

Dear Parents and Students,

We realise that some of our bulletins are quite lengthy and not applicable to all. Therefore you can now go straight to the relevant sections by clicking on the title under the contents section.

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Lent Term

Welcome back to our first week back of the Lent Term. I do hope you had a restful and safe break and are looking forward to the term ahead (albeit this will be different). Staffing Update:

We are delighted to welcome back Mrs Clarke to school in January and she is very much looking forward to her new role as Head of Laud House, building on the excellent work Mr Green did throughout the Autumn

term. In further good news Mr Green will continue to facilitate pastoral and behaviour support to all of Key Stage Four as an additional provision within the Pastoral Team.

The Senior Leadership had already begun planning for the start of the term, implementing the recruitment of volunteers and putting in place procedures for mass screening to take place for the safe return of all year groups, boarders and staff. Whilst we knew that the start of term would be significantly different, we did not anticipate the announcement earlier this week, moving the country into a full lockdown and the cancellation of exams, which will have caused some concern. Please be rest assured as we receive clarification on details these will be shared with you. Nonetheless, we are grateful that we had continued to plan and develop our online teaching and learning since the first lockdown in March 2020, to enhance and grow the remote learning provision, to enable us to swiftly move to this model, once again.

We are Redingensians, as we start this term, firstly, we are not alone, rest assured the whole nation is in exactly the same position.

Secondly, we have been here before and we know the drill. Not only have we been here before, we survived it and more importantly we thrived in it, as students, as staff and as a wider community.

Thirdly, you know the offering that we have, the breadth and depth, the engagement, the interaction, we hope you know is one of the best. Those that are embarking on this for the first time with Reading School ie Year 7's and new Year 12's welcome on board. Please embrace it and engage with it. If you need support or guidance please contact your respective Heads of House or Head of Year in the first instance. We expect to set yourself high standards, regardless of what year group you are in, our expectations have not changed.

If you make the most of the opportunities that you will be offered via lessons and the Reading Way you know you will emerge stronger for it. Remember this is for a limited period only and with the new vaccines being rolled out we know there will be an end in sight.

If we have the right attitude, if we work together the day school and boarding will not just survive but will thrive. In 2021, I am determined that with our focus on academic excellence and building propel of substance we will flourish as a community. If we show resilience and character, if we support each other, especially within our families and homes then we can survive, thrive and ultimately flourish.

As an integral part of the wider Reading Community, on your behalf, I have offered our condolences to the Headteacher of Highdown School regarding the death of Olly Stephens on Sunday. We as part of the Reading community, should be doing all we can to help the police with their investigation and to support Olly's friends and family at this very difficult time. One of the best ways to do this - whether you're a parent or a student - is by not commenting on or sharing speculative 'information' on social media.

Key workers

Reading School remains open only to those students of key/critical workers and vulnerable students. If you are expecting your son to attend school during this period, please email Assistant Head, Mr T Evans at tevans@reading-school.co.uk. Students will be supervised in the LRC to access remote learning with all other students. In addition, any students having problems with the set-up of technology from home should be directed to Mr T Evans at tevans@reading-school.co.uk. Any IT support specific issues should be directed to support@reading-school.co.uk.

Year 11 and 13 Parents only

Following the announcement on Monday regarding the cancellation of GCSE and A Level examinations, and the Secretary of State for Education's address at 13:00 on Wednesday, we wanted to keep you updated about plans for teacher assessed grades, mock examinations and the gathering of evidence regarding student rankings.

Mock Examinations

We intend to deliver formal Mock exams as soon as students in Year 11 and 13 return to the school site. We anticipate these examinations being straight after half term but will not commit to a date until we have more clarity about the end of the current lockdown. Students should expect formal assessment as soon as they are back on site. We may give Year 11 and Year 13 students a full week of mocks rather than two weeks of afternoon sessions and will revise the mock timetable once a return to face-to-face teaching is announced.

Interim Assessments

With an unspecified wait until these mock exams can be completed, all Year 11 and 13 students will be set interim assessments in their afternoon sessions in the weeks commencing January 18th and 25th.

