



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

5 July 2024

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Introduction

Dear parents and students, carers and colleagues,

As we welcome a new government across the country, I am conscious that we can all expect a time of change ahead. I myself am not expecting immediate or profound change for Reading School or for local secondary education.

The educational priorities of His Majesty's new government are focused on early years education, supporting young people beyond the classroom, increasing numbers of trainee teachers and adjusting to Ofsted processes. With limited increases in public spending, I don't imagine all the systemic issues around school funding will be rapidly addressed. Instead, we wish the new cabinet every success as they look towards long-term improvements in the UK's education system. We also pray our new MPs conduct themselves with the same integrity of our internal candidates in the mock election (led by Milan G 12MJK), and we redouble our commitment to getting on with our job here!

While acknowledging the change in personnel within parliament, it also feels appropriate today to acknowledge some changes here. Last night, we welcomed the families of our new students from Year 6 to a picnic with their peers. My thanks go to Mrs Dimmick for organising this, and also to our Heads of House for their work integrating new students. On Monday and Tuesday this week we also welcomed our new Year 12 students for two days of induction, and my thanks go to Mr Whitehorn for all his work on this.

We also said goodbye last week to our Year 13 parents at the Senior Prize Giving Ceremony. It was a pleasure to salute their contributions – particularly in the form of the Salisbury Cup which was awarded to Kirsta Rizzo and Kirsty MacInnes, as representatives of a cohort of incredibly supportive parents. I would like to thank Kirsta and Kirsty again, along with all of those parents who support the school in so many different ways.

On one further matter on the subject of change, I'd like to inform the community of some of our staff who are departing, and introduce some of those who are joining. At the end of term, we will be saying goodbye to the following colleagues:

Alex Head, Teacher of MFL
Alison Jackson, Library Assistant
Andy Robertson, Teacher of PE
Ben Miller, Head of Theology and Philosophy
Julie Postlethwaite, Teacher of English & Teacher and Learning Consultant
Kees Luteijn, Teacher of Geography
Naomi Mallett, Teacher of Mathematics
Owen Thomas, Teacher of Chemistry
Serena Eggers, Teacher of English

I thank each of them for their service and wish them the very best for their adventures ahead. Equally, we welcome the following new staff:

Emilie Maynard, Teacher of Computer Science
Emma Steedman, Teacher of Chemistry
Georgia Thain, Teacher of English
Mark Amos, Chaplain and Teacher of Theology and Philosophy
Matthew Hill, Teacher of Mathematics and Future Stories Maths Lead
Paula Brookings, Pastoral Manager

Vincent Cho, Cover Teacher

Finally, I extend thanks to Our Biology team, Physics teachers, Cricket coaches, Colleagues at the Abbey School, and Director of Music/Head Chess coach for all the success that their endeavours allow us to celebrate this week.

Gratefully yours,

Chris Evans
Headmaster



Key information

All Years

Parental Survey 2024

Last week we invited parents and carers to share their views with the school. In order to collate as many views as possible, in order to continue to improve outcomes for our students and school, please can parents and carers take a moment to complete the short Reading School Survey 2024 by [clicking this link](#).

Year 13 only

The Salvation Army will be providing support alongside other welfare related organisations at this year's Reading Festival, and they are looking for volunteers aged 18 and over. Their support will run at the Festival from Wednesday 21st August to Monday 26th August and additional support is possibly required on Tuesday 20th August.

If you are over 18 and would like to volunteer your time or find out more, please contact Nigel Smith at the Salvation Army by emailing nigel_2000@outlook.com

Safeguarding

[July's Online Safety Newsletter](#) for parents includes information and resources on:

- Roulette style video chat apps – what they are, the content and how to speak with your child about keeping themselves safe online.
- CapCut – a video editing app which the App Store has reviewed as including, 'infrequent/mild mature/suggestive themes, infrequent mild/sexual content and nudity'. Information includes what you should be aware of and further resources.
- Summer Screen Time – support for managing children's screen time during the summer break.

