



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

27 JANUARY 2023

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Introduction

Holocaust Memorial Day 27 January 2023

This week the Headmaster has been explaining the significance of Holocaust Memorial Day to students in Years 7-13 in House Chapel. In addition, Mrs A Jackson has curated a display in the LRC. It is important that we reflect on the role of bystanders and onlookers. Furthermore, we should listen to words and learn from actions in order to ensure that we, as ordinary people, can ensure that evil does not triumph due to indifference. Words below illustrate key aspects of the 2023 HMD theme linked to Ordinary people, the poison of indifference, the courage of St. Maximilian Kolbe and a prayer that invites us all to reflect.



**HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
DAY TRUST**

This year's Holocaust Memorial Day theme is 'ordinary people'. That means us as well as the six million Jews who were systematically killed during the Holocaust. As we ordinary people remember the Holocaust, in a world full of cruelty and injustice, there's a constant temptation to succumb to the thought that there's not much we can do, no real difference we can make. Significantly, those who owe their lives to the courage of one neighbour, one quietly defiant individual, one family, don't think like that. They truly know how much every decision and every action counts. There is nothing too ordinary, nothing too small to matter, when it comes to doing what is right. That is why it is so important that what we learn from this and subsequent Holocaust Memorial Days should enter our heart and guide our values and actions.

We must remember the Nazi Holocaust and the appalling, shameful genocides perpetrated since. Learning about the unimaginable sufferings of people like ourselves, how they were murdered and how survivors coped with their terrible wounds, physical and mental, has to make a difference to how we act in the world. Indeed, it should strengthen our determination to uphold and defend the dignity of each and every person, irrespective of their faith, nationality and identity. On the one hand, we are all ordinary people; on the other hand, there's no such thing as an ordinary person.

We live today in a hugely polarised world – no longer do we seem willing or able to agree to disagree instead we divide into camps of 'them' and 'us'. It was such thinking that led to the Holocaust. But the truth is there is no 'them' and 'us', there is only us.

'The most deadly poison of our times is indifference.'

Maximillian Kolbe

Auschwitz is without parallel a symbol of dehumanisation and cruelty, and yet it was in this place that St Maximilian Kolbe, through an extraordinary act of love, made a statement about the dignity and worth of the human person that has inspired people all over the world. Clergy were among the first groups of people taken prisoner in the early days of the Nazi occupation of Poland and so the Franciscan, Maximilian Kolbe found himself in Auschwitz. He was standing in the line-up when the SS selected ten prisoners for a mass punishment of death by starvation in retaliation for an escape. One of the inmates being dragged off to the punishment block cried out for his wife and children and Maximilian Kolbe was moved to volunteer to take his place. Inexplicably, the otherwise merciless SS permitted this act of mercy.

It was a life-giving sacrifice on many levels; not only did the man he saved, Franciszek Gajowniczek, survive to return to his family, but he became a lay missionary, working to make Kolbe's sacrifice an enduring light in the darkness of Auschwitz. Kolbe's warning about the danger of indifference is today echoed by survivors of the Holocaust, who remind us that the roots of this horror can be traced back to the indifference of people, to othering, to the isolation and humiliation of their neighbours, which quickly escalated during the war into discrimination, persecution and murder.

Prayer for Holocaust Memorial Day: Ordinary People

Loving God, you care for each and every human life. All people are cherished as your beloved children, no matter how ordinary or extraordinary their stories are. Today we come before you to remember the victims of the Holocaust. We lament the loss of the six million Jews who were killed in the Holocaust, the millions of other victims of Nazi persecution, and victims of all genocides. May our minds be clear and attentive to their memory, and our hearts be moved to bear witness to their lives. Help us all to turn away from hatred and division, and to build a world where genocide is no more. Strengthen us so that we, in our own ordinary ways, may show extraordinary love in the world today. Amen

Key information

All years

Staff Day - Reminder

A reminder to all that the school will be closed this coming Monday 30 January due to it being a designated Staff Day.

Student Survey - Safeguarding

Student feedback is very important to us to help maintain a culture of safeguarding and we place a high importance in making sure students are aware of expectations and knowing who to contact, if they need support or are worried for themselves or someone else. Recently, we have updated our Safeguarding Team posters found in all classrooms to reflect a new member of the team who can be contacted in the event of a worry or concern, Ms A Stratford.



During every school year, we also ask students to complete a short safeguarding survey so that we can continue to ensure the school remains a safe place for all. The survey is strictly confidential and only the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be analysing responses collected. Please can all students complete the short survey by [clicking here](#). Your views are important and valuable to us.

