



Note from the Principal

Dear Parent,

What an extraordinary term for musical achievement this term has been! As if this year's House Music competition was not enough, the recent Michaelmas Concert surpassed all expectations. A veritable feast of musical excellence was served up by Mr. Meehan, our new Director of Music, and his burgeoning band of musicians from all Year Groups. The event was thoroughly enjoyed by a full house in Big School who left thirsting for more musical fare of this standard next term. As I write I am awaiting this year's Carol Service in St. Luke's (Monday 12th December) which promises to be one of our best yet.

Regarding School Development, Governors are currently reviewing proposals for Feasibility Studies for the improvement of our Science and Sport facilities. You will be hearing more in the near future – suffice it to say that there are some exciting times ahead as the School makes progress with implementing its Masterplan.

Thank you for the messages of goodwill following my announcement that I will be moving on to Cranbrook School in September this year. It was a tough decision because I know I am leaving behind one of the best schools in the country and because I have such fond memories of my time here. Nevertheless the time is right for a fresh vision and renewed energy from a new Head. He or she will have much improved funding, excellent colleagues and, above all, some of the best students in the world to work with. Floreat Redingensis!

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish our school community a very happy and relaxing Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year ahead.

Book Club member scoops literary prize

This term we were invited to submit entries for a Book Report Competition to the Education Library Service (ELS). The ELS is a partnership established by five of the Berkshire local authorities in 1998 to provide library services for the benefit of their schools.

The remit was to write a review about a book you had recently read and give feedback. There were three categories for entry: KS1, KS2 and Secondary. The school book club members wrote a total of ten reviews and they were sent off mid-October.

To everyone's delight, Daniel Salter (7S) won the Secondary school's category with a review of *The Enemy* by Charlie Higson. Daniel and his family were invited to the Awards Tea on 7th December at the ELS offices in Reading. He was presented with a certificate and invited to choose books to the value of £15 whilst the school was able to choose £100 worth of books for the library.



Daniel with his certificate

Daniel's review was amongst over 1,700 entries the ELS received, so we should all be very proud of his achievement. Daniel caught the attention of the judges with quotes like 'If you're the type of person that likes fairies, unicorn magic dust type books, I'm afraid this book is NOT for you. Where if you like puss filled corpses, swollen rotting zombies and cannibalism this is the book for you'.

On hearing of his win, Daniel said 'I was quite surprised how many people had entered and I came ahead of them'. He added 'I didn't really think I was going to win'. Asked why he thought he had won; he said 'I tried to make it funny'.

Daniel was presented with his certificate by Rosemary Woodman of the ELS. She added that the aim of the competition was to encourage children of all ages to read for pleasure. The ELS had received a huge variety of book reviews from Daniel's age group, but his review stood out because it gave a 'very witty description of *The Enemy* and it was a wonderful promotion of the book'.

Mrs A Jackson, Library Assistant



Severe Weather Arrangements

Will parents please note that regular updates about weather conditions affecting transport to and from school will be given via the school website and our text messaging system. It is therefore very helpful if we have your most up to date mobile phone number for this purpose. If you have not signed up to Teacher2Parents and wish to receive up to date information, please contact Mrs Lidbetter at secretary@reading-school.co.uk. The general principle is for parents and students not to take any risks in making their way to school.

Old Redingensians Association Enterprise Awards

As many readers will know, the Old Redingensians Association is involved in a broad range of activities that enrich the life of the school and its alumni. These include organizing sporting and social activities for alumni throughout the year; commemorating the achievements of past and present pupils of the School; and maintaining the School archive of historical material.

The Association also provides Enterprise Awards totaling £5,000 each year to encourage adventurousness, citizenship, creativity, and leadership amongst Reading School students, by providing part-funding for projects involving community service, expeditions, or improvement in skills and knowledge.

A new round of Enterprise Awards will be launched in January 2012. All boys in the school, from years 7 to 13, are welcome to apply. The Association is interested in funding a broad range of projects and skills. This could include those in the fields of conservation, science, third world development, music, art, theatre, sports, community, faith, and civic improvement, as well as personal development, and gap year projects.