Current Vacancies

Do you know a talented individual who would like to join and be part of an exciting and leading educational institution? Below is a selection of teaching and associate staff roles currently available:

Teacher of PE and Head of Cricket – for more details [please click here](#).

Teacher of PE – for more details please [click here](#).

School Community News

Intermediate Biology Olympiad 2024

The Biology Department would like to congratulate Year 12 students who participated in the [2024 Biology Intermediate Olympiad](#).

Reading School students achieved 3 Gold, 13 Silver and 11 Bronze awards.

The Intermediate Olympiad is an online competition run by the [Royal Society of Biology](#). It consists of an online 60-minute paper with questions on the topics covered in most general AS level biology courses but also rewards those students, whose knowledge of the subject has been increased by reading books and magazines, watching natural history programmes and taking notice of the news media for items of biological interest.

Over 14,000 students from 709 schools worldwide participated this year. The following Reading School students achieved awards (a Gold award places them in the top 5%, a silver top 15% and bronze top 30% of students who participated this year):

Kanishk K (12SA)	Gold	Yui C J H (12LDO)	Silver
Chandan M (12MJK)	Gold	Edward D (12MRC)	Silver
Or M (12JP)	Gold		
		Jude A (12RC)	Bronze
Rohit L (12MJK)	Silver	Yusef Z (12KY)	Bronze
Arhan C (12MK)	Silver	Keshanth R (12RC)	Bronze
Aujaswi M (12ELA)	Silver	Paarth G (12JP)	Bronze
Wai Y L (12MK)	Silver	Thomas D (12SA)	Bronze
Alex C (12KY)	Silver	John O (12MK)	Bronze
Ibrahim S (12JP)	Silver	Mert O (12DAW)	Bronze
Maninder S (12MK)	Silver	Ethan E (12RW)	Bronze
Raymond W (12JP)	Silver	Pranav G (12FEH)	Bronze
Aden C (12JTE)	Silver	Rohan O'C (12RW)	Bronze
Oliver Q (12BSA)	Silver	Istvan S (12FEH)	Bronze
Harry P (12FEH)	Silver		

Biology challenge award winners 2024

Congratulations to Year 9 and 10 Biologists who achieved an impressive 43 Gold, 70 Silver and 66 Bronze awards in the [2024 Biology Challenge](#) run by the Royal Society of Biology. 45,400 students from 621 schools worldwide participated this year. To achieve a Gold award, a score of 83.67% was required and this was awarded to the top 5% of participants. The competition consisted of two, twenty-five-minute multiple choice papers to be taken online under staff-supervised exam conditions. Questions were set on the school curriculum, but the competition also rewards those students whose knowledge of the subject has been increased by reading books and magazines, watching natural history programmes, taking notice of the news media for items of biological interest, and being generally aware of our natural flora and fauna.

We would like to congratulate all Year 9 and 10 students who took part and are listed as follows:

Year 9 Gold Award Winners

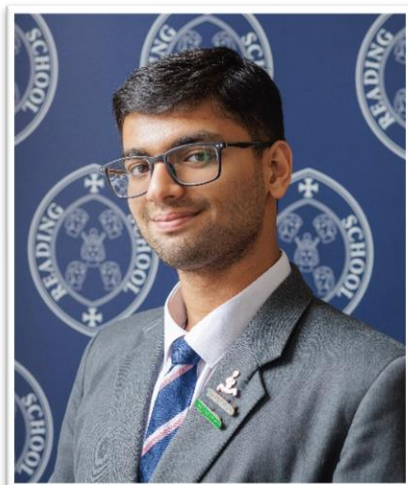
Rowan A (9C)
Samuel H (9W)
Edward Y (9W)
Ojas M (9E)
Sanchit P (9S)
YingGe H (9C)
Harry B (9E)
Andrey D (9W)

