



# Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

28 MAY 2021

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## Introduction

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

### LFD Testing for Covid 19

As we enter half term we would like to update you on the DfE guidelines regarding LFD testing for COVID19:

- Students should continue to test twice weekly throughout half term as long as they are a-symptomatic
- If any symptoms are identified then a PCR test must be booked through NHS as soon as possible
- Students should have enough test kits to see them through to next half term, if this is not the case they should email David Tridgell directly
- More test kits will be distributed after half term as and when we receive more from the government
- Any positive test results should be reported to school, to Caroline Mole, [headspa@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:headspa@reading-school.co.uk) (as well as reported to the NHS)

### Continuation of requirement to wear facemasks in Class and Communal areas

I am mindful of the issue of the different variants of Covid-19 and the rising incidence amongst young people nationally. Therefore, I consider that it is important to have kept under review the issue of the wearing of face masks in classrooms and communal areas. Therefore, I have made the decision that it would be prudent to continue with our current practice until at least Monday 21<sup>st</sup> June. The safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community remains our key priority.

### Use of Mobile Phones and headphones from Monday 7 June

We want our students to communicate effectively and positively with each other. Therefore, following discussions with stakeholders we are communicating today in order to clarify our approach to the use of mobile phones.

Attention is drawn to the section below regarding mobile phone and headphone use. It includes context, aims going forward, system of sanctions for non-compliance and Frequently Asked Questions and responses to previous student petition.

### Safe and Enjoyable half term break

I hope that all members of the Reading School family can enjoy the Half Term break and return refreshed. I have every confidence that we can explore opportunities to thrive and flourish. I hope parents and students will pay attention to the draft internal examinations schedule for the week of June 21<sup>st</sup> but that all students will nevertheless take a well earned rest next week.

Thank you to all members of the School community for their commitment this term,

**Mr AM Robson**  
**Headmaster**

# Excellence

## All Years – Summer Term 2021

### Mobile Phone Usage from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June

**Mobile phones or headphones may not be used by Years 7-11 on the school site during the school day.**

- Students may only use their phones and/or headphones during the school day with specific approval of a member of staff. This includes trips and fixtures.
- Phones should be turned off during the school day.
- Staff may permit students to use their phones as a learning tool in their lessons when appropriate.
- Exception for Sixth Form, who may use their phones and headphones (not cameras) during the school day, except during lessons or form time without permission. No students should be walking around the site with headphones.

Context:

- Staff, parental and governmental concerns about the amount of time student are on phones.
- Current governmental guidance is in favour of restricting the use of mobile phones in schools.
- Phone usage in school has increased since the return from lockdown, particularly as students travel around the site as well as during break and lunch times.
- We have seen an increase in incidents of negative peer interaction triggered by use of mobile phones during the school day.
- Currently, students are allowed phones in school but they should not be out in lessons unless requested by the member of staff.
- Partial measures such as Phone-free Friday and a screen free week have been put in place but are/were not followed with consistency.
- Staff have not been comfortable with the confiscation of phones so the issue of behaviour points and detention will be used in the future.

Aims going forward:

- Consistent application of the mobile phone policy.
- Increased face-to-face interaction between students during the school day.
- Reduced screen time.
- Improved safety around the site.
- Remove distractions during lessons.
- Reduce negative online interaction.

Sanctions System:

- Students using their phones for any reason and without permission will be given a BROMCOM point.
- An automated message will be sent to tutors from BROMCOM after a second mobile phone behaviour point.
- After a third mobile phone behaviour point, BROMCOM will automatically assign a Friday detention.
- Repeat offenders may have to hand in their phone at the start of the school day.

**Frequently Asked Questions conversations with students and parents:**

**“I need my phone to get home safely.”**

Mobile phones must be turned off and not seen or heard during the school day. This means students can still use them for keeping safe on journeys to/from school and school do not have to take responsibility for valuable items.

