



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

05 MAY 2023

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Introduction

Coronation of His Majesty The King & Her Majesty The Queen Consort



The nationwide celebration to mark the Coronation takes place this coming weekend from Saturday 6 May – Monday 8 May. The Coronation is a formal ceremony where His Majesty King Charles will be crowned as monarch. It is a highly symbolic event that marks the beginning of a monarch's reign and has remained largely unchanged for over a thousand years.

I hope that members of the Reading School community can be part of the celebrations in some way, from coronation lunches, watching the Coronation Concert to joining in with volunteering opportunities through the 'Big Help Out'. To find out more, the official website coronation.gov.uk/about-the-coronation/ contains news and resources that may be of interest. Reading School's Learning Resource Centre Team have had a display with information and books related to the Monarchy over the past week for students to access and I would like to thank Mrs A Jackson for her work on this.

I would also invite anyone celebrating this long weekend to email your photos to communityrelations@reading-school.co.uk, in order to be featured in next week's Bulletin.

Allyship

I was very proud of Daniyal V (13C), School Captain 2022-2023, who recently participated as a panellist at the April 2023 Take Back the Night Conference. The focus on encouraging responsibility and a culture of accountability resonates with Reading School's approach to building healthy, respectful relationships and positive character development. Certainly, I concur with Daniyal's contention that 'As young men it is our responsibility to not be perpetrators of misogyny but rather pillars of support for others.' Indeed, we must promote positive masculinity and the importance of healthy and respectful relationships by acting as influencers and allies rather than feeling victimised or act as bystanders. The Crowther Centre in Australia (2021) suggests that positive masculinity should be defined as:

"The expression of attitudes and behaviours (character strengths and virtues which any gender might have) that have been embodied and enacted by males for the common good, both individually and for the community."

Fear can be eradicated through the nurturing of character and attitudes of respect. Our shared common purpose is to advocate for the right of everyone to feel safe from sexual violence. Thank you to all staff and students who are committed to ending all forms of violence. Through an emphasis on positive masculinity, personal behaviours, attitudes and beliefs, we can work together to build a positive community. This includes a sense of duty towards others and recognising the positives that can come from looking out for others. In order to embrace healthy pro-social behaviour and promote good mental health for all children and young people, we need to nurture a new vision of positive masculinity.

As Reading School is a values-based, purpose-driven organisation, we strive to build a community which seeks to build the leaders of tomorrow, pursuing human flourishing. Our students should:

- Call out others who engage in behaviours that are disrespectful or aggressive
- Ask for help when needed
- Show vulnerability
- Express fear, sadness and kindness
- Develop healthy relationship skills such as active listening

As children and young people, students at Reading School should strive to be authentic, connected and motivated. Authenticity is linked to being confident, kind and compassionate. Connection is concerned with building relationships based on trust and respect. Whilst motivation focuses on what is required to do and be a good person. What makes a good man in the Twenty-First Century? My view is heart and backbone. We should encourage our students to express their emotions in healthy ways more freely, engage in kindness and compassion and more regularly check-in with their friends and loved ones.

Character Education



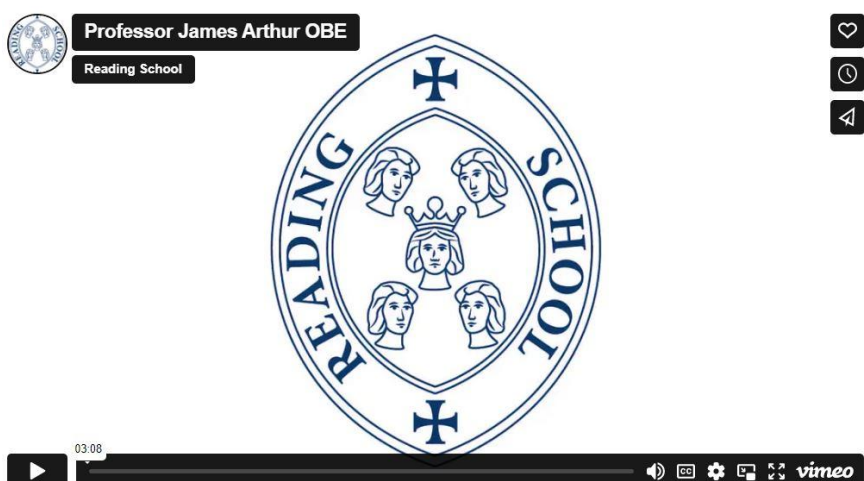
Today, we were honoured to host a visit from Professor James Arthur, Director of the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues (University of Birmingham) and Mr Jim Rahn, President of the Kern Family Foundation (Wisconsin, USA), led by Head of Theology and Philosophy, Mr B Miller.