National Education Union (NEU) Industrial Action

As you may be aware, the NEU have balloted to go on strike and reached the numbers required to do so. They have announced that strike action will take place on the following days:

- 1 February 2023
- 2 March 2023
- 15 and 16 March 2023

We have communicated with parents and students regarding the impact of the strike on the operation of Reading School by NEU members scheduled for 1 February this week and the information is duplicated as below:

Industrial Action – Wednesday 1st February 2023

Reading School will be partially closing to students on Wednesday 1 February due to the NEU industrial action. The industrial action ('strike') is happening because of a national dispute between the unions and the government, and not because of any issues at our school. Parents should be aware that if a teacher decides to take industrial action, this is not because they don't care about the students, and they are not acting against the school or the students. Not all staff who are absent on 1 February will be on industrial action. As such, students and parents should refrain from contacting absent teachers.

School Open for the following: The school will be open to Year 13 students, all boarders, students of critical workers, and vulnerable students. Year 13 timetabled lessons will run in person if their teacher is not taking industrial action or absent for other reasons. All other students in school will participate in online learning in supervised areas of the school.

Remote Online Working for the following: Students in Years 7 – 12 are asked to remain at home. Teachers who are in school will run lessons online via Microsoft Teams and will notify classes no later than 8am on Wednesday 1st February that they will be running their lessons. Where a teacher is absent and no work is set, students should complete other work, [use this link](#) to help them revise or [read from the reading lists](#).

Help on [how to access online lessons is set out here](#) and will follow synchronous timetable as scheduled, with the exception of all electives, which are cancelled on this day only.

A definition of vulnerable children and critical workers can be found at Annex A and B of guidance for [Emergency planning and response for education, childcare and children's social care settings](#).

Vulnerable Students

Heads of House will be identifying students under the vulnerable heading and will be contacting you directly in relation to them attending school on 1 February.

Critical Worker

If you are a critical worker, then please complete the form below so that we can ensure our Health and Safety obligations are fully met. [Critical Worker Form](#) Please complete no later than midday on Monday 30th January so that we can plan accordingly.

Catering Arrangements

Any student entitled to Free School Meals that is not attending school on 1 February can collect a packed lunch from the Refectory on Tuesday afternoon immediately afterschool to take home with them.

Those students attending school on 1 February will have a limited lunch service available from the Refectory.

School Trips and After School Activities

Please be aware that there will be no school trips or after school activities taking place on 1 February. The planned football fixture against the Oratory and hockey fixture will go ahead as planned and the PE department will communicate with those selected separately.

Boarding Students

Boarding will be open as usual for all boarders on the day of the industrial action.

All boarders will be accessing the remote teaching with guidance from housemasters and senior school staff. All boarders will be informed of the area of the school they should go to for their remote lessons. Year 13 will attend school as usual.

I am sorry that you will have to make alternative arrangements for your child at short notice, and that they will experience disruption to their education. I understand that this situation may be frustrating, and ask that all members of our school community continue to treat each other with respect. Reading School remains committed to providing a safe and secure environment for our pupils and delivering high-quality teaching.

We are working closely with our staff union representatives to keep up to date with the situation, and I will inform you as soon as possible if arrangements change further.

If you have any questions, please contact Miss C Mole, Executive Assistant at headspa@reading-school.co.uk.

Belonging Weeks – Summer 2023



During either side of this year's May half term, students in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 will participate in both a week of structured examinations and a week of enrichment activities, characterised by our learn, lead and serve philosophy. Belonging Week was launched in 2022 and building on its success, all students across Years 7 – 10 (Year 12 students will sit examinations and take part in work experience opportunities) will have the opportunity to contribute and collaborate while committing to personal growth and trying new things, in different contexts with a range of peers.

For more information please [click here](#) and more detailed information will be shared during the coming weeks.

Inspire Lecture – A Level Geography & beyond

On Tuesday 31 January between 15:30 and 16:30, we will be welcoming four of our past A Level students to Reading School to share their experiences of the value Geography had in their diverse careers. Students will have an opportunity to ask questions following the lectures in order to discover more about how Geography can be used at A Level and beyond. Please click the thumbnail to view poster.



All year groups are welcome and to register your interest, please [click here](#).

Years 11 & 13 only

Exam Study Leave and Contingency Days



Year 11 students will commence study leave on Friday 5 May after school commitments.

Year 13 students will commence study leave on Friday 12 May after school commitments.

A reminder that the contingency days for the summer 2023 exams have been announced. Contingency days are designed to be used in the event of national or significant local disruption of examinations. All students sitting GCSEs and A levels, need to be available on these dates in case any of their exams are moved at short notice.

