



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

29th November 2024

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Introduction

Dear students, colleagues, carers, and parents,

Last year my children's favourite TV programme was the BBC game show 'Gladiators.' They especially loved Legend, who famously said, "*There's no 'I' in team, but there are five in individual brilliance.*"

Last Sunday's Reading School House Music Competition has been my most delightful moment as Headmaster this year.

All of us in the audience, which included parents, families, friends, students and staff, were able to enjoy an afternoon and evening of incredible performances from students of all ages. We were mesmerised by choirs, bowled over by soloists and astounded by ensembles. It was an absolute joy to be there and watch.

It struck me that, when we get it right as a community, we can enjoy the beauty of individual brilliance, and the triumph of tremendous teamwork. It is a moment many of those taking part will remember fondly and far into the future as highlights of their time at Reading School.

I want to especially thank those Sixth Form leaders who showed generosity in their oversight, allowing others to perform solos, and nurturing exceptional leadership in Year 10 and 11 leaders like Rafa S, Synn S, Kevin A, and Jeremi C.

It was a privilege to see each House pull together and to witness boys support and encourage each other.

We are at our best when we build others up. This spirit, even more than Freeman C's Galloping Steeds, School House's Unna Nenachu, George G's Csárdás, or Sergey D's Alla Turca Jazz, is what makes House Music so remarkable and worthwhile.

May I therefore thank everyone who has so far been part of the team and delivering events both large and small. Thanks to Mr Griffin, Mr Newman and Mr Laing for facilitating Reading School's House Music Competition. Thanks to Heads of House for nurturing their students. Thanks to the Estates Team, the Catering Team, the Student Support Team, the Society Office Team, the Administrative Team, our Chemistry Team and Geography Team, our Theology and Philosophy Team, the entire CCF Team and everyone who has been in a sports team or a chess team. With so many exceptional teams and so many talented individuals, I cannot help but feel truly privileged for all that we have shared so far this term and look forward with great enthusiasm to all that lies ahead in the coming year.

Chris Evans
Headmaster

Key information

Year 11 only

Sixth Form applications open on Sunday 1st December. Students have all received a link to Applicaa for them to complete their applications. Parents and students are kindly reminded to ensure they use these links, rather than the link on the Reading School website, as the link they have received automatically populates their data, so we know they are internal students and that we will be able to connect this application to their existing records on the School system.

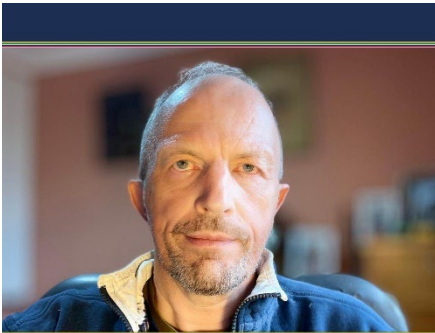
Thank you in advance for your applications. If you have any questions, please do refer to the Sixth Form Information Booklet, which has been previously shared and is also on the School website in the Admissions section.

The deadline for completing applications is January 31st 2025.

School Community News

Upcoming Events

Inspire Lecture: Creating an Impactful Career - 35 Years of Passion and Global Travel



Students have the opportunity to attend an inspiring lecture by Stefan Sanders (OR 1979-1986), a highly experienced professional with over 35 years in the rail industry.

Stefan will share his remarkable career journey, highlighting the role of passion and global opportunities in building a rewarding and impactful career.

Date: Tuesday, 28 January 2025

Time: 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Location: Big School

What to Expect:



From Economics to Global Consultancy: Insights into how Stefan transitioned from an economics graduate to a global consultant in the rail industry.

The Power of Travel: How international experiences broaden horizons and shape personal and professional growth.

A Consultant's Day-to-Day: A glimpse into the challenges and rewards of working as a consultant in a global industry.

Contributions to Global Rail Projects: Stefan's involvement in pivotal projects, including UK rail privatisation and advisory roles across continents.

Living and Working Abroad: Lessons from his time in Malaysia and Australia, embracing diverse cultures.

Practical Advice for Students: The benefits of pursuing travel and international opportunities for a fulfilling career.

This lecture promises to provide valuable real-world insights and practical advice for students as they consider their future career paths, and we would strongly encourage students to attend this unique opportunity to learn from an industry leader with a wealth of experience. **Register here:** [Inspire Lecture: Creating an Impactful Career - 35 Years of Passion and Global Travel | Events | Reading School Alumni Society](#)

Reading School Production in collaboration with The Abbey



Reading School's Drama department are excited to announce auditions for the upcoming school production with The Abbey. As in previous years the show will be a directorial collaboration between Ms Friend, Theatre Artist at The Abbey and Mr Sandiford, Head of Drama, Reading School.

This year is the turn of senior students, and the audition is open to Years 10 - 12.

The play that is going to be staged is the brilliant and funny 'The Playhouse Apprentice' by Jessica Swale.

No preparation is needed for audition, and a link to the play can be found by clicking this link: [Nick Hern Books | The Playhouse Apprentice, By Jessica Swale](#)

Auditions will be held next **Wednesday 4th December** at **The Abbey School from 4 - 6pm** and there is no need to study Drama as a subject as the show is open to all.