Michael B (10W)
Theodore Y (10E)
Daniel P (10L)
Sumiktsal S (10W)
Ashish G (10S)
Vashisht P (10W)
Akilan N (10C)
Kenjer A (10C)
Brahmjot A (10L)
Maurits B (10E)
Uthvah S (10S)
Martin W (10S)
James T (10L)
Arush M (10L)

Year 10 Gold Award Winners

Nageshwar V (10C)
Abdul S A (10E)

Excellence in Engineering



Raphael N (11E) found out last week that he had successfully passed a rigorous selection process set by [Arkwright Engineering Scholarships](#), which meant him becoming an Arkwright Scholar. We spoke with Raphael earlier this week:

Q: Congratulations on being awarded an Arkwright Engineering Scholarship – please tell us more about it.

The scholarship is a full or partial award that was created by a group of Headteachers who wanted to help high-ability young engineers, and you go through a rigorous selection process which includes an application, and then if you're successful, you do the aptitude exam, which I did in January. And then, after that, if you're successful, you get an interview which is the final stage of the application process.

How did you find out about it? And what was the interview process like?

I found out about it though having done a few engineering workshops with an organisation called The Smallpiece Trust which is partnered with Arkwright Engineering Scholarships. To apply, your school has to be signed up, and you have to have an engineering project that you've previously done which you need to send evidence of in the application which explains what your project is and the different key points of engineering that you've applied to and learned from. Then, you also need to give an overview of your activities in engineering and outside of engineering that could help you with the application. And lastly, you also need to say what you want to study and we're like what your broad aims are for the future. It's quite a reflective process as it gets you to consider what you actually want to do beyond A levels. It also made me consider the different fields of engineering and I decided on aeronautical engineering because I find this field extremely interesting.

What's next? What does the next period look like?

I will have to develop further projects. For example, I did another project for the interview, which was a water rocket project, and so the first stage will be expanding on this project. I'll also look into

applying for universities and how to gain industrial experience, because the scholarships are either partially funded or you get sponsored by an engineering organisation, which can either be a military organisation or an engineering company. So, its continuing with my projects and working on them outside of school.

What do you do for downtime?

Well, I do like to watch videos on different things to do with engineering just because it's really interesting. I also play a lot of music and instruments because I find that quite relaxing. And I like to explore because this whole thing is sort of a break from schoolwork. It's sort of related, but it's very different, and I'm really interested in it. It's quite fun for me.

Is there anyone you would like to thank?

I'd like to extend my sincerest thanks to Mrs McAllister, Mrs Rogers, Mr McAllister, Mr Elmore, Mr Lloyd, Mr McGall and Dr Evans who have all helped me in different ways.

Excellence in Chess

Reading School defended their title for the Faringdon Cup on Thursday 4th July in the Reading District School Chess Championship. The team of 10 students across Years 7 - 12 fought off some tough competition over the 2-hour contest to emerge as overall winners by points tally. The results are as follows:

Position	School
1 st	Reading School
2 nd	Kendrick School
3 rd	St Joseph's College
4 th	Blessed Hugh Faringdon
5 th	Denefield School

We would like to thank Director of Music, Mr Griffin for supporting the Reading School Chess Team and a special thanks to Ms Death of Blessed Hugh Faringdon Catholic School for organising and hosting this year's competition.

Mock Elections

This week saw our students taking part in democracy by getting a chance to cast their vote in a school-wide Mock Election where all the UK's main political parties were represented by teams of Sixth Formers. Over a series of debates, each party presented genuine policies along with being asked questions by audience members across a range of Years.