More information about the Awards and the application process will be given during assemblies in February. The Association will also hold some information sessions for boys interested in making an application during February and March. Applications will be judged and awards will be announced during the first few weeks of Summer Term.

Carol Service

Students, parents and staff started the Christmas season with a very successful Carol Service. Representatives of the entire school community gathered at St Luke's Church, Erleigh Road on Monday December 12th for the Annual Service of Nine Lessons and Carols, conducted by School Chaplain, The Rev'd Chris Evans.

The Service, which is based on the version drawn up for use in King's College, Cambridge in 1918, included readings by boys, staff, parents, and alumni, developing the theme of the loving purposes of God seen through the windows and words of the Bible.

The choir and musicians performed an ambitious programme of carols and music, under the direction of Mr Richard Meehan, Director of Music. These included several Christmas favourites, as well as some less well known carols. Mr Meehan, and by year 13 student, Richard Parkinson, also provided some original arrangements and music.

Thanks to the generosity of the congregation, a total of £355 was raised for St Mungo's work with homeless people in Reading. Very many thanks to all those who contributed.





Senior Prizegiving



Reading School recognised the many achievements of students over the last year at the Annual Senior Prize-giving Ceremony at the Great Hall of Reading University on Tuesday, December 13th. In keeping with tradition, The Mayor of Reading, Cllr Deborah Edwards, presented the Principal with his annual stipend of £10.

In his final annual report as Principal, Mr Weeds congratulated students and staff for another year of outstanding achievements. He particularly congratulated students leaving in 2011. A record 23 students achieved a place at Oxford or Cambridge, and 16 were accepted to study medicine.

Captain Bjorn Rose was guest speaker. Captain Rose served in both Iraq and Afghanistan, following officer training at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. Now building a career as a history teacher, Captain Rose spoke movingly of some of his experiences in Afghanistan. He explained how these had shaped him, and how learning from mistakes had enabled him, and the men under his command, to improve their performance.

As well as the usual subject and endowed prizes, there were two new named prizes this year. The Sidwell Organ Prize, given in memory of the late David Sidwell (OR 1963-70), was awarded to Richard Parkinson who gave a short organ recital. The Parsons Prize for Historical Research, donated by the current President of the Old Redingensians Association, Professor Martin Parsons, was awarded to Phillip Herbst.

A chance to reclaim your lost property 14th January 9am-11am

The PE Department will hold a one-off Lost Property Repatriation Event on Saturday 14th January from 9am to 11am in Junior School to give parents an opportunity to reclaim their unlabelled items of lost property. Parents of lost kit are invited to come along and, on a trust basis, reclaim items of property that their sons have lost. The event is being organised jointly by the PE Department, RSPA and James Pender. James is taking on the task of laundering all the lost PE kit before the event, and an entrance donation of £1 per person will be requested with all proceeds going towards James's World Challenge expedition. Tea and coffee will also be available to purchase at the event.

This follows the recent sorting of lost property, when PE staff and volunteers sorted through 25 dustbin liners full of kit. The named items, which filled only three bags, are currently being returned to their owners. At the end of the event on Saturday 14th, any items remaining unclaimed will be passed to the Uniform Shop for sale. This is a timely reminder that all uniform and personal belongings brought to school should be labelled with your son's name. **In future, lost property will be sorted every half-term by RSPA volunteers and named items will be returned. Unnamed kit will be passed to the Uniform Shop, and the money raised will go towards supporting the boys.**

Boys who lose their belongings can continue to look for them themselves at any time. Clothing found in the changing rooms is put in the cage there; clothing found elsewhere in the school is put in the cage in the Quad; and non-clothing items are handed in to the office.



OR's play for Oxford University U21's at Twickenham

Old boys, Charles and Christopher O'Halloran both played for Oxford University in the U21's varsity game against Cambridge on Thursday 8th December. Oxford beat Cambridge 19pts to 11pts. Charles is in his third year and played at scrum half for the 21's and he is studying Geography at Regents Park College. During the summer he played for the Blues at the Casablanca 10's and also went on tour with the Blues to Siberia. Christopher played at fullback and he is a fresher at Worcester College, also reading Geography.



