



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

24 MARCH 2023



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Introduction

I would like to this opportunity to reiterate that as an organisation we are fundamentally committed to being an outward facing school that provides opportunities for our people to flourish. Our people include not just students and staff but also parents, alumni and governors. This is why we value the feedback and views of all our stakeholders so that we may continue to improve the lives and experience of our children, young people and whole school community.

I would like to especially thank the parents who have taken the time to contribute to a recent parent survey and to those who participated in the workshops relating to purpose and organisational culture, linked to our partnership with Right to Dream. I hope that we will be able to facilitate further opportunities to contribute in the future. There have in fact been a wide range of opportunities to demonstrate positive commitment and engagement with the school. For instance; Year 7 Parents' consultation evening, Full Governors Board meeting, RSPA meeting, Reading Foundation meeting and Boarding Parents' Association meeting.

In addition, I would like to highlight some of the key messages that emerged from the recent Parental Survey. As promised in last week's Headmaster's Bulletin, we have considered the responses and have produced a summary to a number of points raised by parents which can be [accessed by clicking here](#).

Quotations below illustrate some of the parental responses:

- Going absolutely above and beyond in providing an all-round education for the students.
- Balancing academic excellence and the wholesome development of boys via the electives.
- Strengths of the school include not just the academic focus but also on character building.
- Academically good and a great Drama department.
- High academic standards are there, but not the be all and end all. I love the equal emphasis on the development of character, integrity and service.
- Superb education through subject specialist teachers.
- Focus on charity, compassion and supporting the vulnerable is to be commended.
- Wide breadth and depth of sport. The smart sports kit enables a sense of belonging.
- SEN support team are amazing.

We seek to go above and beyond in providing a plethora of opportunities, while taking on board and listening to feedback from parents. We are determined to:

- Continue to provide a wide range of diverse trips and educational visits
- Increase our links with other schools and organisations, including girls' schools
- Seek to refine and improve our communication with both parents and students
- Ensure that we continue to prioritise the importance of compassion, charity and service

We encourage students to provide us with information so that we are able to include it within our communications, especially on Team, social media platforms, the school website and the Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin as appropriate.

We seek to provide equity of opportunity so that our people can contribute to the life of the school and feel like they belong. Therefore, we welcome and celebrate participation, performance and progress.

We look forward to showcasing the participation, performance and progress of members of our community. We celebrate in words and pictures. We have curated a number of examples of academic and character excellence, that demonstrate our fundamental commitment to going above and beyond in providing a plethora of opportunities. We are grateful for the support of the parent body for their continued support.

Mr A M Robson
Headmaster

Key information

All Years

Reading School Statement following the death of Ruth Perry



In the Friday, 13 January 2023 edition of the Headmaster's Bulletin, we shared that we were extremely saddened to hear the news that Headteacher at Caversham Primary School, Ruth Perry, had passed away. We felt it important to mark her passing along with providing support if needed, as many of our students formerly attended Caversham Primary School and would have known Mrs Perry who was hugely respected.

As many of you may be aware, news of her passing has been prevalent this week in the national media. Specifically, Mrs Perry's family have shared that her death was a "direct result of pressure" she was under due to an Ofsted inspection at her school and, "deeply harmful" in its "implied focus on one individual". Furthermore, there has been a strong reaction from the education sector and school leaders and staff have been deeply affected by the news.

We would like to continue to offer our deepest sympathy to the family, friends and colleagues of Ruth Perry. Should any of our students need support or simply want to talk, please email studentsupport@reading-school.co.uk or visit the Auxilium to speak with one of our Student Support Team.

Safeguarding children & young people

Schools across the UK have been asked to share information on behalf of the parents of Olly Stephens, Amanda and Stuart Stephens. Given their lived experience of online harm, which had a direct impact on the tragic loss of their son, they would like safeguarding information shared with all school communities.

Online safety and protecting children from online harm is extremely important. Amanda and Stuart would like as many parents and carers to see the FT film in the hope that it will spread awareness and start conversations. They also hope that parents and carers will join the free, Ben Kinsella Trust workshops, to take advantage of this opportunity, to learn more about knife crime and how they can help protect their children.

