

# Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

6th November 2026

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# Introduction

Dear Colleagues, Parents and Students,

I am really pleased to be writing this introduction at the end of my first week back in school! My surgery in September was successful. I now have no pins and needles in my arms, am taller than I was because of the titanium cage installed in my neck, and am slowly getting used to typing again.

I owe a great deal to my surgeon, Mr Trichy Rajagopal, who I know is friends with a number of parents in the school. I'm as convinced as I ever have been that a life of curiosity leads to expertise that benefits the world, and I couldn't be more grateful to the doctors and nurses whose focus on excellence has made my physical recovery possible.

I would also like express my gratitude to Ms Ayres and the Senior Leadership Team. For two months Ms Ayres has worked two jobs, sustaining her own teaching and duties as a Deputy Head as well as managing my responsibilities! I do hope that parents and students will take time to thank her for keeping the school so focussed on its mission during my recovery.

I'm sure it is the depth of our relationships which enable us to chase our dreams and to build opportunity. We benefit more than we can say from those who care for us and sacrifice of themselves for our own sake.

Today then, we also give thanks for those who gave their lives for our freedom, and I very much hope some of you will be able to join the school's Remembrance Sunday service at 10:30 this Sunday.

My thanks to all who have welcomed me back so kindly, to students and colleagues for their incredible efforts last half term.

I'm looking forwards to a really exciting half term, and very much hope I will see you at some point.

With best wishes,

Chris Evans

# Key information

## All Years

### Non-Uniform Day and Bake Sale (held on 6th November)

Thank you for supporting Samaritans by sending your child into school in non-uniform on Friday. Please use the QR code on the poster linked below to donate £1 per child attending in non-unform. Best wishes, Holly Duxbury

**Reading School Samaritans Non - Uniform Day & Bake Sale poster**

### Parent Governor Vacancy

Parents and carers are reminded that there will be a vacancy for a parent governor on the Governing Body from 1st December 2026. Nominations are sought to fill this vacancy.

**The closing date for nominations will be 12 noon on 13th November 2026.**

Details and nomination forms were sent to all parents and carers in October, but if anyone needs a reminder of these, they can be found at Parent Governor Election 2026 Nomination Letter

### Attendance

We are committed to ensuring wellbeing and progress of all of our students, and we therefore celebrate those who make every best effort to attend school regularly.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind all parents and carers of the importance of ensuring that children attend school regularly and punctually.

Every school day counts, and regular attendance is essential to children's learning, progress and overall development. When children miss school, they miss valuable teaching, learning opportunities and experiences that can be difficult to catch up on. Even a few days of absence can have an impact on a child's education.

We would also like to remind families that children are expected to attend school for the full duration of each term. We understand that family commitments and holidays are important; however, parents are strongly encouraged to arrange holidays and other non-essential activities outside of term time.

Please be aware that requests for leave during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Holidays taken during term time will not normally be authorised and may result in a penalty notice being issued.

The Government have introduced a single national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England. This threshold is 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence. The period of 10 school weeks can span different terms or school years.

In line with national guidance, the Local Authority (LA) and school retains the discretion to issue a penalty notice before the threshold is met. As such you are now being referred for a Penalty Notice

under Sec. 444a. of the Education Act (1996) for failing to ensure the regular attendance of your child(ren).

Penalty Notices may be issued by the Local Authority at £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days, reducing to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, for a first offence. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice within the timescales may result in prosecution for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

Please note that, if you have received previous penalty notices in relation to the unauthorised absence patterns of a child for whom you hold parental responsibility/day-to-day care and responsibility, or you have previously been prosecuted under section 444 1/1A Education Act 1996, you may not be eligible for further penalty notices and your case may automatically proceed to prosecution.

We ask for your continued support in prioritising your child's education by ensuring they are in school every day, on time and ready to learn.

Good attendance is everyone's responsibility, and together we can give every child the best possible opportunity to succeed.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support.

The Attendance Team

## A Personal Plea – Our Children's Safety Comes First

Dear Parents & Carers

To the overwhelming majority of parents who already park responsibly, drive carefully and treat our neighbours and staff with kindness, thank you. Your consideration does not go unnoticed, and it makes a genuine difference.  To the small minority who continue to disregard parking responsibilities, I ask you to reflect on my letter below.

I am writing to you today not simply as a member of Reading School's staff, but as someone who has had the enormous privilege of working at this wonderful school for the past 17 years.

Throughout those years, one of the things I have always valued most is the sense of community that makes Reading School so special. We are fortunate to have exceptional students, dedicated staff and, overwhelmingly, supportive and considerate parents.

For many years, I have spent time at the school gates, both at the beginning and end of the school day. Like other members of staff who give up their time to do this, my purpose has always been straightforward: to protect the safety of the more than 1,100 young people who enter and leave our school each day, whilst also showing respect and consideration for the neighbours with whom we share our community.

Last term, however, something changed, and I feel compelled to share my concerns with you personally.

I have witnessed driving, parking and turning manoeuvres outside the school that are genuinely dangerous. More upsettingly, when I have politely approached some parents to ask them to reconsider their actions, I have been met with rudeness and, on occasion, a sense of entitlement. After 17 years of service to this school, I find this both disappointing and deeply saddening.

I am simply doing my job. I am trying to keep your son safe.

I would ask those parents who have responded in this way to consider, just for a moment, the impact on staff, neighbours and others students. We teach our students that community matters, and we would hope that parents echo this.

Ms Mole

## Years 9 and 10

### Danish Exchange expression of interest

This year we hosted an exchange with students from our Danish partner school in Copenhagen. This has been a great experience for our students and we are now offering the same program to students in Year 9 and 10.

Both parts of the exchange are for 5 days and 4 nights.

The Danish education system is focussed on collaboration, with less examination and more opportunities for oracy and presentation of work. Copenhagen is also an amazing city to explore and get to know and all of the students that have taken part in previous programs have enjoyed this experience.

It is a co-educational school and so your son would need to be willing to be partnered with either a male or female student of Year 10 age.

Feedback from one of last years' participants:

'I found that among many things, I most enjoyed spending time with my partner and her friends. They all were welcoming towards us, despite the huge distance between our countries and that we had just met! I learnt that I shouldn't cast a view about something that I haven't experienced yet since I can find it fun even when my original opinion thought it would be awkward or I might not get on with my partner. When my family was hosting, I found that they helped a lot as they knew I was busy making new meaningful friends. Also, we were able to teach each other about the different ways of life between Great Britain and Denmark which, for me, prepared me more for the visit back.

A link to express interest will be sent to all parents in Year 9 and 10 on Monday morning.

## Dates for your diary

10th November – Y11 Subject Fare

11th November – Y7 Concert

18th November – Y7-Y11 flu immunisations

22nd November – House Music at the Hexagon