Our guests met with both staff and students and got to see first-hand our character education provision, which included the character journeys of some of our students along with Floreat lessons. We hope that their visit will act as a catalyst for further inspirational developments relating to personal development, flourishing and positive character formation.

Thank you to the following staff for participating in the visit; Ms. K Rosser-Evans (Head of House), Mr D Tridgell (Head of County House, Reading Way lead), Mr C Betteridge (Head of School House), Mr T Evans (Assistant Headteacher - Personal Development, Pupil Premium Director and Future Stories), Ms. A Stratford (Teacher of History, Sixth Form pastoral lead) and Mr T Casemore (Teacher of Theology and Philosophy, Floreat).

In addition, the students were fine ambassadors of our approach to character at Reading School and the group included; Rishi D (Y13), Nirbhay K (Y13), Benji F (Y12), Aslan H (Y12), Reuben O (10S), Richard M (Y10), Oliver C (Y10), Ewan H (Y8) and Zoravar S (Y8).

Professor James Arthur OBE took some time to record a short interview especially for the Reading School community and please click the thumbnail below to view.



Mr A M Robson
Headmaster



Key information

All Years

Healthy Revision

Building on last week's publication in the Headmaster's Bulletin of the end of year exam details of what students will be tested on, and how to revise in each subject, all of Year 7 were this week treated to a masterclass by our talented teachers on the metacognition behind effective revision. The presentation can be downloaded by [clicking this link](#). We encourage all parents and students alike to look at this in conjunction with the School's [revision guide](#), and the editable [revision timetable](#) that all students are expected to complete. We cannot reiterate enough the following messages about the internal end of year exams:

- These exams are a celebration; an opportunity to demonstrate the fantastic progress you have made this year. They should not be a reason for stress or unhealthy study. We welcome parents and carers' support on this.
- They are a practice opportunity to experience sitting many exams in one go - working in silence, for extended periods of time, and having to organise your own study.
- Students should explore different revision techniques and a variety of strategies, so you are more confident with effective revision ahead of Years 11/13.
- There is nothing 'high stakes' about these exams, and we would caution students and parents against any sense of competition against peers. The exams do not count towards GCSEs nor A level grades.
- There should be a balance between exam technique and revision, maintaining usual hobbies alongside health and fitness.
- After the exams, teachers will provide insightful 'feed forward' - this is advice and tasks to move students on from where they currently are. These exams will only be useful if students fully act upon this advice.

Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 only

Vaccinations

A reminder for parents and students that [HPV vaccinations](#) will be taking place at school on Wednesday 10 May for all students in Years 8 and 9.

Any outstanding vaccinations across years 9, 10 and 11 ([Diphtheria, Tetanus, Polio/Meningitis ACWY/Measles, Mumps, and Rubella](#)) will also take place.

Years 11, 12 and 13 only

How to maximise your Summer Holidays to prepare for sixth form and beyond

Competition for admission to top universities and other career pathways such as apprenticeships and indeed employment in the UK is intense. To increase your child's chances of success when applying, it is recommended to encourage them to explore their chosen subject beyond the confines of the school curriculum during their summer break. Engaging in super-curricular activities enables students to evaluate their level of interest in a particular subject.

Admissions tutors, particularly those from the most selective universities, will be looking for evidence of a student's authentic enthusiasm for the subject they are seeking to study. Incorporating details of their super-curricular learning experiences into their personal statement (and during interviews if required) will demonstrate their level of dedication.

Whilst we suggest super-curricular activities, valuable resource lists are also available from Oxford and Cambridge universities and we have listed other resources below:

- [Cambridge Super-Curricular suggestions](#)
- [Oxford subject resources](#)
- [Outreach event calendar | University of Oxford](#)
- [Oxplore](#) - created by Oxford University to engage student debates and ideas that go beyond what is covered in the classroom.
- [Staircase 12](#) - created by Oxford University, this website helps students to explore their subject interests outside the curricula they learn at school.

Reading Lists:

- [Durham University reading list](#)
- [King's College Cambridge reading lists](#)
- [Manchester University reading list](#)
- [Oxford University reading list](#) (reading lists for each course are provided)

Podcasts:

- [LSE Player](#) – London School of Economics Podcasts
- [Mind over Chatter](#) – Cambridge University's Podcast
- [Oxford University's Podcasts](#)
- [The Naked Scientist](#) – Science Podcasts and Radio Shows

MOOCS:

- [Alison](#): Offers a range of free online courses from the Arts to the Sciences.
- [Coursera](#): Provides universal access to the world's best education, partnering with top universities and organisations to offer courses online.
- [Future Learn](#): A free online courses from top universities and specialist organisations.
- [edX](#): An online learning destination offering high-quality courses from the world's best universities and institutions to learners everywhere. Founded by Harvard University and MIT.

