



# Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

18th October 2024

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# Introduction

Dear Colleagues, Carers, Students and Parents,

This week Mr Wu, our esteemed teacher of Mandarin taught me an ancient Confucian proverb, "*When three of us walk together, I will always find a teacher among us.*"

It made me realise that it is both a privilege to walk with others, and also that we must each be ready to learn from those we walk beside. In the classroom at Reading School I have often felt privileged to learn from students, and continue to feel that the knowledge they possess enables teaching here to be a dialogue rather than a lecture. In almost every class there is a student with a depth of knowledge and perspective that is world class. In almost every student team there is a calibre of leadership that we have no right to expect. In almost every assignment there are students producing research far, far beyond the parameters of the curriculum. To quote Mr Appiah, our Engagement and Inclusion Lead, "*It's not normal.*"

"*It's not normal*" to have 30 Year 7 students playing the trombone in a concert that includes 150 11 Year olds, a dozen amazing soloists and a virtuoso performance of Chopin's Impromptu in Ab. We feel truly proud to be a school that isn't normal, but that leads me to a quote from another esteemed colleague, Ms Creegan, our Head of Art, who this week asked me a really challenging question. She said, "*Why haven't we got a Reading School Astronaut?*" We have a Poet Laureate. We have GB athletes. We have badminton Champions. We even have a Space Cadets. Our alumni is filled with MPs and Opera Singers. But there is not a single 'tea tray' on the wall in Big School celebrating a Reading School Astronaut. So, I'm wondering if one of our current 1144 students might be the first?

I wish all our students a wonderful time of exploring, curiosity, research and reading next week. I encourage you all to focus on understanding things and not just remembering them, and, to come full circle, remind you that the test of whether you understand something is whether you can walk alongside someone and explain a complex phenomena or problem to a novice!

Best wishes,

**Dr Chris Evans**  
**Headmaster**

# Key information

## All years

### Reading Week 2024

#### What is Reading Week?

It's an opportunity for students to spend a week focussed on reading, using a framework provided by the School. Reading can take many forms; for academic development as well as for pleasure, and we would encourage you to use the guidance provided by the school to immerse yourself in a rich and varied diet of subject matter in order to increase your appreciation for reading.

#### What are the benefits?

According to the DfE, reading "matters to the individual, it matters emotionally, culturally and educationally." For many, reading can not only be a form of enjoyment, it can also allow readers to adopt new perspectives, develop empathy and become more socially conscious. Numerous studies suggest that enjoyment of reading is associated with higher reading performance and students who are reading regularly for enjoyment give themselves informal reading lessons, supporting their comprehension.

Furthermore, reading across a variety of rich subject matter expands your knowledge of the world as well as your understanding of subject-specific technical terms and vocabulary.

#### Tips

1. Firstly, read the [year-specific guidance in preparation for Reading Week](#);
2. Complete the 'Reading is discovery' challenges (found on pages 4 and 5)
3. Enjoy a wide range of resources from a wide range of subjects/genres – don't limit yourself to your 'favourite' subjects/genres or those in which you're the strongest.

#### Summary

We want to promote intellectual curiosity and scholarship through independent reading. Departments have shared a wide range of resource formats which prevent the need to buy anything new, and we highly recommend using the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) as well as accessing your local library.

All enquiries can be emailed to Deputy Headteacher Miss Lizzie Ayres by emailing [layres@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:layres@reading-school.co.uk)

### Data collection – checking personal details on MCAS

In order for us to comply with GDPR regulations, we ask that all parents use the MCAS (MyChildAtSchool) App (which can be used as a web-based app as well as a smartphone app for Apple and Android devices) to check contact details, dietary requirements, and medical information. It is particularly important for the school to have the correct information ahead of your son attending any school trips.

As a helpful reminder, here are the features of the [MyChildAtSchool](#) parent portal:

- Provides you with a secure platform to view personal information about you and your son.
- It allows you to make online changes of address, contact details, and dietary and medical information via the Data Collection Form button.
- Provides secure access for you to view your son's school attendance and behaviour.
- Provides instant electronic online reports and online timetables.
- Provides the option to purchase items and top up dinner money.