Organiser, Milan G (12MJK) shared:

*"The aim of the mock election was to simulate democratic proceedings and inform students on the importance of being civically engaged in current affairs. All strings were pulled to gain votes: Instagram posts, publicity campaigns, posters, and even rallies. These all culminated with two debates that covered the important topics featuring in the real election: defence, immigration, the economy, cost of living, public services and climate. Over 560 students and staff voted concluding as follows: the winner of the 2024 Reading School Election were the **Liberal Democrats with 128 votes**, followed by Labour (118), Reform UK (112), Conservatives (102), Green (42) and the Worker's Party of Great Britain (22). Abstaining was also an option."*

All in all the event was an overwhelming success where students learnt the significance of having the right to free speech and representation in a democratic society. Our results somewhat corroborated with the respective successes in the real election, namely victories by the Liberal Democrat's and the surge in support for Reform UK. This clearly shows the youth see other parties as valid competitors to Labour and the Tories."



RSPA

Sports Personality of the Year

RSPA will be supporting SPOTY to raise money for a sports camera for our students.

Event date: Wednesday 10th July, 4pm - 6pm.

Food and Drinks: We will be providing soft drinks, alcoholic drinks and hot snacks at the event.

There will be opportunity for cake bakers and volunteers are invited to bake cupcakes and cakes and donate to the RSPA. *Please ensure that the cakes are nut free* with a list of ingredients provided to display. Please [click this link to apply](#).

Payment: We will be accepting payment by card at the event however please bring cash as well.

Preloved Uniform Shop

The opening dates of the Pre-Loved Uniform Shop for this term are:

- Friday 5th July - 3.30pm to 5.00pm
- ~~Saturday 6th July - 10.30am to 12.30pm~~ *Cancelled due to a wedding taking place at Reading School.*
- Saturday 27th July 10.30am to 12.30pm
- Saturday 31st August 10.30am to 12.30pm

No parking is available on site on Friday openings.

Location: The Pre-Loved Uniform Shop can be found at the back of the Walled Carpark (opposite the school Chapel).

The new Year 7 Uniform Sale

We are thankful to everyone who attended, or volunteered at the new Year 7 uniform sale on Wednesday 3rd July. The sale was an amazing success with lots of happy parents and we raised over £1500 for RSPA funds.

Year 13 Leavers BBQ



Last week was an amazing one with lots of mixed emotions. While we warmly welcomed our new Year 7s, we were also sad to see our Year 13 students leaving us as during the Leaver's BBQ evening last Friday 28th June. We will miss all our students and wish them good luck for their bright futures.

We are very thankful to our RSPA Volunteers: Nishita Moody, Veena Bagley, Julie Bellingham, Jayne Sturge, Pallavi Chube, Menaka Murthy and Kerry O'Brien-Kingston who all supported the event and spent their time volunteering and manning the RSPA stall.

We would like to wish you all a great weekend.

The RSPA Team

Summer Term – Week 11

To keep up to date with student life at Reading School, click the icons below to follow, be part of and stay connected with the Reading School community.



Senior Prize Giving Ceremony and BBQ 2024 – Friday 28th June

An annual event that celebrates the diverse achievements of our senior students and recent alumni. The event is kindly sponsored by The Reading Foundation, Old Redingensians Association and the Reading School Parents Association.

Credit: Guest student photographers Yicheng L (10S) and Prabhav B (12BSA)