It is essential to safeguard our children both at home and at school. Together, we can work towards a safer future for all young people.

[Protecting Children Online - Capture, who's looking after the children?](#)

[Knife Crime Awareness Workshops – The Ben Kinsella Trust](#)

Exams - reminder

As per the school calendar (available on the website):

- Year 11 students' final day before study leave will be May 5, and Year 13 students' final day before study leave will be May 12. We envisage selected Year 11 students to be obliged to remain in school for a period after this, to support them with their revision.
- Internal exams for Years 7, 9 and 12 take place from 22 - 26 May.
- Internal exams for Years 8 and 10 take place from 5 - 9 June.

All students should ensure they have and refer to a copy of the following revision guide that has been put together with our students in mind. We encourage students to revise little and often, starting as early as possible and ensuring time is built in for relaxation and exercise.

There have been exam and wellbeing support sessions on offer on Monday afternoons, afterschool in Big School (last session on Monday, 27 March).

Thank a Reading School staff member

We know our staff go above and beyond in providing education, activities and pastoral care for our students. If you would like to show your thanks to a specific staff member (including associate staff) [please complete this form](#).

Excellence, Belonging & Community

Academic Excellence

British Biology Olympiad

Reading School Year 13 Biologists overall gained an impressive 8 Gold, 10 Silver and 14 bronze medals in the competition run by the Royal Society of Biology. Receiving a gold medal in this competition demonstrates that a student is one of the most talented young biologists in the country. This year over 10,000 students from over 700 schools competed with a gold medal being awarded to the top 5% of students, a silver medal to the top 15% and a bronze medal to the top 30%.



The British Biology Olympiad challenges and stimulates students with an interest in biology to expand and extend their talents. It enables students to demonstrate their knowledge and to be suitably rewarded with publicly recognised certificates and medals. The International Biology Olympiad (IBO) will be held in Al Ain (United Arab Emirates) this year, with over sixty countries taking part. The IBO seeks to challenge by both theory and practical tests some of the top pre-university biology students in the world, with over sixty countries taking part.

More information about other biology competitions can be found here:

[UKBC – Home of the British Biology Olympiad](#)

[International Biology Olympiad](#)

Congratulations and well done to all of our students who participated.

Gold awards

	Laurie H (13S)	Charles P (13S)
Jonny R (13E)	Padmanaban A (13W)	Aazim A (13E)
Vivek D (13C)	Muhammad S (13E)	Chris P (13E)
Harry J (13W)	Aditya K (13S)	Joshua Hughes (13E)
Finn T (13W)	Liou Y (13C)	JaeYoung C (13E)
John J (13S)	Ben Adams (13S)	Janis Z (13C)
Ivan P (13S)	Aminur R C (13S)	Sam T (13W)
Luke S (13S)		

Bronze awards

Silver awards

	Jinseo A (13W)	Morgan K (13W)
Edward T (13E)	Neel V (13S)	Francis C (13C)
Elil S (13W)	Yat C M W (13S)	Meet Nair (13W)

Haileybury Model United Nations



Several of our 6th Formers participated in the largest Model United Nations conference in the UK to learn how to shape a better world for the future last weekend from the 18 – 19 March.

Haileybury Model United Nations (HMUN) is a, 'role-playing activity, in which students assume the roles of delegates representing various countries in the committees of the United Nations and tasked with solving a range of global issues through research, lobbying, and debate.'

Well done to Bobson M, who won an award as a distinguished delegate and Jack L won an award as an honourable mention. We spoke with Jack L this week and he shared his entertaining recollection of events with us:



"Xin Chao, (or hello in Vietnamese) readers of the Headmaster's Bulletin from the Delegation of Vietnam. On Friday, 17 March, the Delegation of Vietnam, comprising of myself (12 BOW), Adam M (12 EF), Harry L (), James R (TF), Bobson M (12 MD), and Elijah G (13 BOW), set out for Haileybury school in Hereford to take part in a Model UN (MUN) which schools from both the UK and other countries would attend.

