



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

24 NOVEMBER 2023

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Introduction

Preparations for a festive season

I found myself travelling to Christmas Common, Oxfordshire in order to purchase a Christmas Tree for Reading School in time for the beginning at Advent, the period of preparation for Christmas, which is rapidly approaching. When the tree arrives, it will be displayed in the Refectory as a long-standing tradition associated with Christmas, and which symbolises joy, warmth, festivity and the spirit of giving.

It is a time of the year where we embrace and celebrate cultural traditions in order to strengthen our sense of community and inclusivity. Similar to recent religious and cultural events celebrated by many in our community, such as Diwali and Bandi Chhor Divas.

The preparation for Christmas also offers our whole school community chances to enjoy a variety of events, which will include this Sunday's Annual House Music Competition at the Hexagon, along with our Carol Service in Reading School's Chapel on Monday 11 December. All these occasions are events that allow us to come together, share our joy and generosity, create memories for our students and children, while fostering a sense of goodwill. All are welcome.

Opportunity to evidence sustained high performance

As communicated on Monday this week, we were notified by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) that Reading School would be subject to a three-day aligned inspection this week. This process consisted of an Ofsted Section 5 whole-school Inspection and a social care Ofsted Boarding inspection, from Tuesday 21 November to Thursday 23 November. I would like to thank our students and staff for their preparation and contributions to what was an intensive school-wide effort to showcase the best of Reading School. Areas that were inspected included:

- Boarding provision
- Safeguarding
- Quality of Education
- Behaviour and Attitudes
- Personal Development
- Sixth form
- Leadership and management

In addition, thank you to the many parents who engaged with the process by communicating with the Ofsted Inspectors. The outcomes will be shared with the whole school community in January 2024 when the final reports have been published by Ofsted.

White Ribbon Campaign 2023



As part of our commitment to building people of integrity and character, Reading School is an accredited [White Ribbon](#) campaign organisation. Reading School Staff Ambassadors and champions have promised to be upstanders against violence against women. We do not use violence against women. We do not excuse men's violence against women. We do not remain silent about men's violence against women.

In addition, our students, led by School Captain, Josha G (13C) have affirmed their allyship of the commitment to #ChangeTheStory for women and girls, so that they live their lives free from the fear of violence. Our student leaders support the view that #AllMenCan take an active role in stopping violence before it starts, by recognising and calling out attitudes and behaviours that are harmful. Thus, we are promoting the importance of male allyship.

We are upstanders, not bystanders. Individually, we can make a difference, but collectively we can change the narrative. Not just on White Ribbon Day on Saturday 25 November, but as part of a long-term strategic approach to engaging men and boys to help end violence against women and girls.

Mr A M Robson
Headmaster

Key information

Parent Governor Election

The result of the recent parent governor election was:

Sanjay Desai 63 votes

Shaifali Gaba 40 votes

Neil Holmes 81 votes

Ben White 22 votes

Neil Holmes was therefore elected to serve as a parent governor for the period December 2023 to November 2027. He will serve alongside the other three parent governors: Sanjay Shahi, Emma Fallon and Dozie Nnabuife.

There will be another parent governor vacancy this time next year. Thanks to all those who put themselves forward in 2023.

All years

Online Safety Newsletter

November's edition of our online safety newsletter is available to [download by clicking here](#). This month's edition shares information for students and parents about:

- Roblox – what it is, what rating it is, what you should be aware of and parental controls
- TikTok – what it is, account set up information, family pairing, inappropriate content and blocking/reporting
- Apple devices – new sensitive content warning feature
- Sexting – the risks and advice for parents

Special Educational Needs and Disability Parent Meet Up - reminder

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 2.00 - 3.30pm. This is a valuable opportunity for parents to meet with other parents while being able to share experiences and approaches in 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.

Year 11 only

Mock Exams

Mock exam week is now just 2 weeks away, beginning on Monday 11 December, and finishing on Tuesday 19 December. Year 11 students will return to normal lessons on Wednesday 20 December. The mock schedule can be downloaded by [clicking this link](#).

Next week Year 11 students will receive an individual exam timetable, which will only have the subjects they are studying. They will also receive more information in relation to whether they need to be in school if they have not got an exam scheduled, and what venues they will be in, for the exams.