Online Resources:

- [Gresham's College](#): A database of free public lectures.
- [iDebate](#): The world's leading provider of debate resources.
- [My HE Plus](#): Created by Cambridge University, this website looks to help students explore subjects beyond their school curriculum.
- [Oxplore](#): Created by Oxford University to engage students debates and ideas that go beyond what is covered in the classroom.
- [Oxford Sparks](#): Oxford University's portal for sharing research carried out by scientists at the university.
- [Staircase 12](#): Created by Oxford University, this website helps students to explore their subject interests outside the curricula they learn at school.
- [TED Talks](#): A great source of inspiring talks from leading experts.
- [YouTube](#): A wonder bank of educational videos if you know where to look!

Apprenticeship preparation:

It is widely acknowledged that apprenticeships are highly sought after, and as more individuals choose this route, it is essential to understand how to distinguish yourself from the competition. Fortunately, we have gathered some helpful tips to assist you in standing out when applying for an apprenticeship.

- **Do your research:** Conduct thorough research on the apprenticeship program and the company or organisation offering it. Understand the requirements, expectations, and the skills and experience they are looking for.
- **Tailor your application:** Customise your application to the specific apprenticeship you are applying for, highlighting how your skills and experience align with the job description and requirements.
- **Highlight relevant experience:** Even if you do not have direct experience in the field, emphasise any transferable skills or experiences that could be relevant, such as volunteering, extracurricular activities, or part-time jobs.
- **Showcase your passion:** Employers want to see that you are passionate and committed to the field. Demonstrate your enthusiasm and interest in the apprenticeship program and how it aligns with your career goals.
- **Network:** Connect with professionals in the field and attend industry events to build your network and learn more about apprenticeship opportunities.
- **Use online resources:** Utilise online resources such as job boards, LinkedIn, and apprenticeship websites to find opportunities and connect with potential employers.
- **Be proactive:** Don't wait for opportunities to come to you. Reach out to potential employers, express your interest, and ask if they have any apprenticeship opportunities available.

Resources for apprenticeship opportunities:

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

<https://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk/>

<https://www.ucas.com/apprenticeships>

Community and work experience

In addition, students in **Year 11 and Year 13** with more time after exams finish should consider community and work experience opportunities they can source over the summer period to provide them with a range of valuable skills and benefits, including:

- **Developing interpersonal skills:** Community and work experience often involve interaction with people from different backgrounds, helping students to develop their communication, teamwork, and leadership skills.
- **Building confidence:** Participating in community and work experience can help students to build self-confidence and develop a sense of independence, as they learn to navigate new situations and take on new responsibilities.
- **Gaining practical skills:** Community and work experience can provide students with practical skills that can be applied in real-world situations, such as problem-solving, time management, and project management.
- **Enhancing their resumes:** Including community and work experience on their resumes can help students stand out to prospective employers or college admissions officers, demonstrating their commitment, initiative, and relevant skills.
- **Exploring career interests:** Community and work experience can also help students to explore potential career paths, providing them with a better understanding of different industries and job roles.

Overall, community and work experience can be a valuable way for students to gain practical skills, develop personal and professional networks, and explore their interests and passions.

Excellence, Belonging & Community

Academic Excellence

2022 Reading Foundation Mcllroy Essay Competition

The annual Mcllroy Essay Competition is the tenth modern edition of the prize, which was reinstated under the guidance of our late colleague and OR Ian Judd. Each year we ask students to respond to a stimulus question which crosses curriculum divisions and academic disciplines. This year's essay celebrated the Year of Reading;

Students from Years 8 to 13 had the opportunity to enter and submit an essay which allowed them to express their thoughts and feelings creatively and reflectively. The competition aims to reward one essay written by a Reading School student which, in the opinion of the judging panel, displays the best combination of:

- Flair for expressing complex ideas about a subject in simple terms.
- A logical and well-developed argument: it must have a starting idea, develop over a series of topic paragraphs, and reach some kind of clear resolution.
- Evidence of verve: a spirit of enthusiasm for the subject and the task, and the process of writing about them.
- Passion for sharing a love and understanding of the subject in question.
- Ingenuity in coming up with exciting and original ways to tackle matters of current affairs and general knowledge.

We are pleased to announce that Noah H (10C) has won the annual Mcllroy Essay Competition 2022. He wrote a piece called *"The Precarious Future of The Art Of Reading"* in response to this year's task-title *"How Reading Makes Life Better"*.

Noah's essay was anonymously judged by the panel, drawn from the Reading School staff, to be a terrifically inspiring and well-expressed piece of writing. It will be published in a future edition of *"Floreat Redingensis"* and on the school's website.