The expedition was punctuated by frantic last-minute preparation and reviews of what we had researched in the build-up to the weekend, accompanied by conversations about what we hoped to achieve from this trip. After a two-hour drive, which Mr Whitehorn and Mr Casemore no doubt felt had been stretched out to eternity due to the intellectually stimulating conversations about modernity that had sprung up during the journey, we finally arrived. Upon arrival, we were greeted by a sprawling expanse of sports fields and buildings and wondered how we would navigate this maze-like school.

After speeches from an ambassador of Eswatini and talks from the school director, we were split off into our committees and thrown into the deep end. Here, we spent the weekend engaged in spirited debates on current issues, such as reducing the economic inequality between developed and developing countries and establishing a nuclear-free weapon zone in the Middle East. Tensions were high during the debates; diplomacy seemed to be an impossibility as a large-scale walkout was staged by myself to protest the USA's proposal of being able to station their nuclear weapons in the Middle East. This walkout resulted in the resolution failing to pass and played a significant part in the relations between different countries, and resulted in the formation of a Bloc with the sole intention of annexing the USA.



The MUN ended with a General Assembly (GA), which consisted of the entirety of the participants in the committees. There was a state of alert after the morning's events, only heightened by the Israeli delegation standing up to protest the attendance of Palestine in the GA and murmurs of an invasion of the US that originated from the walkout in the morning. However, despite the rumblings, the GA proved to be the ultimate test for any resolution and diplomatic relations as a whole. Only one resolution was passed out of the 213 approved by the resolution council throughout the weekend- a clear illustration of the immense tensions between Blocs. The passing of this resolution caused a hearty round of applause that highlighted the difficulty of reaching a consensus on any issue in the UN and reaching a solution.

After the applause died down and people had regained their composure, the Secretary-General began to talk about the events of the conference and what they represented. The Head Chairs of each committee also gave a short speech that reflected on the highlights of the weekend- from the US calling for the removal of the UK and France's veto power in the Security Council to the sombre solitary walkout of the Pakistan delegate in the Special Committee, contrasted with one of the largest walkouts in recent years in the Disarmament Committee. Curiously, a common strand was present in every committee - the sudden influx of pineapples being charitably gifted to the chairs as a sign of commitment to diplomacy and cooperation in international issues, which was emphasised to be in no way related to the decisions in favour of the Country that provided the fruitful bounty.

The weekend concluded with a presentation of awards in which Vietnam, unfortunately, just missed out on being named one of the best delegations but succeeded in achieving a Highly Commended award in the Disarmament Committee and a Distinguished Delegate award in the Human Rights Committee. The weekend was a massive success for all involved, in no small part due to the help of Mr Whitehorn and Mr Casemore, who gave up their weekends to take us to the event, putting up with talks of existentialism during the 2-hour coach journey to and from Hereford. The Vietnam delegation would like to sincerely thank them both for their support during the weekend as well as encourage any student interested in this event to jump at any future opportunities like this."

Particle Physics Masterclass



Science & Technology Facilities Council
Rutherford Appleton Laboratory

A group of Year 12 physics students were able to have the valuable opportunity to take part in a physics masterclass at Rutherford Appleton Laboratory (RAL) on Wednesday 8 March. The day included our students being able to benefit from lectures by world-leading particle physicists in the research group; a tour

of the X-ray synchrotron in Diamond Light Source; and a workshop where they analysed real data from the Large Hadron Collider, deducing the mass of mysterious particles hidden within the data.

Sam J (12S) who was part of the trip shared:



"The Particle Physics Masterclass was enjoyable and thought-provoking, and it was great being able to see and learn about Physics beyond our course. There were a variety of talks during the day, on a wide range of topics – we learnt about the Standard Model of Particle Physics and its limitations; the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) and how it manages data from its collisions; and the research done at RAL. It was great to learn more about modern physics research, and have some questions answered.

There were also a variety of tours and activities during the day – our group got to visit Diamond, the huge particle accelerator at RAL which accelerates electrons, and uses radiation from them in imaging. It was so incredible to visit such a large, cutting-edge machine, and learn more about the engineering behind it. There was also an activity using Python coding to identify rare particles from real LHC data, and it was amazing how much you can learn from very little data. Overall, it was a very exciting and fascinating visit."