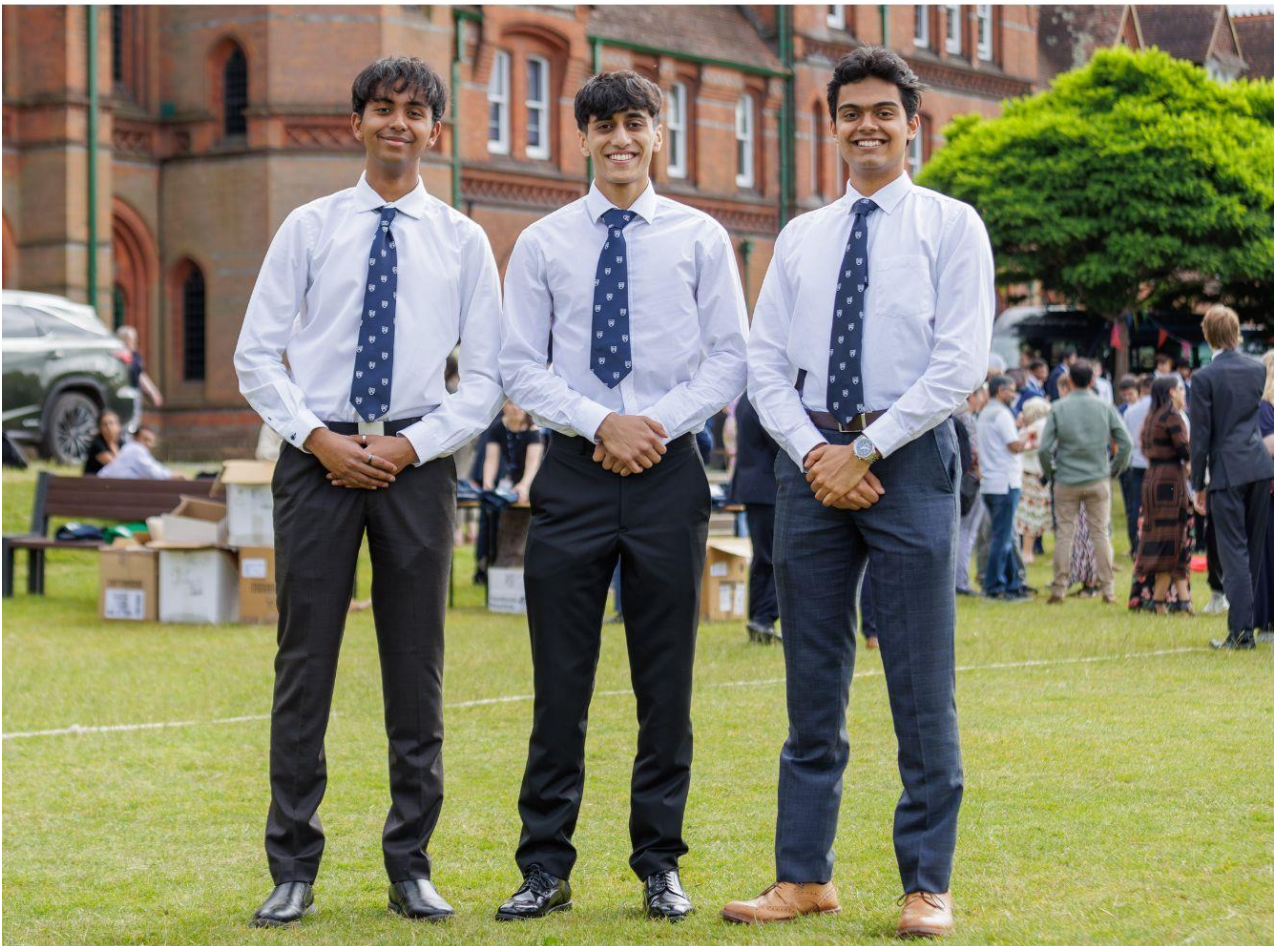








Reading School House Captains 2022, 2023 and 2024





School Captain acts as Headmaster for the day

Paarth G (12JP) hosts the morning's Senior Leadership Team



Reading School & The Abbey School joint school events (front cover image)

