



# Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

22 SEPTEMBER 2023



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# Introduction

## The culture of Reading School

The definition of an organisation's culture is the combined result of the values, attitudes and behaviours exhibited in its engagement with stakeholders, both internal and external. For Reading School, that means its students, staff, parents, governors and alumni at its heart.

Our ability to build a positive culture is the leading indicator of our future success. Our core values are Excellence, Integrity, Leadership and Community. However, values only take you so far and are only a starting point. Values must be accompanied by agreed behaviours.

High social capital, wellbeing, enhanced life chances and educational success are closely aligned. Shared values should inform everyday practice, a strong community identity and a sense of place. Significantly, positive social relationships and high trust are facilitated by communication based on shared language. In addition, a sense of respect, fairness and equity should be developed. In recent external reviews of our approach to Safeguarding and Boarding, students surveyed stated how important it was to minimise 'thoughtless language'. Words have consequences. A healthy culture ensures that consequences are positive rather than destructive and harmful.

The road to success begins in Year 7. Key drivers for flourishing include how young people feel about their lives as a whole. How they feel about their relationships and their future. An education for flourishing needs to encourage people to be aspirational and reach beyond a limited horizon.



Education is never merely a matter of just learning; it also involves care for the person as well. Therefore, we must care for standards but never forget the person. The experience of community at Reading School is not just some vague idea but an essential mark of our authenticity as a learning community. People should be committed to the promotion of the common good. We must not view education in purely utilitarian terms.

The creation of a commitment culture is where 'doing good' and 'doing well' coincide. Culture should be at the heart of our organisation, emphasising cultural values that underpin what we do. We are committed to facilitating positive experiences of social interaction in an ordered context, and are committed to providing mutual care and responsibility. Reading School is at the front line of enabling flourishing through its intentional, conscious and deliberate focus on character education. Good character starts with good behaviour and we need parents to collaborate with us in achieving this for their children.

What does a successful, positive culture look like at Reading School?

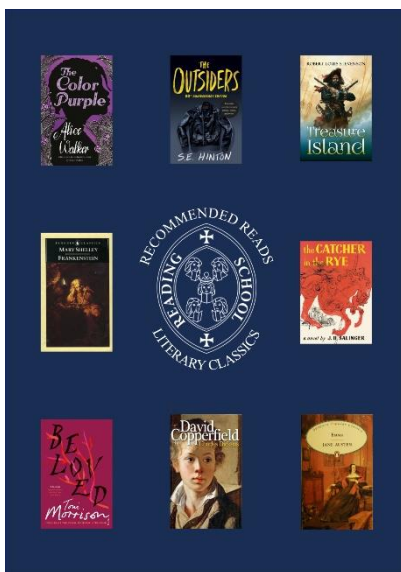
- Setting high expectations of our people as they are not passive parts in an academic machine but should be authors of their own narrative.
- Believing that hard work pays off
- Possessing and demonstrating optimism
- Having purpose and passion
- Developing great relationships
- Having attainable goals



In closing, we may look to reflect on questions posed by Professor Damian Hughes when he emphasises the importance of world class basics in nurturing a commitment culture.

- Are we humble enough to go back to basics to achieve our goals?
- What are your roots? Never forget where you come from.
- Who is on your support squad? Who do you turn to in times of crisis?
- Which 3 words would you describe as your strengths?
- Do your words align with your/our core values?
- How do we make gratitude a habit?

## A culture of reading



At Reading School, we are committed to championing a culture of reading as exemplified by our Reading Week.

It can be said that the best way to improve your writing is to read more. Thus, it is for that reason that, in our Year of Writing, we are proud to announce the second annual Reading Week (the action, not the town!) which will take place from Monday, 30 October to Friday, 3 November.

During this week, students and staff will be prioritising both reading for pleasure, and reading for intellectual and academic development.

Given the focus on reading beyond the curriculum, there will be no lessons (online or otherwise) during that week. In order to avoid any potentially unauthorised absences at other points in the year,

families are indeed welcome to enjoy their reading away from home.

We are making some modifications to the expectations of reading for each year group, and will announce these shortly, but we ask that parents prioritise reading in all plans for their children, and model excellent reading habits as far as possible.

In the meantime, students and parents are invited to access a compendium of reading compiled by our expert subject staff and librarians by [clicking here](#). In order to maximise the opportunity to access inspiring reading material students are encouraged to visit the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) or reserve [via on our online catalogue](#).