Sixth Form Registration and Open Day

The postponed Sixth Form Open Day is now scheduled for Wednesday 29 November. Just as a reminder, this Open Day is primarily for external parents, not parents of current Year 11s at Reading School, as lots of the information will be aimed at parents who do not already know Reading School's approach to education.

All parents of current Year 11s will receive a letter early next week with a link to a talk about Sixth Form applications for internal Year 11s, which will hopefully answer any questions they have about Reading School Sixth Form. Additionally, all students will receive a similar talk in school during next week, so they have the opportunity to ask the Head of Sixth Form, Mr Alun Lloyd, any questions they may have.

In the meantime, we would strongly recommend parents and students read the Sixth Form Booklet carefully, as this is where all of the information about the Sixth Form can be found. The link to this can be found here: [Sixth Form Booklet](#). On the Reading School website, you can also find links to a wide range of videos about Sixth Form life, which will help to add colour to the picture of what Reading School Sixth Form can offer. These can be found here: [Reading School Sixth Form](#).

We hope this clarifies the situation with regard to next Wednesday's Open Day and how to find information related to the upcoming Sixth Form application process.

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 Engineering



We would like to congratulate Henry K (12L) for being recently awarded an Arkwright Engineering Scholarship, an esteemed UK award designed to inspire students to, 'pursue their dreams and change the world as an outstanding engineer of the future.' The scholarships are awarded to diligent students through a rigorous selection process in order to support them during their A levels through financial, mentoring and event support.

We spoke with Henry earlier this week during an extended interview so that other students could benefit from his experience:

Q: Can you tell us more about the Arkwright Engineering Scholarship?

A: Last year, during Year 11, I applied for an engineering scholarship, which is run by the Smallpeice Trust. It's for young people who want to get into engineering and bring ideas to life through science, technology, engineering and maths.

Q: What did the application process look like?

A: It was split into two parts. The first part was a series of questions and the second part focused on my engineering project. I needed to talk about why I wanted the scholarship, my interests in engineering, plus any leadership roles I've taken part in. For the application I had to think about what I want to study at university and where I see myself in 10 or 20 years. I then had to complete an aptitude test involving solving engineering-based problems under exam conditions. Following this I was selected for an interview. Mr McAllister helped with my interview preparation by giving me a mock interview which was valuable as this was my first one.

Q: Can you paint a picture of what your project looks like?

A: The idea behind my project was to create something that would help me improve my lacrosse skills, specifically my aim when scoring goals. Firstly, I created a prototype. I started off building a mini lacrosse goal out of wood, which was half the size of a real one and I attached sensors around it to begin the initial testing phase. The sensors detected the position of a ball as it entered the goal on a two-dimensional plane which allowed me to gather statistics on where the ball crossed the goal. With the collated data I can hopefully see my accuracy improve over time. Once I was happy with the prototype, I scaled things up to make something that could work on a full-size lacrosse goal.

Q: Where did the idea of combining engineering and lacrosse come from?

I recently started playing lacrosse, and I was keen to improve my accuracy when going for a goal. I wanted to try and improve at lacrosse and improve my engineering skills at the same time...it just fitted together nicely. I think I've always been interested in engineering like Lego and designing stuff. I think it's only recently where I've got more advanced in terms of the projects I can attempt. I used a 3D printer for this project and that opened a gateway into more serious projects. I don't know why I didn't do it earlier.

Q: What will the scholarship allow you to do?

A: I will be able to go on industry visits as well as 'Connect Days' at universities with other Arkwright scholars. The scholarship provides £660 a year for the two years at A level and the school will get £440 which provides funding for STEM projects. I will also have an engineering mentor who works in the engineering industry who will provide advice about the transition from school to university and on to becoming an engineer.

Q: When it comes to the money that goes to you, what are you planning to do with it?

A: Well, I'm currently 3D printing the pieces to build an RC car which I have designed from scratch. It's been a challenge, but progress is being made! It's likely that I will put some of the money towards attending the Arkwright engineering summer schools. Ideally, the money that goes to the school will be split between projects within the Computer Science Society and the Engineering Society. The funding has to be used for STEM and for the benefit of learning.