## 900th Anniversary Whole School Photograph

The date for the rescheduled whole school photograph has been confirmed for Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November. All students have been made aware by Teams and have been asked to arrive at school in full school uniform (if students have PE or Games on this day, please bring PE uniform to change into). If there are any questions about the event, please email [events@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:events@reading-school.co.uk).

## Years 9 & 10 only

### Duke of Edinburgh 2024/25

The sign-up for DofE 24-25 is now open for interested students in Years 9 and 10 (we advise students in Year 9 to discuss and complete the form with their parents).

Please note this is a student-led program, and they must complete this form using their school account by [clicking here](#).

Students are invited to apply for the Bronze, Silver and Gold awards. Typically, the Silver and Gold awards are only open to students who have completed the previous level or are nearing completion.

We will continue to use our approved activity provider, the School of Outdoors, for the expedition section of the programme.

For any queries about signing-up, please contact Mrs M Smith by emailing [msmith@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:msmith@reading-school.co.uk)

Please note that students who completed their awards between Summer 2024 and now are currently being processed and will receive their awards in the weeks following half-term.

### Fencing Club

We are excited to announce the launch of a Fencing Club starting after half-term, taking place every Wednesday from 3:45pm to 5:00pm. Initially, sessions will be offered free of charge.

If there is enough interest, the club will continue into 2025 with a small fee to cover equipment costs.

The club is open to students in Years 9 and 10, with only 16 spaces available.

Please register your interest [clicking this link](#).

# School Community News

## Parent Governor Election 2024

Four nominations have been received for the parent governor vacancy originally publicised in the Headmaster's Bulletin dated 27<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

The nominations were from:

- Sanjay Desai
- Neil Devanand
- Jagadeesh Ratnala
- Kathryn Winter

There will therefore need to be an election, and the supporting statements from each of the candidates are [available here by clicking this link](#).

The timetable for the election will be:

*11th – 15th November via an online ballot:*

- 10.00 on 11th November - ballot opens
- 16.00 on 15th November - ballot closes

*18th November – Counting of ballot papers*

- 19th November – Results of poll announced.

The ballot will be an electronic one, and voting instructions will be sent out by e-mail on the morning of 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

## Sporting Excellence

We congratulate James S (12JT) as he goes from strength to strength after returning from the YONEX German Ruhr U17 International 2024 Tournament which took place last week from 9<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> October. James competed in the men's singles and mixed doubles event and going onto win the mixed doubles alongside his partner.

James will be headed to the 2024 European U19 Junior Championships which takes place in later November and he is the only competitor selected by Badminton England who is under 17 years of age. On behalf of the Reading School Community, we wish him all the very best of luck.

# RSPA

## Who we are



'The Reading School Parents Association' is a charity managed by the parents and carers of Reading School students and we work alongside the School to provide a community for all the parents and carers. We raise funds using several methods, like the Preloved Uniform Shop, School Lottery, events and donations.

Over recent years, we have funded much needed outdoor seating, cricket nets, refurbished toilets, minibuses and, most recently, AV equipment. We are always looking for

new members to support the RSPA in order to continue supporting the school for the benefit of its students. For all enquiries, please email [contactus@readingschoolparents.co.uk](mailto:contactus@readingschoolparents.co.uk).

## Nominate the RSPA for a chance for us to win £1,000!

We're asking for two minutes of your time! Please visit [movementforgood.com](http://movementforgood.com) and enter "Reading School Parents' Association" (Charity Number 1101822). There is no purchase necessary and by nominating the RSPA, we have a chance to win money that will help raise funds for extra resources to benefit all our students. It's quick, easy and nominations close on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

## The Pre-Loved Uniform Shop

### Opening dates and times:

- Friday 18th October - 3.30pm to 4.30pm
- Saturday 19th October - 10.30am to 12.30pm
- Friday 6th December 3.30pm to 4.30pm
- Saturday 7th December - 10.30am to 12.30pm

No parking is allowed on site on Friday openings.

There is parking available in the Walled Carpark on Saturday openings and the Uniform shop can be found in the back of the Walled Carpark. Please note shop opening is weather dependent, in the event of a poor weather forecast the opening may be cancelled. Please email [shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk](mailto:shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk) with any queries.

