



# Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

7 JULY 2023

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# Introduction

## The Reading way to human flourishing

The Reading Way is essentially about academics plus character. Intelligence plus character is our goal. We want all our students and staff to work hard and be kind. Our students are not cogs in a machine. We want to prepare our people for the challenges and opportunities of the Twenty First century. In an increasingly AI world, human characteristics need to be emphasised, including being compassionate, service-oriented, people-facing, resilient and agile. We are committed to enabling human flourishing. Crucially, the Reading Way illustrates that a rich curriculum full of character development should be viewed as a necessary component to prepare our young people for stability, agility and success. Reading School is a school for human flourishing and our people need to be compassionate and courageous, resilient and respectful, demonstrating intellect and integrity. Character needs to be woven in to the essence of our organisation so that positive impact is maximised.

We can shape a positive future story which emphasises academic and character excellence, character, culture and collaboration. Thus, the Annual Operational Plan 2023-2024, to be ratified by the Full Governing Body on Monday 10 July emphasises the 3 C's:

- **Character** – focusing on character and values in order to enable human flourishing. The development in our people of habits of integrity, justice and courage enable the practise of humility, curiosity and gratitude. We build blocks of character through our 'Learn, Lead and Serve' approach.
- **Culture** – focusing on a strong, positive, commitment culture that ensures our people act in the best interests of the organisation and are fulfilled within it. The culture of Reading School is only as good as the people who inhabit it. We support a commitment culture that is fair, sustainable and high performing – doing the best we can, where we are, with what we have got. Culture shapes our organisational climate where healthy, high performance is championed. We support cultural architects.
- **Collaboration** – focusing on enabling innovation and improvement. It is shaped by our community along with a myriad of local, national and international collaborations. We prioritise psychological safety, treating others with civility and success and being open to new ideas. Collaborative professionalism leads to big picture thinking for all – What should we stop doing? What should we continue doing? What should we start doing?

## Senior Prize Giving – The celebration of academic and character excellence

Undoubtedly academic excellence and character excellence was celebrated at the joyous event on Friday 30 June, held at the Great Hall, University of Reading. It was an opportunity to listen to the wisdom of the inspirational guest speaker Professor Parveen Yaqob OBE and also to say thank you to parents, carers, associate staff and teachers who have supported our remarkable young people. We congratulated the class of 2023, and welcomed back our Year 14 ORs. Clearly, our students have played a key role in nurturing a purpose-driven culture and demonstrated leadership through service.

The Philip Mitchell Chemistry prize, James Economics prize, Brian Turnbull History prize, Bion STEM prize and Evans prize for Spanish were some of the examples of prizes awarded for academic excellence. In addition, we paid tribute to those students who represented the United Kingdom in International Olympiads. Whilst the Dr Rohma Newman Cummins Award for character, Joan Bristow outstanding commitment prize and the Toms prize for commitment to the Reading School community illustrate the importance we rightly give to putting our values in to action.

## Mothers and Grandparents who inspire

The role of supportive parents cannot be overestimated. On Tuesday, 4 July we welcomed assessors from the City of Sanctuary organisation who were triangulating evidence from staff, students and parents regarding our commitment to making Reading School a place of safety and sanctuary.

The testament of our Ukrainian mothers was inspirational. It has ensured that we will redouble our efforts to be a beacon of good practice. I look forward to visiting our Ukrainian partner schools, once the war is over. Thank you to our Ukrainian guests and friends for showing us the value of education, the value of family and the value of community. You are in inspirational role models for us all. Thank you to Mr K Luteijn for his superb leadership of our School of Sanctuary initiative. The role of family in supporting the education and development of our students was certainly evident in the highly successful Grandparents' Day held this week. Health and Fitness, metaphysics, earthquake preparations in Geography and much more was on offer. Thanks to our superb catering team too for providing meals throughout the day for our visitors. Gratitude is an important characteristic to demonstrate and I was therefore heartened to receive feedback from a number of grandparents of boys in Year 7.

