



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

15 JANUARY 2021

Contents

Introduction	3
Excellence	4
Continuous remote learning	4
All Years – Lent Term 2021	4
Year 11 and 13 only	4
Year 11 and Year 13 Interim Assessments	4
Sixth Form Applications for 2021 Entry	5
EPQ Results	5
Inspire Lectures	5
Integrity	7
NHS Test and Trace: Covid-19 testing for students	7
Safeguarding	7
E-Safety	7
Leadership	8
Debating Society	8
Work Experience opportunities	8
Careers and additional opportunities	8
Community	9
Year 7 and 8 Parents only – OR Responses to Christmas Card Appeal	9
LRC Annual Survey	9
Reading School Parents' Association	9

Introduction

Dear Parents and Carers

I am conscious that last week, the first week back to school of the new year and the current lockdown, did not offer the fresh start to 2021 that many of us hoped for. The current restrictions and sense of uncertainty that we have become familiar with is undoubtedly difficult.

I want to reiterate once again the importance of putting your health and wellbeing first and finding sustainable ways of learning and working. You have Reading School's complete support in doing this. Specifically, we recognise that parents and staff with caring responsibilities, require great flexibility, in carrying out our daily duties as well as ensuring our students get the support they need. There will also be days when things do not go to plan. That is part and parcel of the struggle many people are facing now. All of this is to be expected and, more importantly, it is alright.

Our students may also be feeling vulnerable as they grapple with online learning and isolation having experienced returning to School during the Michaelmas Term (albeit under certain measures). There will once again be some disappointment to the announcement of exams being cancelled, at the same time this may have released anxiety for others. However, no one likes the uncertainty that surrounds this. Therefore, rather than speculation, we have made it clear that we will be transparent in sharing details as and when they become available.

There is no 'normal' response to this pandemic and feelings may change daily, but please remember this situation is extremely unusual and things will get better.

As a father to three children, I must confess that it is not easy at the moment. For instance, they do not want me at home during the day as our WIFI is not particularly effective, and I make matters worse if I work from home. Also, it is hard to be relentlessly positive when faced with challenges. Crucially, we know that we are not alone. Even if it feels like that sometimes we are.

I am blessed that my mother lives near to me and I can take food and flowers round to her. She is certainly looking forward to receiving the vaccine

Stay connected with friends and family with regular catch ups via zoom and video chats. I know some students have undertaken Cahoots an online quiz to be able to connect with friends. Another great opportunity for learning too!

Of course, I recognise that it is not just working parents and carers who are finding it tough right now. No matter your personal situation, if you are struggling, I urge you to talk to a friend, family member, or colleague. Please do not feel you have to cope with everything on your own.

As a reminder, **please can you I direct you to Reading School's Wellbeing page for support:**
<https://www.reading-school.co.uk/page/?title=Wellbeing&pid=90>

Excellence

Continuous remote learning

I want to commend all students and staff for adjusting to the start of this term remarkably well. I want to thank parents for all their support during these challenging circumstances.

The feedback from teachers this week has been that students have adapted to remote teaching and learning with great maturity and the interaction and engagement over Teams has been impeccable in live lessons. Pupils are now familiar with online learning etiquette or 'Netiquette' and in turn this allows for a constructive online learning environment with limited disruptions.

Please find below link to the Remote Learning Provision at Reading School:

[Remote Learning Provision at Reading School](#)

All Years – Lent Term 2021

At a Glance

Please click the '[At A Glance](#)' document which outlines the timetable for all years during the Lent Term. The 'at a glance' guide attached summarises Reading School's remote learning provision for the weeks up to February half term. It also clearly states the expectations for each year group and who to contact if there are any concerns.

Online Electives:

Afternoon activities for students in Years 7-10 will commence in RW3 and RW4 from Monday. There are a range of both live and asynchronous activities so students can take responsibility for planning their afternoons.

We would encourage all students to participate, to do something active daily and to get involved with the school community outside of lesson time.

Students can access each of these online electives using the 'team' and 'join code' provided in the attached documents.

[Year 7 and 8 Online Electives](#)

[Year 9 and 10 Online Electives](#)

Year 11 and 13 only

By way of reminder, from **Monday 18th to Friday 29th January** Year 11 and 13 students will be undertaking remote assessments designed to showcase evidence of excellence or highlight areas that can be improved in time for mock exams when School is reopened. There will be no live lessons in this fortnight consequently. The schedule for each year group can be found below and all Year 11 and 13 students should by now have appropriate instructions to help them prepare.