**“We need our phones for our studies.”**

If a teacher explicitly asks you to use your phones for research/online quiz etc, then of course you are permitted to get it out and turn it on.

**“I need to contact my parents urgently.”**

Students can go to Student Services to have a message sent home or call home. Parents can call school and a message will be passed to student. Tutors can also give permission to allow emergency contact home during tutor time at their discretion.

**“I need to contact my son urgently.”**

Parents needing to contact their son during the school day can phone the school and messages will be pass on to them. If required they can talk to them either through the Student Services landline or via the student’s mobile.

**“This hasn’t been discussed with Student Council and isn’t in the School’s Behaviour Policy/Code of Conduct.”**

This was raised at Student Council last year and discussed student council again this half term. It is included in the school behaviour policy and code of conduct.

**How will I find remember my timetable or find a room should it be changed due to exams.**

You should have a record of your own timetable in your planner or diary. Should there be a room change there will be notices placed on the door and Student Services can support with any queries. From September we have ordered planners for all KS3 & 4 students.

**“There is nothing to do at break or lunchtime.”**

The staggered structure to lunch and break has given more space for socialising and play than previously available, both inside and in the refectory. New recreational equipment has been put in place and is available to use at breaktimes which can be collected from Mr McGall’s office beside Student services. As Covid restrictions ease, more clubs and societies will be offered. For the summer term we have opened up access to the field and there will be new clubs/activities on offer in September. We welcome students’ suggestions for break and lunchtime activities.

**“Teachers use their phones during the school day.”**

We will be advising teachers to restrict their use of their mobile phones around the school site to essential use only, but students should be aware that teachers may use their mobile phones to take the register, set work on Teams and access emails to share information with their classes.

**“It should be voluntary, not obligatory - you’re taking away our liberties.”**

We are obliged to create the optimum environment to ensure your rights to safety, education and social development are met. It is not your right to have unlimited access to a mobile phone. As students move through the school, you will earn Sixth Form privileges where more freedoms are granted to you, commensurate with your increased maturity.

**Parents say students have too much screen time:**

In a recent survey, 58.5% of Reading School parents said that they didn't think the amount of time students spent in front of a screen for non-school related activities was healthy (1 in 10 of your parents had a very strong opinion on this.)

**Number of mobile phone related issues/bullying at Reading School:**

Comments using the medium of mobile phones have been the consistent trigger in negative social interactions when cyber bullying. Having time away from checking in for both instigators/perpetrators and those targeted is required as part of a strategy to reduce the frequency of issues.

**Reading School are not the only school to be doing so:**

A ‘Teacher Tapp’ survey said that 42% of schools in the UK have a policy of not allowing mobile phones on site, and many more have the same policy as this moderated proposal. France and China have made it illegal for mobile phones to be used on the school site. The UK’s Education Secretary and Children’s Commissioner have advocated for restrictions on mobile phone use in school:

[Education Secretary Support](#) and [Children's Commissioner Support](#)

### Response to previous student petition:

- “Students at Reading School who use their phone at lunchtime are watching movies, watching funny videos with friends or playing multi-player games with them. If anything, these are positive, and they will only result in positive peer interactions as friends bond together. Very few people sit alone on their phone at lunchtime, thus the target audience for these measures are very small.” [It is impossible to police a policy whereby certain apps and uses of phones is permissible whilst others are not. In addition, a number of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour towards both staff and students have occurred in the past 6 months and it is our duty of care to remove the opportunity for this wherever possible. There is plenty of opportunity to share videos and play multi-player games together outside of school hours and these are not essential to the school experience.](#)
- “By forcing each and every student to comply with this regime will kill the point of it. We see this as a violation of our liberty to take out our phone to show something funny to a group of friends or to quickly google a fact which would save us right before the exam!” [We believe students should be developing and honing their verbal skills to explain and discuss experiences others may not have seen or been part of. Effective notes, not last minute Googling, are key to the learning and revision process. No liberties are being violated – in many workplaces it is not permitted to use phones at certain times and all students are free to use their phones outside of the school day.](#)

## Internal Examinations

Please find below links to our first draft of the June Internal Examinations.