Q: If you had advice for younger students who have a passion for a subject or career, what kind of general tips or advice would you share with them?

Research different projects. Be realistic, as there will be lots of projects which are incredibly advanced, which won't be achievable at your current ability or given the resources you have. Try and do as many projects as you can because you'll have the time in Years 7, 8 and 9, when you've got time to experiment and develop passions. And watch YouTube tutorials as I learnt a lot from them about engineering and read up around your area of interest.

Q: What are your plans for the future?

A: I want to study engineering at university and then I'd like to become an aerospace or mechanical engineer.

Belonging & Community

The [UK Space Design Competition](#) is a multidisciplinary space-themed competition designed to be a simulation of life in industry. Students from many schools are combined to form an engineering company and take on the task of designing a crewed space settlement within our solar system.

In early November, 12 of our Sixth Form students, led by Head of Computer Science, Mr McAllister, took part in the competition held at Oxford Brookes University. Taking part in the event allowed our students to experience what it would be like for an engineer, architect, young entrepreneur, chemist, physicist or medical student.

After speaking about their experiences of taking part in the competition two of our students shared:

"The UK Space Design competition was thoroughly enjoyable, and a first of a kind experience for me to practically apply a lot of the knowledge I've gained in all my STEM subjects over the years. Working with other students with similar interests and skills to deliver a large project was very satisfying, albeit more challenging than I expected! I'd totally do it again next year, hopefully winning with the experience I've gathered from this year." Prabhav B (12W)

"Despite not being picked to be in a leadership position within my team of around 40 students, I found that there was still lots of work to do elsewhere and ended up taking a large role in one of the sub-teams, making sure that we delivered our project efficiently and well. Regardless of being absolutely exhausted by the end of the day, the people I met, and the experience overall, mean I would do it again any day." Anish K (12C)



Piano Masterclass & Recital



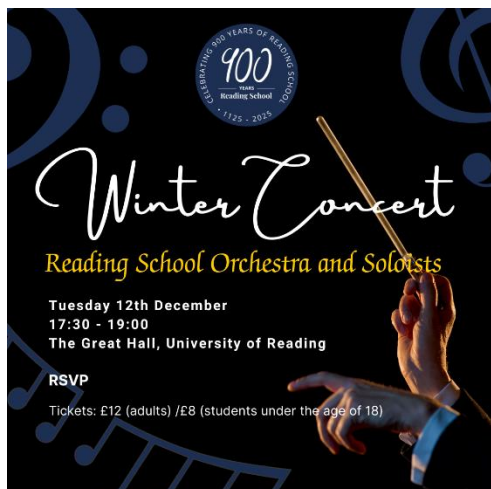
On Wednesday 8 November, visiting pianist, Anthony Williams led an educational and exciting set of piano masterclasses for music scholars from Reading School and The Abbey School. During the masterclass, students played music from diverse periods in all styles while Anthony supported the students in emphasising musicianship and phrasing. Sean A (13L) and Yash S (13E) also performed in the recital that took place later in the afternoon with musicians from The Abbey also performing for an audience.

Sean performed an enthusiastic rendition of Beethoven's Pathétique Suite, Movement 1, a difficult piece that demands perfect technique and intentional phrasing while Yash performed Rigoletto Paraphrase by Franz Liszt. Rigoletto is an opera by Verdi, which Liszt developed and arranged for piano in his typical virtuosic style. Multiple melodies from the opera are clearly heard, combined with technically demanding flourishes, but the piece maintains a sense of elegance throughout.

Both Sean and Yash will be performing at this Sunday's House Music Competition 2023 at The Hexagon and for ticket information, please [click this link](#).



