



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

19 JANUARY 2024

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Introduction

Dear parents, carers, students and colleagues,

The last week has, in many ways, been a typical Reading School Week. In addition to 1623 lessons being taught, this week there have been three house competitions, 12 sports fixtures, three national competitions and an international trip:

- Year 11 and 13 students have begun to get results back from their mock exams, and 26 students have had careers appointments with the careers team, now lead by Mrs Chhokar.
- Year 12 students have been briefed on leadership opportunities ahead of them by School Captain Josha G along with the responsibilities and expectations of the varied roles.
- Year 11 have had a National Citizenship Service Assembly introducing them to one of the UK's biggest volunteering schemes.
- Mr Griffin organised a superb House Chess competition, which was won by Laud House.
- Mr Tridgell ran the unique Reading School House 'Ghost' competition for Year 10.
- Dr Young organised a fascinating Rock and Mineral identification elective for Year 9.
- Ms Humphries and Mr Sanchez have taken 19 Year 10 - 13 students to Albacete in Spain in the first leg of our new Spanish exchange.
- Mr Allen coordinated 3 senior football fixtures with nearly 50 Sixth Formers representing the school.
- Mr Robertson and Mr Kearle took Year 7 and 8 Football teams to The Forest School, leading matches for nearly 80 players.
- Mr Pedlow took our senior basketball team to Shiplake College, and our senior badminton team to the county tournament, with both teams coming home victorious.
- Mr Betteridge and the tennis team enjoyed a fantastic fixture in Winchester.
- Mr Tett coordinated the Senior House rugby sevens, which was played in great spirit.
- Mr Miller took five Year 11 and 12 students to the Ethics Cup competition in Bristol.
- Ms Heston and Mrs Dimmick facilitated visits to and from four primary schools as part of our Future Stories Programme.

Reading School will always be a restless community that strives to juggle the most ambitious curriculum goals, with the most stretching opportunities for personal development. I have no doubt at all, therefore, that the brief list above misses dozens of other significant activities. As the week comes to a close, I would like to thank all the staff in the school for the energy and care they show. Without this, the school would have no hope of managing the wonderful range of activities alluded to above, nor any chance of the academic progress hinted at in the Year 11 and Year 13 mock exam results.

I would also like to ask students a question to reflect on over the weekend. *'If you haven't played in an ensemble, sung in a choir, participated in a team, represented the school or your house, or found some way to lead or serve others this week, can you identify what has held you back?'*

We are clear that academic success when coupled with the development of character contributes to young people who are well-rounded and equipped to manage the world around them now and into the future. With 94% of 2024 still ahead of us, may I therefore once again invite all our students to think about the things they are committed to, the priorities indicated by their habits, and the attitude that their participation reveals.

I would encourage each of us to do all wholeheartedly.

Chris Evans
Headmaster

Key information

Important Dates

- **Monday 29 January** is an inset day for all students and an opportunity for our teaching staff to pursue training and personal development objectives. The school will be closed to all students across all years and for Year 11 students, we encourage work placements on this day as part of our careers provision. More information will follow in a letter to all Year 11 parents and Year 11 students on Monday.
- **Thursday 1 February** is our Careers Convention event open to all years to attend. Further details to follow regarding student and parent bookings. In addition, thank you to all the parents, ORs and local organisations who have responded to participate. If you or your organisation would like to attend, as a delegate, please email careerscon@reading-school.co.uk

All Years

Safeguarding: Behaviour and Bullying Survey

We are committed to ensuring Reading School remains a safe and nurturing place for our students. We have just launched our annual safeguarding Behaviour and Bullying survey and ask parents and carers to encourage their children to share their feedback with school leaders. Student views are incredibly valuable in ensuring we remain a safe and nurturing school. A summarised report will be shared with the school community in due course.

PSHE and RSHE education

Reading School is committed to its statutory requirements of Personal, Social, Health and Economic education along with Relationships, Sex & Health education. We acknowledge how empowering and impactful these lessons and discussions can be in preparing young people to remain healthy, safe and prepared for life. Lessons are taught sensitively, with a focus on creating a respectful learning environment for all.

The schemes of work for content covered can be found here [Reading School - PSHE](#) (where Government guidance can also be found as links) and in addition, each student has a work booklet with further information from their lessons.

Parents are also reminded of their right to withdraw from RSHE and should follow the guidance in the Relationship and Sex Education Policy (page 10) which can be found by [clicking here](#).

Current Vacancies

Do you know a talented individual who would like to join and be part of an exciting and leading educational institution? Below is a selection of teaching and associate staff roles currently available:

Teacher Vacancies

Teacher of Mathematics - deadline for applications: 9am, Monday 22 January 2024 - [click here for further details](#).

All applicants must complete a Teacher Application Form which can be downloaded by [clicking here](#).

Associate Staff Vacancies

Head of Operations and Projects - deadline for applications: 9am, Thursday 1 February 2024 - [click here for further details](#).