Noah says:



"Winning the Mcllroy Essay Competition is an experience, to say the least. I was first introduced by my friends pestering me to put my creativity to use over the summer, and sending me this. However, having nothing but time on my hands in the sweltering Malaysian heat, I thought I'd give it a go. While I could talk about its pluses, like how it's obvious EPQ practice and develops essential essay writing skills, what really hits home is how much of a journey it is (especially for fiction writers such as myself) into informative writing. It shows that non-fiction writing does not have to be limited to a GCSE mark scheme."

Once again, students from across all the year groups took up the challenge, and the panel enjoyed carefully reading each one of the submissions to the 2022 competition. Thank you to every student who invested time, thought and skill in crafting an essay.

The Mcllroy Essay Competition has been running in its current format since 2013, and the English Department would like to thank the school and the Reading Foundation for its continued generous support by funding the £250 prize.

We all passionately believe in providing a wide range of opportunities for Reading School students to express their thoughts and feelings in a creative and reflective way, and this is just one such outlet.

The competition will open again for our current cohorts during the Summer Term 2023.

Take Back the Night International Conference

Current School Captain, Daniyal V (13C) recently featured as a panellist at a global virtual conference seeking to address sexual, relationship and domestic violence in all forms. The organisation, Take Back the Night, is the largest foundation aiming to end sexual violence, with its roots stretching back to popular protest movements in the 1970s.

Daniyal shared:



"It was incredibly poignant hearing about the experiences and initiatives expounded by the other speakers, from the importance of portraying sexual violence in film to local community initiatives in India designed to encourage group responsibility and a culture of accountability."

I personally offered our school's perspective on the issue as a single-sex educational environment, speaking about Reading School's PSHE collaboration with the Abbey School as a way of tackling potential harmful misconceptions that can arise from being in an all-boys environment and ensuring healthy character development."

The biggest take-away for me from the conference was the importance of the role that we can play as responsible and supportive third parties – as young men it's our responsibility to not be perpetrators of misogyny but rather pillars of support for others, doing our own part in whatever way we can to help end sexual violence."

Reading School is on journey with many strands, in order to develop and shape happy, healthy and informed children and young people. An additional and related strand to this work was the recent and inaugural Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) Symposium for single-sex schools held on Wednesday 19 April.

The event allowed Heads of PSHE from single sex-schools to come together in order to discuss the challenges faced in preparing students for the world beyond secondary school. The symposium discussed curriculums and compared how topics are taught in boys' and girls' schools respectively. The opportunity to learn from practice was effective in enabling the Heads to consider how to tailor PSHE and wider character development provision to achieve its aims. The event was led by Sixth Form Pastoral Lead, Head of Partnerships and Teacher of History, Ms A Stratford and schools attending included; Kendrick School, King Edward VI School, Queen Anne's School, The Abbey and Wilson's School.



Community

Our Echo Challenge 2023



Three Reading School students came together to share their inspiration, passion and drive to change the world as 'Team Bio Hazard' in the [Our Echo Challenge](#), an International competition designed by educators to engage secondary school students in tackling the decline of biodiversity head-on. Maulik S (8L), Abhiram G (8L) and Naivedya P (8L) worked together on a project which focussed on recycling food waste while reducing CO2 emissions through the design of a waste disposal vehicle that transforms biomass into biogas.

After entering the competition, Team Bio Hazard have made it through as 2023 finalists alongside four other teams who have all developed innovative and novel ways to act toward preserving, protecting and repairing biodiversity on a local level.

In order to support Team Bio Hazard, [you can vote for them by clicking here](#) and to watch a short one-minute video created by our students, please click the thumbnail below.



Good luck to Maulik, Abhiram and Naivedya.

RSPA

Quiz night

The RSPA are holding a Quiz night on Saturday May 20th from 7 -8.30pm to raise the much-needed funds for the school. Your contributions and participation are once again paramount to us meeting our targets and yet have so much fun! Some of our work has resulted in the refurbishment of the refectory toilets, purchase of the new cricket nets, the gym equipment around the school, new seating to be purchased and placed around the school and the LRC resources. This is yet another great evening for us to get together as a school community to raise more invaluable funds.

Only 120 places are available so please visit <https://www.trybooking.co.uk/CIXZ> to purchase your ticket as soon as you can. Prizes are on offer but please bring a little more cash as our shop is open.

Volunteers on the night are always welcome. So, please contact us at contactus@readingschoolparents.co.uk for more info on how you can be involved.

Second Hand Uniform Shop

The Second-Hand Uniform Shop will be open today, Friday 5 May, between 2:30pm and 4:00pm

Please come along to purchase blazers, trousers, shirts, base layers, rugby boots, trainers, outdoor coats and more.

The shop is located at the back of the walled carpark (opposite the Chapel).

Please note:

Buyers are not allowed to drive onto site, access is via the pedestrian gates only.