Please note that in any sessions where Year 7-10 students do not have exams they will be supervised in private study/ revision. Year 12 students only need to attend School for their exams – though there will be additional elective sports activities that they are welcome to participate in.

This timetable will be amended after half term, with a final version published on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> June. There are some sessions where a small number of students have clashes. In these instances alternative arrangements will be made for one of the papers.

[Year 7 Internal Exams 21st June 2021](#)

[Year 8 Internal Exams 21st June 2021](#)

[Year 9 Internal Exams 21st June 2021](#)

[Year 10 Internal Exams 21st June 2021](#)

[Year 12 Internal Exams 21st June 2021](#)

## Year 11 Transition to Sixth Form

A letter has gone out today inviting all students with an offer to join Reading School in the Sixth Form to attend a Sixth Form Transition Week. This is taking place on the week commencing Monday June 21<sup>st</sup> and is an opportunity for all future Year 12 students (new and returning) to get a taste of Sixth Form life.

Linked within this letter was the Bridging Work document. This document is designed to prepare students for starting their A-levels. Students are expected to complete the work for the subjects they have selected for A-level. This is an early opportunity for students to show their commitment to their studies and to maximise their readiness for the

## LRC News

### The Reading School Book Award 2021

The Reading School LRC Book Award Team are delighted to announce the shortlist for this year's award.

2021 Shortlist:

The Soul Hunters by Chris Bradford

The Tower of Nero by Rick Riordan

Assassin by Chris Ryan

Windrush Child by Benjamin Zephaniah

The Reading School Book Award is awarded annually by pupils at Reading School for recent exciting and engaging Young Adult novels. Copies of the shortlisted titles can be borrowed from the LRC and the winner will be revealed after a vote in September.

Last year the winner was Nightshade by Anthony Horowitz.



### KS3 Popular Reads Brochure 2021



All pupils in Years 7 and 8 were given a special English lesson before half-term where they could look at LRC books, chat about books and borrow books. Our KS3 Popular Reads Brochure 2021 highlights some of the most highly rated titles at Reading School and includes suggestions for those wishing to try something different. The brochure can be accessed at the following link: [KS3 Popular Reads Brochure](#). The brochure includes books supporting Empathy Day, which is on June 10<sup>th</sup>. Reading is a fantastic way to start the conversation about building a more empathetic society, and helps young people learn more about empathy.

# Integrity

## Safeguarding and Wellbeing

Whilst we navigate coming out of lockdown, there are still lots of anxieties over an array of concerns. We encourage our students and families to talk to each other. Through talking, we can share our experiences, and point each other in the direction of appropriate support and help.

If you or someone in your family is in need of support, do reach out to your tutor or Head of House. 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:

### For Students:

A year after the death of George Floyd, have a read of [Racism and mental health \(youngminds.org.uk\)](#)

For those of you ready for your next steps, read [Looking after yourself at uni \(youngminds.org.uk\)](#)

### For Parents:

On the anniversary of the death of George Floyd, read some advice on how to talk to your child about racism [BlackLivesMatter](#)

Young people all over the world are coming to terms with the effect of trauma from the pandemic. If you need support, reach out. [Parents Guide To Support - Self-harm \(youngminds.org.uk\)](#)

### Gaming

Whilst young people are spending more time online, it can be difficult to navigate conversations around gaming. Use this helpful guidance for parents from young minds. [Parents Guide To Support - Gaming \(youngminds.org.uk\)](#)

#### 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](http://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 \(youngminds.org.uk\)](#) 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

## House Captaincy Teams

The incoming House Captaincy teams have now been confirmed for next academic year. The Houses are all vying for top spot again, following East's exceptional performance this year and the new House Captains and their Vices will be determined to lead their respective Houses to victory.

