



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

17 NOVEMBER 2023



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Introduction

'Don't expect to accomplish your dreams if you are not willing to help others accomplish theirs.'

This was one of the key lessons from the recent visit of A Level PE students to FCN, Right to Dream in Copenhagen, Denmark. Led by Mr Steve Allen, Head of Sport and Mr Tom Evans, Assistant Headteacher, our students experienced cultural enrichment, character coaches and collaboration within a high trust environment.

I wanted to take this opportunity to share positive feedback that strengthens my view that we should be optimistic regarding the future. Whilst there is still much work to be done, we want to continue to provide valuable opportunities for members of the Reading School community to flourish in a variety of ways. The school trip to Copenhagen could be viewed as a positive case study, however I would suggest it is also a powerful catalyst for further action that prioritises culture, character and collaboration.

Laurence Halsted, the performance consultant, coach, Olympian and author, provided the following assessment of the visit:

'What a pleasure it has been to spend the last few days with them all. What an engaging, interesting, thoughtful and generally impressive group of young men they are! They are a credit to the school, and I was especially impressed by how openly and maturely they engaged with the activities and discussions that were offered here.'

While Assistant Headteacher, Mr Tom Evans, shared the following feedback:

"We were all impressed by the degree of the high trust culture in Denmark and the extent to which this builds supportive communities. Cycling round Copenhagen was an amazing experience, as was our Fencing Workshop with the Danish national coach and his team. Our sessions with Laurence were particularly insightful and we all benefitted from the depth of conversations and his input around sports psychology, culture and values. Our time spent with elite athletes that are beneficiaries of the Right to Dream philosophy was invaluable, giving us a sense of the importance of belonging and we will be working with our A level students to implement a 'Character coach' model in the months ahead. We are also hoping to work together to bring the best of the Danish approach to Reading School, the Kenrick Sports Pathway and to our community."

In addition, Eja, a 'Character Coach' from FCN, Right to Dream shared, *'Thanks to the students and staff from Reading School. I am optimistic about the future with such brilliant young students.'* It is also pleasing to note the positive response of our own Year 12 who was part of the trip, *"I feel inspired by everything I saw and who we spoke to, not just with Laurence but also FC Nordsjaeland too, about mental softness and character coaches. It very much achieved the cultural enrichment which we set out for."*

The challenge is to scale up the key learnings from the experience so that there can be a positive impact throughout our organisational culture. For example, exploring the concept of 'mental softness' and the value of developing character coaches, should be considered a key place to start.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank staff, students and parents for their support of the provision of opportunities to flourish. This positive, outward-facing attitude helps to ensure that, essentially, we can be optimistic regarding the future. This is because we are striving to develop people of character and substance. We are committed to supporting all our students, day and boarding, from Year 7 to Year 13, and beyond, to accomplish their dreams.

Mr A M Robson
Headmaster

Key information

All years

Special Educational Needs and Disability Parent Meet Up

Following the success of the meet-up in the Summer Term, Head of Student Support, Mrs Rogers, is inviting parents of students with SEND to a meet up on Wednesday 29 November from 14.00 - 3.30pm. This is a valuable opportunity for parents to meet with other parents while being able to share experiences and approaches to meeting their child's needs in a supportive environment, as well as being able to review resources and meet staff members of the Student Support Department.

If you would like to attend, please email studentsupport@reading-school.co.uk.

Admission Arrangements Notice

The Admissions Code sets out that schools wishing to amend their admissions arrangements must consult as widely as possible. Maiden Erlegh Trust is carrying out a consultation in accordance with statutory requirements, on proposed changes to their admissions arrangements 2025/26 for Maiden Erlegh School in Reading. The proposed new arrangements and supporting documentation can be found by [clicking here](#) and the consultation closes on Tuesday 19 December 2023.

Current Vacancies

Site Controller

Have you got the skills to help us provide a safe, well-maintained and positive space in which our students excel? We're looking for a reliable and enthusiastic Site Controller to contribute to the safety, security and day-to-day maintenance of the school premises and site. For more information, [click here](#). Deadline for applications is 9am on Wednesday 6 December.

Excellence, Belonging & Community

Excellence in Languages



As featured in last week's Headmaster's Bulletin, Reading School had 10 teams of Year 9s taking part in [GCHQ's National Language Competition](#). We were very pleased to see the students' enthusiasm and excitement during the competition, while enjoying the challenges of solving all the language and linguistics puzzles by working collaboratively together.