If necessary, these interim assessments may be used to validate other data points in future rankings or grade recommendations. If this is the case, they will be afforded a lower weighting than assessments undertaken in controlled conditions in school. They might, nevertheless, be used if students were not able to return school in time for mock exams, be used to show ongoing progress and engagement, and be used to support the ranking process in cases where very close judgements have to be made (at grade boundaries for example).

Different departments will deliver different assessments. Some will be focussed on areas of the curriculum not yet assessed, and others on particular Assessment Objectives. Most will be 'open book' assessments which do not prioritise recall of facts. We know that open book assessments are 'not the same' as internal exams in controlled conditions but we believe there is real benefit in gaining some assessment data as the term progresses. Students should await further guidance from their teachers where this is necessary.

Reports home for Year 11 and 13 will follow an amended time frame as a consequence.

Teacher Assessed Grades

No process has yet been established for this ranking and grading students this summer. Until guidance is published all students should continue learning 'as though exams are happening'. We will keep all students and parents informed of processes and of our next steps as soon as we have further information. All we can say with clarity, at this stage, is that students and parents *must* not communicate with staff about grades. Nationally instances of this sort of behaviour led to allegations of malpractice last year and we ask all parents and students to protect themselves by avoiding placing any pressure on our colleagues, whose professionalism and integrity is a source of great pride for the School. Having gone through the process of recommending grades last year we have every confidence in your son's teachers and in the multi-stage review and quality assurance steps we anticipate implementing in the months ahead. We thank you in advance for your understanding.

Academic Excellence

Covid-19 restrictions did not impact mathematics and computer science competitions in the Michaelmas term, taking place as normal.

UKMT Maths challenge results

Many congratulations to those students who took part in the UKMT Senior Mathematics Challenge which took place on Thursday 26 November.

With a special mention to the 16 students from years 11, 12 and 13 qualified for the Kangaroo Challenge and 4 of them received certificates of Merit. Excellent performance from each one of you and special congratulations to Mannan K, Samuel M, Nihil M and Shaunak S.

In addition, huge congratulations to the 8 students again from years 11, 12 and 13 who qualified for the first round of the British Mathematical Olympiad. Of these students, two of them achieved Distinction certificates: Arlan A and Sida L. Sida has also qualified for the second round of the Olympiad which will

take place in the new year. Also 4 students achieved certificates of Merit: Ewan A, Siyuan L, Aniruth K and Peter I. Outstanding results, you should all be extremely proud.

Special congratulations to Sida L who qualified for the second round of the Olympiad due to take place in the New Year. We wish you the best of luck.

The problems on the Senior Mathematical Challenge are designed to make students stretch their thinking and challenge those with more experience. A special thank you to Mr B Owen (Teacher of Mathematics) for his continued support in running and organising this event and Mrs S Parker (Head of Mathematics). It is these additional opportunities that allow our pupils to shine.

Bebras Computing results

The UK Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge, supported by the Raspberry Pi Foundation, is designed to get students excited about computing and computational thinking. It is a problem-solving contest with questions inspired by topics in computer science. In the first round, students have to try and solve as many problems as possible in the allotted time. There are six age categories. The highest scoring students from the four oldest age groups (Elite, Seniors, Intermediate, and Juniors) are then invited to the Department of Computer Science at Oxford for the finals over two weekends in January/February (currently postponed).

We are pleased to announced out of the 359 students that participated, 88 students achieved a Distinction and 99 students achieved a Merit.

A huge congratulations to:

- Juniors category (10-12) - Ashish G (7S) and Isaac S B (7C).
- Intermediate category (12-14) - Aarav A (9L) and Parth G, (8L), who also scored top marks in this challenge.
- Seniors category (14-16) - Hayden Y (11S).
- Elite Category (16-18) - Bobby M (JM) who scored one of the best results in the school.
- Jaden L (7C), Azaan A (10S) and Finn T (11W) also achieved amazing results.

I would like to add that Reading School's results were the best in the country and everyone that participated should be rightfully proud. Well done to all the students who participated in the Bebras challenge.