The dates are: Thursday 8 June 2023 (pm), Thursday 15 June 2023 (pm), and Wednesday 28 June (all day).

Students will receive their exam timetables after February half term. The dates can also be looked up on the exam board website.

Year 10 only



In their Theology and Philosophy lessons, Year 10 will be looking at euthanasia and assisted suicide as the 5th topic in their Ethics module for the OCR AS Religious Studies. As a part of this, students will be required to discuss topics such as terminal illness, end of life care, suicide, the laws around suicide, and possibly some aspects of abortion. Naturally, this may cause some distress for students who are or have gone through related situations, and whilst we can handle a lot of this respectfully in the classroom, some students may wish to talk further about this.

As the T&P department, we have, and will continue to signpost Form Tutors, Heads of House, and Student Support as places to go, should students wish to discuss these issues further or seek support. In order to safeguard our Year 10s, we feel it is important that parents and guardians are aware these topics are being raised so that safe discussions can continue at home. If you have any worries or questions, please contact your son's form tutor as a priority and this can be passed onto the T&P department if needed.

Current Vacancies

Below is a list of our current opportunities at Reading School. Please circulate these to anyone you think might be interested in the roles.

Teacher Vacancies

Pay scale dependent on experience with potential for TLR / responsibility allowance if combined with a leadership role.

[Teacher of Mathematics](#) - deadline 9am, Monday 6 February

[Teacher of Computer Science](#) - deadline 9am, Monday 20 February

Associate Staff Vacancies

[Exam Invigilators](#) - deadline 12pm, Monday 6 February

[Kitchen Porter](#) - deadline 12pm, Monday 20 February

How to Apply

In order to comply with our Safer Recruitment policy, all applicants must complete the relevant application form for the role to be considered for shortlisting. Application forms can be downloaded from the [vacancies section](#) of our website. Enquiries about any of the roles should be directed to hr@reading-school.co.uk.

Excellence, Belonging & Community

Excellence



At this time in the year, our Year 13 students are in the midst of receiving university offers. Every single university offer is a huge accomplishment and many of our university applicants have received many outstanding offers across a wide range of subjects. Others are waiting for responses, as many universities offer much later in the year. It is vital that all students appreciate that any offer is conditional on gaining the required grades. Therefore, we would encourage them to redouble their efforts to apply themselves to fulfil their academic potential.

Two universities who have sent out their responses to students are Oxford and Cambridge, two highly prestigious institutions to which many of our students apply. The

application process is very competitive and all of our applicants should be praised for their aspiration and for their hard work, in curating applications, based on some excellent academic and non-academic achievements. Every year we see students, who we believe to be exceptional candidates, not achieve a place even though we know they would flourish at Oxbridge.

Equally, every year we see exceptional candidates who do achieve a place and this achievement deserves celebration. Below is a list of our successful candidates to Oxbridge. Congratulations to them all.

Oxford

Mishra	Eesh	Mechanical Engineering	Brasenose
Mittal	Mayank	Economics and Management	Hertford
Chintawar	Ved	Economics and Management	St Peter's
Goyal	Jai	Medicine	Balliol
Shoaib	Muhammad Ahmad	Medicine	Magdalen
Vemuri	Daniyal	Philosophy, Politics and Economics	Exeter
Luthra	Rishabh	Engineering	St Peter's
Chowdhury	Mina	Medicine	Exeter
Kendall	Max	Mathematics	Worcester
Singh	Aditya	Economics and Management	New College
Phillips	Toby	History	Christ Church
Lin	Ryan Xilun	Physics and Philosophy	Balliol

Cambridge

Barot	Ansh	Economics	Trinity Hall
Young	Hayden	Computer Science	Jesus
Zelenka	Janis	Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology	Homerton
Soni	Achyuttam	Economics	King's
Li	Sida	Mathematics	Trinity
Hillman	Lily	Mathematics	St Catharine's
Dasgupta	Neel	Computer Science	Clare
Conaghan	Joshua	Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology	King's
Ganeshbabu	Adarsh Arun	Computer Science	King's
Shen	Thomas	Engineering	Christ's
Pandey	Shivansh	Economics	Gonville & Caius

