



Q: How can parents best find out how their child is doing at School?

A: If ever there were concerns about your child's academic progress, their subject teacher or form tutor would be in contact directly with parent(s) to discuss this. We ensure that through expectations evenings, progress reports, parents' consultation evenings and end-of-year reports, there is at least one official form of communication to parents regarding each year group, nearly every half term.

There are 7 Year groups in the School, so greater frequency of such communications would be overly burdensome to our teachers. In the meantime, sometimes the most valuable feedback and sense of progress that parents can access regularly is often found in their child's work. This is where written feedback (not appropriate in all subjects), whole class feedback, assessment improvements and marks can be found.

Regardless of how each subject provides feedback, you should see increasing complexity over time in your child's work. Equally, parents can access MCAS where any concerns regarding organisation, completion of work or behaviour will be shared with you on a 'live' basis.

In addition, at any time, parents can see the planned curriculum, assessments and guidance on the school's website: [Reading School – Curriculum](#).

Q: How do you choose which external partnerships to prioritise, and why is the School so keen to have such partnerships?

A: Reading School has been expanding our local partnerships including with a number of girls schools as a cornerstone of our character development and PSHE offering. These partnerships are vital to enable our students to develop insight, skills and compassion in order to promote equity, equality, respect and integrity.

There are a wealth of extracurricular activities and events in partnership with The Abbey, Kendrick School and Queen Anne's School; we regularly extend, and receive, invites to facilitate co-educational opportunities which we capitalise upon to enhance both academic excellence and cultural capital for your child's education.

There are a number of factors which contribute to the decisions in how partnership opportunities are chosen. A school will consider factors including timing, capacity, staffing, location and logistics to name but a few. Organising a successful event between schools takes a huge amount of planning and staff from all schools involved will often work above and beyond in order to ensure the event is delivered for the benefit of enriching the lives and experiences of children and young people.

Examples of partnership prosperity:

- Reframe Pain Conference at Queen Anne's School (March 2022)
- Joint Combined Cadet Force between Reading and Kendrick School (weekly)
- Social Enterprise Project between Reading School and The Abbey (ongoing)
- Joint Drama Production with the Abbey School (March 2023)
- Joint musical performance with Queen Anne's School (Feb 2023)



- Thames Valley Air Ambulance Charity Concert Charity concert between Reading and Kendrick School (March 2023)
- Joint PSHE sessions between Reading School and The Abbey (ongoing)

Q: How are Parents' Consultation Evening appointments allocated?

A: Parents' Consultation Evenings all take place on SchoolCloud, an online system which has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from staff and parents alike, and is now used by many schools nationally. Appointments are usually 5 minutes long, to enable as many parents as possible to speak to their child's teacher that evening. This desire to maximise participation is of course in tension with the depth of feedback possible in the allotted time, which is why we front-load a lot of the advice:

- reports indicate which subjects' parents should prioritise when booking
- subject-specific whole year group feedback is sent in advance with suggestions of next steps
- parents are encouraged to look in their child's work beforehand
- the curriculum documents on the website indicate what is still to be covered

Where there are particular concerns that require further conversation, the subject teacher or tutor will arrange a phone call to discuss these with you separately. Although appointments are 'first come first served' (up to a maximum per parent), parents are notified in advance of the date and time when appointments will become available.

After prioritising students that have been highlighted by teachers for conversations, our Parents' Evening Administrator then manually 'smooths out' any unevenness, to ensure that every parent gets as many (and as fair a number of) appointments as possible. It should be noted that some parent frustrations come from incorrectly entering their details when logging in. All queries regarding Parents' Evening should be directed to parentsevenings@reading-school.co.uk

Q: What are the school's expectations regarding homework and Teams in Years 7-11?

A: For Years 7 - 11, all teachers are expected to set homework as Assignments on Teams. This will include instructions, any linked resources and the deadline. (*Note: unfortunately, the deadline time defaults by Microsoft to 23:59 – this is most definitely not an expectation that students work until then*).

For Years 7 – 11, students are given a homework planner and are expected to note down which subjects have set homework and for when. The aim of this is to develop organisational skills, and so that form tutors can monitor completion of homework. There is no set homework timetable, as homework is set according to the needs of each subject. However, homework tasks are expected to have tight instructions and clear expectations in terms of format of submission.

The amount of homework will increase from Years 7 through to 11.

Q: How can I find out what my child is studying?

A: We would encourage both parents and students to refer to the Curriculum documents available permanently on the [school website](#), which outlines in detail what students will be studying and when, along with advice regarding sources of support.



Q: What is Floreat and how does it differ from PSHE?

A: We believe that character education belongs at the heart of the school curriculum. Character education should be understood in its broadest sense; comprising of all the educational experiences and activities planned for children and young people, which help them develop and cultivate positive character traits.