We are delighted to share that all of our top three teams were ranked within the top 100 nationally, and our top ranked team came 30th out of thousands of teams - a fantastic achievement!

This was also a House Competition, and the standings are as follows:

- 1st – County
- 2nd - Laud
- 3rd - West
- 4th – East
- 5th - School

Belonging & Community

A Physics trip to CERN



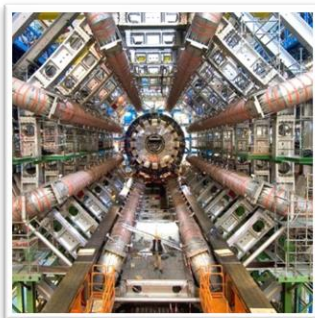
During Reading Week 2023, 15 lucky students had the opportunity to visit the European Organization for Nuclear Research, more commonly known as CERN. The laboratory sits astride the Franco-Swiss border near Geneva and uses the world's largest and most complex scientific instruments to study the basic constituents of matter – the fundamental particles. The purpose of this exciting trip was to further our student's education in particle physics and inspire future particle physicists through exposure to leading-edge physics research.

Led by Head of Physics, Mr Elmore and Teacher of Physics, Mr Hung, the trip was open to Year 13 Physics students and after speaking with Sam J (13S) earlier this week he shared his experiences:

"We visited lots of museums around Geneva, including the History of Science Museum, with lots of hands-on exhibits, the Natural History Museum. Our favourite was the Einstein museum - which was well worth the long coach ride to Bern. Here, our engaging tour guide led us through the huge exhibit on Einstein's life and work. They had a huge number of intriguing items, from Einstein's passport, to home videos and drawings by him. It was amazing to learn more about the man behind the monumental Physics theory."

We also enjoyed some time in the centre of Geneva – unfortunately the huge fountain in Lake Geneva was closed, but we made up for it with some classic Swiss fondue! We weren't immune to some public transport mistakes – a highlight was Mr Elmore being carried off by a bus retrieving his forgotten bag...





The highlight of the trip was, of course, our visit to CERN. We started off with a tour of various buildings, like their gigantic ATLAS detector. It was amazing to learn how much technology and engineering is needed to detect the smallest subatomic particle. Hopping over the border to France, we saw their cryogenic facility, where they produce the superconducting magnets that guide particles in the LHC. I found it very surprising that they produce most of the tech in-house. After lunch, we went on to visit some CERN exhibitions, with loads of interactive exhibits to discover. I particularly enjoyed an exhibit showing how the LHC speeds up particles, and a vacuum tube with a small ball and feather inside, to demonstrate how everything experiences the same acceleration due to gravity.

The best part of the trip, I think, was the lab workshop, where we made our own cloud chambers. These let you see trails left by subatomic particles and identify the particles. We seemed to impress both the scientist leading the workshop, and Mr Elmore with our knowledge of particle physics! It was great to see how some exciting lab equipment is made and come to exciting conclusions from observable evidence.

Overall, the CERN trip was a huge success – it was great to learn some new physics and amazing to explore CERN itself!"

Medical Mock Interviews (MMI) - Interviewers Needed

For the last three years, we have run our annual Multiple Mini Interview circuit (MMI) virtually via Zoom or, more recently, Teams. Our aspiring medics and dentists from Reading School as well as other students from schools in the wider Reading area gained valuable experience from the Old Redingensians, current and former parent volunteers working in the medical field, who offered their support.

The MMI format is increasingly popular with medical and dental schools and our MMI circuit consists of four stations covering motivation for medicine/dentistry, healthcare current affairs, medical ethics and role play/communication. Students rotate between the 4 stations while the interviewers remain at their stations.

Once again, this year, we are working closely with the Royal Berkshire Hospital to extend this opportunity to other students in the Reading and Wokingham area with the aim of improving the participation and progression from under-represented groups within healthcare. We have already held one MMI event and another is scheduled for this coming Monday 20 November. However, we now need to arrange a third evening on Wednesday 29 November and are searching for professional doctors, nurses or allied healthcare professionals who can commit to leading a series of 5-minute mini-interviews during one or ideally both of the evening sessions (Session 1 starting at 6pm and Session 2 starting at 7:30pm). Don't worry - there isn't anything to prepare! All interview details and materials will be provided beforehand, along with the meeting link.

If you are interested in volunteering your time and expertise, please email Esther Chong or Jas Chhokar by emailing events@reading-school.co.uk to indicate your availability by Tuesday 21 November.