Thank you to Dr C Lewis-Brown for leading the trip.

The Oxford University Computing Challenge



This annual challenge is an event which aims to encourage students who have achieved a top 10% score in the [UK Bebras Challenge](#) to further develop their skills and produce programmed solutions to computational thinking problems. Each year there are two rounds of the challenge, with the second, only inviting the top 20 students from each year group to compete.

Congratulations to Luke H (12W) for achieving the Elite National Finalist award of 6th place, James M (13C) for receiving the Elite National Finalist award of 6th place, Isaac Badipe (12L) for receiving the Elite National Finalist award of 22nd Place, Rujul Nayak (10S) for receiving the Senior National Finalist award of 6th Place and Maxwell Li (7W) for Junior National Finalist award of 9th place.

"It is the second time I have done this challenge and I have loved it both times. I got joint sixth this year, which I hope to improve upon next year" Luke H (12W)

Perse Coding Competition 2023

The second round of the Perse coding challenge, which was open to the highest scoring entries in Round 1 only, was recently attempted by over fifty of the Reading School students. Round one took 40 minutes and was for pairs (or solo, if necessary) sharing one computer, whereas round two was for three pupils to participate together, with a maximum of two Years 10-11 allowed per team. Students sat together on up to three computers with up to three different logins per team.

This is one of the more dynamic and interactive type of competitions, with students sharing ideas and thoughts on how to solve the set challenges. Strategy was also key, where groups allocated questions to each other based on the varying levels of difficulty that suited specific students' abilities.

The key to success was to understanding the expectations of the online submission window, which took the code for each question and parsed it, providing an indication of whether the algorithm was successful or not. This type of competition certainly does require practice. Well done to all students for participating and we look for to more students joining the fun next year

Sporting Excellence



The UK Ultimate Frisbee Nationals 2023 competition was held on Saturday, 4 March and Sunday, 5 March at WV Active Aldersley in Wolverhampton with Reading School participating in the Under 14 and Under 17 categories.

We are very proud that our team in the Under 14 category came 3rd and well done to Abhay S (8W), Akhil G (8W), Akshat S (8W), Arnav M (8W), Haris S (8W), Henry R (8E), Karthik V (8C) and Yash K (8W).

We would also like to congratulate our Under 17 team - Kaval S (11L & Captain), Krish M (11S), Samarth K (9C), Kaushik K (9C), Nag V (9C), Inder S (9C) and Ihsan S (9C).

Abhay S P (8W) shared, *"After a lot of practice over the past few months, we had an opportunity to use our techniques and we all played really well as a team. We are looking forward to the next competition. Thank you to Mr D Whitehorn, Teacher of History and Dr C Lewis-Brown, Teacher of Physics and Maths for your support and coaching throughout the sessions."*

Community

LRC

Pupils in Years 11 and Year 13 should check their school library records before the Easter holidays. They can do this by using the library catalogue, 'Oliver' or by asking Mrs Kesteven. All books that are no longer being used must be returned and all overdue fines cleared by Friday, 31 of March. Pupils can continue to use the LRC until their last exam. We will contact parents directly with details of their child's overdue books and outstanding charges after this deadline. If students have queries about their accounts, they can email ikesteven@reading-school.co.uk

Sports Fixtures

Monday, 27 March

U16 Basketball v Cox Green (away) 4:00pm

Tuesday, 28 March

Year 10 Futsal Tournament at Reading University 2:00pm

U14 Basketball v Cox Green (away) 4:00pm

Wednesday, 29 March

Year 10 Football v Little Heath (away) 4:00pm

Thursday, 30th March

Year 8 Football v Wren (away) 4:00pm

Friday 31 March

GCSE Moderation

Parents are welcome to attend and watch sports fixtures.

RSPA

Lottery Update



Win an iPhone 14 Pro! Yes! You've heard it right!!

Spring is in the air, and the RSPA has an AWESOME prize for you to win!

Buy tickets before the draw on Saturday, 25 March 8pm, and you'll be in the draw to win a top-of-the-line iPhone 14 Pro. With a massive 48-megapixel camera, a crystal clear 6.1" display, and 128GB of storage – along with all the speed and processing power you'd expect, this really is the upgrade you've been waiting for. There's not long to go before the big draw - so don't miss out and get your tickets today!