Thank you to the Computer Science Department for supporting the students and coordinating this competition led by Mr S Ling-Winston (Head of Computer Science) on superb results.

Inspire Lectures

Over six inspire lectures took place covering Economics, English, Geography, Medicine, Modern Foreign languages, PHSE and Science from leading professionals or Old Redigensians with in-depth specialist subject knowledge. We had speakers touching on topics which globally impacted 2020 – including discussing the warmest January in History and the affects of climate change and sustainability; the affects of the global pandemic; and the impact of discrimination where we have seen communities around the world rally for social and racial justice. We hope to continue with more lectures during the Lent and Summer term.

Please encourage your son(s) to attend these lectures which provide an invaluable insight in to career paths and specific subject areas. If you would like to deliver a workshop or Inspire Lecture in a specific industry or share your career pathway beyond Reading School, please do get in contact with Mrs J Chhokar or Miss P Hutchinson in the Society Office at events@reading-school.co.uk. There is particular interest in medicine, scientific research, finance industries, computer science, engineering, languages and the creative arts.

In partnership with **Speakers for Schools:**

Thurs 14 January 5-6pm

[LINK TO TALK](#)

Shai Weiss, CEO, Virgin Atlantic Airways for KS3-5/ S1-6

Speaker bio [here](#).

Join us to hear Shai Weiss share insights into his own career journey and discuss how he became CEO of Virgin Atlantic. Shai will focus on the importance teamwork, resilience and maintaining mental clarity during difficult times.

How to join:

- Join 10 minutes before the broadcast to be ready
- You can join without needing an account – [Watch how here](#)
- For full speaker descriptions visit the [Broadcast Schedule here](#)
- Watch pre-recorded broadcasts from our library [here](#)

Sixth Form Applications

A reminder that the deadline for applications to the [Sixth Form](#) is 29 January 2021. All current Year 11 students need to complete the application if they wish to progress into Year 12 September 2021. You will need to access the following link to make an application: <http://www.reading-school-admissions.co.uk>.

Leadership

At Reading School we believe that students should be given a wide range of opportunities to develop and practise leadership skills in preparation for life beyond school. I would particularly like to commend Matthew G (Y12), on seeking out opportunities and using his own initiative to provide support to areas of the School where he has been able to initiate improvements for the benefit of staff and students. Working with staff to find solutions whether this is the creation and implementation of the LRC magazine or working with the Society Office on providing solutions to technical issues, being the student photographer, or assisting with creative & design marketing, to name a few.

Thank you for Matthew for seeking out these opportunities and the support you have provided in these areas.

Community

During December, the Redingensians community came together in the spirit of giving in a multitude of ways: from the RSPA providing staff appreciation festival goodies during the second half of the Michaelmas term; sixth form students undertook collating and delivering 60 Christmas Stockings to Kennet Valley Primary School and Katesgrove Primary School; as part of our Future Stories programme, Sixth form mentors virtually mentoring pupils from our local primary schools providing additional support in Maths and English and Reading School staff embracing the 12 days of giving by donating foods to Readifood.

One of our proudest initiatives run this year was 'words of wisdom', whereby our Year 7 and 8 students designed and wrote more than 300 hand-made personal Christmas Cards to send to Old Redingensians over the age of 65, to let them know we are thinking of them. With so many people feeling lonely, separated or isolated and this year our students felt it was particularly important to spread Christmas cheer and think of others.

I am particularly gratified by the numerous responses we have received from Old Redingensians expressing how much this meant to them. I will therefore be writing to those students that have received

responses to share respective replies. I want to thank all those that were involved in contributing in this way. All it takes is kindness.

Reading School Non-Uniform (Christmas Jumper) Day to support Sure 24

We are delighted to announce that the second charitable initiative, led by Ben H (Charity Prefect) at the end of last year, raised a total of £3,226.75 (including Gift Aid) with **435** donors to support [Sure24 and Rain Edge High School](#) in Nakuru, Kenya, proud partners of Reading School since 2014.

Thank you to everyone that has donated the minimum of £2.00 and the many who have contributed more than this. It is not too late! If you would like to support this cause, please make your contribution via: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/readingschoolchristmasjumperday>.