A date for the diary - Reading School Winter Concert



Reading School's Director of Music, Mr Griffin invites all within our school community to share in a special winter concert featuring the Reading School Orchestra and Soloists on Tuesday 12 December 2023 at the University of Reading's Great Hall. Highlights of the concert will include:

Soloists

Paganini - Caprice 24 - Kyle R (13W)
Jacob - Viola Concerto No. 2 MVT II - Joseph M (13L)
Tchaikovsky - Dumka (Op. 59) - Avaneesh R (12W)
Ravel - Jeux d'eau - Ryan L (12L)
Handel - Variations on Angels from the Realms of Glory – Freddie S (13W)
Liszt - Rigoletto Paraphrase – Yash S (13E)

Reading School Orchestra

Overture to Romeo and Juliet – Tchaikovsky

Piano Concerto No. 2 Movement II – Rachmaninov Soloist: Yash S (13E)

Tickets for the concert are priced at £12 (adults) and £8 (under 18s). Please [click here to purchase tickets](#).

Date: Tuesday 12 December

Time: 15:30 – 19:00

Venue: The Great Hall, University of Reading, London Road, Reading RG1 5AQ

Student Fundraiser



On Friday 1 December, the Sixth Form Charity Prefect Team led by Saad A (12E) and Chandan M (12C), will be holding a Krispy Kreme Sale to fundraise for Action for Humanity's Gaza Appeal. Doughnuts will be sold outside the LRC during Junior and Senior lunchtimes and please bring your spare change or [visit the Go FundMe page by clicking here](#).

According to Charity Prefect, Yaman E (13S), "the humanitarian crisis in Gaza is gravely escalating. More than 13,000 have been killed, including more than 5,300 children, while about half of the population has been left homeless. Of Gaza's hospitals, 25 are non-functional and 11 are partially operational. With a harsh winter approaching, it is imperative that the Gazans are supplied with medical relief materials, water, and food kits. Action for Humanity is one of the few humanitarian organisations operating within Gaza and is supporting medical institutions in providing the Gazans with the life-saving care they need. In addition to medical relief, they continue to provide food, water, and formula milk."

Careers – Years 10 and 11

Discover the Future of Business & Accounting at our AICPA CIMA Virtual Event

Thursday 29 November, from 5pm – 6:30pm.

Are you an aspiring accountant, business or management professional looking to gain some extremely valuable industry specific experience? Register here: <https://apprenticeships.co.uk/events>

Lloyds Banking Group

Tuesday 5 December 2023 from 17.00

What does Lloyds Banking Group do? Lloyds Banking Group (LBG) is one of UK's largest financial services group which means that we provide lots of different banking services. As a bank, we look after people's money and help them in every stage of their life, whether it's starting to save, getting a loan or lending them money to buy a home. We also support businesses with their banking needs. We have lots of different brands that make up Lloyds Banking Group, which include Lloyds Bank, Halifax Bank, Bank of Scotland and Scottish Widows. Register here:

<https://apprenticeships.co.uk/events>

RAF Virtual Engineering Event

Tuesday 5 December 2023 at 17.00

The Royal Air Force (RAF) has around 28,000 members who contribute to 15 missions on 4 continents in 22 countries. Whether in the skies above Britain, or in airspaces around the world, it is our job to protect the UK. Our cutting-edge technology enables us to rapidly respond to any threat identified through intelligence gathering & surveillance operations. The RAF is made up of impressive personnel from diverse backgrounds, working side-by-side as part of a team to make a difference. When it comes to recruitment our focus is on attracting the best personnel and ensuring they're taken care of during and after their service. Register here: <https://apprenticeships.co.uk/events>

Sports fixtures

Saturday 25 November

Rugby v LVS Ascot

Yr7 and Yr8 (away) 9am

Yr9 and Yr10 (home) 9am

Monday 27 November

Yr11 Football v Highdown (away) 4pm

Tuesday 28 November

Yr7 5-a-side tournament at Bohunt School 4pm

Wednesday 29 November

1stXV v Holyport (away) 2.30pm

1stXI v Prospect (away) 2.30pm

Yr11 Rugby v Downs (home) 2.30pm

Yr10 Football v Forest (home/Morgan Road) 2:15pm

Yr7 Badminton v Maiden Erlegh Reading (away) 4pm

Friday 1 December

U18 Squash National Championships

RSPA

Teachers' Amazon Wishlist 2023

We're delighted to return with another Teachers' Amazon Wishlist appeal – and we are now going LIVE 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. It is enormously appreciated by our teachers, knowing that these much-needed resources could be coming their way very soon! The list is underway, with more to follow, and can be viewed [by clicking here](#).