There's no need to buy a separate ticket for this draw and you will be entered automatically. Of course, you're welcome to buy extra tickets to increase your chance of winning.

Joining the lottery is very easy and one RSPA participant wins a guaranteed prize every Saturday night. Tickets cost £1 each and can be bought as a one-off or on a regular basis.

[Click here to enter.](#)



Second-Hand Uniform Shop

The Second-Hand Uniform Shop will be open at the following times this week:

Friday, 24 March 2:30 – 4:00pm (access on foot, via the pedestrian gates, only)

Saturday, 25 March 10:30am – 12:30pm

The Uniform Shop can be found at the back of the Walled Carpark.

Please note that, if the weather forecast is poor, everything will be kept inside the shop. If this is the case, we will be unable to offer access to our full range of stock and only one family group will be allowed in the shop at a time.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Quiz Night



We have started planning a Quiz Night! A lot more information is to follow in due course and for now, please save the date; it will take place on Saturday, 20 May.

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

The RSPA Team



Lent Term – Week 12

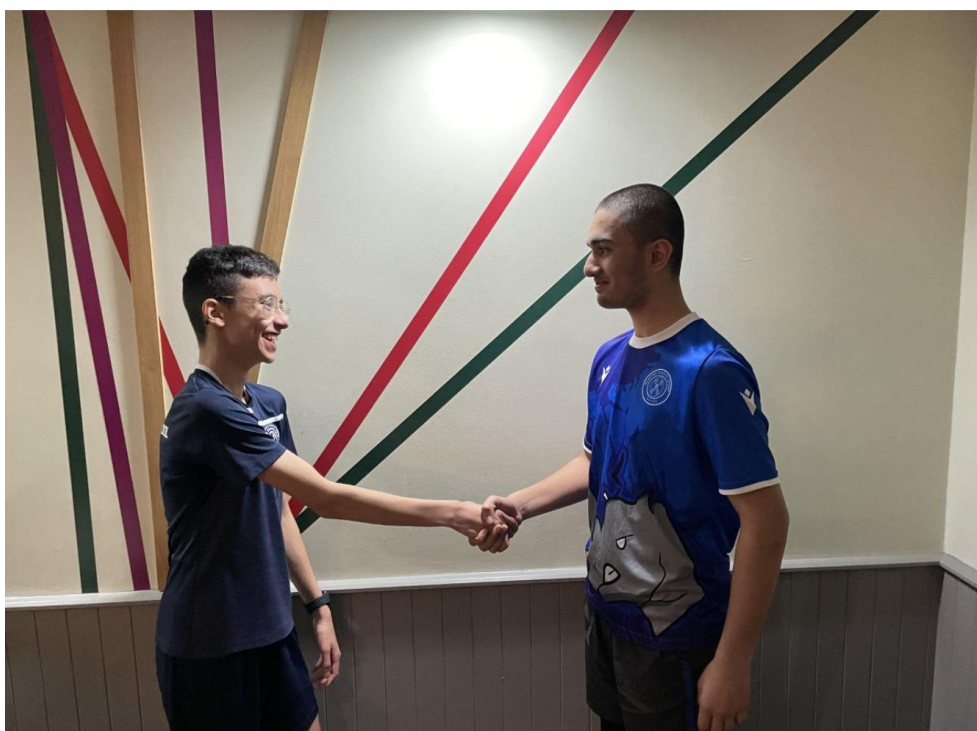
To keep up to date with student life at Reading School, click the icons below to follow and stay connected



UK Ultimate Frisbee U17 and U14 Indoor Nationals (Saturday, 4 March – Sunday, 5 March)

U14s (pictured below) - finished 3rd out of 13 teams (from a starting seed of 5th)

U17s - finished 10th out of 24 teams (from a starting seed of 21st)



MVPs (Most Valuable Player) - Kaval S (U17 Captain) and Haris S (U14)