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



# Key information

## Year 8 only

### Expectations Evening

Please click the links below to access this week's Year 8 Expectations Evening Presentation which included important information in relation to: key dates, curriculum updates, character updates, safety and wellbeing, careers and working together to ensure students continue to thrive during their journey at Reading School.

[Year 8 Presentation \(Recording\)](#)

[Year 8 Presentation \(Slides\)](#)

## Year 11 only

### Expectations Evening

Please click the links below to access this week's Year 11 Expectations Evening Presentation which included important information in relation to: Key dates, preparing for external exams, communication, curriculum update, Sixth Form admissions and character education.

[Year 11 Presentation \(Recording\)](#)

[Year 11 Presentation \(Slides\)](#)

## Current Vacancies

### Teacher of Mathematics

Please [click here](#) for further details.

# Excellence, Belonging & Community

## Excellence in Geography



We are excited to announce that Reading School's Geography Department has been awarded the [Geographical Association Secondary Geography Quality Mark](#) award and an award for Centre of Excellence. The Quality Mark requires departments to reflect on each element of their practice, from the quality of teaching, attitudes and values, professional development for students and staff and the management of the department.

There are 22 indicators on which the department assesses their practice, makes changes if needed, attaches evidence and reflects on how this can be further improved. We like to have a creative and innovative approach to our teaching in the Geography Department and the Quality Mark processes has allowed us to review the effectiveness of our approach and

make changes to make our offering an exceptional experience for our students and staff. For example, the expansion of the use of GIS. In Year 7, after learning about glacial landforms, the students use ArcGIS to explore 3D landscapes on the computers and identify the landforms they have studied in a real landscape like the Lake District.

The second award was the Centre of Excellence, for which we opted to specialise in fieldwork. Fieldwork can be broken down into six sections: Introduction, methods, data presentation, data analysis, conclusion and evaluations. At the beginning of last year, we completed an audit of our fieldwork provision across all the years and started to rebuild our fieldwork practices throughout the year groups, increasing the student's fieldwork skills in complexity and independence.



We have taken the approach of practicing and perfecting each stage of fieldwork before bringing them together to complete a project, such as the Reading School Weather Survey in Year 8. The end of year survey showed that the students have loved having these opportunities. Looking forward to this academic year, we will continue the changes we have made and strive to add more opportunities into the curriculum that our students enjoy and progress their academic achievements and character development as they work their way through the key stages.

# Belonging & Community

## Learning Resource Centre (LRC)

Students in Year 7 were set two challenges when they visited the LRC for their transition day in July. Firstly, the LRC Team set them a challenge to read at least 6 books over the summer. Secondly, they were challenged to take a photo reading in an unusual or exotic location. The results are now in and the winners are being announced this week during Year 7 English lessons.

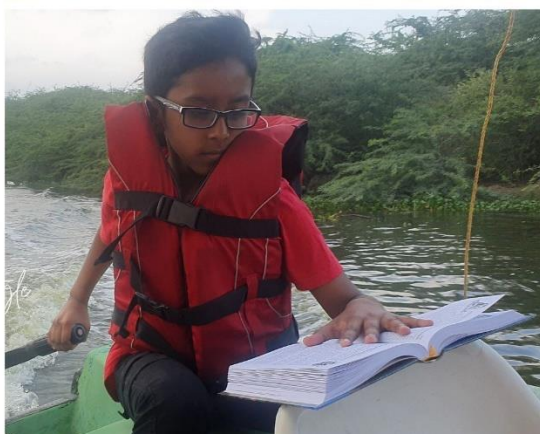
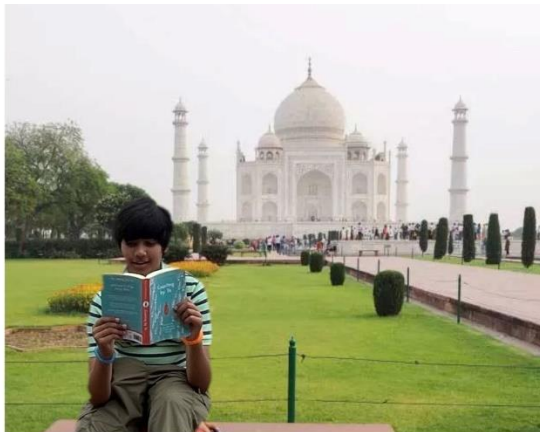
The tutor group who read the most books over the summer was 7S - they read 183 books. The pupil who read the most books was Ayush S (7W). The 'eXtreme Reader' winners are Jayan J (7S), Vivaan S (7S), Neel S (7E) and Lucas Y (7E).