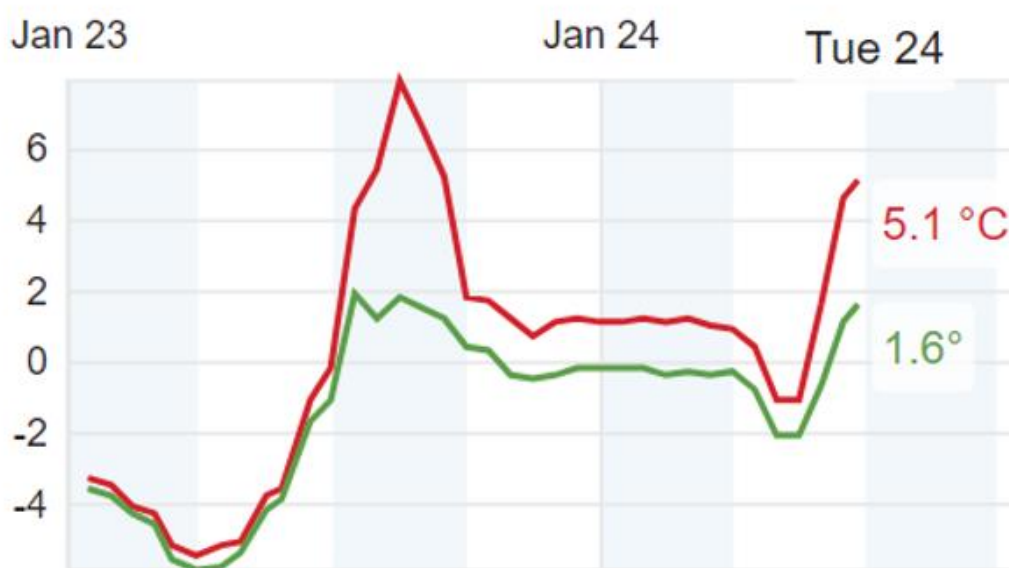
Community

Reading School Weather Station

The Geography department are very pleased to announce that we have just had a brand new digital weather station installed on the roof of the John Kendrick Building (JKB). It shares live weather data with a global sensor network made up of over 250,000 weather stations called Weather Underground.

Through the Weather Underground website you can track live weather data as well as compare it to historical data that it has collected. We have already started using this data in our lessons to provide the students with real examples of the phenomena they are learning about. For example, Year 8s have been looking at data (example below) to understand the impact of air pressure on temperature.

January 23, 2023 - January 29, 2023



Our weather station dashboard can be viewed either using the link below or by scanning any of the QR codes found on posters around the Geography department - [Personal Weather Station Dashboard](#).

When you view it for the first time you will need to click on the menu icon in the top right hand corner and then the cog icon to change the units from Fahrenheit to Celsius.

If you're interested in finding out more about our weather station or perhaps you have your own weather stations at home that you would like to add to the global weather station network, please speak to Mr K Luteijn by emailing kluteijn@reading-school.co.uk.

An invitation from The Abbey School



Reading School students are invited to join the first Abbey School 'Ideas and Passions' talk, '[What a Future in Engineering Can Do For You](#)'. This will take place on Thursday 9 February at Abbey School (Richards Hall).

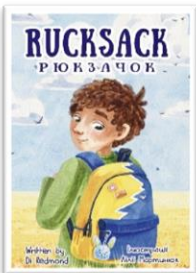
The Abbey has teamed up with the Institute of Engineering and Technology (IET) to increase awareness and understanding of what a future in engineering may involve and inspire the next generation of engineers. The talk will be given by Professor Danielle George, a past President of the IET; she will talk about her journey from school to where she is now and what inspired her, as well as giving an overview of the importance and versatility of engineering and why engineers are key to our future.

Guests are welcome to arrive from 18:15, with the talk beginning at 18:30. Following the talk, refreshments will be served and students will have the opportunity to meet and network with a range of engineers from the IET Berkshire Local Network and Abbey alumnae with careers in engineering. The event should be over no later than 20:00.

Students, families and staff can book a place at the talk via the link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/passions-talk-series-what-a-future-in-engineering-can-do-for-you-tickets-517324029097>

Due to the timing of the event, The Abbey are expecting that students will sign up with the permission of their parents, and make their own travel arrangements to and from The Abbey. A parent is welcome to attend with their child should they wish. There will be no parking on site but there is free roadside parking on Kendrick Road.

The Rucksack Project



The Rucksack Project came to Reading School on 21 January 2023 to support families who have been displaced in the Reading area by working through their experiences of war trauma in a safe environment.

The event was organised in collaboration with the New Roots Initiative (Нові корені), where they welcomed over 50 children and parents for a reading of the book by the iconic children's writer Di Redmond (who has written over 100 children's books, including Bob the Builder and Postman Pat). Each child was given a copy of the Rucksack book, along with a therapy booklet with key anxiety-reducing exercises to work through with their parents.