A Christmas Fair with a Brazilian twist



During the year, Reading School hosts a variety of non-school related events which are organised by third parties not affiliated with the school. On Sunday 10 December from 12pm – 5pm, Conexao Empreender will be turning the Refectory into a Christmas Fair which will see an array of Brazilian food, festive drinks, music, exhibitors, a raffle, a visit from Father Christmas, along with a chance to win an Apple watch.

Tickets for children under 12 years old are free, £2 for adults and children and £5 as a family.

[To book a ticket, please click this link.](#) For all enquiries, please email conexaoempreenderuk@gmail.com

Teachers' Amazon Wishlist 2023



Following on from the tremendous success of the Teachers' Amazon Wishlist 2022 – it's back for the third year running!

As with previous years, all departments have been given the opportunity to request items up to the value of £250. You can choose what to purchase directly from the list, or if you can't decide what to buy, you can donate an Amazon Gift Voucher or cash.

The list is being compiled as we speak, and will go live from next Friday, 24 November and will close on the Friday, 8 December.

There are a wide range of requests and costs of items so hopefully something to suit everyone who wishes to contribute.

Teachers massively appreciate your donations, and we can boost the donation that you make if you can please first sign up for [EasyFundraising and choose AMAZON as your retailer](#).

Year 7 Disco



Get ready to put on your dancing shoes and let the good times roll!

The Reading School Parents Association is thrilled to welcome our newest members of Year 7 to a spectacular Disco Night. But that's not all - we're taking it up a notch! We're excited to share that we've extended a special invitation to the Year 7 girls from Kendrick School. They're just as eager as our own students to hit the dance floor and make this night unforgettable.

For our Reading School Year 7 Parents (only), drop-offs will be at the Refectory. From there, we'll lead you to our Meet and Greet event - a specially planned event for new year 7 parents where you'll have the chance to connect with current parents, share experiences, and forge new friendships.

Details for the Evening:

Date: Friday 17 November 2023

Time: 7.00pm to 8.30 pm

Location: Reading School, Refectory

Tickets and advantages:

- Final few tickets are available to buy
- Soft drinks are included in the ticket price
- Raffle tickets, snacks & glow items are available to buy on the night
- Cash / Card will be accepted
- [Reading School hoodies](#) will be available to buy

Belongings (including phones) are brought at students' own risk. The RSPA does not take responsibility for these. Let's come together as a community to create memories that will be cherished for years to come.

Volunteers required at the Disco:

We would also like to hear from parents who are able to volunteer an hour or two of their time on the night to ensure the event runs smoothly.

Please email rspa-secretary@readingschoolparents.co.uk if you would like to volunteer.

Michaelmas Term – Week 10

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



During October, as the International Olympic Committee confirmed that squash would finally take its place at the Olympics in 2028, Reading school took two teams of Year 8s and 9s to play against The Oratory School. The first team had a convincing victory, winning 4 matches to the Oratory's 1. The stand-out performance came from Henry R (9E), playing at number 1, who came from behind to win 12-10 in the tie-break of the fifth and final set. The second team's match was a tighter affair, evenly split at two matches apiece going into the final game. Aarav R (8W) managed to fight off a spirited comeback from the opposition, eventually winning a marathon match in the fifth set to give the second team a well-deserved victory. This is a promising sign as the club prepares for its debut in the National Schools Squash Championships next month.

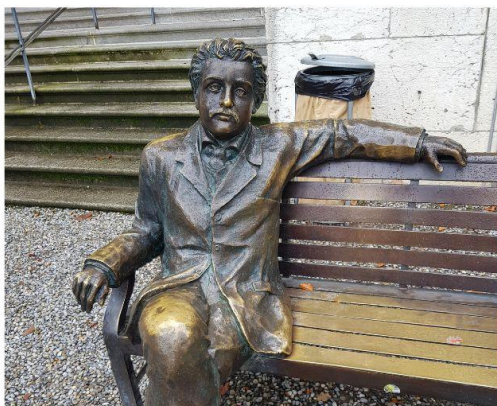
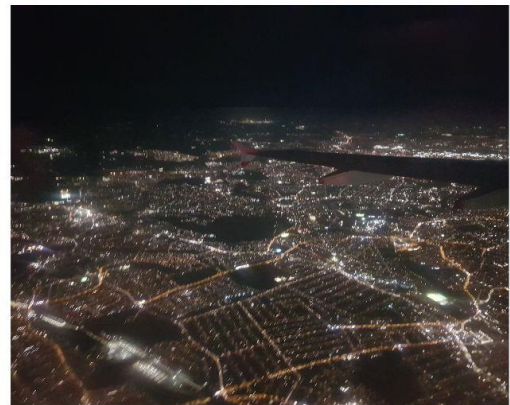
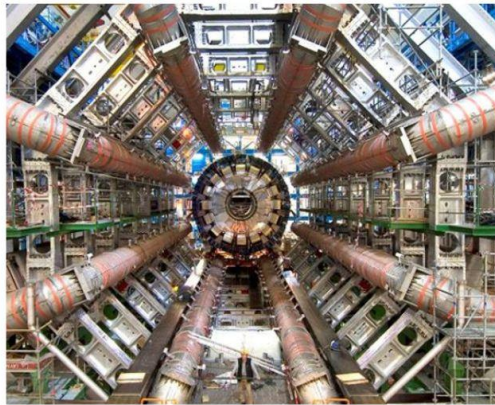