For instance, one of our guests wrote:

'I just want to say thank you for the very informative and interesting day Reading School gave me yesterday. I would like to thank the teachers who organised it, the teachers whose classes I attended, the catering staff for a very good lasagne and the young men who were the ambassadors. As a visitor I was greeted and made to feel very welcome. I enjoyed the lessons and that I was able to participate. I still think Philosophers must have dreadful headaches from all their thinking!'

Whilst another proud grandparent stated:

'Thank you so much for the invite to attend Grandparents Day 2023. Thank you too to everyone for planning, organising and executing a wonderful day. I spent a fabulous morning with my grandson, seeing the day to day working, observing the interactions of pupils and staff round school, seeing first-hand the exemplary behaviour of pupils, and can only say everyone can be justifiably proud of Reading School. Mutual respect shone through.'

I would like to express my gratitude to Miss L Ayres, Assistant Headteacher and her team for organising the very successful event.

### **Sporting High Performance**

Not to be outdone, on Wednesday 5 July the Annual Reading School Sports Awards took place. Inspired by our partnership work with the True Athlete project, we honoured our students for sporting excellence and character excellence displayed in the sporting sphere. We celebrated elite performances and inspirational team performances. Indeed, the evening was a celebration of how our students and staff seek high performance, defined by Professor Damian Hughes as '*Doing the best you can, where you are, with what you have got.*' Significantly, with the full support of the Governing Body, we will improve our on-site facilities substantially, subject to planning permission.

In addition, from September 2024 the KSP (Kenwick Sports Pathway) will be a new opportunity to flourish for up to 15 students in Year 7. The emphasis on developing a positive culture that places a value on commitment to maximising opportunity to flourish and also give back. We will work with Go Perform, Right to Dream and TAP as well as other local partners to build culture, character and collaboration through the joy of sport.

### **Ben Nevis to Big Ben (Via Reading School)**

Are we running out of time? Sustainability requires positive action and we are very proud of being an integral part of a very special event today, Friday 7 July. Running out of time is the nation's largest sporting celebration of climate action and nature.

The baton will be relayed 2661km from Ben Nevis to Big Ben. Organised by Mr David Starley OR, a previous senior prize winner at Reading School, the baton was welcomed by Year 7 and Year 8 students this morning. David's excellent talk in Chapel regarding the race against time, climate, sustainability and what young people can do about it ensured that important messages were heard. We are proud of our alumni who give back and add value.

Thank you to Mr D McGall, Assistant Headteacher, for leading on this important opportunity to learn and lead.

### **Culture character and collaboration**

Thus, Senior Prize Giving, Grandparents Day, Sports Awards and the Running Out of Time event show that we continue to strive for providing opportunities to flourish and value healthy, high performance. Our culture champions collaboration and character.

**Mr A M Robson**  
**Headmaster**



# Key information

## All years

### Safeguarding

Every month, we share an online safety newsletter for parents and students and July's issue contains information, which includes:

- Quora: What the website is and what parents should be aware of.
- Online challenges and advice for parents and carers.
- Grand Theft Auto (GTA) 6 release and what parents should be aware of.

Click [this link](#) to access the newsletter in full.

### Attendance

We have been fully open to all year groups this week and are committed to providing an ambitious academic and characterful offer until the end of the Summer Term. Thank you to all families who continue to value the importance of high attendance. As a school, we are committed to minimising absence. Our approach that prioritises education is fully supported by the Governing Body and the Local Authority. We hope that it is supported too by all parents.

## Staff Vacancies

Please visit our website for current vacancies: <https://www.reading-school.co.uk/vacancies>

# Excellence, Belonging & Community

## Excellence in Digital Media



On Monday 3rd July, two of our students attended the Shine Digital Media Awards. Henry Barry and Rayyan Ahmad were nominated for the national award for Best Digital Publication Design, based on the work they have been doing on their online newspaper, 'The Addington'.