A special thank you to Ben H (Charity Prefect), the Student Prefect Leadership Team, Student Council and Mrs P Hutchinson (Society Office) for planning and coordinating the second student led fundraiser.

Responsible Citizenship

We have all been deeply saddened by the news of Oliver (Olly) Stephens' untimely death on Sunday. We, as part of the Reading community, should be doing all we can to help the police with their investigation and to support Olly's friends and family at this very difficult time. One of the best ways to do this - whether you're a parent or a student - is by not commenting on or sharing speculative 'information' on social media. Thames Valley Police has asked that, if you do have any images, footage or information, not to share it on social media but to report it to them instead. You can call 101 or go online (www.thamesvalley.police.uk), quoting reference 43210002635. Or, if you wish to remain anonymous, you can contact the independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or online.

If you've been affected in any way and would like some additional support, Kooth, Victim Support and Young Minds all offer free and confidential support.

Thames Valley Police has issued a warning to those sharing details related to the investigation online.

As legal proceedings have begun, there is a risk of contempt of court in publishing any information on the three teenagers who have been charged following Sunday's stabbing, including reports of previous convictions. Reporting restrictions are in place due to Section 45 of the Children and Young Person's Act 1999, which gives anonymity to juveniles appearing in an adult court. This means you cannot publish their name, address, identity of any school or education establishment they attend, identity of place of work, or any picture or video of them.

Reading School Debating Society- Inter-School Debate with Queen Anne's School- Friday 15th January 2020

Reading School Debating Society is delighted to announce the first debate of the term organised with Queen Anne's School, Caversham. The motion for the debate is TH believes the UK is systemically racist. This debate will take place on Friday 15th January at 2:30pm [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Integrity

Old Redingensians

I am equally enormously proud of the Old Redingensians and the parent community working in the front line tackling the global pandemic as doctors, medical staff or scientists. Over the Christmas period, many OR's have been in contact with the Society Office to offer support to our students wishing to pursue medical careers in the future. We were touched by the recent responses, this is whilst they themselves are currently delivering care to patients, continuing research or medical students volunteering to assist with the delivery of vaccines. We are proud and hugely thankful, our sincere thanks.

Wellbeing

Students will be facing anxiety and uncertainty as we begin the Lent term, and I wish to remind you of some of the resources available to support [health and wellbeing](#). It is also important for students to remember that Student Services, studentservices@reading-school.co.uk are always available to provide support relating to mental health and wellbeing.

We learned from the first lockdown how challenging it can be to juggle our personal and school or professional roles. We also learned how important it is, amid the crush of work-related tasks, to make time and space for ourselves and our families.

COVID-19

The public health concerns behind the lockdown are very worrying, and I know that the restrictions it imposes on all of us will create new challenges and pressures. We are working hard to ensure that staff and students are supported at all times. I thank you for all your efforts.

Useful resources:

- Government guidance on COVID-19: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- NHS latest guidance: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Ensuring that all students can access remote learning

Digital devices for disadvantaged students and those in households that are shielding:

Under current government guidance, there is provision for digital devices from the DfE for disadvantaged students who meet any of the criteria outlined below:

- Does your child need to shield, due to being clinically extremely vulnerable based on current official advice? (This could be from a doctor or hospital consultant.)
- Does your child live in a household that's been advised to shield because a family member is clinically extremely vulnerable?
- Cannot attend school – even though theirs is open – because restrictions prevent it i.e. cannot travel to school or similar.

If the answer to any of the above questions is 'yes', please contact tevans@reading-school.co.uk who will be in touch to see if you may be eligible for a digital device from the DfE.

Mobile data allowances to support for remote learning:

Additional 'mobile data' may be available to support students in their home learning. If you do not have fixed broadband at home, and / or cannot afford additional data for your child's device please complete the attached form.