We would love donations of the following items as our stocks are running low:

- Small size blazers (up to 34")
- School ties
- Lab coats
- Safety goggles
- Macron kit
- Reading school hoodies
- Rugby boots and trainers

We are also collecting old style reversible games tops, which will be donated to a charity that sends rugby kit overseas. Donations can be sent into reception in a bag marked 'Uniform Donations' or handed in at the next opening.

Please email shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk for further information.

We look forward to seeing you there.

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

The RSPA Team



Summer Term – Week 3

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



The keenly anticipated annual 'Come Dine with Me' competition took place in boarding last week and it did not disappoint. After the high standards set last year, this year's entrants knew they had to work hard to impress this year's judges: school staff, Mr D McGall, Mrs P Hickman, Miss M Hooker and RSBPA chairs, Rhidian Williams and Xiaoxiao Wang.

Both boarding houses put in an exceptional effort, with East Wing's starter of pan-fried scallops and dessert of vegan chocolate cheesecake wowing the judges. The musical interludes from Sean A, Kevin A and Rohan P added to the highbrow restaurant atmosphere. In South House they elected for a Bollywood theme with a special dance performance by Year 9s Dylan J, Ryan C and Jeremi C, capping off an Indian feast of paneer curry served with basmati rice and freshly baked naan bread.



After much deliberation, East Wing were announced as the winners of 2023, bringing the overall record to 1-1 for this competition. A huge thanks go to all the boarders who contributed, as waiters, washer-uppers and organisers.

Particular praise must go to the head chefs: Andrew M and Avi G in East Wing and Aaryan K and Jeff N in South House and to the main organisers James P in SH and Avi G in EW. Special mentions to Manas S, Harry P and Srisht C, as well as to all our Year 11s who contributed to the success of the evening.

Although this is a student-led competition, as always special thanks go to House Matrons, Mrs Andrews and Mrs Booth for their efforts in helping to facilitate this event.

