



# Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

6th September 2024

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# Introduction

Dear parents, carers, colleagues and students,

Welcome back to School! It has been a privilege to welcome our new students in Year 7,8,9 and 12 this week. I very much hope that any anxiety has given way to excitement, and that any students still feeling apprehension will soon find themselves surrounded by friends and blessed with ample encouragement, nurture and care. We have also been pleased to welcome eight new colleagues this week who I am pleased to introduce.

Mr Amos joins us as our new Chaplain, having previously taught Religious Studies, Theology and Philosophy at Ranelagh School in Bracknell, and more recently at the Abbey School, where he has been Head of Department and Chaplain. His Bachelors and Master's degrees are from Manchester and Nottingham, and he's currently completing a PhD at the University of Leeds.

Mrs Brookings joins us in a new role, becoming our first Pastoral Manager. Over the summer, we reoriented space in West Wing, to create a new student reception area, which will be a hub for students needing any services or support during the School day. Mrs Brookings will be managing this space alongside her team. Having studied Biomedical Chemistry before completing a PhD in Immunology, she was a Researcher until 2006, when she joined the Home Office. She has also previously been a teaching assistant at Birch Copse School.

Mr Cho is also joining us in a new role – that of Cover Teacher. Mr Cho joins us from the Forest School where he was a Teacher of Geography. Prior to his arrival in the UK in 2021, he taught in a range of schools in Hong Kong. He is a graduate of the University of Hong Kong – an institution often described as Asia's best university.

Mr Hill joins as a Teacher of Maths and Future Stories Maths Lead. He'll be making sure that any students whose mathematical foundations aren't quite as secure as they could be, gain the support they need. Mr Hill will also be 9E's Tutor. Before joining us, Mr Hill was a teacher at John Hampden Grammar School for five years, where he was highly regarded for his Further Maths teaching and was also co-ordinator of House Competitions. He read Computer Science and Mathematics at Exeter, where he also completed his PGCE.

Miss Loft is our new library assistant. Her role allows us to keep the LRC open before and after school each day, in order to support School Librarian, Ms Kestevan. Miss Loft has previous experience archiving at Eton College, and brings an exceptional love of literature to the team.

Miss Mitchell is our new Student Support Assistant. She joins Mr Richardson and Mrs Bjornsdottir who started in the summer term, along with Mrs Hobbs and Miss Robinson, who all work under the guidance of Head of Student Support, Miss Rogers. Miss Mitchell has worked at Bohunt School as a learning support assistant, taught swimming for many years, and taught in several primary and secondary schools in Cardiff, from where she graduated with a BSC in Sport, PE and Health.

Miss Steedman joins us as Teacher of Chemistry. A graduate of St. Andrews University, her Master's degree in Chemistry included a specialism in Organic Chemistry, Gamification of Chemistry for Enhanced Learning, and the Development of Laboratory Frameworks. She has previously taught at a High School in Fife.

Miss Thain joins us as Teacher of English. She read English Literature at the University of Surrey before completing her PGCE at the University of Reading and teaching at Bulmershe School for the last two years. In addition to joining the English team, she will also be a Sixth Form Tutor in School House.

I am also especially eager to thank the students who led our staff training on Monday and Tuesday of this week. I would like to applaud their vision and leadership and highlight a few messages that they shared with the whole staff body.

Bestami B (9S) reminded colleagues of our uniform expectations:

### **Suits**

Are to be plain grey or (for Sixth Form) grey, black or dark blue.

### **Shoes**

Are to be plain black leather or (for Sixth Form) black or brown. White socks are not permitted.

### **Coats**

Should be plain and dark in colour.

### **Hair**

Must be well-groomed and long hair tied back. Exaggerated and coloured hairstyles are not permitted. Facial hair should be well groomed unless it is in conflict with accepted religious beliefs.

### **Jewellery**

Must not be worn nor must it be brought to School. No piercings are permitted.

I am very pleased to report that students have so far looked especially smart. I hope that students will continue to uphold these high standards throughout the year.

Richard M (12JP) and Kevin A (10L) spoke powerfully about motivation, the support available from staff and the systems that had most helped them in the last 12 months. They noted the return of Ms Ayres as Deputy Head, Mr Cooper's new role as Head of Scholarship (stretching students toward exceptional independent study and deepening curiosity), and Mr Appiah, who joined last term as our Engagement and Inclusion lead.