The Floreat curriculum at Reading School is an integral element curriculum and is a bespoke character course, enabling students to engage with character education in an intentional and explicit way. The curriculum covers four broad areas: flourishing individuals, flourishing relationships, flourishing societies and digital flourishing. It is informed by research from leading academic institutions such as the Jubilee Centre at Birmingham University and Stanford University. Within these broad themes, students in KS3 and 4, explore topics such as leadership, study skills, the virtue of learning, the vocabulary of character, using technology wisely, service, volunteering and a focus on empathy and compassion.

A particular highlight of the Floreat curriculum has been our Year 10 students taking part in Project Wayfinder - a year-long course designed to explore who they are and what matters to them, so that they can navigate their lives in a healthy way. Project Wayfinder has been developed at Stanford University and is a purpose riven education course that allows children and young people to reflect on their personal narratives, identity, values and what brings them meaning and joy. The Floreat curriculum includes the best of a theoretical and practical approach to character development with students also having the opportunity to plan and take part in a diverse array of trips, experiences and expeditions, both locally and internationally.

Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) is a statutory school curriculum subject in England that helps students stay healthy, safe and prepared for life and work in modern Britain. PSHE education also contributes to students achieving their academic potential. Reading School's PSHE provision, based on current research and best practise, is a vital component of the Reading School curriculum. Through it, pupils develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to manage their lives, now and in the future. It ensures pupils stay healthy and safe, while preparing them to make the most of life both at Reading school and beyond.

The programme is tailored to our students at Reading School. This includes considering research that highlights the most important contextual and local factors and priorities such as physical, mental and emotional health, youth crime and safeguarding concerns. Reading School's PSHE programme includes, but is not limited to, statutory content, including Relationships Education at key stages 3-5, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at key stages 3-5, and Health Education in the secondary phase. It also supports the school to meet the Gatsby Benchmarks for careers education as part of the DfE Careers Strategy.



Q: What does the school have planned to ensure reading remains central to the school?

A: Reading, writing and oracy plays a significant part within our School. Our Learning Resource Centre (LRC) embodies all of these and received **35,939** individual visits from students last year who borrowed **13,876** books during 2021/22 alone. This is a 9% increase on pre-COVID levels, building on the regular reading lessons that all of Years 7 and 8 have as part of their English curriculum.

All of Year 9 and Sixth Form EPQ students use the LRC as a crucial resource, in particular the e-resources such as The Economist, JStor and Britannica, that students can access for free. Fiction continues to be the most borrowed loan category, followed by illustrated fiction, while history, medicine and economics saw the most academic borrows.

Ahead of this year's inaugural Reading Week in October 2022, the School compiled nearly 100 curated reading lists, each designed to enrich the curriculum of each subject in each year group. This can be [accessed here](#) for anyone wanting to remind themselves of the opportunity that Reading Week provided. These built on the subject specific 'Recommended Reads' posters that adorn each corridor, and in 2023, our staff training focus is on embedding literacy within each discipline, through high quality texts, understanding the role of etymology, explicit vocabulary teaching and academic scholarship in enhancing your child's education even further.

Q: Where can my son find his boots/sports top/bottle/blazer/bag?

A: At secondary school, students are expected to develop responsibility for their own belongings. In response to previous student feedback, we built large numbers of shelving racks for students to place their belongings whilst playing or in the Refectory. We also installed brand new large waterproof lockers around the site.

Despite these efforts, unfortunately we continue to see bags and property left abandoned in changing rooms, classrooms, on shelving and generally on the school site. We would encourage parents to help staff and the valiant efforts of the Reading School Parents Association (RSPA) by labelling their property and reminding their children of the importance of looking after their belongings. It is the student's responsibility to retrace their steps and search for their own belongings, rather than relying on a parent contacting a form tutor.

Q: How is poor behaviour dealt with by the school?

A: Behaviour in school is dealt with through verbal feedback in the first instance and should this not be adhered to or have the desired impact, information is logged on the electronic school portal which links to the parental portal 'My Child At School' (MCAS).

There is a conscious effort to celebrate positive behaviour points which are linked to the school's values. These are shared with the students in Year Group and House assemblies. Students can also receive praise postcards should they particularly impress a member of staff. We aim to catch our children and young people doing the right thing to support positive behaviour in school.

Should there be any poor behaviour, it is logged as a negative behaviour point (with subcategories for staff to view in order to allow for analysis of incidents and identify trends) and multiple points result



in a sanction ranging from a break/lunch time “pre-detention” to a 30- or 60-minute afterschool detention. Detentions happen on a Tuesday after school, with poor conduct behaviour involving community service or restorative work.

More serious incidents result in internal exclusions which can range from 1-5 days. During internal exclusions the student attends school but is not in circulation with peers and is bought work to complete in or outside one of the Senior Leaders’ offices.