There are a wide range of requests and costs of items and hopefully something to suit everyone who wishes to contribute. However, if you can't make your mind up then Gift Vouchers are most welcome. Can we also kindly request that you set your account to 'EASYFUNDRAISING' and choose AMAZON as your retailer, when purchasing. This will raise further money for the pupils with no extra cost to you.

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/rspareadingpa>

We are also happy to accept cash donations, particularly if you would like to Gift Aid your donation. (If you require a form, please email: treasurer@readingschoolparents.co.uk)

Name: RSPA No. 2 Account, Sort Code: 60-17-21, Account No: 15309096

Please choose RPSA PARENT GIFTING WISHLIST TERRI LORRIMORE as the delivery address. The list will close on 8 December 2023. If you have any queries, please contact Jo Wyles by emailing jwyles@readingschoolparents.co.uk

RSPA Photo Fundraiser

A big applause and thank you to Kerry Kingston who has been an inspiration with various fundraising projects to date. Most recently Kerry organised a photo shoot for the outgoing Year 10 group (now year 11), and co-ordinated sales of the photographs to parents, raising the fabulous sum of £610!

There's still a small number of photographs left in various sizes (in matt finish) so if any current Year 11 parents would like more for themselves or to give to family, please do reach out to Kerry by emailing kerryobrien2004@yahoo.co.uk

The RSPA would love to hear from any parents who may have fundraising ideas. We will be holding a 2024 Fundraising Meeting in the New Year, so please contact us about any ideas that you may have by emailing Nish at NMoody@readingschoolparents.co.uk or texting Terri via 07810 445474.

Lottery Update



Fancy Winning a PS5/VR2 prize bundle this Black Friday Weekend?! We are thrilled to introduce our biggest Ever Super Draw Prize:

A HUGE PlayStation bundle, consisting of not only a Limited-Edition Spider-Man 2 PS5 console (disc edition, of course) – undeniably the hottest console of the year – but also the BRAND-NEW PlayStation VR2 Virtual Reality headset, which ALSO comes bundled with Horizon: Call of the Mountain, for an unforgettable Virtual Reality gaming experience! With our new Super Draw, there are exciting new flexible way to play – so get your tickets now ready for the big draw on November 25th.

Our new Super Draw gives people new and exciting ways to play – instead of committing to weekly tickets, supporters can choose to just buy tickets for the Super Draw week, meaning more flexibility and less commitment, whilst still supporting Reading School. Existing supporters can even choose to TOP-UP their tickets just for this weekend's big draw.

Any ticket holder can invite their friends and family using the new Refer a Friend process. For every person that signs up using their unique referral link, and BOTH of you will get an entry into the exclusive £200 prize draw. There's no limit to the number of entries you can get, either-the or people you refer the more entries into the Draw!

Joining the lottery is very easy and one RSPA participant wins a guaranteed prize every Saturday night. Tickets cost £1 each can be bought as a one - off or on a regular basis. [It's easy to buy a ticket by clicking here.](#)

Year 7 Disco – a thank you

The Reading School Parents Association would like to thank all Year 7 parents and volunteers who supported and helped to make the event a spectacular and successful night. It was great pleasure to see Year 7s from Kendrick and we hope to have more social events in the future.

The funds raised from the event are being counted and we will update you next Friday.

Thank you again to everyone who supported the event.

