



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

26 MARCH 2021

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Introduction

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

A year since Covid

Now is the time for reflection. A time for looking back. But also, a time for looking forward, renewing our commitment to respect each other and build community.

This week marked the anniversary of the announcement of the first lockdown. It provides us all with an opportunity to reflect on the grief and loss caused to so many since March 2020. Many members of the school community and their families have been impacted, in so many ways, by the pandemic. We are committed to supporting all members of the Reading School community.

It is also important to appreciate that we are still in a period of National Lockdown, although schools have been open since 8 March. I do not want any members of our community to think that we should be complacent and consider that the threat of coronavirus is over.

We are pleased that so many staff have been able to take up the offer of the first dose of the Oxford Astra Zeneca vaccine. I was delighted that our entire student body, boarders and day students, underwent three rounds of testing in school. At home testing, including over the Easter holidays continues apace.

An aspect of the pandemic is that it has shone light on our need to work in partnership. Arguably, it has taken forceable isolation and social distancing to emphasise the importance of community and working in partnership. One of the most important partners working with Reading School to support the education of our students is the Reading Foundation. The Reading Foundation are seeking to fill the position of Parent Trustee. Details can be found in the Community Section of this bulletin on page 12.

As an organisation we need to remember and learn from the past and from our current situation. Additionally, we must consider what we need to do in order to thrive and flourish in the future. We need to ensure that our shared values are lived out through our daily behaviours. Thus, we all need to show commitment to respect our community and our environment. If we work in partnership, respecting the valued contribution of all members of the Reading School family then we can more than catch-up, more than recover. Indeed, we can thrive and flourish if we work together. We can rededicate our passion and purpose to be an outward-facing organisation that delivers academic excellence and builds people of substance.

End of Term Arrangements

Please note that school will end at 1.30pm on Thursday 1st April following tutor time to give students and tutors the time to tidy up form rooms.

Boarders will be dismissed with the day boys in their form at 1:30pm. They will then be expected to return to their boarding house when they will have a chance to finish tidying their rooms and packing their bags. Upon inspection, boarders will then be allowed to sign out. No evening meal will be provided.

Both boarding houses will be locked at 6pm on 1st April. The boarding houses will re-open from 6pm on Sunday 18th April.

Job Vacancy

We currently have a vacancy for a Teacher of Mathematics with effect from 1st September 2021. Below you will find the advert and details of the post. If you, or anyone you know would be interested in this vacancy, please do forward to them. If you require any further information, please contact hr@reading-school.co.uk in the first instance.

[Teacher of Mathematics – Advert](#)

[Teacher of Mathematics – Details of the Post](#)

Summer Curriculum update

As the Lent term draws to a close we are pleased to report that extensive time invested in consolidating learning and reviewing areas for further intervention has been fruitful.

From **Monday April 19th Afternoon timetables** will include the structure and content, which replaces all previous structures and represents a moving towards the provision which we hope to sustain in a post-pandemic landscape.

Therefore, all students, apart from Year 12s completing three A Levels, will be in School every day until 15:25.

All students in Years 7-10 and Year 12 will have a week of Assessments in the week commencing June 21st. These represent an important checkpoint for reviewing students' progress, and generating adjustments to schemes of work within the curriculum with effect from September 2021.

Year 12

All Year 12 students will be timetabled for two full afternoon per fortnight for each of their A Level Options. They will have Games options on Friday afternoons, but will be in school until 15:25 for three or four afternoons depending on the number of A Levels they are studying towards.

Year 10

Per Fortnight, all Year 10 students will be timetabled for 2 lessons for each of their options, 2 English lessons and 2 Maths lessons. They will also have 1 x Philosophy, 1 x Biology, 1 x Chemistry, 1 x Physics lessons and a double games session every Thursday.

Year 9

Per fortnight, all Year 9 students will have 2 x HPQ taught skills sessions, 2 x HPQ supervision meeting, 2 x Philosophy, 2 x English, 2 x Maths and 2 x Modern or Classical Language lessons. They will also have 1 x Biology, 1 x Chemistry, 1 x Physics and 1 x Revision Skills session. They will also have a double games session every Tuesday.

Year 8

Per fortnight all Year 8 students will be timetabled for 2 x Computer Science, English and Maths lessons and 2 lessons of each of their languages. They will also have 1 x Classics, 1 x Geography, 1 x History and 1 x Theology and Philosophy lesson per fortnight. They will have a double Games session every Wednesday. They will also have a single elective session on Monday afternoons, where all students will be able to choose between one of nine extension activities.