First team: Henry R (9E), Abraham S (9C), Maxim H (8S), Oscar Z (9W), Varnesh R (9W)
Second team: Aarav R (8W), Vihaan G (8W), Vihaan T (8W), Shaashwat M (9W), Edward K (9E)

Year 13 Physics trip to the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN)

Founded in 1954, the CERN laboratory sits astride the Franco-Swiss border near Geneva. It was one of Europe's first joint ventures and has 23 member states.

Physicists and engineers at CERN use the world's largest and most complex scientific instruments to study the basic constituents of matter – fundamental particles. Subatomic particles are made to collide together at close to the speed of light. The process gives us clues about how the particles interact, and provides insights into the fundamental laws of nature. We want to advance the boundaries of human knowledge by delving into the smallest building blocks of our universe.

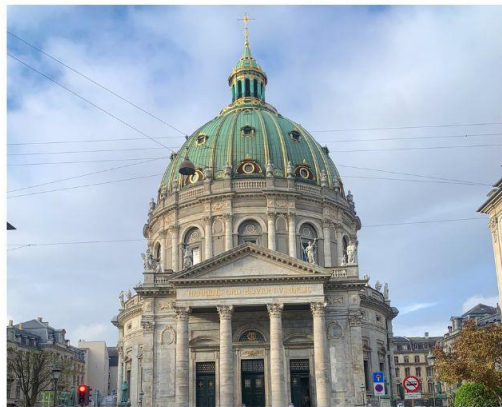


The instruments used at CERN are purpose-built particle accelerators and detectors. Accelerators boost beams of particles to high energies before the beams are made to collide with each other or with stationary targets. Detectors observe and record the results of these collisions.

The Large Hadron Collider (LHC) is the world's largest and most powerful particle accelerator. It first started up on 10 September 2008, and remains the latest addition to CERN's accelerator complex. The LHC consists of a 27-kilometre ring of superconducting magnets with a number of accelerating structures to boost the energy of the particles along the way.

Laurence Halsted is a two-time Olympic fencer, having competed for Team GB in the London 2012 and Rio 2016 Games. He has been working in partnership with Reading School under his '[The True Athlete Project](#)', a sports charity that focuses on a more compassionate, holistic culture of sport. He enables children, young people and adults to discover and enhance their potential as individuals and groups, through a better understanding of themselves and by tapping into a sense of purpose and meaning in life while connecting with each other.

This week, A-level students had the opportunity to visit Copenhagen Denmark in order to take part in a structured enrichment programme led by Laurence Halstead along with visiting [FC Nordsjælland](#), a football club with a world renowned culture rooted in, 'a desire to develop young talent while building a distinctive style of play and philosophy.'



"An incredible experience for our A-level PE students to gain an insight into elite performance through meeting Olympian Laurence Halstead of the True Athlete Project and our visit to FC Nordsjælland as a professional football club that focuses on character and belonging over anything else. The cultural value was equally impressive from everything we saw and did in the amazing city of Copenhagen."

Mr S Allen

Old Redingensians Remembrance Day Service 2023 - Sunday 12 November 2023

Our annual Remembrance Day event is to remember the service and sacrifice of all those that have defended our freedoms and protected our way of life. Especially those fallen Old Redingensians.

Thank you to Chris Widdows (1955-1962) Membership Secretary, Old Redingensians Association for organising this important event.















Congratulations to Akaaldeep S and Kacper L for taking part in the CIMAC Kickboxing Superleague tournament which took place in early November. Kacper achieved a silver medal and Akaaldeep a bronze and both trained intensively in the lead up to the tournament.



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