The RSPA Team

Michaelmas Term – Week 11

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



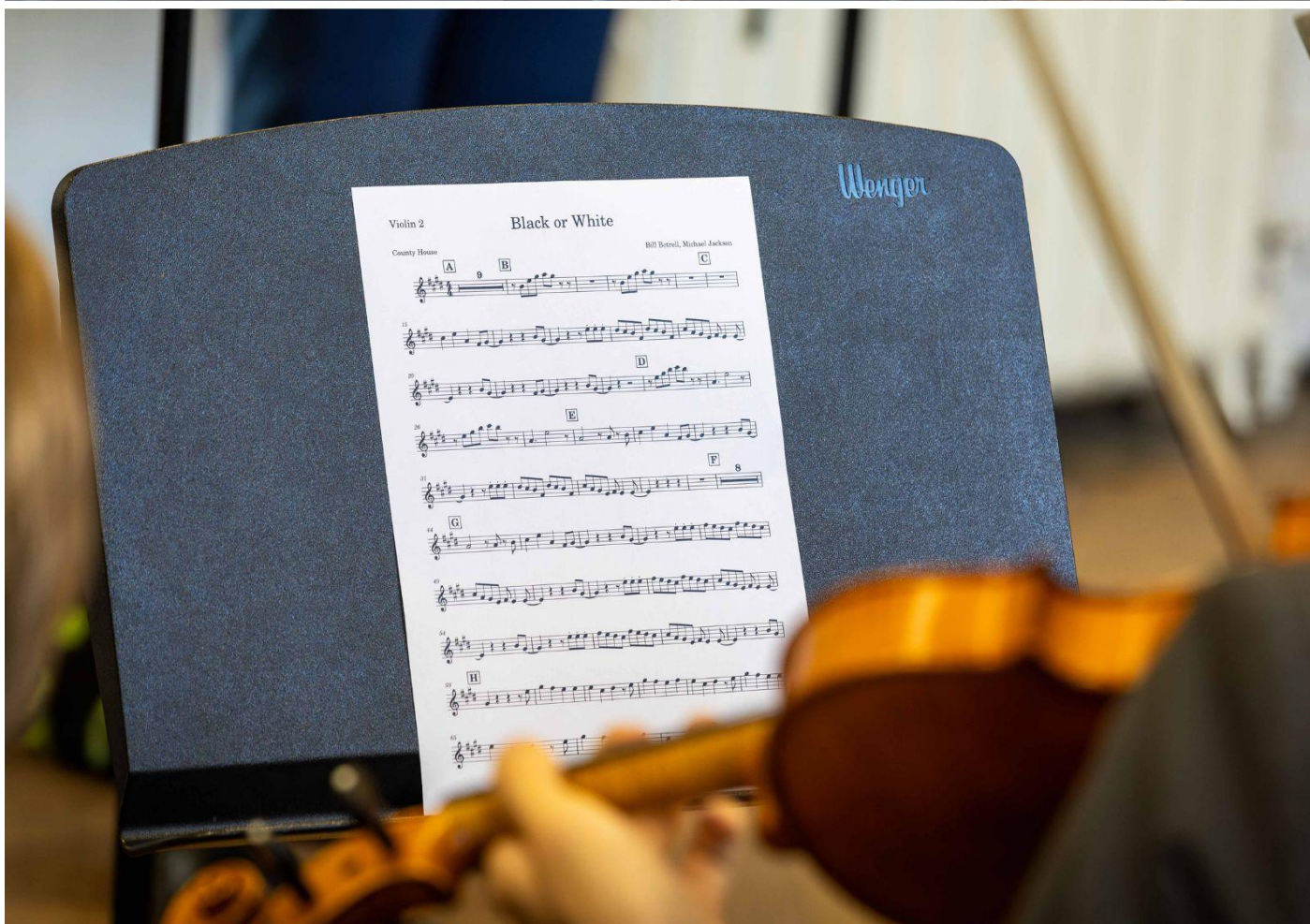
County House Orchestra (Large Ensemble) puts in some last minute preparations for their performance at Reading School's eagerly awaited House Music Competition 2023.