Charles and Christopher
holding the Nomura trophy
after the game

News from the Maths Department



Second place winners of the Reading
Area Senior Maths Challenge

The certificates for the Senior Maths challenge were presented this week with 31 boys achieving gold, 46 silver and 33 bronze. 26 boys took part in the next rounds and we are currently awaiting results from the Olympiad round 1, and the senior 'Kangaroo'. Robin Elliott came top in school - well done Robin.

In the regional senior maths team challenge competition Reading finished second to Eton, with Robin Elliott, Henry Gardner, Joe Moneim and Daniel Brock representing us and now awaiting news as to whether they have qualified for the National finals as a best place second school. Well done to these four boys.

MACE Aces!

It may only have been a small team, but they were big on talent. Year 13 boys, John Tuggey and Ben Morris, accompanied by a small group of supporters, travelled to King's College School, Wimbledon on November 22nd, to take part in the first round of the English Speaking Union's Mace National Schools Debating Competition.

Opposing the motion "This house would remove the right to refuse life-saving medical treatment", John and Ben did verbal battle against teams with significantly more competition experience than themselves. They emerged victorious, along with King's College School, and now go forward to the second round.



Mr Beahan from the English Department helped the boys prepare for the competition. He said "Given the quality of the teams we were up against, the demanding format and the fact this was our first time, the win is no mean feat. We await the next round with spirits renewed and targets raised!"

Uniform Shop

The Uniform Shop has recently had a facelift so do drop in when we open next on Friday, 6th January (2.30-3.45pm) and Saturday, 7th January (9.30-11am). We have a wide selection of second-hand school uniform and PE kit in good condition at reasonable prices. Find us behind the blue skip in the walled car park. All money raised by the Uniform Shop goes towards supporting the boys.

RSPA



Trip to the Christmas Market



29 students of German and a number of teachers enjoyed a day out at the Birmingham branch of the Frankfurt Christmas market on the last weekend of November. We sampled authentic sweets and ginger bread, savoury sausages and breads and had a wonderful time looking at the wide variety of traditional crafts on display. Many found Christmas presents for their family members and the staff were impressed how extremely punctual and reliable every single person among the 29 students was - so danke to everybody for a wonderful day und Frohe Weihnachten.

Ms A Von-Widdern

2011 Reading School Confirmation

On Wednesday November 23rd, 9 boys from the School were confirmed by Bishop Andrew Proud in the School Chapel. The boys had requested the chance to explore faith and each attended weekly discussions over a period of two months run by the Chaplain, Rev'd Chris Evans. The service was a delightful occasion, with each boy giving a very personal account of their faith and their journey.



Dan Richman wins Cambridge Chemistry Challenge Award



Dan with his chemistry teacher, Mr Giubertoni, Julian Huppert MP, and Dr Peter Wothers at the award ceremony at the Houses of Parliament.

Year 13 student, Dan Richman has received an award for his outstanding performance, achieving one of the highest marks in the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge. Dan was one of just 30 students, out of 3,000 participants, who achieved the highest marks in the Challenge. He was presented with his trophy by Cambridge MP and research scientist, Dr Julian Huppert at an event in the Houses of Parliament

The Cambridge Chemistry Challenge is the brainchild of Dr Peter Wothers who is a chemist at the University of Cambridge. It is made up of a monthly online competition which is open to anyone, of any age from anywhere in the world and is designed to stretch students' science knowledge. At the end of the online competition the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge team, made up of teachers and university chemists, set a written exam for Year 12 students at schools in the UK.

Dr Peter Wothers said: "Congratulations to the winners of this year's Cambridge Chemistry Challenge. It is fantastic to see this competition strike a chord with so many students. At school, students are taught the facts but here they have to apply knowledge of other subjects and think creatively- these are exactly the kind of skills which are needed for university."

The Cambridge Chemistry Challenge will continue into 2012 due to popular demand from students and teachers. The first online challenge will be available at 00.01, Sunday 1 January 2012. If you would like to find out more visit www.c3l6.org.



Under 13 Rugby Team Triumph

The under 13 rugby team emerged triumphant in the semi-final of the Berkshire Cup. In a closely fought match at Morgan Road against Licensed Victuallers' Schools, the boys scored with the last play of the match to win by 12 points to 5. They will play in the final at Newbury Rugby Club in January.