For extremely serious incidents, a fixed term (1-5 days) or permanent external suspension can be issued.

Details of the framework and guidelines can be seen in the [Student Behaviour Policy](#) or a summary overview in the student planner.

Weekly behaviour reports are reviewed by Heads of House and then shared with tutors, to allow discussion when appropriate with their tutees. Both positive and negative behaviour points can be seen by parents via the My Child at School portal on a live basis and emails are sent in relation to issued detentions.

Q: How are places on trips allocated fairly? How does the School ensure there is something available for everyone?

A: Student choice is at the heart of our co-curricular offer. Where there is over-subscription, allocation is randomized so as not to be ‘first come, first served’. Parents should be assured that there is extensive thought and time that goes in to trying to give the greatest possible number of students their choices across the year, and across their time at School.

All information for electives, trips and clubs is [published on the website](#) and regularly included in the Headmaster’s bulletin (under Key Information section), especially ahead of new terms and at the start of each academic year.

Q: What support will Sixth Formers get regarding university applications?

A: Parents will imminently receive a letter from the Sixth Form team regarding University Applications. It will include a presentation which will serve as an introduction for parents to next steps for students after Sixth Form.

This presentation looks at different options available for students after they leave Reading School and then goes through the university applications process, while also covering competitive admissions, medicine and other topics.

Students have had an introduction to some of these ideas as part of their PSHE sessions and will be getting a full in-depth look at the process on their ‘Next Steps Days’ which are due to take place on Tuesday, 11 July 2023 (online sessions from home) and Wednesday, 12 July 2023 (in-person sessions in school). This will be two full days off timetable for students to delve into potential options and gain expert advice from myself, teaching staff, alumni and university representatives.



Q: What is the Sixth Form Character Development Programme?

A: Sixth Formers will take part in experiences and opportunities where character values can be developed alongside Reading School's four pillars, Leadership, Integrity, Excellence and Community.

A variety of means will be used in order to achieve this, including lectures, mentoring, volunteering, seminars, digital learning and events. All Sixth Formers are expected to select one (or more) of the four threads as part of their character education journey.

What does the School use parental contributions for?

A: The Society Office oversees the primary fundraising tool via the 'Charitable Annual Trust Fund – Building for the Future' and offers an opportunity for every parent/carer, Old Redingensian, staff member, governor and friend of the school, to support both current and future generations of Reading School students.

These contributions mean that we can continue to run our vital co-curricular/electives programme of clubs and activities which benefit all our pupils, enabling them to learn new skills, develop their individual talents and enjoy their recreational time.

Each department bids for their additional resources to enable them to run these activities efficiently throughout the year, directly impacting the breadth of co-curricular activities and competitions offered to pupils, as well as some modernisation of classrooms and facilities. Regular donations from parents and ORs also enables Reading School to project and plan activities for the future. We also use contributions to run the minibuses that transport students to and from games, co-curricular activities and events. We are very grateful for the financial contributions of parents that help to provide opportunities for our students to flourish.

Q: How does the school ensure as many students as possible get a chance to represent their House/ the School?

Inclusion and participation are promoted and encouraged by all the sports staff here at Reading School. Every student participates (both training and competing) in each major termly sport house competition (rugby, football and cricket – all of which are modified for A, B and C team abilities), and then all students are welcome to participate in school team ('match division') training, regardless of their availability for fixtures.

If a student decides not to try out for the school team, the second half-term in Years 7 - 11 is a rotation of activities, chosen by students. Every single after-school and lunchtime training session is open for anyone to attend, there is never any 'closed door', and coaches are encouraged to balance healthy squad rotation with remaining competitive fixtures.

Significantly, in 2022-3, we entered the ESFA football national cup for B teams, as well as arranging 'friendly' fixtures and termly Saturday fixtures in all sports, to give as many students as possible the opportunity to represent the school.



Beyond the 'major' sports, we have also run house events and entered competitions/fixtures for:

Table tennis (U16 Team national finalists and U19 Individual Finals), ultimate frisbee, handball, volleyball, lacrosse, basketball, cross country (3 students representing Berkshire in the National Championships in 2023, athletics, boccia, indoor curling and motor sport. There is something for everyone at Reading. We encourage our students to be active and strive to improve in their chosen sports. We have plans to ensure that water sports are given a higher priority when the Boat House project is completed later in 2023.

Head of Sport and PE, Mr S Allen and his team encourage children and young people to give something new a try and they encourage parents to reinforce and remind their children of the same.

The full list of extra-curricular opportunities can be found here: [Reading School - Co-Curriculum Programme](#) and details of sporting fixtures will be found in the Headmaster's Bulletin. Parents are welcome to attend fixtures to support their children. We have never offered so many sporting activities and opportunities for our students. Thank you to students for participating and thank you to parents for supporting.