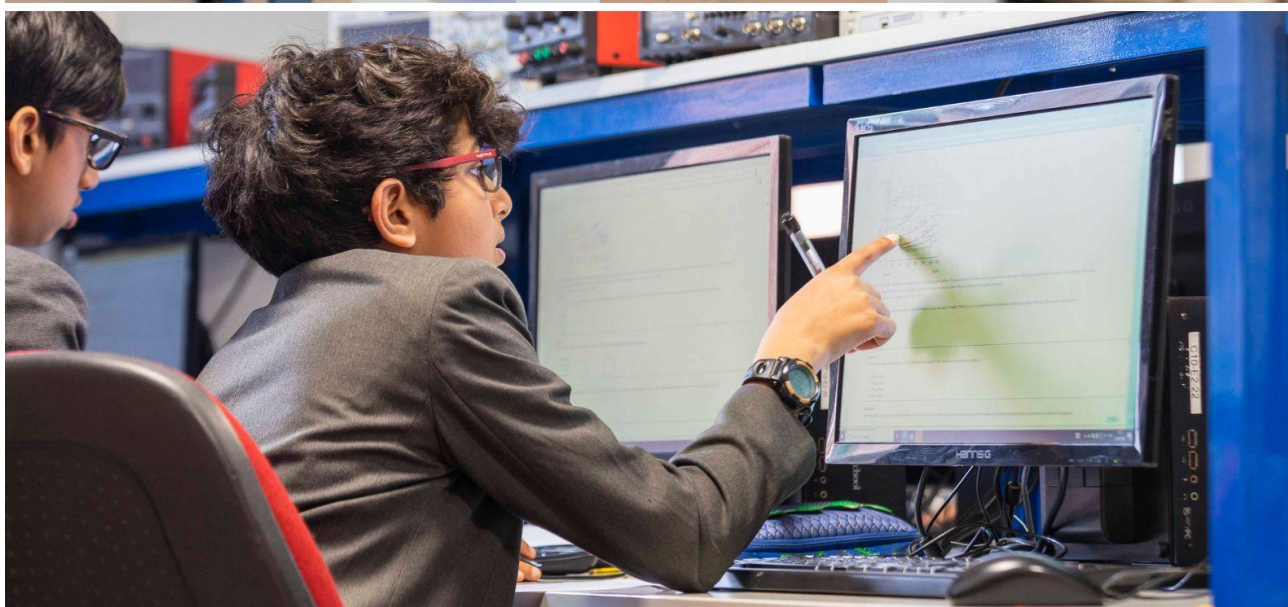
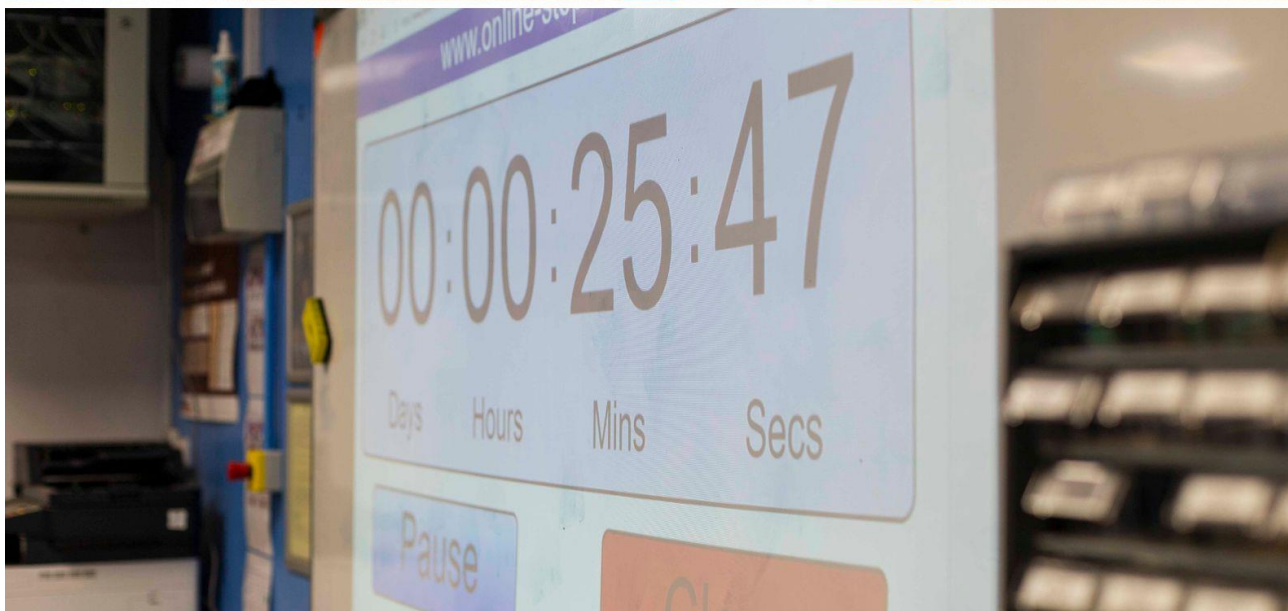
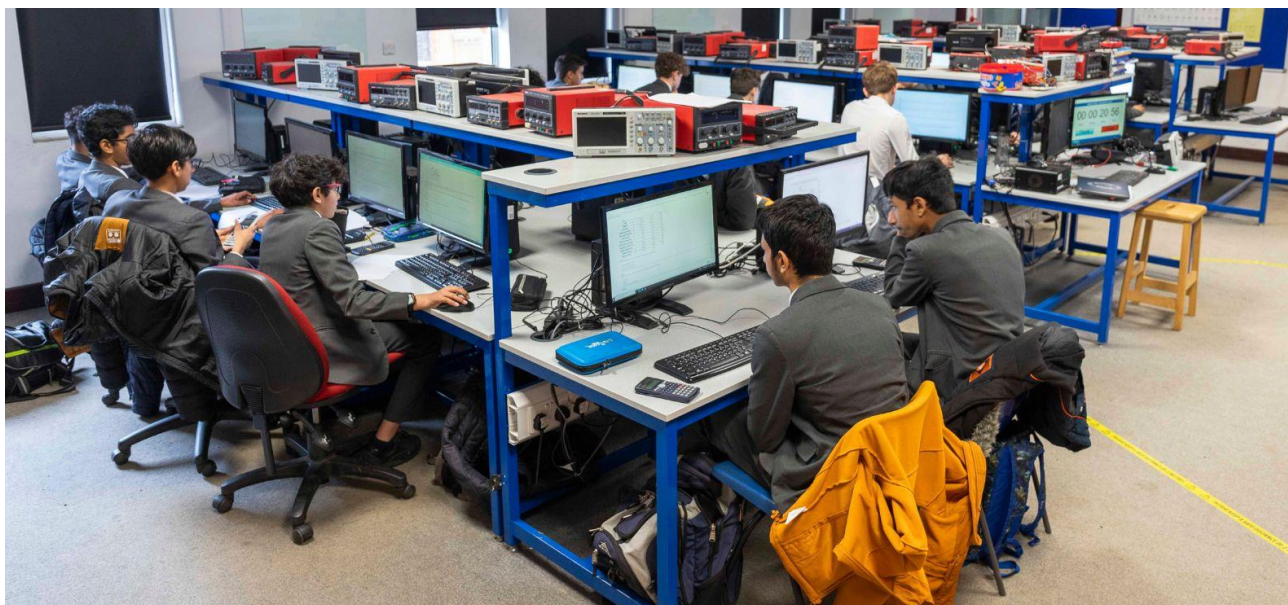


On Tuesday 25 April, Reading School had its first highly anticipated squash fixture against Oratory School. The match was very close, despite the difference in competitive experience between the two teams. While it was a valiant effort from our Reading team, the Oratory did ultimately win both age groups: 2-1 in the Year 10/11s and 4-1 in the Year 8s. Well done to Henry R (8E), Abraham S (8C), Oscar Z (8W), Varnesh R (8W), and Edward K (8E), along with Daniel S (11E), Teo R (11E), and Vighnesh U (10L).