Year 7

Per fortnight all Year 7 students will be timetabled for 2 x Biology, Chemistry, Physics, English, Maths, Geography and History lessons. They will have a double games session every Monday. They will also have a single elective session on Friday afternoons, where all students will be able to choose between one of nine extension activities.

Earth Hour 2021

Earth Hour is now one of the world's largest grassroots movements for the environment. Held every year on the last Saturday of March, Earth Hour engages millions of people in more than 180 countries and territories, switching off their lights to show support for our planet.

In a year that has seen most of us spending a lot of time at home, there are many opportunities to make a difference to our environment – for example, by reducing our personal electricity use. To observe Earth Hour, all you need to do is turn off your household lights and non-essential appliances from 8.30pm to 9.30pm on Saturday, 27 March. You will be joining millions of people, businesses and landmarks, in more than 180 countries and territories, who are switching off as a gesture to show their support for our planet. There are some great [tips](#) and resources for how you can make a difference to the environment on the [Earth Hour website](#). I also encourage you to tune in to the Earth Hour website on the night for the first 'virtual spotlight'.



Alumni news

James Alex Harding (OR 2009-2016) has now released his debut novel, set in Reading School.

Entitled 'Red & White', the story centres around the pupils' fight for survival after a disease ravages the adult population. Drawing inspiration from 'Lord of the Flies', the novel focuses on portraying teenagers and conflict in a realistic manner.

'Red & White' is available for £5 on the Kindle Store and on mobile devices using the following steps:

<https://tinyurl.com/3pzc9m6z>. James suggests the recommended reading age to be sixteen and above, and provides the following link to his work:

<https://tinyurl.com/3v9ptmmd>.



Logo Competition

A reminder to all our community that we are asking all students, parents and members of our community to devise some designs that could be used going forward. The two separate logos should incorporate in some way:

- 1.Future Stories
- 2.Future Stories Community Enterprise

The deadline for submission of all entries is Friday 2nd April 2021. Please submit your entries to: cmole@reading-school.co.uk. We look forward to seeing what creative ideas you may have.

Wishing you a safe weekend.

Mr AM Robson
Headmaster

Excellence

All Years – Lent Term 2021

Road Safety

Please can we ask for your support to highlight the importance of road safety with you son. We have had a near miss for a student this week, which in addition to potential serious lasting consequences for the student could also result in a multiply vehicle traffic accident. As we come out of a period of lockdown it is paramount that students are reminded of the importance of road safety, especially to and from school, when travel is at its peak.

Therefore, please can I remind students and ask parents/carers to reiterate the following:

- Students should be reminded of their responsibilities as pedestrians, cyclists and passengers.
- Students must carefully consider where and when they cross the road, using the designated crossing points.
- Understand what is acceptable behaviour on public transport - be courteous.
- Plan journeys effectively - so you are not rushing.
- Do not be distracted by gadgets as you walk or cycle.
- Understand the risk and the effect of risky behaviour on safety.
- Develop strategies to cope with potentially dangerous situations caused by the behaviour of a driver they travel with, or people they walk or cycle with.
- Cyclists should always ensure they are wearing protective gear and helmet.

Please see for additional resources please click here: <https://www.think.gov.uk/education-resources/>

The uncomfortable truth about road safety around schools is that road traffic injuries are the biggest cause of death among young people worldwide, and six children are killed or seriously injured on roads every day in the UK according to [Brake](#).

I thank you for your support on this.

Inspire Lectures

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

Week commencing Monday 29th March 2021

Mon 29th March 2-3pm

Stephen Isherwood, CEO, Institute of Student Employers

What are my career options? What skills do employers want? How do I choose what to study? Stephen will explain the career and study choices open to students and how to develop the skills that employers recruit for. To register for this event, please email communications@reading-school.co.uk if you would like to attend so we can inform Speakers for Schools beforehand and we can send you the link to join.

Mon 29th March 5-6pm

Sarah Henderson, Managing Director, Murray Chalmers PR

[LINK TO JOIN](#)

Are you interested in working in the music industry? Do you want to know more what is like to work in Celebrity PR? MCPR is home to some of the world's most-loved artists and bands including Coldplay, The Stone Roses, Liam Payne, Kylie and many more. MCPR also looks after world-renowned entertainment businesses and events including Abbey Road Studios and Lovebox Festival. Sarah will be sharing insights into her career and is looking forward to answering your questions.