Rayyan and Henry co-founded the newspaper which covers a wide range of topics, with contributors from all year groups putting forward articles on any area of interest, such as politics and economics or even less typical areas of interest such as creative use in health and fitness.

They attended the awards at Stationer's Hall in London and were chosen as the national winners of the award for Best Digital Publication Design. Their independent work, which was completed with no staff contribution is a testament to the innovative and self-motivated work of our students.

Congratulations to Henry and Rayyan!

## Excellence in Economics



On Tuesday 4th of July 2023, four Year 12 Economics students – Henry B (12E), Oliver C (12E), Branson R (12S) and Siddhant T (12C) – took part in the annual Year 12 Stock Market Challenge held at the ICMA Centre of the University of Reading. They had a lot of fun trading with fellow Year 12s from various schools, and narrowly missed making the largest profit at the close of trading.

Henry B said, "The stock market challenge at the University of Reading was a great experience. The atmosphere in the trading rooms was quite realistic and the thrill of making massive trades still existed even though we were using virtual money."

Oliver C said, "Many thanks to the School for giving us this opportunity; the trading floor we had access to, provided an awesome experience, with plenty of action and new acquaintances. Also, the lecturers at the University were knowledgeable, interesting and charismatic!" Whilst Siddhant T contended "The stock market challenge was really engaging and provided great insight into the world of trading in a quickfire, condensed format. It was a really well organised event and I learnt a lot in the couple of hours of trading that we did."

## Belonging & Community

### GCSE and A Level Art Exhibition 2023

On Monday, 10 July, the Art Department led by Ms A Creegan will be hosting an art exhibition featuring GCSE and A Level art as a way to recognise and celebrate students' work. There are been exciting and compelling pieces of work produced this year and we invite the school community to the exhibition next Monday from 5pm – 8pm in the Refectory (refreshments will be available).

### Charity Haircut

On the 25th July, Christopher D (8S) will be having his haircut for the Little Princess Trust. The trust helps children with cancer feel more normal, by giving them real hair wigs. Since his own operation (when he was 6), Christopher has always wanted to help people who have been ill, and as lockdown started, he saw his chance to help them. He started growing his hair so it could be cut and made into a real hair wig for a child. Christopher has decided that it is now the right time to get his hair cut. In addition to donating his hair to the Little Princess Trust, he is also raising money for Headlines, a charity which supports people with craniofacial conditions. Christopher has created a Just Giving page and would be very grateful for any support to help him raise £500 for them. You can donate [here](#)

## Miles for refugees 2023



We would like to congratulate Arnav A (11L) who recently took part in the British Red Cross charity campaign, [Miles for refugees](#). The event was for participants who wanted to take on a challenge and, 'help give hope to people forced to leave their homes for safety' by running, walking or cycling a range of distances over 30 days. Arnav shared, "As I feel very passionately on the subject of refugees in the UK, knowing quite a few myself, after seeing the Reading School Refugee Week Art Exhibition, I felt the need to take action and contribute personally to the cause. To support this, I have pledged to cycle 22 miles for the British Red Cross."

22 miles is distance of the English Channel and Arnav not only completed 22 miles, he also exceeded his target of raising £150 ([£180 raised in total](#)). Arnav went onto share, "I hope that this has a positive effect on those seeking sanctuary, and that it reaches as many people as possible." Well done Arnav.

## Alexander Devine Visit

This year, the Boarding Charity Committee has been working on supporting 3 charities, including Alexander Devine's Children's Hospice. On Monday 3rd July, some of our committee members had the opportunity to visit the Hospice in order to discover the inspiring work that their staff and volunteers undertake.

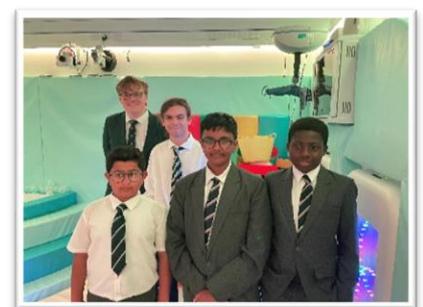
We discovered that, despite taking a substantial amount of burden off the NHS, the government only funded 17% of their annual operating fees. Additionally, we learnt that the current shortage of nursing and care staff within the UK has created a series of challenges for the Hospice. In spite of this, Alexander Devine provides exceptional care to over 150 children in the Berkshire area, caring for individuals with life-limiting or life-threatening conditions, both on site and within their homes, as well as supporting the families of those affected by these conditions.