Year 11 and Year 13 Interim Assessments

Please find below links to Interim Assessment Schedules for your information:

[Year 11 Interim Assessments](#)

[Year 13 Interim Assessments](#)

In the weeks of **Monday 1st to Friday 14th February** the delivery of Year 11 and 13 afternoon lessons will be adjusted to allow departments to manage feedback from interim assessments according to their departmental needs. Some departments will ask for small groups to attend live feedback

sessions to highlight areas for improvement, some will provide drop-in sessions for students to ask questions, some will extend instructions for independent tasks and others will still need all students to be present. Your son's teacher will inform him in advance regarding sessions he must attend.

Parents should also be aware that the Secretary of State for Education has stated that he "*would like to explore the possibility of providing externally set tasks or papers, in order that teachers can draw on this resource to support their assessments of students.*" And, further, that he intends for all students to be "*assessed based on what they have learnt, rather than against content they have not had a chance to study.*" The full text of his letter to Ofqual can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/951797/Letter_from_Gavin_Williamson_to_Simon_Lebus.pdf

We will keep parents and students, as informed, as possible, as to the progress of the Ofqual consultation.

Sixth Form Applications for 2021 Entry

A reminder that the deadline for both day and boarding applications to the Sixth Form is Friday 29th January 2021. All current Year 11 students will need to complete the application if they wish to progress into Year 12 September 2021. Please do not defer an application on the basis of waiting for any internal test results. There will be some flexibility for option changes providing they can be accommodated. To make an application please click on the following link: <http://www.reading-school-admissions.co.uk>.

For anyone considering weekly boarding in the Sixth Form please contact our Boarding Administrator, Mrs Hickman (phickman@reading-school.co.uk) for further details. We find that boarding in the Sixth Form provides students with the perfect opportunity to gain independence, self-motivation and academic discipline; skills which they can build upon and then utilise to ensure a seamless transition into university life.

EPQ Results

Congratulations to those students who received their EPQ results yesterday. I am delighted to report 100% grades A* - B with 6 A*, 2 A and 5 B Grades. Well done to all the Year 13 students and thank you to their dedicated tutors led by Ms J Pickering (EPQ Co-ordinator).

Inspire Lectures

In partnership with Speakers for Schools here is next week's full [Live Broadcasts Schedule](#). Please encourage your son to tune in to these opportunities!

WEEK STARTING MONDAY 18th JANUARY 2021

Tues 19th January 5-6pm

Anthony Salcito, Vice President of Microsoft Worldwide Education for KS4-5/S4-6

[LINK TO JOIN](#)

Anthony Salcito is the Vice President of Microsoft Worldwide Education and was previously the Vice President of the Public Sector & Government. Anthony's role involves empowering educators and inspiring students to achieve more. He aims to transform the way we all learn, with the support of the best technology, to help build the skills needed for the 21st century workplace. In this SFS broadcast, tune in to hear Anthony's thoughts on how technology has impacted education, what skills are important for your future career and get the opportunity to ask your questions!

Wed 20th January 10-11am

Sophie Darlington, Wildlife Cinematographer for KS3-5/S1-6

[LINK TO JOIN](#)

Join us to hear Sophie Darlington share insights into what it is like to be a Wildlife Cinematographer. Sophie will be interviewed by SFS on what it was like to work on “Our Planet” and “Perfect Planet”, where she gains her inspiration from and will be sharing some top tips on filmmaking. A broadcast not to be missed for students interested in nature and filmmaking.

Wed 20th January on Zoom 2-3pm

Introduction to Animation & VFX with Industrial Light & Magic for KS3/S1-3

[FORM TO SIGN UP](#)

Join Industrial Light and Magic for this ZOOM webinar about what it's like to have a career in VFX! There will be the opportunity to hear from people who work for ILM and how they started in their careers and more about their work. There will be the opportunity to ask the speakers questions too.

HOW TO JOIN THE LIVE BROADCASTS

- Join 10 minutes before the broadcast to be ready
- You can join without needing an account – [Watch how here](#)

LIVE BROADCASTS LIBRARY & MORE

- Watch pre-recorded broadcasts from our library [here](#)
- Please see our [Schools Guide here.](#)

Integrity

NHS Test and Trace: Covid-19 testing for students

Many thanks to all those who have completed the consent form. A reminder that we will be looking to test all staff and students as they return after lockdown. In order to test your child, we need to have consent. Therefore, even if you do not consent, please complete the form below and submit no later than **Friday 22nd January 2021**.