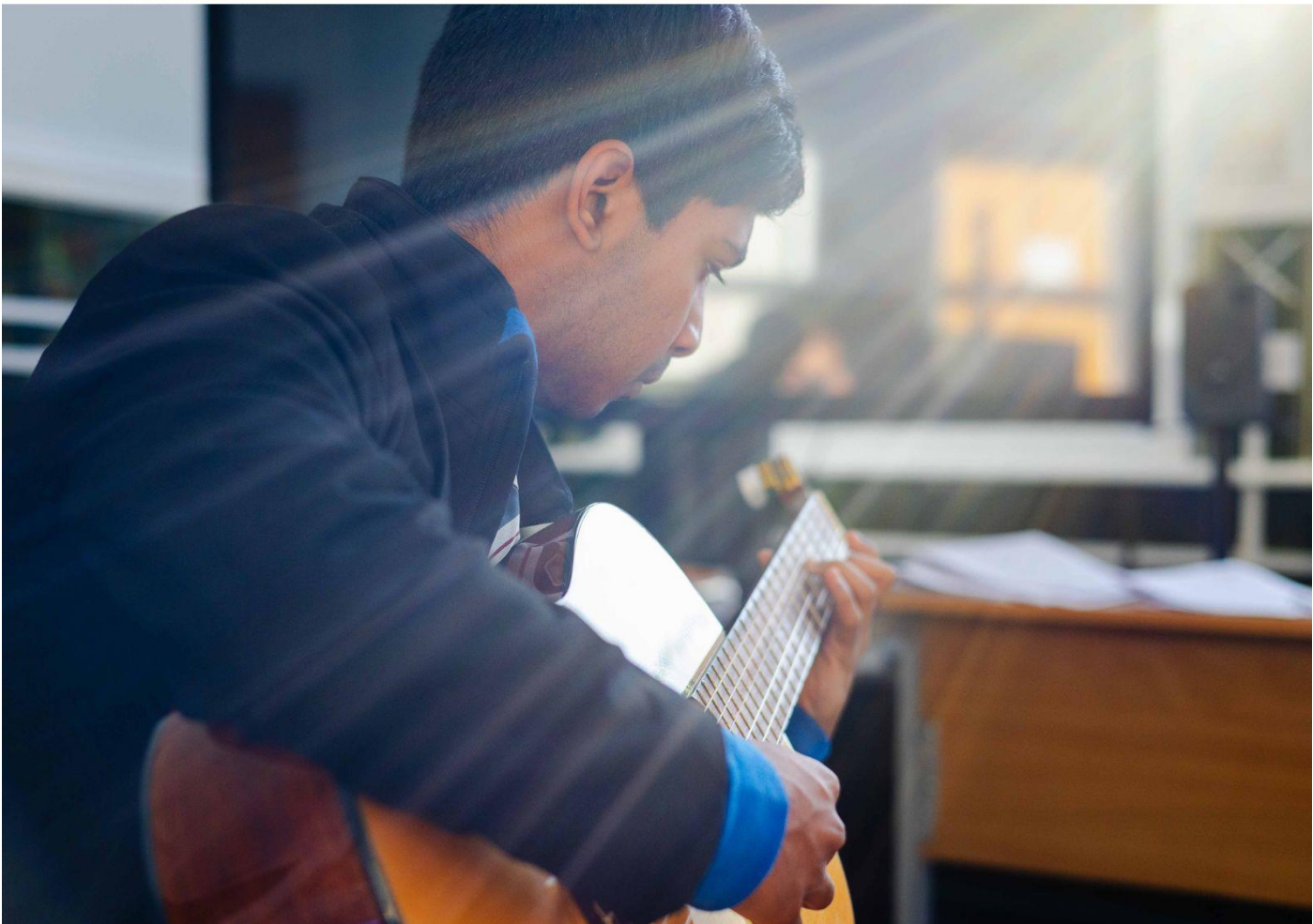
















Life skills sessions

Year 10 students take part in a weekly life skills session and each group gets to participate in six different activities over the course of the school term. Cooking is just one of the activities with others including first-aid, personal finance, coaching, basic mechanics and personal training.

Students taking part in the cooking sessions plan [a series of menus](#) and cook a different dish each week as a team while sourcing their own ingredients, preparing and cooking within a 45min session. The week, each group prepared a Turkish egg-based dish called 'Cilbir'.

A conversation piece for parents of Year 10s during dinner?





This term we saw our Reading School Tennis Team competing in the finals of the South East LTA Tennis Competition at The Oratory School. The team won their group without losing a set and won 5 matches to 1 against The Oratory. Particularly impressive was the performance from Paul T (9C) and Max H (8S) who have both demonstrated incredible improvement and growth throughout the season.

We look forward to seeing the development of the Tennis Team into 2024.



From left to right (in Reading School kit):

Paul T (9C), Max H (8S), Adhyan S (9C) and Kaiton C (9E)

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