Alexander Devine is a purpose-built children's hospice, designed with the sole focus of aiding the children and families for whom organisations such as this are a necessary part of life. Each of the rooms is outfitted with a hoist, allowing those with limited mobility to gain all the benefits provided by Alexander Devine. The children have access to a huge variety of activities, like a pool, gardens, a playground and a music room; the modifications that have had to be made to all of these facilities was a sobering reminder about how lucky the vast majority of us are to not need such adjustments.

Fiona Devine (the founder of the Hospice) intended for Alexander Devine to be 'a resting place on life's journey' for the children and families, designing it to be as welcoming and homely as possible.

Visiting Alexander Devine was a truly humbling experience, and all of us who were fortunate enough to see this incredible organisation were deeply touched by seeing everything that they do for the children and families. The Boarding Charity Committee are honoured that we have been able to support such an incredible organisation, one that is very close to the hearts of our members, and we hope that our efforts throughout the year to raise funds for them will help them to continue to serve as a beacon of hope for all those who need their services.



## RSPA 2023 Summer Fayre



### Join Us at the Spectacular School Summer Fayre!

Date: Sunday 9th July 2023

Time: 12 - 3 PM

Location: Reading School, Erleigh Road, Reading, RG1 5LW

Admission: Entry to the Summer Fayre is available at the door, £2 for adults, no charge for children

Payment: **Cash** will be needed but we will have the facility for some credit cards.

Step into a world of fun-filled activities, delicious food, thrilling games, and an unforgettable day of family entertainment. This year's event promises to be an exciting one. So, mark your calendars and bring your loved ones along for an extraordinary summer day! We encourage everyone in the community to come and enjoy this fantastic event. Don't forget to bring your family, friends, and neighbours for a lovely day out!

Here's a sneak peek at what awaits you:

- **Tantalizing Food Stalls:** Savour a wide variety of mouth-watering treats that will delight your taste buds. Indulge in juicy burgers, sizzling samosas, refreshing ice cream, and much more.
- **Attractions:** Marshall Honda will be bringing Motorbikes for the day and we'll have some amazing stalls to peruse.
- **Exciting Games and Prizes:** Test your skills and luck at a variety of game stalls offering awesome prizes. Whether you're aiming for the highest score or trying your luck at winning a stuffed animal, there's something for everyone.
- **Community Spirit:** Connect with fellow families, teachers, and local community members in a lively, inclusive atmosphere. The School Summer Fayre is a fantastic opportunity to build new friendships and strengthen existing bonds.

Save the Date! Spread the word and let everyone know about our School Summer Fayre. We can't wait to welcome you to this extraordinary celebration of summer!

For more information and updates, follow the RSPA on social media - Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp - or contact us directly at [contactus@readingschoolparents.co.uk](mailto:contactus@readingschoolparents.co.uk)

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Hand Uniform Sale

The Second-Hand Uniform Shop will be open on **Friday 7th July** between **2.30 and 4pm** and on **Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> July** during the Summer Fayre.

Please come along to buy all your uniform needs.

The shop can be found at the back of the Walled Car Park; Access is on foot only, via the pedestrian gates.

Please email [shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk](mailto:shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk) with any queries.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

We would like to wish you all a very happy weekend.