Di was joined by the team of [Children and the War UK](#), who have been working in Ukraine since 2014: Professor William Yule (King's College London; founder of Children and War UK), renowned Ukrainian psychologist Kateryna Yavna and Professor Dennis Ougrin, professor of child and adolescent psychiatry at Queen Mary University of London. The team of experts led a session with the parents to allow families affected by the war in Ukraine to process their emotions and learn to make new memories.



The event was attended and supported by the Mayor of Reading, Councillor Rachel Eden, who not only listened to the reading of the book with the children, but also spoke to the Ukrainian mothers attending the session to hear their stories of being displaced and how the Rucksack Project has helped them.



The Rucksack is a story both about Ukrainian children and for Ukrainian children – written by British writer Diane Redmond and illustrated by Ukrainian artist Lilia Martynyuk, the story takes the children through devastating loss and trauma; they receive empathy and support from other children, alongside help from adults. The book has been designed to have an accompanying booklet for the parents, developed by Children and War UK, who have been working with families in Ukraine since 2014.

RUCKSACK is a project created in partnership with Children and War UK and its aim is to create a series of children's books that will create healing with the expertise of Dennis Ougrin and Ukrainian psychologist Kateryna Yavna (who has worked with Children and War since 2014).

For more information, please visit www.rucksackproject.co.uk

Day Students Invited into Boarding

This week, 13 day boys were the special guests of their Year 7 boarder friends, as they were invited into the boarding houses for an evening with the boarding community.

Each boarder in Year 7 selected one friend to spend the evening with, experiencing the clubs, camaraderie and cuisine that the boarders have every night. They played football in the MUGA; pool and music in the boarding houses; cooked and flipped pancakes; explored boarding while playing hide and seek; ate dinner in the Refectory; and then had the novel experience of boarding prep time under the supervision of Mr Lloyd then Mr Betteridge in South House and Mr Miller in East Wing.

From the laughter and excitement that bounced around the boarding houses throughout the evening, it was clear that boarders and day boys alike enjoyed the experience.



RSPA

LRC Amazon Wishlist

The RSPA are absolutely delighted to be assisting the LRC in their refresh of stocks of books. For ease an [Amazon Wishlist](#) has been created to allow you to purchase a book(s). Should you be unable to choose a title we have provided the option of purchasing a gift card which will be used solely for the purposes of the LRC. We are very grateful for any contributions made. The Wishlist is open until Friday 10th February and can be [accessed by clicking here](#).

Please choose '*RSPA Parent Gifting Wishlist Kirsty MacInnes Gift Registry Address*' at delivery and please also remember to choose Amazon SMILE at the checkout stage which raises even further donations to be used for the enrichment of the pupils' experience at Reading School. If you have any queries regarding the list, please contact Jaideep Das by emailing JDas@readingschoolparents.co.uk

School Lottery

We would like to remind you about the School Lottery. There is a draw each Saturday night at 8pm (all tickets purchased by this time will be entered) and every week a RSPA participant wins a guaranteed cash prize.

At the same time funds are raised for the pupils, enriching their experience at Reading School.

As an added bonus, if you buy a ticket for the 25 February draw, you have a chance of winning a WHOLE YEAR of HelloFresh. Helping you to keep to your New Year healthy eating resolutions! Tickets cost £1 each and you can play regularly or as a one-off. Simply click here to play: www.yourschoollottery.co.uk and search RSPA.

If you have any queries about the lottery, please do not hesitate to contact Jaideep Das who will be delighted to help you by emailing JDas@readingschoolparents.co.uk

2nd Hand Uniform Shop

The shop will be open on the following dates:

Friday 3 February 2:30pm - 4:00pm

Saturday 4th February 10:30am – 12:30pm

Please come along to purchase blazers, trousers, shirts, base layers, rugby boots, trainers, outdoor coats and more at the Shop. For this month only selected CGP revision guides and exam practice workbooks are on offer at 5 for £5. Come along and grab a bargain! The shop is located at the back of the walled car-park (opposite the Chapel).

Please note: On Friday 3 February, buyers are not allowed to drive onto site, access is via the pedestrian gates only. On Saturday 4 February, buyers are allowed to drive onto site and parking is available on the right-hand side of the walled car-park or outside it. Please email shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk for further information. We look forward to seeing you there.

Year 7 Disco

The Year 7 Disco last Friday was a great success. It was lovely to see so many happy students enjoying themselves. We had a fantastic turn out for the parents Meet & Greet as well. Thank you to all who donated and bought raffle tickets. We could not hold an event like this without the support of our volunteers, so a massive THANK YOU to all who helped to make this such a great event. We will update next week on how much we raised!

We would like to wish you all a very Happy Weekend.