Unfortunately, the under 14 team didn't win their semi-final match against Maiden Erleigh School. They lost by 22 points to 14. Director of Sport, Alex Beckey said "This has been a really good season for our boys. They played really well. I hope we will have a lot of supporters coming along to cheer on the under 13s when they play in the final."

Details of the final of the under 13 section of the Berkshire Cup will be shown in the "what's on" section of the school website when arrangements for the match have been confirmed.

Reading School Chess Team Success

Reading School Chess team has reached the second round of the Yateley Manor National Schools Chess Championships. They scored resounding victories against Yateley Manor School, Wellington College and Davenies School. They now go forward to play Eton College in the second round.

Last year, Reading School reached the National Finals of the competition, and came second out of 8 finalists. They were narrowly beaten by Manchester Grammar School. Team organiser, Mrs Smith says: "We are currently feeling very optimistic and are looking forward to 2012!"



'How to drug proof your kids'

There will be a six-week course for parents of boys in Years 7 and 8, entitled 'How to Drug Proof Your Kids', starting in the Lent term. Details will be emailed to parents shortly. This will be run by Mrs Green, on Monday evenings, starting at the end of January.

New Website

We are delighted to announce the launch of our new school website www.reading-school.co.uk. We have tried to keep it as clean and simple as possible with easy navigation to all sections. There are also many new links to the school's social networking sites and we look forward to much more dynamic news content. If you have any comments feel free to let us know on the contact us link

Student illness

Please could you remind your son that if he feels unwell during the school day then he should go and see Mrs Ellis in the first aid room in the first instance. Students should not contact parents independently to come and collect them from school without following this procedure.

Internet Safety

We are working in partnership with PC Dave Thomas, the Safer Schools Officer for Reading, to address the issue of internet safety. PC Thomas has spoken to Years 7 and 8 about this topic and will be talking to Year 9 students in January. He has asked us to inform parents that they can obtain guidance by looking at the 'Think U Know' website (www.thinkuknow.co.uk) which has been produced by the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre.

Mrs A Hardwick



HSBC Mandarin Speaking Competition

Seven students from Reading School will show off their linguistic skills at the X Factor-style regional heat of the HSBC/British Council Mandarin Chinese Speaking Competition at the London School of Economics. They will compete against around 200 other students from almost 40 schools on Friday 16 December, to win a place in the final at the British Museum in February.

The competition supports and promotes the teaching of Mandarin Chinese as a modern foreign language in UK schools. Now in its ninth year, the competition has attracted a record number of learners eager to prove their Chinese skills. Regional heats are taking place in London and Newcastle, with only the best being invited to attend the final – where they could win a visit to China.

The talented youngsters will compete in either the Individual Language Ability or Group Performance section. In the Individual section, contestants give a pre-prepared short presentation in Mandarin, translate sentences from English into Mandarin and are tested on their knowledge of China and Chinese culture, or are asked to give a short speech from a prompt. In the Group Performance section, groups of between four and six students perform a piece of drama in Chinese. The judging panel will be made up of native and non-native speakers of Mandarin, from a variety of backgrounds.

Participants from Reading School are: Alexander Johnston, (Individual Speech) and Laurence Bashford, James Daly, Iain Dunn, Martin Shines and Will Martineau (Group Performance).

The competition is part of the British Council and HSBC's work to prepare children in the UK for life in a global society and work in a global economy. When these students enter employment, they will need to be able to compete in a world where links with China are essential. China overtook Japan to become the world's second largest economy earlier this year – with projections that it will take the number one spot in the next 20 years.

The competition has been organised by the British Council – which builds relationships for the UK through English, Education and the arts, and already links around 43,000 pupils and teachers in the UK and China. It is supported by the HSBC Global Education Programme – which focuses on international understanding, disadvantaged children, financial literacy, and environmental education.

Big Bands @ Big School

Please note that we will be holding a joint concert of big band swing music in conjunction with Innovations Jazz Orchestra on Monday 5th March 2012 at 7.45pm. This will be the second year of this concert, following the success of last year's event. Further details will follow in the New Year.