The RSPA Team



# Summer Term – Week 12

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



## Senior Prize Giving Event 2023

Photo credits: Prabhav B (11W) Guest Student Photographer











Summer Music Festival 2023

Photo Credits: Prabhav B (11W) Guest Student Photographer







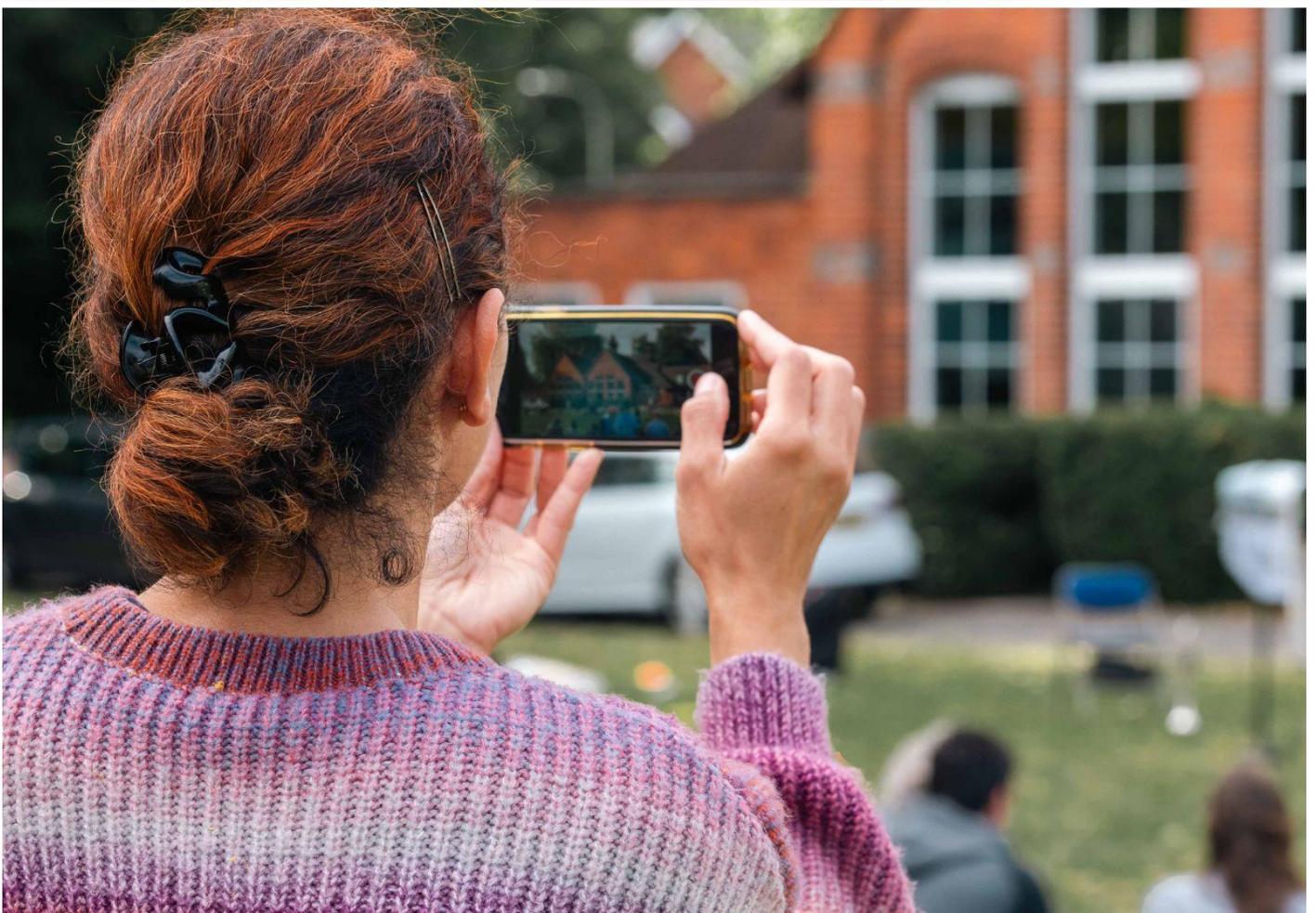




Photo credits: Isaac H (10S) Guest Student Photographer



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](mailto:communityrelations@reading-school.co.uk)