## A winter warmer for all the family



A welcome addition when taking part in any PE or games activity and may be worn to school on games day only.

Available online or try before you buy at the pre-loved uniform shop events.

Should you wish to order this can be done via the RSPA website or by [clicking this link](#).

Please bear in mind that XL - XXL hoodies are currently on special order and will take 2-3 weeks.

Have a lovely weekend.

The RSPA Team

# Michaelmas Term – Week 7

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.



## Sporting Excellence

James S and mixed doubles partner Sofie (in red) during the YONEX German Ruhr U17 International 2024 Tournament.



## Combined Cadet Force (CCF) Excellence

We congratulate Flight Sgt Dixit, member of Reading School CCF, who has been appointed as one of the four Lord-Lieutenant's cadets by His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the Royal County of Berkshire, Mr Andrew Try. The Lord-Lieutenant's Cadets are the aides and representatives of the cadet forces to the Royal Family and the Lord-Lieutenant. They are selected and appointed based on their outreach and participation within their contingents and appointment is one of the highest achievements in the Cadet Forces. (Photo credit: Stewart Turkington)



From left to right: Deputy Lieutenant Dr Stefan Fafinski OR JP DL, Flight Sgt Dixit, Captain Ali Matthews OR and CCF School Staff Instructor

## Iceland Trip – October 2024

Over 20 of our Year 9s have travelled to Finland in order to explore unspoiled nature, broaden horizons and develop life skills with Director of Character, Mr Tridgell and his trip team.



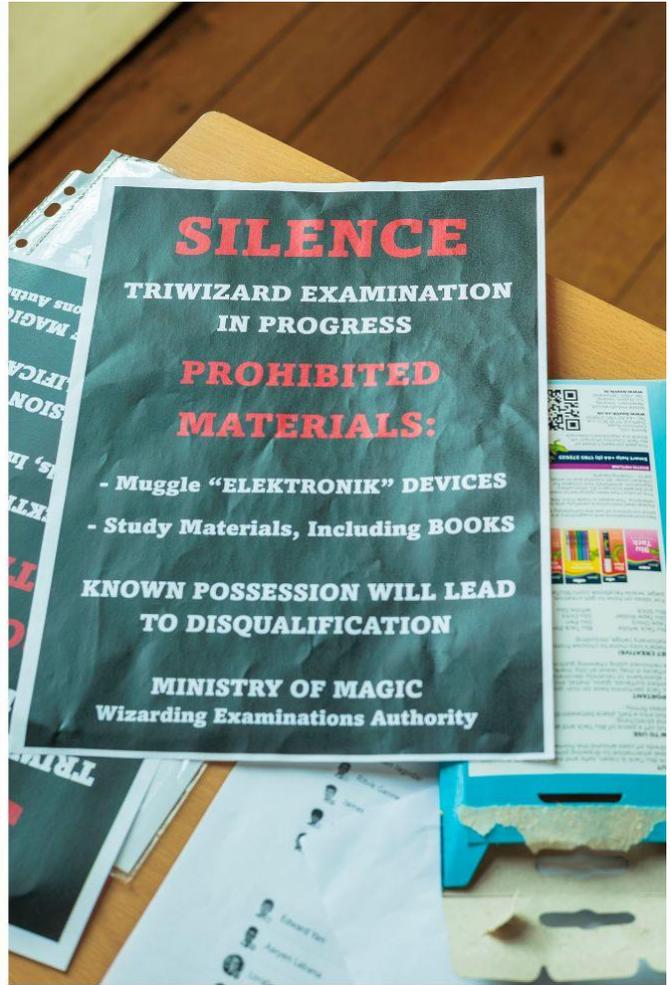
Our partners Adventure Apes take a, 'world-renowned approach to education focused on maximising the potential of every student.'



## Harry Potter Triwizard Tournament 2024

We welcomed both Kendrick School and The Abbey to our annual Harry Potter themed quiz on Tuesday afternoon. The event would not be possible without the support of the Learning Resource Centre team, student and staff volunteers and our Catering Team.













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).