Led by Jude A (13RC) and Aneel H (10W), Pedram A (10C) spoke powerfully about the character development he felt the school nurtured, while Olti K (11W) spoke about the way staff could support students experiencing very different challenges and Ariana T (11E) shared her journey from Ukraine and the love of learning she discovered while at Reading School. Lucas Y (8E) shared details of our upcoming 900<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations. Our keynote speech was given by Luca Zani, who completed his A Levels this summer. Perhaps in this Bulletin I can finish with his words:

'If education is just providing a "pupil" with a great bank of facts and propositions, the world would be filled with increasingly vacuous generations of young people with little functional capacity, or practical application. Ralph Waldo Emerson put it this way:

*"We are shut up in schools and college recitation rooms for ten or fifteen years, and come out at last with a bellyful of words and do not know a thing. We cannot use our hands, or our legs, or our eyes, or our arms."*

Education must therefore be about much more than this exchange of propositions. To "give" a child an education is not just to transmit knowledge from one generation to another, but to pass on lore, beliefs, customs, disciplines, virtues and methods. To install a culture. We must understand that the primary role of the educator is not to guarantee the recall of exam answers but the shape of society.

It seems to me, that no syllabus, no number of 9s or A\*s, or examination percentage can compare to the moral and personal lessons that have been imprinted on me. My experience is that the truest riches of an education come from the relationships that mould us. The relationships that teach us how to listen. How to talk to people. How to show people we really do care. How to shake a hand or put an arm around a shoulder. How to be gracious when what you wanted was to be right. How to understand perspectives which are not your own. How to disagree without offence, and how to take criticism without becoming defensive. Textbooks and YouTube can teach me techniques, and facts and concepts. That's not what I got most out of my seven years here.

If schools leave students with the curiosity and the character, the traits and the behaviours, the wisdom and desire to carry on learning once they have left, and to find meaning and purpose in their daily endeavours,

they support all those they educate to build meaningful relationships, to flourish in what they do and they enrich society. And that, I argue, is the purpose of education.'

Wishing you all the very best for the year ahead,

**Chris Evans**  
**Headmaster**



# Key information

The Headmaster's Bulletin is structured in 3 main sections.

Section 1 (Introduction, Key Information, Safeguarding & Wellbeing) contains key information that we encourage all parents, carers and students to take note and be aware of.

Section 2 (School Community News) features optional information.

Section 3 (School Gallery) features highlights from the School week.

## Year 7 Only

### Official School Photographs

Please can parents and carers inform and remind their children that official school photographs will take place this coming **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September**. All Year 7 students are expected to be in full school uniform (not PE/Games kit).

### Year 7 Online Expectations Evening

Assistant Head, Mr D McGall leads an online session for parents and carers detailing: The Reading Way, Pastoral Support, The Curriculum, Safety, Wellbeing, Happiness & Success, Supporting your son & working together and Key Dates.

Please [click this link](#) to access the online recording of the Year 7 Expectations Evening.

Please [click this link](#) to access slides.

## Year 12 Only

### Official School Photographs

Please can parents and carers inform and remind their children that official school photographs will take place this coming **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September**. All Year 12 students are expected to be in full school uniform (not PE/Games kit).

### Year 12 Online Expectations Evening

Assistant Head, Mr A Lloyd leads an online session for parents and carers detailing: Key Dates, Sixth Form Life, Outcomes & Subject Choices, Foundations for Academic Success, Pastoral Support, Our Values, Planning for the Future and Your Role.

Please [click this link](#) to access the online recording of the Year 12 Expectations Evening.

Please [click this link](#) to access slides.

## All years

### Mathematics Calculators

For their mathematics education, all students need a scientific calculator. In the past the school has organised for students to buy calculators through school, however this year, it is possible to buy the same calculators more cost effectively via the internet.

We suggest that **Years 7 to 9** have the [Casio FX-85GTX](#), this calculator has a blue button on it.

We suggest **Years 10 – 13** who need a new calculator, getting the [Casio-FX-991CW](#) calculator, which has a gold button on it. This is essential for A level mathematics.