The RSPA Team



Lent Term – Week 4

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



Chinese Culture Club Activities led by Teacher of Mandarin, Mr R Wu, to celebrate Lunar New Year 2023



When displayed as a Chinese ideograph, Fú is often displayed upside-down on diagonal red squares. The reasoning is based on a wordplay: in nearly all varieties of Chinese, the words for "upside-down" (倒, Pinyin: dào) and "to arrive" (到, Pinyin: dào) are homophonous. Therefore, the phrase an "upside-down Fú" sounds nearly identical to the phrase "Good luck arrives". Pasting the character upside-down on a door or doorpost thus translates into a wish for prosperity to descend upon a dwelling.





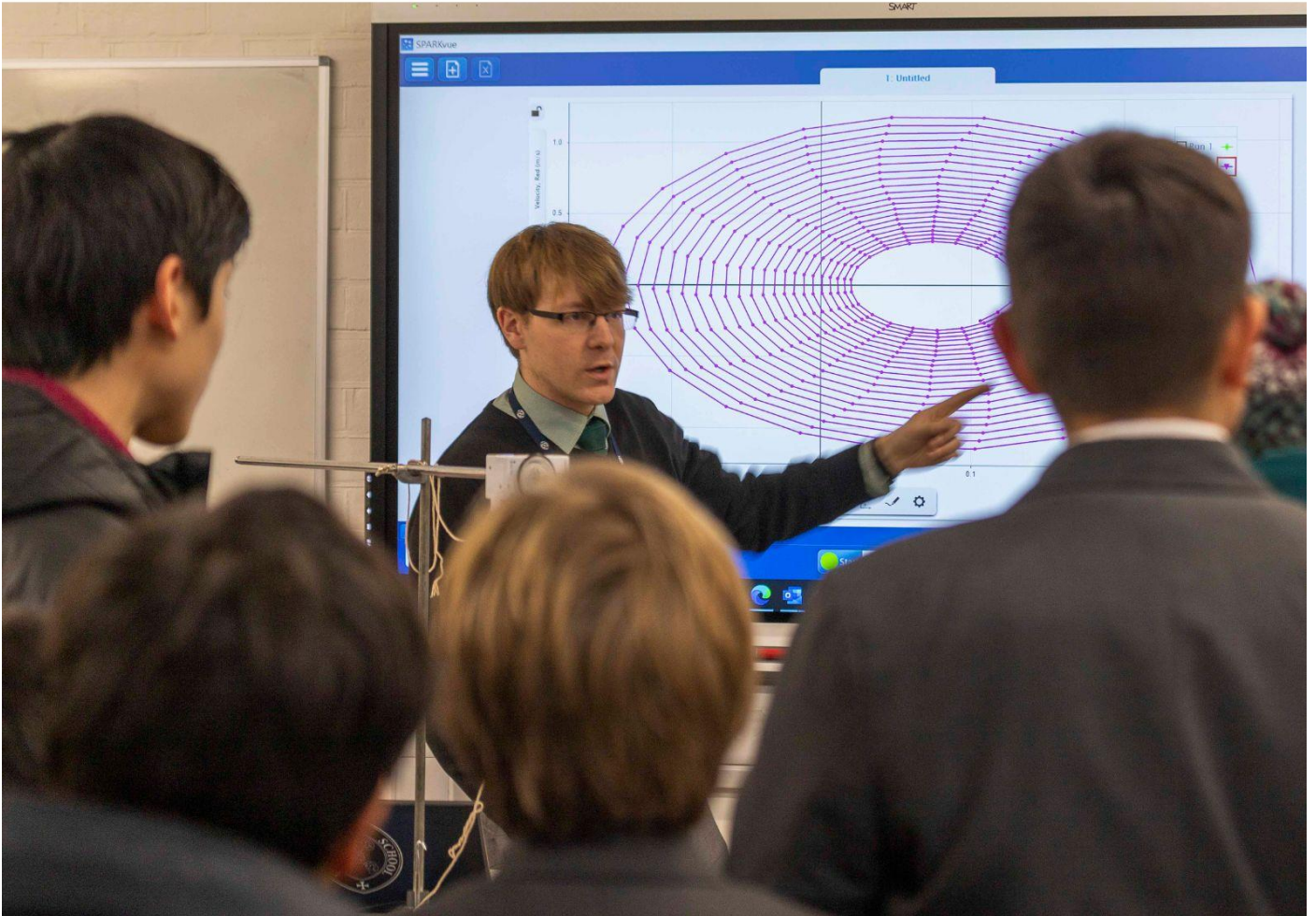