Each pupil who read at least 6 books has been given a DARE point along with being awarded a highly coveted Reading School Summer Reading Challenge pen. Ayush S (7W) won a copy of Alex Rider: Nightshade Revenge by Anthony Horowitz. The eXtreme reader winners received Amazon gift cards.

Here are the full results:

- 7C **98 books**, 9 pupils received a DARE point, **top reader Satvick I (7C) 14 books**
- 7E **132 books**, 10 pupils received a DARE point, **top reader Aarman G (7E) 42 books**
- 7L **133 books**, 14 pupils received a DARE point, **top reader Thenuk A (7L) 15 books**
- 7S **183 books**, 17 pupils received a DARE point, **top reader Jayan J (7S) 32 books**
- 7W **130 books**, 9 pupils received a DARE point **WINNER - overall top reader Ayush S (7W) 43 books**

Finally - the deadline for the Percy Jackson Chalice of the Gods competition is **Monday 25 September**. There are three copies of the brand-new Percy Jackson book that will be awarded next week for the best chalice designs (inspired by Ancient Greek gods).



## **Sporting Fixtures**

### **Monday 25 September**

Year 10 B Team - National Cup Football v John Hampden (home) 2.30 ko

### **Wednesday 27 September**

2<sup>nd</sup> XV v Salesians (home) 2.30 ko

Year 8 A and B Rugby v Maiden Erlegh (home) 3.45ko

### **Thursday 28 September**

Cross County Years 7 - 9 Match 1 (Blue Coat School) 4pm



# RSPA

## RSPA AGM

We are delighted to invite you all to our Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, 18 October. Further details regarding time and location will follow shortly.

At this meeting, the current trustees will stand down. Some will stand for re-election but we are looking for some new members to become involved with the committee. There are so many ways in which you can become involved depending on your interests and available time. You can view our current roles here <https://www.readingschoolpa.org.uk/meet-the-team-current>

If there is any aspect of our organisation that you would like to have a no obligation chat about, please do not hesitate to email [contactus@readingschoolparents.co.uk](mailto:contactus@readingschoolparents.co.uk)

## Year 7 Disco and Welcome Event

The RSPA are delighted to invite all Year 7 students, parents and carers to a Welcome Event at the School on **Friday, 17 November** (exact time tbc).

The children are invited to attend a disco being held in the Refectory (ticket link to follow) whilst parents and carers are invited to join the RSPA in Big School for refreshments.

Please save the date. It's a great opportunity for Year 7 parents/carers to learn how they can be more involved with the School and meet other parents, whilst the students are enjoying the disco. We hope to see as many Year 7s there as possible!

## Second-hand Uniform Shop

A reminder of the 2023 dates for second-hand uniform shop. The shop will be open as follows:

- Friday, 13 October 3.30pm to 4.30pm
- Saturday, 14 October 10.30am to 12.30pm

and

- Friday, 8 December 3.30pm to 4.30pm
- Saturday, 9 December 10.30 to 12.30pm

Please email [shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk](mailto:shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk) for further information.

## Hoodie Ordering

It is still not too late to order the very popular Reading School hoodie! You can order a hoodie by [clicking this link](#).

## School Lottery

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 this link to join](#).

We would like to wish everyone a wonderful weekend!

