



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

16 October 2026

Contents

Introduction	3
School Community News	4
Curiosity Crowns Our New Poet Laureates	4
Non-Uniform Day and Bake Sale for Samaritans	4
Chess: Schools' Blitz Tournament at Harrow School	4
Reading School Events	6
Open Coffee Morning with the Headmaster	6
Reading School Junior Parkrun Takeover – Sunday 29th November	6
Sixth Form Only - Interdisciplinary Academic Conference 2026	7
RSPA	8
RSPA – Annual General Meeting 12th October 2026	8
Highlights: Michaelmas Term Week 6	10
Remembering our founders, celebrating our community	10
Finland Trip 2026	14

Introduction

Dear Parents, Carers, Students and Colleagues,

As we reach the end of this half term and look ahead to Reading Week, we have a valuable opportunity to reflect. In just six weeks, our students and staff have achieved a remarkable amount, and there is much of which we can be proud. We have also celebrated the rich foundations of our school through our Commemoration events, and welcomed prospective families into our community, offering them a glimpse of what it means to be a Reading School student. It has been wonderful to share our traditions, values and daily experiences with so many of you.

At the same time, our Year 13 students are very much looking towards the future. Over recent weeks, I have had the privilege of reviewing and submitting a number of early UCAS applications. I have been truly impressed by the curiosity, scholarship and independent learning our students have shown. Their applications reflect young people who not only work hard but are also driven by a love of learning and a desire to pursue their passions beyond the classroom. I hope Reading Week gives all our students the chance to follow their interests, explore new ideas and experience the joy of discovering something unexpected.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our staff and students. This half term has been filled with outstanding classroom learning, impressive performances, memorable trips and a wealth of extra-curricular opportunities. The energy, commitment and enthusiasm shown across our school community have made for an exceptional start to the academic year, and I look forward to seeing what next half term brings.

Enjoy a restful and rewarding Reading Week.

Lizzie Ayres

Acting Head

School Community News

Curiosity Crowns Our New Poet Laureates

This half term the English Department ran a competition to fill the posts of Junior Poet Laureate and Senior Poet Laureate for the year 2026-2027.

The competition was fierce. We were impressed by the creativity students brought to the theme of 'Curiosity' and enjoyed reading every entry.

We are delighted to announce that the position of Junior Poet Laureate goes to Nivan S (7E) and the position of Senior Poet Laureate is awarded to Rayyan C (12PEI).

The Reading School community looks forward to hearing and reading the poetry that they will share with us throughout the academic year. Thank you to everyone who entered.

[Click here to read the Junior Poet Laureate's winning entry](#)

[Click here to read the Senior Poet Laureate's winning entry](#)

Non-Uniform Day and Bake Sale for Samaritans

On Friday 6 November, students may come into school in non-uniform to raise money for Samaritans, the charity that offers round-the-clock emotional support to anyone who is struggling.

Our Sixth Form Charity Prefects are also running a bake sale outside the LRC during both lunch breaks, with cakes and biscuits priced between 50p and £2. Students can pay by coin or card.

The prefects would welcome donations of nut-free cakes and biscuits. Students can drop these off outside the LRC from 8am on the day. Home-made items should come with an ingredients list, and named containers will be returned.

Chess: Schools' Blitz Tournament at Harrow School



Eight Reading School players competed in the Schools' Blitz Tournament at Harrow School on Sunday 11 October. Blitz is a fast-paced format where each game lasts only a few minutes. Over 12 rounds against 17 teams from across the UK, Reading School came second, two points behind the winners.

Ayan P (7C) led the team with 9/12 and finished sixth in the individual standings. Krish K (7S) and Ethan L (11C) followed with 8.5/12 each. Arnav B (10L), Shaurya Z (7E), Ashvik G (7C), Riaan S (8C) and Jamie L (7C) all beat higher-rated opponents, and Ashvik defeated a player rated 700 points above him. For several of the team, this was their first over-the-board (in-person) tournament.

Riaan S (8C) said: *"The tournament was heart-racing, as it was my first blitz tournament. I was nervous about playing such strong but friendly opponents, but our training clearly paid off. I was one of the underdogs, as I had never played blitz over the board and my rating was lower than everyone I faced. I'm very proud of my score of 7/12."*

Ashvik G (7C) said: *"At first I was nervous, as it was my first blitz tournament and only my second over-the-board event, but I was also excited to play higher-rated opponents so I could gain an official English Chess Federation rating. After a few rounds I felt comfortable and started enjoying myself. I'm happy with 7/12, although I think I could have picked up a couple more points. I hope to represent Reading School in future tournaments."*

Full individual results: chess-results.com

Reading School Events

Open Coffee Morning with the Headmaster



Our first Parents' Coffee Morning of the academic year has been rescheduled to **Thursday 5 November 2026**.

We host these informal gatherings for parents and carers once a term, providing a relaxed opportunity for parents to connect with one another and engage with members of staff. Acting Head, Ms Ayres, will welcome parents and be available to answer questions about all aspects of school life.

We would also particularly like to welcome parents of students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Members of the Student Support team will be available to talk with you, and there will

be an opportunity to visit Auxilium, our Student Support area, and meet other parents who may share similar experiences.

Whether you are joining us for a general catch-up or would like to find out more about the support available for your child, we warmly invite you to come along for a coffee and conversation.

RSVP here: [Open Coffee Morning with the Headmaster \(Michaelmas Term 2026/2027\) | Events | The Redingensians](#)

Reading School Junior Parkrun Takeover – Sunday 29th November

Ready, Set, Run – Represent Your House!