Dr Lewis-Brown found time to teach some Maths during break

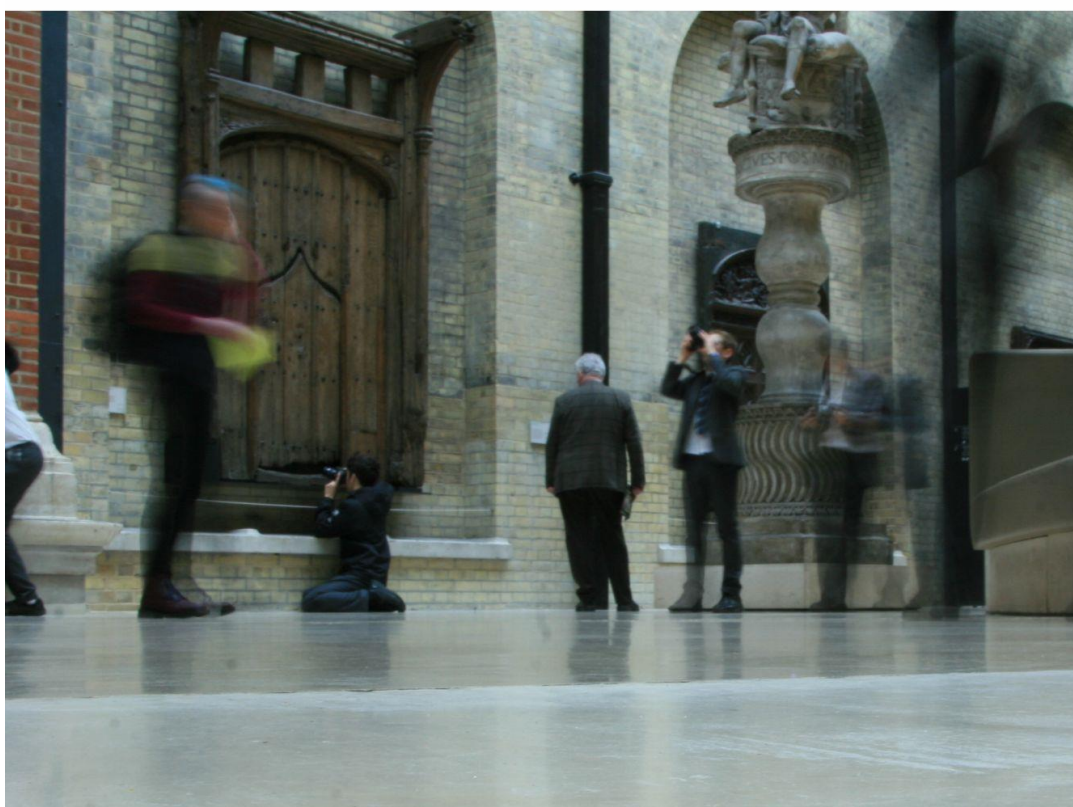


U17 team

This week our Year 9 Artists and Photographers, Year 10 Artists, and Y12 History of Artists, visited the world-renowned collections of craft and design at the V&A, London. For most pupils this was their first visit, with boys and girls greatly enjoying a taste of the amazing artworks, artefacts, and objects in the collection.

Groups led by Ms Creegan, Ms Record, and Mr Evans circulated around key parts of the museum so that pupils got a good idea of the breadth and depth of the work within, taking in the Cast Courts, Fashion, Jewellery, Architecture, Design, Japan, Ceramics, and Furniture.

Student photographs by Yicheng (9S)



Oxford University Computing Challenge Cohort

(From left to right) Headmaster, Mr Ashley Robson, Luke H (12W), James M (13C), Rujul N (10S)

"This was a great opportunity to compete and represent our school in a subject I enjoy. The puzzles were challenging but fun and I am very pleased with my results. I hope this will inspire younger pupils in the future" Rujul N (10S)



Isaac B (12L)



"Participating in the OUCC final round was an amazing experience for me. It has been a great learning journey, as I have been able to explore the world of technology and gain an insight into its fascinating capabilities. I am immensely proud of what I have achieved and would encourage everyone to take part in such amazing opportunities. Never be afraid to try something new, you will never know what you can achieve." Maxwell L (7W)

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