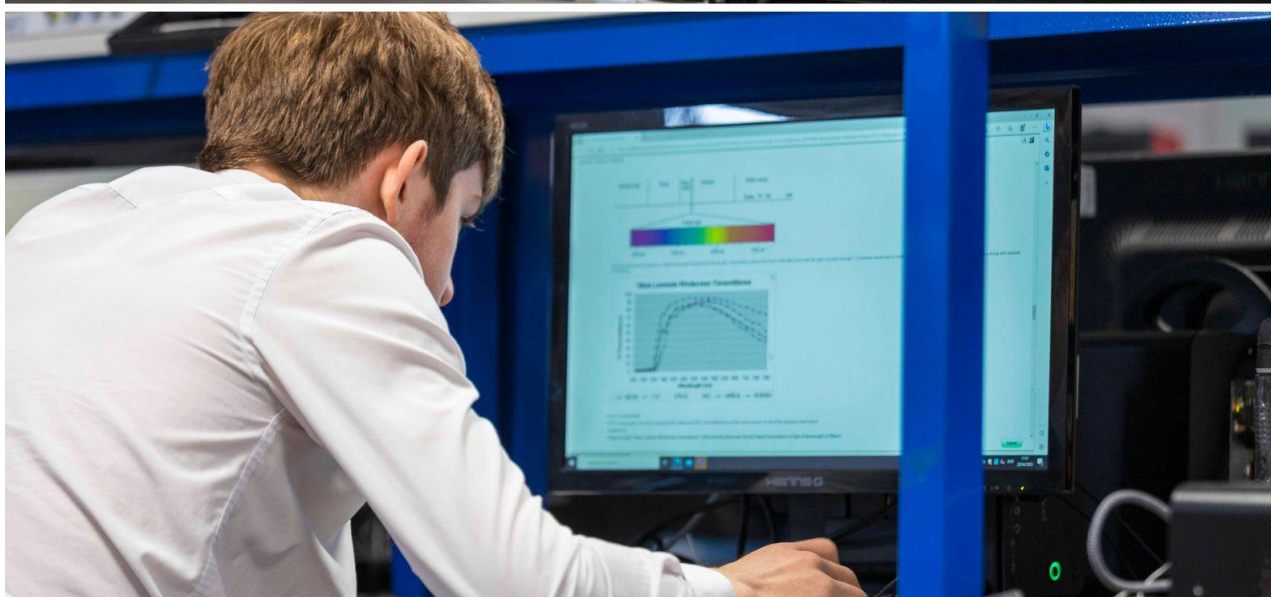
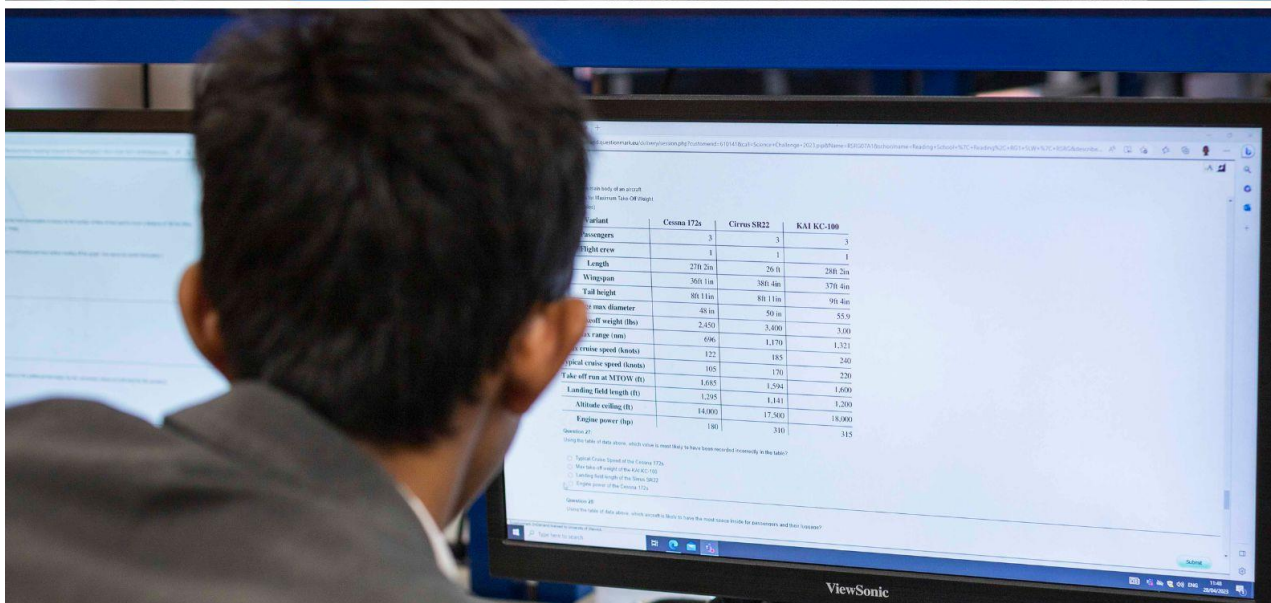
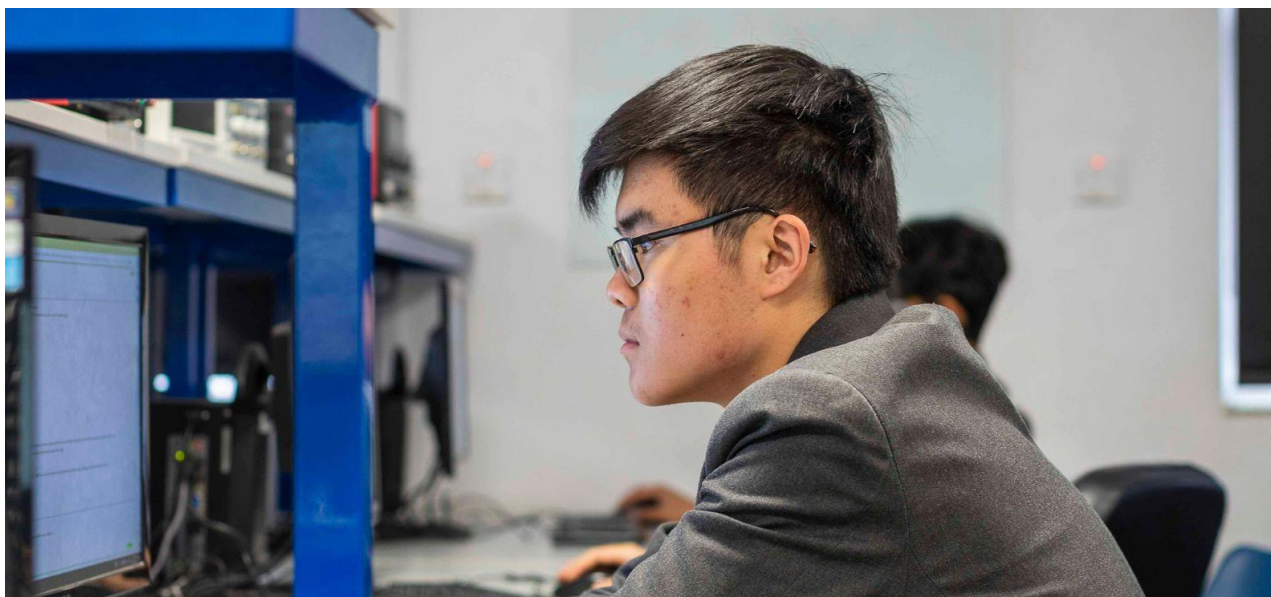
A particular mention goes to Teo R for coming back in his match from 2-0 down to win 3-2.



This was our second year of entry into the National Scientific Thinking Challenge. The nationwide challenge is for Year 10 students and consists of questions that test the skills used by a research scientist, such as: deduction, spotting trends and anomalies, reading data tables and interpreting graphs. This year, we entered the entirety of our Year 10 cohort but around 17,000 students nationally have also taken part in the challenge this year.



Teacher of Chemistry and Science Partnership Lead, Miss K Rosser-Evans shared, “Students from all schools will have their answers marked and ranked, with the top 10%, 25% and 40% of all students nationally who competed being awarded with a gold, silver and bronze award respectively. Well done to our Year 10 cohort who participated in this year’s challenge and we look forward to receiving the results and to watching your success in the coming academic year.”



"The shot put is a track and field event involving "putting" (throwing) a heavy spherical ball, the shot, as far as possible. For men, the sport has been a part of the modern Olympics since their revival (1896), and women's competition began in 1948." Wikipedia



Shot put is not just about strength, it's a combination of technique, power and focus. Assistant Head, Mr D McGall supported Year 10s to work on perfecting their technique by remembering to use their hips and shoulders to improve throws and confidence in preparation for the athletics season and sports day.











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