The students looking to inspire their House are:

| <b>House Leadership team</b> |                  |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| County House Captain         | Aryan Gupta      |
| County House Vice            | Toby Caswell     |
| County House Vice            | Harish Raghu     |
| East House Captain           | William Lockwood |
| East House Vice              | Adam Musa        |
| East House Vice              | Jacob Merchant   |
| Laud House Captain           | Vivan Vasudeva   |
| Laud House Vice              | Daniyal Thakur   |
| School House Captain         | Ollie Binnie     |
| School House Vice            | Dominic Smith    |
| School House Vice            | Tom Booth        |
| West House Captain           | Joe Tubb         |
| West House Vice              | Umar Ashfaq      |
| West House Vice              | Shrey Chawla     |

We are sure their leadership skills will motivate each of the Houses to new heights as well as fostering the sense of House community that is so valued by the School.

## Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award

We are delighted to confirm that Reading School will be offering the 'Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award' for students in Year 9 going into Year 10. We aim to begin the Award by the beginning of July (hopefully sooner).

Reading School is committed to providing opportunities for students to flourish. We believe that the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme supports our fundamental values of Community, Excellence, Integrity & Leadership. If your son chooses to commit himself to the award then he will undoubtedly develop in each of these areas.

It is important to note that whilst the school will facilitate completion of the award, the drive and motivation for this comes from each participant. DofE requires independent motivation and responsibility and any participant should be aware of this.

A brief overview:

The Award is made up of 4 sections: Volunteering, Physical, Skill & Expedition. Volunteering, Physical and Skills sections tend to be completed as an individual whereas the Expedition section involves participants working in teams of 4-7. Each section must be completed for the Award to be attained.

Further information about the Duke of Edinburgh's Award can be found at <https://www.dofe.org/>, and the DofE launch video can be viewed here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GuZMfKbMW6M&feature=youtu.be>

Our Approach:

At school we will take responsibility for the following:

- Taking payment for registration, signing your son up for the award and supporting him create an online account with DofE
- Providing support through a mixture of peers and teaching staff in order to assist each participant with the completion of their Volunteering, Physical and Skill sections of the award
- The Expedition Section of the Award will be planned & delivered by an 'Approved Activity Provider' that is NOT affiliated with the school. This means that monies would be paid directly to the provider and no teacher presence will be in attendance during any planned activities. AAP's are accredited by the DofE Award Scheme and there are many to choose from. They vary in cost depending on the approach they take to the training and assessment of this element of the Award but all AAP's will meet the baseline assessment criteria. A place on a course can cost from £190-£300 and the price tends to be reflected in the level and quantity of training provided. Historically we have used a local company called 'Path Hill Outdoors' to deliver Expeditions and have always been happy with the level of service they provide.

Financing the Award:

What you need to do:

At this stage we are just gauging the level of interest within the year group. From there we can work out final costs and logistics. If your son is interested then please follow the link below and complete the form no later than Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2021

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=QKRT3Wr9XkC75IKx5h6C24IFiiUnXIFKk4ARxUOY21JURUISQUJLU1hTSjM3QIFJSVpKTDNYNEFLVi4u>

Please bear in mind that more information will be forthcoming after half term but if you have any urgent questions then please email David Tridgell [dtridgell@reading-school.c.uk](mailto:dtridgell@reading-school.c.uk) and Michelle Hooker [mhooker@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:mhooker@reading-school.co.uk)

# TeenTech Live Animation Week

Tuesday June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Wednesday June 3<sup>rd</sup> and Thursday June 4<sup>th</sup> 2021  
10:00am – 11:00am each day

It is a series of sessions that young people taking part previously have particularly enjoyed and just right for half term activity!

Here is the link you will need: <https://www.teentech.com/live/innovation-animation-week-062185/>.  
This link will enable you to join all three days.