\*The FX-85GTX will be suitable for any Year 10 or 11 student who does not intend to study A level mathematics.

The Mathematics Department will speak to further Mathematicians in Year 12 and 13 next week to gauge interest in graphical calculators and a further message will be shared in due course.

## Safeguarding & Wellbeing

Keeping children and young people safe, happy and healthy is at the heart of our practice at Reading School. Safeguarding and wellbeing related information and support will be shared with parents, carers and students in this section during the academic term.

# School Community News

## Current Vacancies – Reading School

We currently do not have any vacancies available at Reading School. Please visit our [careers page](#) to join our talent pool and we will review your application.

## Current Vacancies – Kendrick School

**English Teacher** - to cover a maternity leave (for November 2024)

**Caretaker** - (for as soon as possible), full time.

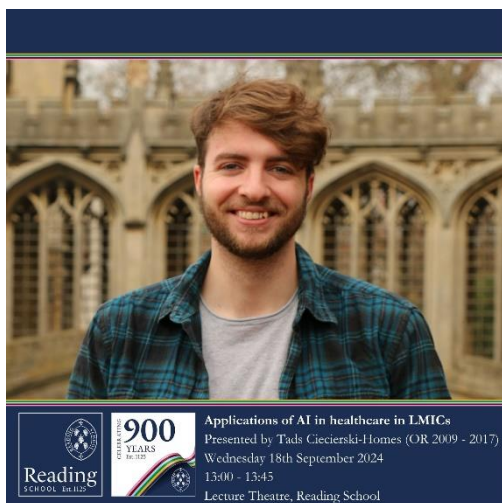
**School Administrator and Student Welfare Assistant** - 28 hours a week, Monday to Thursday, 8am to 3.30pm

**Library Resource Coordinator** - 22 ½ hours a week, alternate weeks - 8am to 12.30pm; 12.30pm to 5pm.

More information on each of the roles above can be found on the [Kendrick School website](#).

## Inspire Lecture – September 2024

### Applications of AI in Healthcare in LMICs - Wednesday 18th September 2024



**Date:** Wednesday 18th September 2024

**Time:** 13:00 - 13:45

**Location:** Lecture Theatre, Reading School

Join us for an insightful lecture by Tads Ciecierski-Holmes (OR 2009-2017), a graduate-entry medical student and Economics graduate from the University of Cambridge.

Tads will delve into how AI is transforming healthcare, particularly in low-resource settings, and share his research on the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of these technologies. Don't miss this opportunity to learn about the future of medicine and the challenges and opportunities of AI in healthcare.

To attend this lecture, please [RSVP via this link](#).

## Inspire Lecture – October 2024

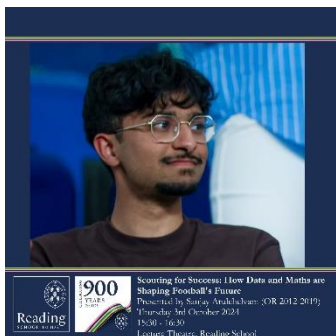
### Scouting for Success: How Data and Maths are Shaping Football's Future

**Date:** Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2024

**Time:** 3:30pm – 16:30pm

**Location:** Lecture Theatre, Reading School

Sanjay Arulchelvam (OR 2012-2019) is currently the Data Scouting Manager for the Saudi Pro League in Riyadh. After earning a degree in Maths, Statistics, and Economics from the University of Warwick, his passion for football, coupled with a social media platform, led him to pursue a career in the sport. Sanjay applies data and algorithms to help the 18 Saudi Pro League clubs recruit and analyse players, aiming to discover hidden talents and support effective, strategic squad planning.



He's back in the UK for a few days and will be giving a talk on how data and maths are revolutionising football. This is a rare opportunity to hear from someone at the forefront of sports and data science.

All students are welcome to attend, but Years 10-13 are particularly encouraged to join, as the talk will provide valuable insights into how data and mathematics are applied in real-world scenarios, which could be highly relevant to your studies and future career considerations.

To attend this lecture, please [RSVP via this link](#).

## Calling All Medical Students, Graduates, and Professionals!

Are you passionate about mentoring the next generation of healthcare professionals? If so, we need your help.