[Mobile Data Allowances form](#)

Using an Xbox or PlayStation to access MS TEAMS:

With so many students and parents busy online at home, If you have an Xbox or PlayStation 4, you can use the internet browser to access MS Teams. For advice on how to do this there are many youtube tutorials - there is one such link attached.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfrSCeedsmE>

Service Pupil Premium

It is now a requirement that service personnel with children in state schools must notify schools of their eligibility for the Service pupil premium (SPP). The main messages are shown below.

Service personnel with children (reception to year 11) in state schools in England should notify schools of their children's service status to ensure they are recorded prior to the next autumn census (first Thursday in October) in order to qualify for Service pupil premium.

Pupils attract SPP if they meet one of the following criteria:

- *one of their parents is serving in the regular armed forces (including pupils with a parent who is on full commitment as part of the full time reserve service)*
- *they have been registered as a 'service child' on a school census since 2016, see footnote one of their parents died whilst serving in the armed forces and the pupil receives a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or the War Pensions Scheme*

[Service pupil premium \(SPP\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Children have to be flagged as service children ahead of the autumn school census deadline. Service parents need to make the school aware of their status by talking to the head teacher or school admin staff. If you fall into this category, please email: admin@reading-school.co.uk.

School Nursing Team

The school nursing advice line has a new number!

Your School Nursing service is aware that the Coronavirus pandemic continues to be a difficult and worrying time for everyone and during this time there have been additional pressures on children, families and young people. We are here to help with advice and support regarding physical or emotional concerns.

The School Nursing advice line is available to support children, young people and their families who live in West Berkshire, Reading, Wokingham and Bracknell; it is an easy way to reach us, is available Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm and can give you the advice and support you need.

Call us on **0300 365 0010**

LRC NEWS

LRC Books

The LRC will continue to suspend LRC overdue charges this term. If your son has a book due for return this week, please ask him to try to renew it using Oliver, our Library Catalogue. This can be accessed through SharePoint. We understand if there are delays getting books back to the LRC at the start of term.

If your son is looking for something to read, our ebook library, VLeBooks, can be accessed at www.vlebooks.com (login using Office 365).

The 12 Book Challenges of Christmas!

Pupils at Reading School were set 12 mini challenges to inspire them to keep reading over Christmas. All year 7 and 8 completed one of the challenges during a special library lesson in December, which was to read a book picked by someone else in their class from the LRC Lucky Dip bag. Other challenges included reading a book published the year you were born and running a book quiz for your family. Prizes were awarded for completing all twelve challenges and for creativity.

The overall winner, who completed all twelve challenges, was Nag V. (7C). Nag created this video to document each Challenge.

<https://readingschool.planetestream.com/View.aspx?id=5496~4y~AogsJYFh>

Runners-up were Qasim A. (7W) and San C. (9S) who also completed all 12 challenges.

Judges comments:

We would like to thank all the pupils who entered the competition for sharing their enthusiasm for reading with us and it was great to see the families getting involved with challenges too. We really enjoyed judging the competition and it was great to see so much creativity. In particular we thought Nag's video was very enjoyable to watch and the short story inspired by Jeff Kinney's Diary of a Wimpy Kid was fun to read. It was wonderful to see pupils make the most of the opportunity, reading books ranging from Private Peaceful by Michael Morpurgo to We Should All Be Feminists by Chimamanda Adichie and The Zen of Fish: The Story of Sushi, from Samurai to Supermarket by Trevor Corson.

The LRC Magazine

Matthew G., Head Pupil Librarian and the rest of the Pupil Librarian Team are keen to share all that has been happening this term, including the changes we have had to make and all the other LRC news, competitions and book reviews.

<https://www.reading-school.co.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=2401&type=pdf>

The LRC would like to thank the RSPA, Pupil Librarian Team, Student Librarians and Book Club members for their enthusiasm and support this term.

LRC Annual Survey

Please can you ask your son to complete the annual LRC survey by Friday 22nd of January

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=QKRT3Wr9XkC75IKx5h6C2_NUEb79GzxBpRR_ClayEK8JURUFNUFRGWIBFV0MxSFVUNFM2Szg1U1RaRiQIQCN0PWcu

The aim of the survey is to find out more about how pupils have used the LRC from September 2020 and to hear their feedback and ideas.

Mr AM Robson
Headmaster