On Sunday 29 November, Reading School will take over Woodley Junior parkrun. We would like students in Years 7 to 9 to join us, whether by running the 2km course or helping out as volunteers.

Taking place at Woodford Park in Woodley, the event involves a 2km run and will form part of our House Competition, with valuable House Points awarded based on both the number of students participating from each House and their finishing positions.

Whether you are a keen runner chasing a personal best or simply fancy a jog or walk with friends, everyone is welcome. Participation is just as important as performance!

Event Details

- **Date:** Sunday 29th November 2026
- **Time:** 9:00am
- **Location:** Woodford Park, Woodley
- **Distance:** 2km
- **Who:** All students in Years 7–9 are encouraged to attend

How to Get Involved

1. Visit www.parkrun.org.uk/register and register for a free parkrun account (if you haven't already).
2. When registering, select **Reading School** as your running club. Existing parkrunners can update their club through their parkrun profile.
3. Bring your personal parkrun barcode on the day so that your participation and finishing position can be recorded.
4. Turn up ready to represent your House and enjoy a fantastic morning of running!

Calling All Parent Volunteers!

A number of Reading School teachers will be attending to support, encourage and cheer on our students throughout the event. However, we would also love to see parents getting involved.

We are particularly keen to recruit parent volunteers to help marshal the course, providing encouragement to runners and helping the event run smoothly. This is a fantastic opportunity to further demonstrate the strength of the Reading School community and support our students as they represent their Houses. If you would be willing to volunteer, please email Mr Orgill at morgill@reading-school.co.uk.

We hope to see as many students and families as possible joining us for what promises to be a fantastic morning of sport, community spirit and friendly House rivalry.

Sixth Form Only - Interdisciplinary Academic Conference 2026



There is one week left to book for 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.

With a speed-mentoring session available with limited places during the evening networking session.

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](#)



READING SCHOOL PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

There was a great turn out of attendees at our AGM and following the meeting, our committee will be expanding with several new members. There was also a chance to speak with three members of the Reading School staff outside school hours, with the generous attendance from Acting Head, Ms Lizzie Ayres, Head of Operations, Mr Warren Symonds, and Head of Finance, Mrs Cathy Woodcock who answered parent questions on the progress of Reading School.

On their behalf **we also wish to remind parents to support the 365 Fund**, and Mrs Woodcock gave an overview of the many, many, co-curricular activities this provides for all students. The fund removes the need for school to have to request ongoing payments for each and every activity for your child. If you have not already signed up to support this fund, please do so, even if only to make a one-off donation. Please also consent to Gift Aid your donation, if you can.

[Support your child and Reading School by clicking here](#)

The RSPA committee for 2026/27

Chair: Terri Lorrimore (Interim until May 2027)

Secretary: Neha Doorwar

Treasurer: Oxana Marcov

Vice Chair: Neil Devanand

Vice Treasurer: Bakhit Adam

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 Alexandru

Gift Aid Manager: Yan Lin

Events Manager: Menaka Murthy

Lost Property Manager: Helen Sturk (Interim until May 2027)

Committee Fundraiser: Claire Kirby

Committee Fundraiser (& Sound Engineer): Ben Bryant

HM Notifications Manager: Yogakshi Munjal

Please consider joining the RSPA as an active member, particularly since some of our committee members are due to step down in early 2027, when they effectively “leave” Year 13.

The RSPA also request a [one-off donation from incoming parents](#), of either £20 or £50. This covers our administration costs and helps us provide annual grants to school to fund carefully selected items which are outside those provided within DfE funding. Again, these donations can be used for Gift Aid claims.

At the AGM we also discussed the grants made by the RSPA to Reading School in the accounting year ended 31 March 2026, being a total of £16,852. The vast majority of this sum is raised by our commitment to running a sustainable Uniform & Book Shop onsite, as well as many other events and fundraising activities.



LRC Books Campaign 2025



Professional Sports Camera



"Twin" Gazebo



Lecture Theatre Upgrade – part of the 900th Anniversary Celebrations

Please see our “[Impacts](#)” [page on the RSPA website](#) to see what YOU have helped to achieve!

Also highlighted at the AGM, was the Teachers Wishlist Campaign. In December 2025, we helped co-ordinate, and YOU donated £5,642 of gifts directly to the teachers.

We are excited to announce another Teachers Wishlist for 2026, opening next month!

Finally, our outgoing Treasurer brought to everyone’s attention that we have a free income stream available to us that is much underused, in the form of **Easyfundraising**. If every parent

household signed up to use **Easyfundraising** when doing their usual online shop, the potential extra income to Reading School could be **thousands and thousands of free pounds!**

Easyfundraising now also offers donations where parents prefer to shop in-store, AND ALSO when purchasing gift cards... which may be an attractive way to raise funds for some parents as we consider how to give gifts to our wider families.

[Please do sign up now!](#) We currently earn an immediate £2 donation when you use the link and make your first online shop. No bank details are required as this is just a charitable platform.

Thank you everyone for your support, and we would love to hear from you on our email address

contactus@readingschoolparents.co.uk if you wish to get involved!

We hope to see you soon,

From the new team at the RSPA – 2026/27

Highlights: Michaelmas Term Week 6

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



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

Remembering our founders, celebrating our community

Commemoration Day is Reading School's annual service of praise and thanksgiving for the founders and benefactors who have supported the school for over 900 years.









Finland Trip 2026

Our Year 9 and 10 students headed off for an adventure in the Arctic this week



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