The RSPA Team

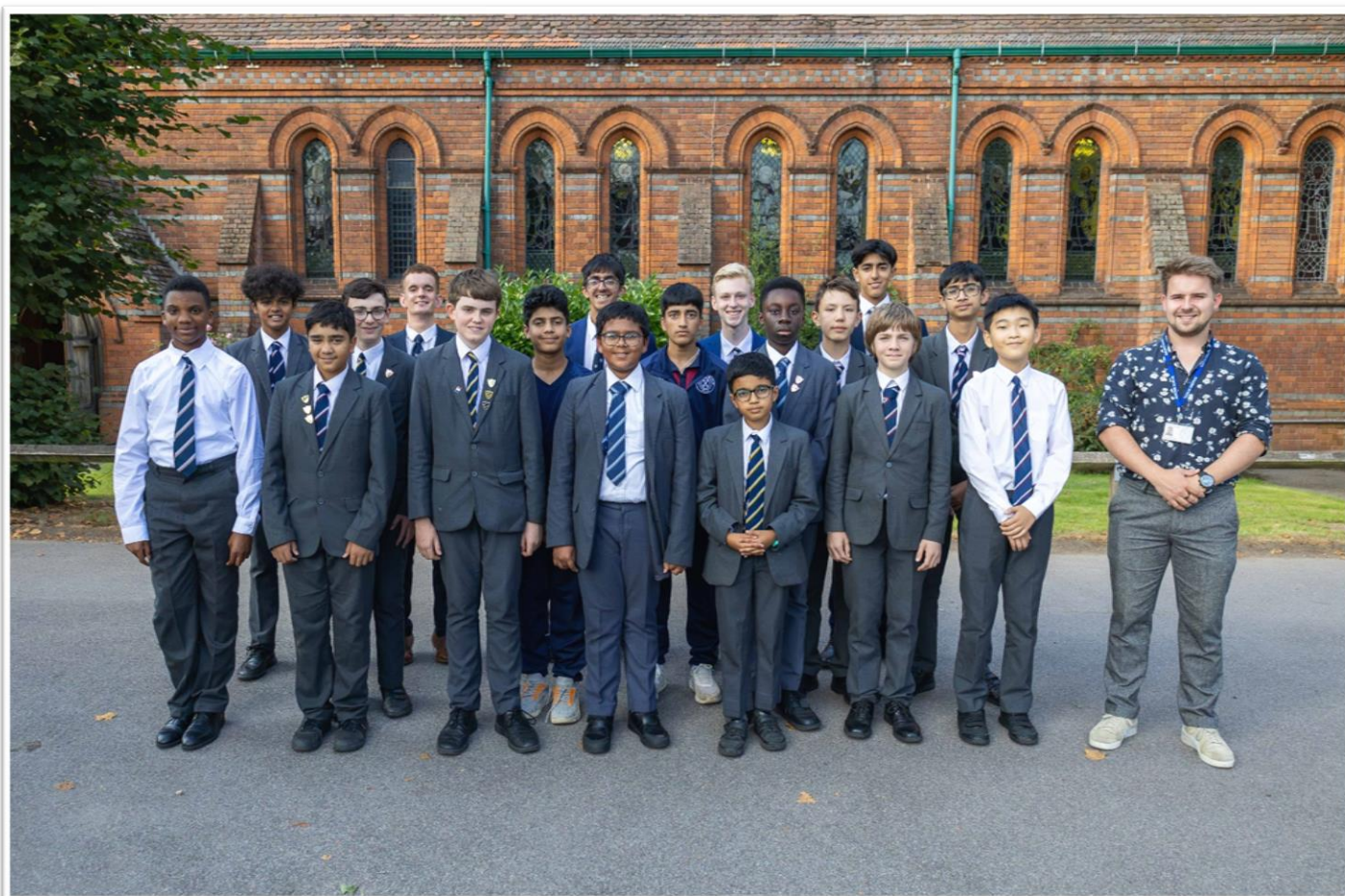
## Michaelmas Term – Week 3

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



The Reading School Chapel Choir are busy preparing for their upcoming tour to Barcelona during Reading Week in October. They will have the opportunity to perform at Barcelona Cathedral, Iglesia de San Román de Lloret & Sant Vicenç de Tossa.

Their repertoire will include: Ave Verum Corpus & Ave Maria op.2 (Elgar), 3 Elizabethan Songs (Vaughan William), Expectans Expectavi (Charles Wood), Songs of Farewell (Parry), 5 Spirituals (Tippett) and If ye Love Me (Tallis).





## Year 7 Music Lesson with Teacher of Music, Mr J Newman.

During the lesson, Year 7s got to develop good breath control, tone and overall vocal performance, while being reminded to release tension in their necks, shoulders and throat which all can restrict airflow.









## Year 13 Quiz and Social Event with The Abbey School.

The first partnership event with the Abbey School in our Michaelmas Term took place this week on Wednesday, 20 September.





The [Schools' Analyst Challenge 2023](#) is an annual competition allowing teams of three students to compete against each other in an analytical Chemistry challenge.

*"The challenge was an opportunity to really put our chemistry skills to the test. We had a series of practicals to identify different foods to solve a cooking related case, and we stretched our knowledge to beyond the spec. Vivek and Rio were brilliant team mates, and what made us successful in my opinion was collaborating as a team and assigning tasks based on team strengths. I am grateful for all the teachers for this opportunity and am thrilled with first place."*

Azaan A (13S)

Winning Team: Vivek S (13S), Rio T (13C) and Azaan A (13S)

Second Place: Advay C (13S), Rohan N (13L) and Darsh K (13L)

Third Place: Isaac B (13L), Maulik A (13L) and AleSsandro M (13L)



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)