Tues 30th March 5-6pm

Dr Sarah Mackenzie Ross, Award Winning Clinical Psychologist & Honorary Associate Professor at University College London

[LINK TO JOIN](#)

Thinking about studying Psychology? Join leading Clinical Psychologist, Dr Sarah Mackenzie Ross on how she pursued a career in the field and is now running her own private practice. Sarah has worked for multiple organisations including the NHS, the Ministry of Defence and as a Researcher. Students who are thinking about studying Psychology further should not miss out on the opportunity to have your questions answered by Sarah!

Advance registration

Tues 20th April 11am-12pm

In collaboration with Penguin: How to dare to change your life, with Lawrence Okolie and Harry Pinero

[LINK TO JOIN](#)

WBO world cruiserweight champion and author of Dare to Change Your Life, Lawrence Okolie, joins entertainer, host and content creator, Harry Pinero, to discuss Lawrence's incredible journey from obesity to professional boxer, and his lessons for how young people can make their dreams a reality too. To register for this event, please email communications@reading-school.co.uk if you would like to attend so we can inform Speakers for Schools beforehand and we can send you the link to join.

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 and more

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

STEM

Get Involved

[Earth Optimism Cambridge \(cambridgeconservation.org\)](http://cambridgeconservation.org)

Earth Optimism is a worldwide movement aimed at fundamentally shifting how we frame the environmental narrative, from one of doom and gloom to one focused on solutions and success. Earth Optimism has emerged from two key realisations: that fear without hope leads to apathy rather than action, and that conservation successes are numerous but largely invisible to the general public. The last few years have seen an unprecedented groundswell of concern for the future of our planet. Earth Optimism 2021 will respond to the call for positive change, and help translate activism to action.

Led by the [Cambridge Conservation Initiative](#), this online celebration will bring people together to share our understanding of what works in conservation and how we can make the changes we know are needed on the ground, in the workplace, and in our everyday lives. Across generations and across the world people are calling for action, and asking for that action to be evidence-based. Earth Optimism 2021 will showcase some of the extraordinary efforts already being made, explore why they are working, and consider how they can be scaled up.

Opportunity for Year 9 and Year 10

[Virtual Routes into STEM](#) is an innovative course that provides **Year 9 and Year 10** students with a clear understanding of the amazing opportunities offered by STEM based careers. The course allows students to recognise the variety of opportunities available to them after taking their GCSEs, it will provide access to key information on **different pathways: College and University and Apprenticeship** routes through industry. The course is suitable for **all academic abilities** – all that is required is a **genuine interest in STEM subjects**. Click on the link for further information.

Online Competition Opportunities

There are a variety of projects available to get involved with online. Talk to Miss Ayres if you have an idea and would like to take part, as an individual or a group.

- Starting your project (thebigbangfair.co.uk)
- Sustainability Challenge - Trust for Sustainable Living
- bp educational service | Ultimate STEM Challenge
- The Bright Ideas Challenge | Shell United Kingdom

Free Termly Physics Masterclasses to support students in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13

Isaac Physics is offering **FREE** termly Physics Masterclasses to support students in Y10, 11, 12 and 13.

Students can **BOOK NOW** for the Summer Masterclasses.

Sat 24 April: [Y11 Masterclass](#) (Y10 also welcome)

Sat 8 May: [Y13 Masterclass Webinar](#)

Sat 15 May: [Y12 Masterclass Webinar](#)

Sat 22 May: [Y10 Masterclass](#) (Y11 also welcome)

Students in Y12 and Y13 will have video support and be able to ask questions which will be answered in a live tutorial.

Students in Y10 and Y11 will have additional support from experienced teachers in small breakout groups.

Year 12 students will also receive University admissions guidance as part of Cambridge University Subject Masterclasses, the University's virtual taster days.

Please see our attached [flyer](#) for the dates and times of all Masterclasses.

All GCSE students booking on a masterclass will be offered a **FREE** GCSE workbook, sent to their home address. Book a week before the masterclass to receive your workbook in time for the masterclass!

Year 11 GCSE Music and GCSE Drama Only

Please note that your child will have received an email if they take the above subjects, regarding a change in venue for Drama and change of date for Music.

Please contact layres@reading-school.co.uk if you have any questions.

Integrity

Safeguarding and Wellbeing

World Autism Week

Next week is World Autism Awareness Week. As with all differences, we encourage our students to be ambassadors for change and acceptance and to help make the world a better place for all, regardless of race, gender, sexuality or indeed how our brains work.

