



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

28 APRIL 2023

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Introduction



'Whakapapa' is a notion that each of us are part of an unbreakable chain of people going back and forward in time. The sun slowly moves down this unbreakable chain of people and each of us will have our time in the sun. When the sun shines on us, we are alive, safe and respected. We share an identity and a sense of belonging with those around us and this anchors us. We share a purpose with them. This idea, popularised by Owen Eastwood, can help us to be focused on creating and setting conditions for sustained high performance and human flourishing. Indeed, Eastwood maintains that 'Whakapapa points a finger at us and tells us, you will not be judged by your money or celebrity or sense of self-pride.... you will be judged by what you did for your community.'

Working with the True Athlete Project (TAP) we are seeking to nurture a practical, person-centred approach to the culture of sport that demonstrates that mental wellbeing and improving performance are not mutually exclusive. This is undoubtedly aligned with our ethos that academic excellence and character excellence are complementary. According to Head of Sport, Mr S Allen, "*The mentoring and community aspects of the TAP programme have provided inspirational opportunities for both our Year 10 students and staff to flourish. Sam Parfitt and Laurence Halsted have led the inspirational programme with expertise and verve.*"

Furthermore, looking ahead to 2024, we are committed to developing the Kenwick Sport Programme (KSP) at Reading School. Mr Robert Kenwick, Chair of Governors, is passionate about the value of sport in developing young people of character and substance and fully supports our drive to nurture a culture of commitment to sport that emphasises fun, positive attitudes and the holistic development of individual athletes and teams. Indeed, the KSP intends to, working in partnership with Right to Dream and TAP, facilitate the development of a culture of healthy, compassionate high performance. Thus, we will develop cultural architects rather than cultural assassins. Young people and staff who will direct, influence and inspire others, resulting in maximum engagement and impact on both individuals and teams.

Arguably, the Coronavirus pandemic was a melancholy laboratory for rediscovering what we value in each other. Undoubtedly, we value the passion, commitment and engagement of our students. Indeed, our students are our ambassadors. This week we had two very busy Open Days, with over 2000 people visiting Reading School. Our superb team of Sixth Form and Year 7 students led tours with assurance and aplomb. Certainly, they and last week's newly appointed Prefect and House Leadership Teams can be considered as some of our cultural architects. They are evidence that we have developed habits, ways of working and behaviours that build and maintain a shared sense of identity and belonging. They have embraced our values, shared standards and principles.

I would also like to pay tribute to all our table tennis squad that participated in the National Individual and Team championships held in Wolverhampton last weekend. Our Under 16 squad were placed 3rd nationally. Thank you to the superb support from parents. Furthermore, well done to our Year 7 students who participated in a Chess Tournament ably organised by Mr O Griffin and a team of Sixth Formers on Thursday.

We must continue to articulate our collective ambition to shape the future, working with our partners to enable human flourishing, academic excellence and character excellence. Thus, today I have represented Reading School at a conference of Boys' Academic Selective Schools in Stratford Upon Avon. We have showcased our commitment to social mobility through our Future Stories programme and Future Stories Community Enterprise. In addition, we are looking forward to hosting Professor James Arthur of the Jubilee Centre, University of Birmingham, to share our Floreat programme approach to the development of character. We want to strengthen our partnership with such a prestigious centre for character education so that our students can continue to flourish.

Floreat Redingensis.

Mr A M Robson
Headmaster



Key information

Safeguarding

Every month we share an online safety newsletter for parents and students and April's issue contains valuable information to be aware of, which includes:

- Snapchat/AI update – AI is being incorporated into Snapchat and there were concerns when initially released as it was providing responses that were not age appropriate. More information is available in the newsletter.
- Minecraft Legends – Released last month and rated as 7+ by the Pan-European Game Information (PEGI), the rating does not consider the communication features within the game (which can be switched off).
- Report Remove is a tool provided by Childline and the Internet Watch Foundation to support those under the age of 18 to confidentially report inappropriate images or videos or themselves if they have been shared online.

The safety newsletter can be accessed by [clicking here](#). Furthermore, as we continue to navigate the online world and find ways to protect children and young people, we would encourage parents and carers to watch, '[Capture, who's looking after the children?](#)', a 15min drama starring Jodie Whittaker and Paul Ready and which looks at online harm, regulation and responsibility.

All Years

Hay fever medication

An increasing number of students have visited the Medical Centre over the past week with symptoms of hay fever. The Medical Centre will not normally dispense hay fever medication unless parental permission has been previously provided. Please can parents and carers consider their arrangements with their children and young people during the hay fever season.

Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 only

Internal Exam Weeks

Please [click here to access the draft exam timetable for students](#). Please note these are subject to change and will be finalised closer to the time. Alongside this, click the following links to access '[End of Year Exams Subject Content](#)', '[Creating an effective revision timetable](#)' and '[Revision Guide](#)'.

We would like these exams to be an opportunity and not a source of stress and would encourage you to consider:

- 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 in 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, and 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.

Please contact Ms Ayres by emailing layres@reading-school.co.uk if you have any queries or concerns.

Year 12 only

Careers

We are currently looking for placements for our Year 12 students for their work experience week. If any parents or carers or family friends can offer any opportunities for work experience, we would love to hear from you. Please contact our Careers Advisor, Ms Karen Wray, by emailing kwray@reading-school.co.uk if you or someone you know is able to help.

Current Vacancies

Teacher Vacancy

[Teacher of Biology](#) - starting September 2023. Deadline for applications: 9am, Friday 5 May.

Excellence, Belonging & Community

Academic Excellence

The Perse Coding Team Challenge 2023

This was our first year of entry into the [Perse Coding Challenge](#), which is a competition that is complex and syntactically stretching, with students submitting short code solutions to a range of challenges which increase in difficulty. Reading School successfully made it to round 2 with a multitude of teams and we certainly watched the coding gurus of Computer Science demonstrate their abilities, with our top team coming in joint 10th overall in the country out of many thousands of teams.

The concept of promoting the development of computational thinking skills to students will only enhance future societies' propensity for problem solving in an ever-increasing technological world as well as off world. If you are interested in joining next year, then get coding and attempt the practice questions by [clicking here](#). Other competitions to prepare for are: [Bebras](#), [Cyber Explorers](#), [Reply Challenges](#) and the [British Informatics Olympiad](#).

Well done to all students who participated in this year's challenges and we look forward to seeing your success in the coming academic year.

From left to right: Rujul N (10S), Akshaiyan S (9S) and William W (9S) presented with Certificates of Distinction by Headmaster, Mr Robson.



House Excellence

As featured in last week's Bulletin, the Senior School Prefect and House Captain Team has been chosen and the entire cohort will play a significant role in the life of the school, especially in relation to being ambassadors and role models.

Prefect Leadership Team 2023/24



Rio Thomas
Vice Captain

Yash Singh
Vice Captain

Joshua Gupta
School Captain

Harry Aldred
Vice Captain

Rajan Dhanjal
Vice Captain

Community

Future Stories

Reading School's Future Stories programme is a social mobility project, working in partnership with local primary schools and the community.

Monday 24 April marked the last of five after-school mentoring sessions run by the Future Stories team. Year 5 pupils from ten local primary schools attended Reading School to take part in sessions focusing on Maths and English topics which supported their KS2 learning. The Year 5 pupils were nominated to attend by their Future Stories partnership primary school. During the sessions, visiting Year 5 pupils worked 1:1 with a Year 12 mentor. These sessions were an excellent experience for both the Year 5 pupils and our Year 12 mentors.

The after-school mentor sessions were organised and led by Reading School staff: Mrs C Heston, Mrs P Hickman, Ms J Postlethwaite, Mrs L Dimmick and Miss C Mole. Accompanied by our dedicated and talented Year 12 mentors: Maulik A (12L), Faiyaz A (12S), Nikolaos A (12S), Henry B (12E), Ashran B (12S), Arthur B (12S), Rajan D (12E), Yaman E (12S), Fazly F (12S), Benji F (12L), Harold G (12E), Thien H (12C), Aslan H (12L), Ashmaan K (12W), James M (12L), Dhian S (12W) and Vivek S (12S), and Future Stories prefects Rishi D (13W) and Nirbhay K (13C).

These sessions would not have been possible without the time, enthusiasm, dedication and commitment of our student and staff teams. Thank you to these students and staff for their support of the Future Stories programme (*front cover image*).

Sports Fixtures

Wednesday 3 May

U16 Reading Athletics Match 1 at Palmer Park 4pm

Cricket 1XI vs Parkhouse – Home

Thursday 4 May

Football U13 National Cup vs Dr Challoners – Home

Football U12 vs Kennett County Cup – Away

Friday 5 May

Combined Events (pentathlon) Year 9 and 10 (all day) Palmer Park

Music School – ABRSM Exams (Summer Term)



As we look forward to the Summer Term, we will be hosting an ABRSM practical grade exam visit on **Tuesday 4 July 2023** in the Music Department at Reading School. If you have been preparing for a practical graded exam in your instrumental/vocal lessons and will be ready for the date above, please complete this form below as an expression of interest to be entered: <https://forms.office.com/e/ijMbgzqQv6>

If you are unsure, please discuss with your instrumental/vocal tutor who will be able to advise.