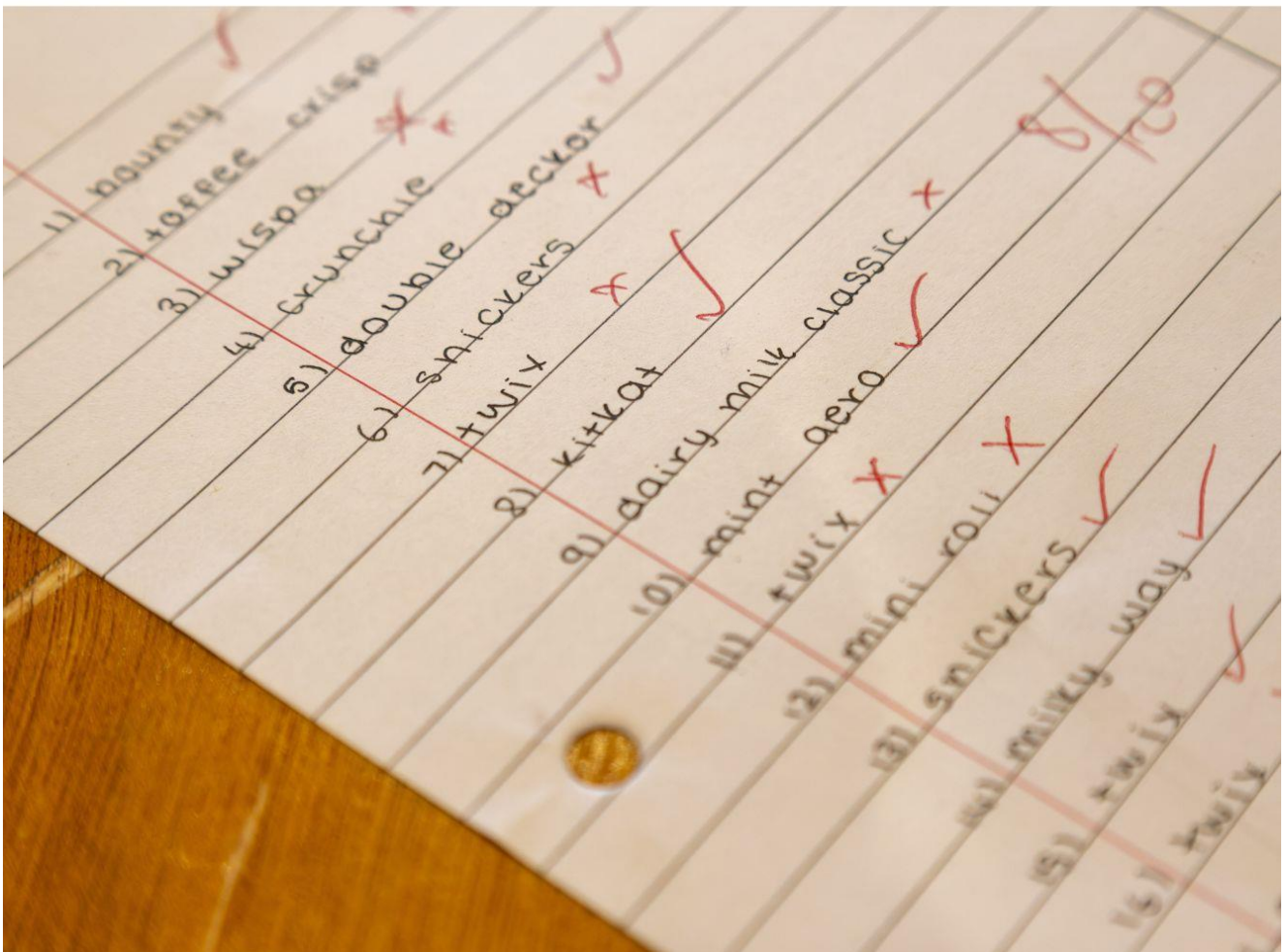
The last two weeks have seen Year 9 and 10 joint events taking place as part of our commitment to extend opportunities for students in order to interact, collaborate and learn together.



The advantages of joint events between single sex schools include opportunities to enhance social skills, a promotion of balanced development, building confidence, reducing stereotypes and preparing for the real world.









International Biology Olympiad training

This week we welcomed Robert Starley (OR 2005-2012) and his colleagues who spent the day with a team representing the UK in the [International Biology Olympiad](#) taking place from Saturday 6th July in Kazakhstan. The competition involves more than 800 students, leaders and guests from 80+ countries and the UK Team includes our very own Nikolaos Argyropoulos (13MK).