[World Autism Awareness Week](#)

Please see the reading list for any support for Autism: [Spectropolis Book List](#)

Domestic Abuse Resources

We have recently published support helplines for those experiencing domestic violence. Key messages for children include:

- [domestic abuse] happens to other people too
- adults don't always do the right thing
- the most important thing is that everyone is/stays safe
- other people can help and it is okay to speak to people that the child trusts
- it is not the child's fault
- it can make everyone feel sad but it does get better

These are further resources to provide support:

- Encouraging children to talk about their feelings [toolkit | \(letstalkproject.co.uk\)](#)
- Domestic Abuse, Recovering Together [Domestic Abuse, Recovering Together \(DART\) | NSPCC Learning](#)
- Domestic Abuse Stops Here (slough) [Home \(thedashcharity.org.uk\)](#)
- SAFE! (Thames Valley) [SAFE! – Supporting young people in the Thames Valley who have been harmed by crime \(safeproject.org.uk\)](#)
- Refuge [www.refuge.org.uk](#)
- A book to empower children that have witness domestic violence [The Day My Daddy Lost His Temper](#)
- Helping children to understand domestic violence [Home | The Hide Out](#)
- Bright Sky App [Bright Sky - Apps on Google Play](#)
- Young Minds for Children [Supporting Your Child - Domestic Violence \(youngminds.org.uk\)](#)

Wellbeing Wednesdays

Make sure you follow us on Twitter to get weekly updates and inspiration for a healthy dose of wellbeing, for students as well as parents.

E-Safety

Preventing Hacking – support and guidance from Action Fraud

Secure your email and social media accounts in just a few minutes. Here's what you need to do:

1: Use a strong and separate password for your email, as well as other important accounts, such as your banking or social media accounts.

2: Enable two-factor authentication (2FA). It will help to stop hackers from getting into your online accounts, even if they have your password.

3: If you can't access your account, search the company's online support or help pages. You'll find information about how to recover your account.

For detailed instructions on how to reset your password or enable 2FA on your accounts, visit:

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/secureyouraccounts>

Additional Guidance and Useful links

- [Childline | Childline](#) Offers 1:1 support and a guide to staying safe online for adults and children.
- www.refuge.org.uk Help for women & children – for support against domestic violence
- <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/> Referring concerns over online communication including sexual abuse
- [Find help - for parents \(youngminds.org.uk\)](http://youngminds.org.uk) Guidance on how to support a young person's mental health

If you are concerned about a young person, talk to their tutor, Head of House, Mr D McGall (Assistant Head) or Mrs L Ayres (Assistant Head)

Students also have access to a safeguarding flowchart on the student channel on Microsoft Teams, to talk them through options for disclosures about themselves or a friend or classmate, and what the outcomes and support possibilities might be.

Leadership

Debating Society

Please note all future debates arranged by the Debating Society will be held **Friday at 2.30pm via Microsoft Teams**, unless indicated otherwise. Over the forthcoming weeks, the motions include:

- Friday 26th March: (Historical Motion) THB that Britain has not been held accountable for its actions during the British Empire- [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.

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. Parental consent is also required.

Virtual Work Experience opportunities available via **Speakers for School** for students aged 14-19 years old include:

- [Insight Day for Careers in Music – British Army](#) Year 15 – 19-year olds interested in a vocation with music performance at its heart. Dates: 14th April 2021(10am -12am) Application Deadline: 14th March 2021
- [Keeping Nottingham Green through sustainable travel](#) Year 15 - 19-year olds considering a career in government. Dates: 14th April 2021. Application Deadline: 7th April 2021
- [National Grid - Thinking about a career in energy?](#) 16 – 19 year interested in employability opportunities at the National Grid. Dates: 27 - 29 April 2021 (4pm – 5pm). Deadline: 8 April 2021
- [Green Skills in Consulting & Construction with Jacobs](#) 15 – 19-year-old with an aptitude for STEM subjects. Dates: 28 April 2021. Application Deadline: 8 April 2021
- [Eco Schools Action – Keep Britain Tidy](#) 15 – 19-year olds interested in promoting eco-action in their school and local community. Dates: 1 – 2 June 2021 (9am – 12pm). Deadline: 30 April 2021
- [British Army Insight Session \(Female Students\)](#) 15 – 19-year-old female students interested in a career that makes a difference. Dates: 3 June 2021 (10am – 12pm). Deadline: 3 May 2021
- [Y11 VWEX within Cisco`s Tech/Business Departments](#) Year 11 students curious about a career in technology. 5 - 9 July 2021 (9:30am – 4:30pm). Deadline: 9 May 2021
- [Green Skills National Competition with Anglian Water](#) 14 – 19-year olds keen to fight climate change. Dates: 26 May 2021 (09am till 15:00). Application Deadline: 12 May 2021
- [Royal Air Force Careers Insight - Access All Areas](#) 15 – 19-year olds interested in finding out more about opportunities in the Royal Air Force. Dates: 19 May 2021 (10am – 3pm) Application Deadline: 19 April 2021
- [Royal Air Force Careers Insight - Access All Areas](#) 15 – 19-year olds interested in finding out more about opportunities in the Royal Air Force. Dates: 20 May 2021 (10am – 3pm) Application Deadline: 20 April 2021
- [NextGen Nurse - Meet the people behind the masks](#) 14 – 19 year interested in helping to save and improve people`s lives. Date: 14 May 2021(10am – 2pm) Application Deadline: 22 April 2021