Costs for taking an ABRSM grade exam can be found on their website here (please ignore dates): [ABRSM: Exam dates and fees](#)

RSPA

Quiz night



The RSPA are holding a Quiz night on Saturday 20 May from 7:00pm – 8:30pm at Reading School Refectory to raise much needed funds for the school. If you have never been to an RSPA event, please do consider joining us in what will be a fun and engaging way to test your knowledge and have fun while getting to meet with other parents.

Funds raised from previous events have resulted in the refurbishment of the refectory toilets, purchase of the new cricket nets, gym equipment, LRC resources along with new seating to be purchased and placed around the school. 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 tickets as soon as you can. Prizes are on offer but please bring cash as our shop is open.

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

Volunteers for The Goring Gap Run



The RSPA are looking for two volunteers to assist with marshalling duty at The Goring Gap race on Sunday 14 May. In return for your help, we receive £60 per person. Bring your child to accompany you, and we receive £120! Slots are based at Purley, Tilehurst, Pangbourne/Whitchurch and Goring. We're aiming to raise £600 to provide some new outdoor seating, requested by School.

Please email Terri at t_lorrimore@hotmail.com or text to 07810 445474. You will be given the race organiser's email, and from that point on you can organise with them directly what works for you.

It's a lovely event. Take a chair, a flask of coffee, a newspaper, and enjoy 2 to 3 hours in the morning, of cheering people on as they run (or walk) past you.

Please contact us immediately, to register your interest. Thank you to the people who have volunteered so far and we will be in touch this week to arrange your location.

Win an annual Merlin pass for a family of 4!

*****Last Chance to win the amazing prize this coming Saturday 29 April!! It could be you!*****

With attractions all over the country, there's something for everyone to enjoy. Older children will love the York, London and Edinburgh Dungeons, and kids of all ages will be thrilled by Legoland, and the rides at Alton Towers and Thorpe

Park. For animal lovers there's Chessington World of Adventures, and the Sea Life Centres. Or see the sights of London from the London Eye, followed by meeting your favourite celebrities at Madame Tussauds!

You can do all this and more, absolutely FREE, with an annual pass for ALL Merlin's attractions!

This draw takes place only on Saturday 29 April 2023.

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.

Here is the link to join: <https://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/lottery/school/reading-school>

Second-Hand Uniform Shop

The second-hand uniform shop will be open on the following dates this half term

- Friday 5 May 2.30pm - 4:00pm
- Friday 19 May 2:30pm – 4:00pm
- Saturday 20 May 10:30am – 12:30pm

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:

On Friday openings 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 2

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



From bridge building to...an egg drop. The entirety of Year 7 continued the next stage of their exciting Design & Technology curriculum, by working together in inter-form teams to create a contraption that would safely land a raw egg to ground from the top of a building. Having examined what enables real spacecraft and animals to safely land, as well as considering the physics behind air resistance and crumple zones, the boys set about coming up with imaginative ideas, trying to meet the three criteria of their design needing to be appealing, functional and innovative.



When provided with their materials, much of which was recycled cardboard to highlight the importance of sustainability, students then had to come up with their final design, completing a technical drawing of it that they presented to the other teams in order to get constructive feedback. Once the construction phase was over, their teachers helped them safely launch their inventions from height, with varying degrees of success...and plenty of spilt yolk!



The teams then retired to the classroom to develop reflective skills, nurtured within our innovative Floreat character programme, to consider how the (in)effectiveness of their teamwork led to the egg's eventual demise or survival. With thanks to all of the staff who supported the students in a full day of activities, creating Design & Technology opportunities for everyone to participate in within the school day. If you or your company can offer any materials, tools, facilities or ideas to further the D&T programme, please do email secretary@reading-school.co.uk







Our Year 9 and 10 German linguists were taken to the Wild West on Wednesday afternoon during a performance of 'Im Alten Saloon', performed in German by Onatti Productions. It is important when creating a play in German to pay careful attention to the written script and delivery of the dialogue. The play developed student's skills in "applying the language they already knew" to enable them to follow the story.

Aryan P (10S) was the lucky student who got to take a starring lead and judging by the laughter, all the students benefitted from this enriching experience.





To watch a short video about our Future Stories programme, featuring Future Stories Prefect, Benji F (12L), please click the image below.



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