We are super excited to see what everyone comes up with. Please do not share the link outside of the school apart from pupils/parents. The link is live **now** so do please test it to make sure that you will be able to join.

## **Tuesday, 10:00am: TeenTech Innovation Day at Home - Animation Preproduction**

Meet Industry Experts who work in preproduction for Animation (in film, television and video games) for an interactive introduction to Animation. We will be setting the challenge for the week, and you'll be able to ask any burning questions to our live guests and us! We will be guiding you through the preproduction process, and helping you to come up with an idea! With contributors Sanna Myllykangas (Aardman Storyboard Artist), Karine Chevalier (Film Writer, Director, Editor and Senior Lecturer at University of Roehampton) and Mike Andreoli (Concept Artist at Platinum Films).

## **Wednesday, 10:00am: TeenTech Innovation Day at Home - Animation Production and Animation Masterclass**

Today we'll start creating our animations, and we'll be getting some advice from experts. Join us for a practical masterclass session where we'll be showcasing the free tools you can use to create an animation of your own. You can ask us questions, live, and we'll help you get ready to film your very own Animation! We'll also be speaking to Dave Brain (Animator and Visual Effects Artist), the son of Terry Brain who worked on Wallace and Grommit, Chicken Run, Creature Comforts, The Trap Door and more. With contributions from pixel art artist, Gary Lucken (Minecraft, Kynseed).

## **Thursday, 10:00am: TeenTech Postproduction Masterclass**

Join us for a practical session, where we'll explore the tools to add some extra production values to your work! We will also answer any questions you might have, and help you if you're stuck on anything! We've also got answers from the experts from the questions you have sent in!

We hope all your students enjoy these super creative sessions and that it helps to make a great half term!

## **Frequently asked questions**

### **How will students watch the TeenTech Live event?**

This link above to the live stream will take you to a private page on the **TeenTech** website where you and your pupils can watch the session.

### **What if I can't watch live?**

The sessions will be able to be viewed for 6 days

### **What platform does TeenTech use for TeenTech Live events?**

The video stream is broadcast using YouTube's live event technology, straight to the TeenTech website. The students can watch the presenters but the presenters will not be able to see or hear the students or communicate with them directly. YouTube's Live Chat functionality will be disabled.

### **Can students interact with the presenters during the live stream?**

There will be a private messaging box on the TeenTech site which students/teachers can use to ask the presenters questions without submitting personal information (other than their first name and nearest town). Questions from the students will be answered live by the presenters during the stream. Students will only be identified by their first name and class name/school name. Students cannot be seen or heard throughout the sessions.

# Community

## STEM

Opportunity for Y11 and Y12 students: Insight into University [Insight into University flyer](#)

- 50+ live sessions to choose from – speak to university students, lecturers, admissions tutors, & employers
- Projects, lectures and activities on a wide variety of STEM subjects set by top UK Universities.
- Virtual university tours and taster sessions
- Industry workshops
- Students study at their own pace over the summer
- On completion of the course students gain a Silver Industrial Cadets award

## Transition to University: Alumni Panel Discussions

Over the next 5 weeks, the Sixth Form Leadership Team and Society Office will be running a series of online alumni discussion panels to help Year 13 students with the transition to University.

All panels will take place on the Year 13 PSHE Team and will involve a roundtable discussion chaired by a member of the Sixth Form Leadership Team and followed by a Q&A session.

- Tuesday 8th June 2021- Five things I wish I'd known before Freshers' Week: [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- Tuesday 15th June 2021- Let's talk about mental health and wellbeing at university: [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- Tuesday 22nd June 2021- Applying to and experiencing a Year in Industry or Study Abroad: [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- Tuesday 29th June 2021- Tips on studying and managing workload: [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- Tuesday 6th July 2021- Survival kit to tackling Clearing: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

For more details of the events, please click here: <https://www.reading-school.co.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=2843>