Reading School Big Band

**Musical Director
Richard Meehan**



Innovations Jazz Orchestra

**Musical Director
Simon Ward**



Reading School Gifted and Talented Geography Quiz 2011



Reading School winners

The Reading School Geography Department hosted the Geographical Association Worldwide Quiz for the sixth year running. This year saw over 60 gifted and talented geographers participate from over 20 local schools. Teams consisted of a year 8, a year 9 and a year 10 student. After some fierce fighting Reading School Team A saw off Wellington College to win the coveted trophy, congratulations to James Woolaghan (8E), John Livesey (9S) and Ed Clennett (10W) who now go on to represent the region in national competitions. Congratulations also to Reading School Team B who came third beating Reading Blue Coat and Abbey School amongst others. Well done.

Mr J Norgaard, Head of Geography

New Online Resource Accessible from Home

It is now possible to access the archive volumes of the following Philip Allan magazines online via the Learning Resources page on Sharepoint:

Sharepoint > Student Support > Learning Resources > Eresources

- 20th Century History Review
- Biological Science Review
- Business Studies Review
- Chemistry Review
- The English Review
- Geography Review
- Economic Review
- PE Review
- Physics Review

Philip Allan magazines expand student knowledge and each issue features:

- Specially written articles by leading authors and examiners, relevant and accessible to A-level students
- Grade boosting advice from examiners - who know what students need to do to get those top grades

Mrs Kesteven, School Librarian

The Royal Geographical Society Trip

On the 21st November, around 20 Year 9 boys from Reading School went to The Royal Geographical Society to learn about different aspects of geography. When we were there we did a number of activities which individually taught us about the many different sides of the subject. From development to globalisation and even wind patterns on the Earth, we covered many subjects in great detail with the RGS staff. It was really fascinating and enjoyable, even Mr Hurst enjoyed it! We also got told about how geography can help us in the future and how geography can help us finding a job.

Overall, I think everyone would agree, it was a really good day at the Royal Geographical Society, I would fully recommend it for next year's Y9s!

Jack Ginger 9S



Boarders Family Carol Service 2011

The annual Boarders Family Carol Service took place in the School Chapel on the evening of Sunday 11th December 2011. Boys, staff and family members took part in a series of carols and readings reminding us of the journey towards Christmas and its true meaning. Accompanying the congregation on the organ was Richard Parkinson of Year 13. Afterwards, everyone repaired to Big School for some seasonal refreshment in the form of mulled wine and mince pies. As ever, the event was well supported by parents and friends. The retiring collection for the Alexander Devine Children's Hospice raised £132 – very many thanks to all those who contributed.



Members of Year 7 in East Wing and South House who took part in the carol service.

Rugby Results 2011

It has been a very successful season for rugby this year. The teams have been very competitive due to the hard work, commitment and endeavour the students have put in. In this day and age it seems to be a constant battle against work commitments at John Lewis, social commitments and a PlayStation lifestyle for students to commit to something bigger than themselves, but I feel a growing spirit within the sporting community at Reading School will hopefully see us continue to be successful.

Off the pitch has been successful too. This is down to the hard work of Mrs Barker and Mrs Horton in sharing this spirit and enthusiasm by leading the hosting and increasing parental involvement on match days. This season has been the best by far and on a personal note it is deeply satisfying to see how social after match hosting has become with students, parents, opposition and coaches all involved. No doubt they are already recruiting for the Football Season. Finally, I would like to especially thank Mr. Coggan, Mr. Giubertoni, Mr. Bellinger, Mr. Evans, Mr. Teixiera, Mr. Roca and Mr. Gush for all their time and effort to the rugby cause.

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost
1st XV	9	4	0	5
2nd XV	7	1	0	6
U16s	8	6	0	2
U15s	10	8	0	2
U14s	12	5	0	7
U13s	11	8	0	3
U12s	5	2	1	2

- 1st XV knocked out of the 5th round of the Daily Mail Cup by Abingdon
- U15s made it to the Quarter Final of the South West Daily Mail Vase
- U14s made it to the Semi Final of the County Cup
- U13s through to the Final of the County Cup which will be played in January at Newbury Rugby Club
- U12 Won Berkshire Trophy Final – Unbeaten Run

Mr A Beckey, Director of Sport