Reading School's Multiple Mini Interview (MMI) Program is gearing up for another round of sessions to support aspiring medical students. Since 2020, we've expanded our reach by transitioning to a virtual format, allowing us to annually engage 20 - 30 volunteers to support over 125 of our students. Thanks to this program, 81 Reading School students have successfully pursued careers in Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, and related fields.

This year, through our partnership with the Royal Berkshire Hospital, we're extending support to over 50 students from 15 local schools in the Reading and Wokingham area. We are committed to ensuring that students from all backgrounds have access to essential support.

**How you can help:** We are looking for undergraduates (second year and higher), graduates, and professionals in medicine, nursing, dentistry, and veterinary medicine to lead 5-minute mini-interviews via Zoom.

**Interested?** Click the link by Monday 21st October 2024 to sign up: <https://alumni.reading-school.co.uk/surveys/medical-mmi-interviewers-nov-24>. Your support can make a real difference.

Choose all the dates you're available, and we'll confirm the final schedule based on availability. For more details or any questions, please email us at [alumni@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:alumni@reading-school.co.uk)

## A thank you

A Q & A session took place this week on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September with Andrew Yang (OR 2013-2020) who delivered a session for Year 12 students titled, 'Insights on Mathematics at University and Beyond'. Andrew is a distinguished recent graduate of the University of Cambridge. He earned both a Master of Mathematics and a Bachelor's degree, achieving First Class Honours in Part III of the Mathematical Tripos. His academic journey also includes the publication of research papers in collaboration with Prof. Steven Miller at Williams College, Massachusetts, covering topics in Baseball Analytics, Statistics, and Number Theory. In addition to his academic background, Andrew is skilled in programming languages including Python, MATLAB, and R. The session offered a unique opportunity to gain insights from his experiences in both academia and applied mathematics.

We would like to thank Andrew for kindly giving up his time to share his insights for the benefit of Year 12 students.

# Michaelmas Term – Week 1

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



The first day of term



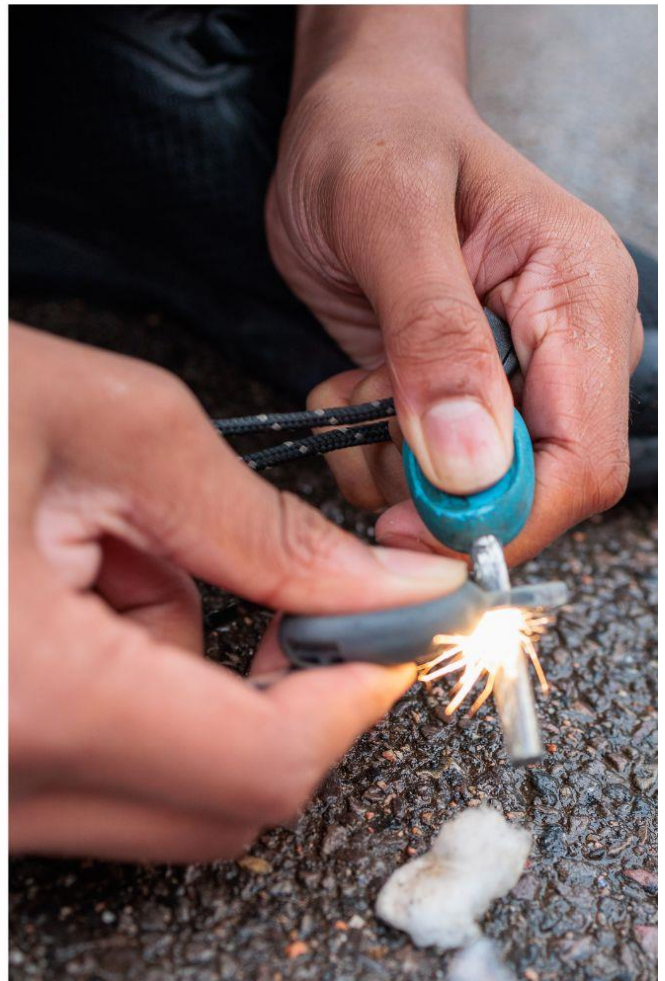
















## Staff Day 2024 (a student-led 2-day event)













Feedback is important to us and if you have any positive news, comments or suggestions, please contact the Community Relations Office by emailing [communityrelations@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:communityrelations@reading-school.co.uk).