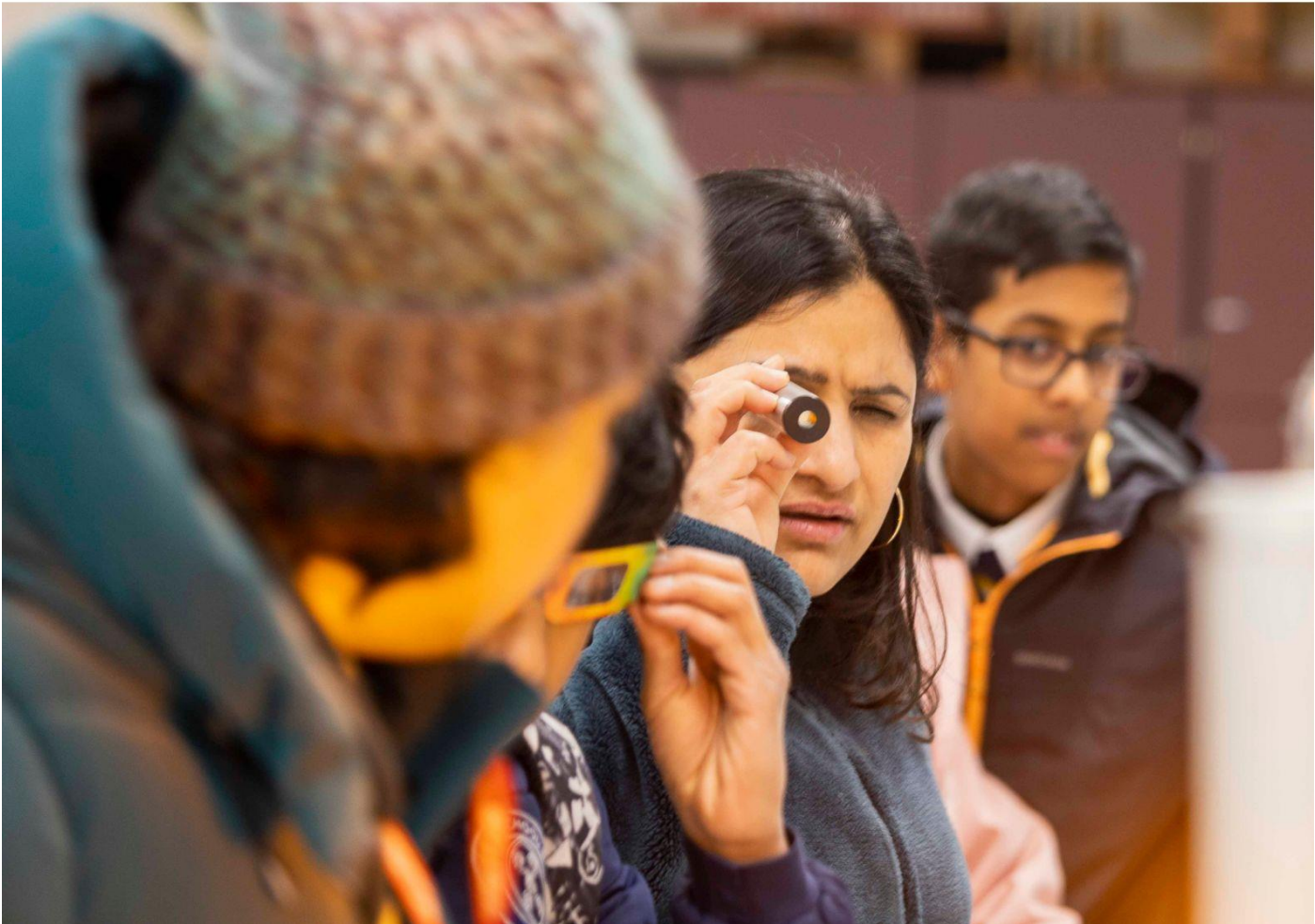
This week saw the official opening of our refurbished Physics labs where students, parents, staff and governors were given the opportunity to view the labs and take part in experiments conducted by our Physics Teachers and sixth formers. The highlight of the evening was hearing from Dr Rebecca Harwin (Instrumental Development Scientist at RAL Space), who delivered her Inspire Lecture, '*From the James Webb Space Telescope to the SPEQTRE CubeSat: the many, many applications of space*'.

Thank you to Teachers of Physics, Mr C Lewis-Brown, Mr I Sharma and Mr P Holloway, along with Head of Physics, Mr A Elmore, for running the interactive experiments with the support of our sixth form volunteers.