Dr Andrew Treharne MBE, Robert Starley and Kim Ngan Luu Hoang

Nikolaos Argyropoulos (13MK)



Earthworm Dissection: Internal Anatomy

1. Lay the worm on your dissecting tray with its dorsal side facing up. Use dissection pins to secure each end on the tray. Start your dissection about an inch posterior to the clitellum. Lift up the skin with a pair of forceps and snip an opening with a pair of dissecting scissors. Insert the scissors into the opening and cut in a straight line all the way up through the mouth. Go slowly and be sure to cut just the skin—if you go too deep you may damage the internal organs.



2. Using the forceps and dissection pins, carefully pull apart the two flaps of skin and pin them flat on the tray. (You may need to drag a pin along the inside of the skin to sever the septum walls to make it easier to read the skin.)

Look at the labeled picture to help you find the following features:
pharynx: This is the light-colored organ...



Biology challenge award winners 2024

Year 9 (top) Year 10 (bottom)

"The Biology Challenge was a great experience, combining knowledge of key concepts with the application to scenarios. The time pressure of a mark a minute was also quite challenging, with recalling knowledge quickly and correctly applying it to the situation. But the difficulty of it is what made it a great learning experience as a Biologist but also a fun challenge to compete in!" Ojas M (9E)



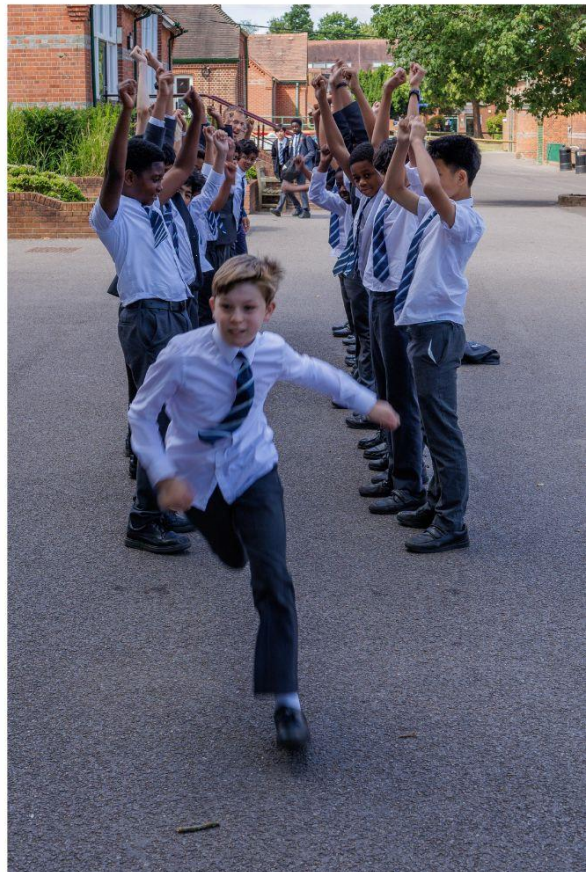
Reading School Chess Team – The Faringdon Cup Winners 2024

Krishna M (7W), Ethan L (8C), Arjun S (10W), Kaval S (12FEH), Gaurav K (12MD), Akshith A (11E), Arnab B (7L), Youssef D (12LDO), Harry B (9E) and Dylan W (9E)



A Floreat Snapshot

As Year 7s near the end of their Floreat programme, they take part in The Gate Game, an exercise which consolidates and brings alive the theory they have learned in relation to trust amongst each other.



National Cricket Cup County Finals

Congratulations to Jishnu B (8E), Abdullah A (8W), Arin K (8C) and Adithya Balasubramanyam who all play for Wokingham Cricket Club and who reached the quarter finals of the National Cricket Cup last Friday 28 July.



Feedback is important to us and if you have any positive news, comments or suggestions, please contact the Community Relations Office by emailing communityrelations@reading-school.co.uk.