Community

Appointment of Parent Trustees to the Reading Foundation

The Reading Foundation is a charity that supports Reading School and owns the School site and buildings. The Foundation Trustees are stewards of funds intended to support each generation of Reading School pupils. Working closely with the Headmaster, they provide support through making significant financial grants to programmes for which public monies are not available and funding a substantial annual awards scheme. In addition, the Foundation provides funds to help the School improve its facilities and maintain the Grade II listed school buildings. The Trustees are responsible for the investment strategy of the charity and employ a wealth manager to help them decide upon and monitor that strategy and to manage the charity's investments. Working closely with the School governors, the Foundation funds the school development office with the objective of enhancing the school community and establishing a tradition of giving to the School and the Foundation amongst this community. Further information can be found in the [Foundation's annual report](#).

The Trustees of the charity are alumni, current parents, parents of alumni, current and retired staff – all have a love for the school, have a great respect for the wishes of those who have left bequests to the school and wish to see current and future generations benefit from their kind gifts.

There are openings for parent trustees to join the Foundation and we are looking to appoint trustees from our current parent community.

We follow Charity Commission recommended best practice and recruit trustees based on skills, knowledge, and experience relevant to our charity.

Accordingly, we would particularly welcome applications from parents with any the following skills

- Legal knowledge (particularly in relation to land and building)
- Budgeting and accountancy/finance
- Investment knowledge and experience

Most importantly we value the input of positive committed members who can think clearly, investigate, and contribute to decision making processes.

The commitment required for meetings is of the order of three to six times a year, plus a willingness to take on and progress actions outside the meeting process. If you would be interested in applying to become a trustee of the Reading Foundation, please complete the following form.

[The Reading Foundation - Parent Trustee Application](#)

Deadline for the completion of the above form is **1st May 2021** with the selection process taking place until mid-June. The first meeting for new trustees will take place in July.

Reading School Parents' Association

Reading School Staff Appreciation Update:

A huge thanks to all the parents who generously donated to the staff appreciation collection held by the RSPA before Christmas. Last term, each week we dropped off treats, many hand baked by parents to all the staff to show our appreciation and support in such challenging times.

However, the parents of Reading School were so generous that we had money left over and on asking the school what the staff would most appreciate the answer was good Coffee.

We are delighted to say that the RSPA did a makeover on the staff room this weekend, leaving several new coffee machines and a large stock of coffee, as well as a supply of tea and biscuits to show our ongoing appreciation. Photographs can be seen on the Reading School Parents Association FB Page. (<https://www.facebook.com/rspareading>)

These have been so well received and if we can just share one of the mails received ...

"I have just walked into the kitchen and wanted to say such a huge thank you for all the coffee / machines, biscuits etc. It is so lovely of you all and I am sure it will be hugely appreciated!!! All the RSPA's efforts, time and thoughts are so kind and so highly valued. You have made such a difference during such challenging times."

Thank you to everyone who donated time, money, baked cakes and organised this, Mr Robson has commented that this has been such a fantastic boost to the whole staff morale and personally thanks us all.

Urgent: Uniform donations needed:

Please can you help the RSPA 2nd Hand Uniform Shop restock. We are in need of any school uniform that your sons have outgrown during lockdown. After an all-time high demand last year, our stocks are low and any support is greatly appreciated because, in donating, you are not only supporting other parents, but also supporting the school and our boys.

We are looking for any good quality items:

- daily school uniform (including ties)
- games & PE sports kits (both old and new styles)
- trainers
- football/rugby boots
- cricket gear
- outdoor wear (base layers, school hoodies, coats)
- lab coats & goggles.

Students can, at any time, drop off any bags of uniform donations to the Students' Services office in the Cloisters.

Note - this call is for Uniforms only. No Bags2School donations at this time. Thank you.

Once Government guidelines allow retail shops to open, we are planning to hold a shop opening. Provisionally, this will be the last week of the Easter Holiday in line with the current restrictions easing.

The RSPA Uniform Shop
shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk.