," "The Vicar of Bray," "Tom Bowling," and many others of a really good and British type.*

It is the opinion of a celebrated Professor of Music that everybody has a voice who cares to develop it, and anybody we know can in time pick up a tune by ear, as is proved by the way in which popular songs are whistled about our streets.

What then should prevent us from becoming at once a vast Musical Society? Unhappily there is one great obstacle in the way of progress in this direction, namely, the peculiar modesty and un-

reasonable shyness which seizes upon every child of Adam the moment he is called upon to play or sing before others. It is no new failing, for old Horace says:—

"Omnibus hoc vitium est cantoribus, inter amicos,
Ut nunquam inducant animum cantare rogati."

But as there is safety in numbers, so surely this modesty has no place with us. If then we cannot bring School song here to such perfection as it is brought to at Harrow, for instance; or even if we cannot have our own printed song-book (as many Schools have), let us at all events appropriate some of those songs, which are the property of the nation, and hand them down—if not by elaborate music sheets or carefully printed books—at least by voice and memory, to be the hereditary property of the School.

CAMPING OUT.

I HAVE been camping out in many places, and have generally found it a most enjoyable way of passing a few days. In order to enjoy camp life thoroughly it is necessary to have a strong constitution, while to have good spirits under difficulties is necessary for your companions' comfort as well as your own, as the grumbler finds plenty of opportunities for displaying his forte. The account of our last expedition will bear me out in this.

We pushed off under a cloudless sky, and without a breath of wind to fill our sail, so that we were persuaded to leave behind all wraps which were not absolutely necessary. But we had "reckoned without our host," and began to prognosticate rain as the day drew on. Our forebodings were more than realized; and under a pelting rain we made our way about 14 miles up the river. About six o'clock we landed, and set up our wet tent upon an equally wet piece of meadow land, covering the grass as well as was possible with a piece of tarpaulin, which was as small as it was welcome. Then we set about making a fire, but it absolutely refused to burn. A "fire-wheel" caused a faint flicker for a moment, and then the rain indignantly trod the flame under foot (if I

* There is an excellent collection of more than two hundred of such English, Scotch, and Irish Songs by Dr. Hullah, which we would humbly suggest that the Library Committee should purchase. It is published in "Macmillan's Small Series," and gives the air of each tune.