Parents of students under the age of 16 should complete the consent form below:

[Consent Form for COVID 19 testing in School \(Students under 16\)](#)

Students who are aged 16 or over should complete the consent form below:

[Consent Form for COVID 19 testing in School \(Students Over 16\)](#)

In addition, any staff member or student who has come into contact with positive cases in our school can be tested daily for seven days to allow them to remain in school.

[Reading School – COVID-19 Testing Privacy Statement](#)

Safeguarding

Domestic abuse – please be aware of a new scheme to help those subject to domestic abuse: Ask for Ani in pharmacies

[Ask for 'ANI': Domestic abuse help scheme explained - BBC News](#)

To support those escaping abuse, please visit this link: [Buy a Refuge Parcel | Donate to Stop Domestic Violence](#)

E-Safety

Please ensure you know what your child is accessing on their phone, tablet or computer.

E-safety online activity packs for parents/carers are available at: [Online safety home activity worksheets \(thinkuknow.co.uk\)](#)

Leadership

Debating Society

Debating Society is moving to Wednesday afternoons from the Friday afternoon slot.

We endeavour to bring students together for our weekly discussions and debates on current and topical issues. Led by the Arvind A (President), Alex N (Vice President) and Malhar D (Committee member Year 12). Thank you to Miss Hutchinson (Society Assistant) for coordinating.

Launching the first debate this Friday of the Lent Term at 2.30pm with Queen Anne's School.

- Is the UK systematically racist?- Inter-school debate with Queen Anne's School - [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Then the committee will host a debate every Wednesday at 2.30pm via Microsoft Teams. Over the forthcoming weeks, the motions include:

- Wednesday 20th January - THS the Black Lives Matter movement - [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- Wednesday 27th January - TH opposes political correctness - [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- Wednesday 3rd February - THS protective legislation over individual freedom - [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- Wednesday 10th February - THS the censorship of music lyrics (Drill music etc.) - [Click here to join the meeting](#)

All students are encouraged to participate in Debating Society gaining broad, multi-faceted knowledge, increasing confidence, poise and self-esteem and improving critical thinking skills.

Students can also follow-on Instagram at RSDebatingSociety.

Work Experience opportunities

Students are reminded that when applying for virtual work placements to please ensure you inform your tutor of the details of the opportunity you are applying for, in advance. So, tutors are aware that a personal reference may be required.

Careers and additional opportunities

Students are reminded that careers and additional opportunities are posted to Teams. An example of these are set out below:

- ['Meet the Russell Group'](#) event on afternoon of Wednesday 10th February.
- Sign up to the virtual [UK university and apprenticeship fair](#) Wednesday 27th January 12noon to 18.00.
- [University of Leicester](#) - Short introductory videos explaining what studying a wide variety of subjects is like at University of Leicester. This could help with subject choice.
- [Lancaster University](#)- Series of webinars and an essay competition for anyone interested in studying Sport Science.
- [Barclays](#) are running a whole series of webinars and presentations for those interested in the finance sector. There is a focus on apprenticeships. Places are limited.
- [HSBC work experience programme](#). A great opportunity.
- [PWC Flying Start degree](#). This combines work and university and is an excellent opportunity.

Community

Year 7 and 8 Parents only – OR Responses to Christmas Card Appeal

We were very impressed by the thoughtfulness of our Year 7 & 8 students who wrote Christmas and Seasons Greeting cards to our oldest alumni.

This act of community service made a big difference to some very elderly members of the Reading School family.

Thank you to every student who took part and all the OR's who called or emailed to express their thanks.

A sample of the responses can be found here: [OR responses to Christmas Card Appeal 2020](#)

LRC Annual Survey

Thank you to the pupils who have already completed the survey. It is particularly important this year to hear from all pupils, even if they have not used the LRC! Please can you ask your son to complete the annual LRC survey by Friday 22nd January.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=QKRT3Wr9XkC75lKx5h6C2_NUEb79GzxBpRRCIayEK8JURUFNUFRGWIBFV0MxSFVUNFM2Szg1U1RaRiQIQCN0PWcu

Reading School Parents' Association

The RSPA are very excited to launch our new school lottery for Reading School. It is extremely easy to join and will make an incredible difference to our fundraising efforts during these difficult times where we would normally run our many successful events.

Tickets are £1 per week and the draws take place each Saturday evening. For every £1 ticket sale, 40p goes to our school so we will be benefitting for 52 weeks of the year! There will be a guaranteed prize each week amounting to 30% of all Reading School ticket sales plus the chance of a Grand Jackpot Prize! Winners advised by email. Further information to follow.

Do look out for further marketing on our Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter Sites. Thank you so much for supporting the boys at Reading School. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to get in touch with Susie Gupta at Treasurer@readingschoolparents.co.uk.