Student Support Assistant - deadline for applications: 9am, Friday 26 January 2024 - [click here for further details](#).

All applicants must complete an Associate Staff Application Form which can be downloaded by [clicking here](#).

Excellence & School Community News

Excellence in Writing



We would like to congratulate Joshua O (8W), finalist in the recent [2023 Solstice Nature Writing Competition](#). Joshua's story, 'It Was Brought Upon Ourselves' has been included in an online anthology and judge, Gill Lewis, judged it as, 'a brilliantly imagined dystopian future which is hard to do in 500 words. This short story has a good narrative arc and yet also feels that it could be part of a much bigger story. We feel the grey suffocating environment of the protagonist. I loved the idea of clouds and seasons being in the realms of mythology. This writing is very engaging and made me want to read more of the story.'

To read 'It Was Brought Upon Ourselves', [please click here \(page 20\)](#)

School Community News

A visit from Dr Christina Manning



Our electives program is an integral part of our curriculum which all students from Years 7-10 take part in and they are an opportunity for students to develop their collaboration skills and support their 'Learn, Lead, Serve' journey. Students are given choice, invited to be imaginative, be open to collaboration and to remain receptive. During our Geology elective this week, we had the privilege of hosting Dr Christina Manning from the Earth Science department at Royal Holloway, University of London.

Dr Manning encouraged curiosity and fascination about our world amongst our Year 9 students, all of whom opted to delve into geology as part of their electives program. Guided by Dr Manning, the students used identification guides to meticulously describe and recognize various rocks, including sections resembling an extinct British magma chamber, ancient ripples indicative of a vast braided river bed, and fossilized limestone.

We extend our gratitude to Dr Christina Manning and Dr Kate Young, the Head of Geography, for their valuable contribution in inspiring our students, expanding their imagination, and nurturing their fascination with the world around us.

The Ethics Cup 2024



On Thursday 18 January, five Reading School students from Years 11 and 12 made the trip to the University of the West of England Bristol (UWE Bristol), to take part in the regional heat of the Ethics Cup, a tournament in which teams of secondary school students match wits

with each other in discussing ethical issues of public concern. As current national champions, the Reading School team entered with high hope of reaching the final stages once again.

Milan G (12MJK), Mofe A (12AC), Sankha K (12EF), Indiana S (11E) and Sid M (12ELA) discussed a series of case studies dealing with several topical issues including: the use of AI in schools, fast fashion, FTX's charitable donations and ear piercings with teams from other schools across the Southwest. The Reading School team were commended by the judges on the precision

and the clarity of the arguments and for the way they supported one another in developing their lines of reasoning.

The standard of debate was incredibly high and it was fantastic to watch our students grapple with the complexity of the questions being asked and responding to the other teams with nuance and sensitivity. Although Reading School will not be progressing to the Ethics Cup finals this year, the larger aim was to make a meaningful contribution to the current ethical conversation on these matters of public concern. With respect to that goal, the team made an important and distinctive contribution and can be incredibly proud of their efforts and the way in which they represented the school.

Abbey School Entrepreneurship Event

The Abbey School will be hosting an event on Thursday 8 February from 5pm – 8pm which will celebrate entrepreneurship in all its forms. The event will include a student-led entrepreneurship fair, a talk by Sir John Madejski OBE and networking reception. To sign up for a free place, please [click here](#).

New Year School Lottery



Fancy winning a £1000 Luxury Getaway or £1000 Cash Prize Bonanza? Then look no further as we are thrilled to announce our New Year's Super Prize Draw.

Our new Super Draw gives people new and exciting ways to play a school lottery – 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 more 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 all you have to do is click the following link:

<https://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/lottery/school/reading-school>

Donations to School Uniform Shop

Preloved uniforms can be donated to School Uniform Shop and we would welcome your donations. Parents, carers and students and simply come to the Uniform Shop when open (within the walled carpark) or drop to School Reception in a bag clearly marked 'Uniform Shop'. We thank you in advance for removing any names, labels, named buttons etc.

Thank you and have a lovely weekend.

The RSPA Team

Lent Term – Week 2

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.



Our House Chess Tournament 2024, led by Mr O Griffin, featured three categories of Seniors (Years 11-13 years), Colts (Years 9-10) and Juniors (Years 7-8). For each category, each House put forward their best four chess players. The competition featured 1 point for 1 win and 0.5 for a draw.



Results: **Laud (30.5)**, East (27.5), County (27.5), West (19.5) and School (15)



Thank you to all players and student helpers during what was an exciting House Chess Tournament











In closing and on more chess related news, we congratulate the Reading School Chess A-Team who competed in the second round of the English National Championship on Tuesday 16 January against Eton.

Results: Reading 5 Eton 1

Reading School A-Team: Abeer G (12VGG), Gaurav K (12MD), Mohit K (10L), Teo R (12SP),
Stephen Q (13RC), Moksha S (10E)



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