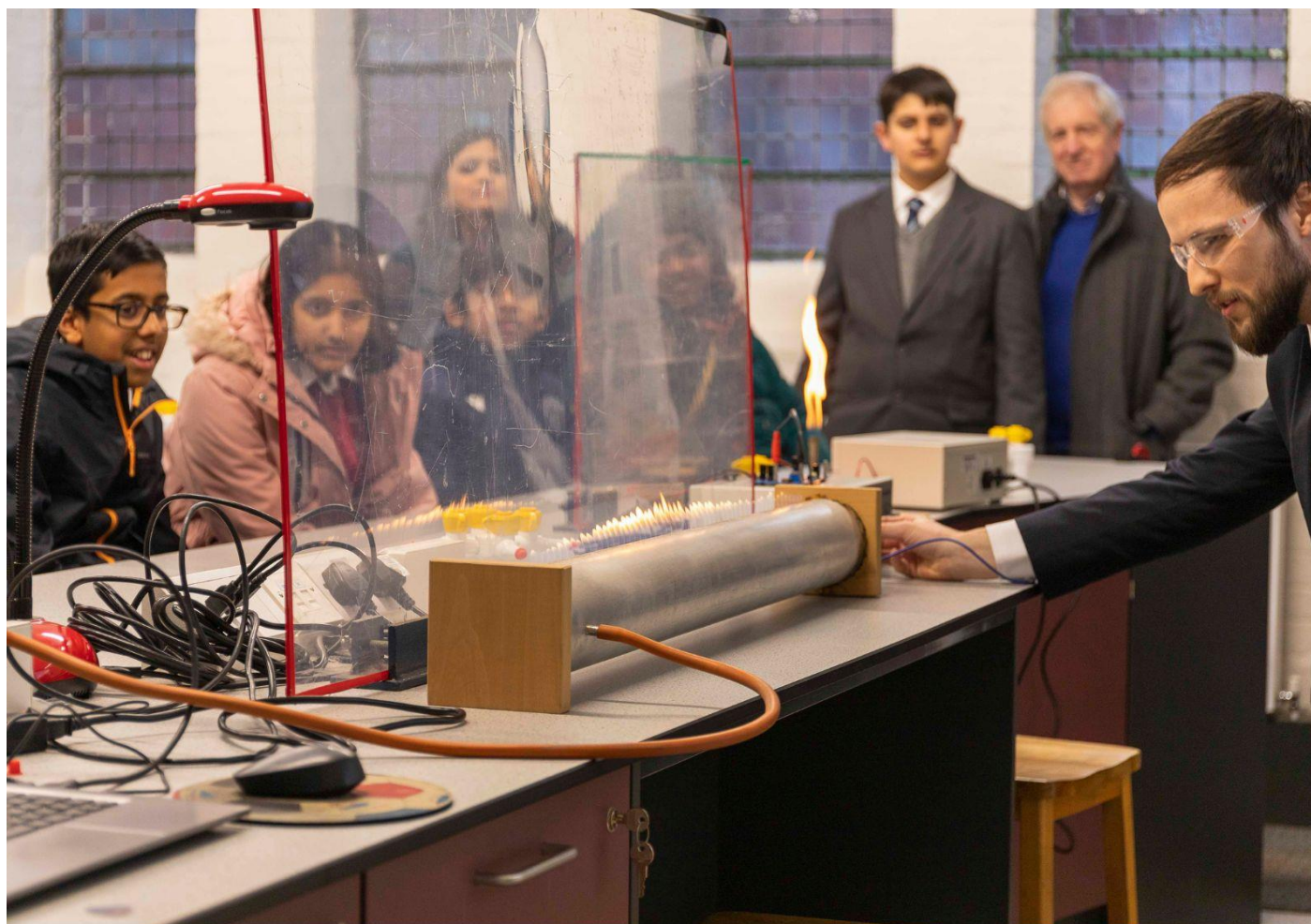














Reading School's Medical Society was delighted to welcome back OR Jonathan Croos, now in his second year of Medicine at King's College London, who gave an informal discussion-based talk on Monday 23 January.

Jonathan provided Reading School students, from Year 11 to Year 12, with a candid and invaluable insight into the application process as well as studying Medicine at a prestigious London university. While Jonathan spoke on his own experiences, the informal nature of the talk welcomed active student participation, where Jonathan was able to answer the students' many searching questions.



The discussion covered how to prepare for medical admissions tests, how to decide which universities to apply to, undertaking super-curricular activities, and the positives and harsh realities of working in Medicine. However, students particularly appreciated learning of the different styles of education provided by different universities. This was most notable through the distinction between universities that favour dissection (learning via direct preparation of cadavers) over prosection (learning via demonstrations), and the different rates at which universities integrate clinical training into students' university educations.

We would like to thank Jonathan for giving up his time in order to return to Reading School and to share his valuable experiences for the benefit of current students.



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