If you are interested in attending, please email Mr Sandiford: bsandiford@reading-school.co.uk

All interested students should meet on the Terrace outside Chapel, straight after school on Wednesday 4th December and will walk to The Abbey with Mr Sandiford.

As in previous years rehearsals will take place from 4pm - 6pm every Tuesday and Wednesday at The Abbey over a period of six weeks either side of the February half term, and attendance at all rehearsals is required.

Schedule:

Rehearsals begin: Tuesday 28th January 2025

And run for 6 weeks every Tuesday and Wednesday thereafter

Extra Rehearsal: Saturday 15th March

Shows: Tuesday 18th March and Wednesday 19th March

German Christmas Market comes to Reading School – a reminder



Bakers get baking! Can't bake? Bring some money to buy baked good and other Christmas related items at Reading School's German Christmas market this coming Monday 2nd December. Baked good can be dropped off in the LRC from 8am and the Refectory will also be selling Bratwurst to get you completely into the Christmas spirit.

The Reading School German Market event is for students to experience the popular German cultural event with food, drink and Christmas related gifts on sale. The money raised will go to the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) to purchase books students have wished for.

The event also offers the opportunity for budding and experienced bakers to bake traditional (nut-free) German Austrian biscuits which go on to be sold at the market. All donated baked goods can be dropped to the LRC on the morning of 2nd of December and we thank in advance to all who chose to donate. [Please click here to view easy to follow recipes with photos](#) for a range of traditional German Austrian biscuits.

Modern Foreign Languages Spotlight

Operation Language

This week Reading School hosted its biggest ever A Level Languages event, with five schools and a total of 94 students taking part in 'Operation Language', run by BLC. With their peers from Kendrick, The Abbey, The Holt and Downe House, our Reading School linguists experienced how their language skills can be used in the workplace, with a focus on the World Health Organisation. Multilingual communication is an essential tool for improving global health. It allows the WHO to guide public health practices, reach out to international audiences, and achieve better health outcomes worldwide.



Working to a tight deadline, the different teams had to complete a number of challenges that came up through the day, collecting information in a very short window of time, producing in a foreign language a presentation, a website and social media campaign to raise awareness of a health problem by creating a new "international day of..." in the morning. In the afternoon, students presented their work orally in their studied language, also having to think on their feet to interpret in real time for the students studying different languages. Our keynote speakers, Alison Brunier of the World Health Organisation and Sophie Heywood of the Languages Department at Reading University shared their experiences of languages and explained the many opportunities MFL can offer.

This was an excellent event that enhanced a range of skills, including teamwork, working under pressure, adaptability, and research. Above all, it provided an opportunity to put communication and language skills into practice in a modern-day work context. Thank you to all the participants from Reading School, Kendrick School, The Abbey School, The Holt, and Downe House. A special thank you to Madame Fondu for organizing such an enjoyable and inspiring day.

"This BLC event is my favourite language event of the year. There was a perfect mix of information, namely from the keynote speakers about degrees and careers in languages, and creativity, which shone through the websites, social media posts, and presentations we had to make. I loved how the event focused on one specific organisation, which allowed it to differ enough from last year, and display how language skills are useful in all careers, not just those specifically about languages. The mix of teams including other schools really allowed the event to feel unique and rewarding, both in encouraging confidence when speaking to students we didn't know, and in connecting with local language students and having to work together in a team to meet deadlines. Can't wait for the event next year!" - James C (Y12)

Inspire Lecture with Kaloyan (Kalvin) Gavrilo (OR 2022)

Reading School's Inspire Lectures are a series of educational and thought-provoking talks designed to enrich students' academic, career and personal development. They typically feature Old Redingensians (former students known as 'ORs') as guest speakers and the lectures aim to:

- Broaden students' horizons beyond the standard curriculum.
- Spark intellectual curiosity and inspire future career aspirations.
- Provide insights into diverse careers.

These events align with Reading School's ethos of academic excellence and character development, encouraging students to aspire to lead and make a positive impact in society.



On Friday 22 November, Kaloyan Gavrilo (OR 2022) returned to Reading School to deliver two Inspire Lectures to share his experience of studying International Relations with French at the London School of Economics.

Kalvin shared how his passion for languages transformed from a hobby into a vital skill set that complements academic and professional pursuits whilst sharing his personal experiences and actionable tips for students considering language studies.

It was a fascinating insight into the world of International Relations and how they have an impact on all sorts of fields in our interconnected global world.

It was particularly eye-opening to discover through an engaging and interactive talk that communication and cultural understanding are absolutely key in International Relations, and by learning languages, develop a skill set that goes far beyond knowing a foreign language. He went on to share advice around university applications and life, including language applications and course recommendations.

If you would like to find out more about Inspire Lectures, please contact development@reading-school.co.uk

Theology & Philosophy Spotlight

Year 12 Philosophy Day at Reading School: What is a Good Life?

A day of thought-provoking theology and philosophy came to Reading School this week for Year 12 students, centred around the philosophical question: "*What is a good life?*" The event featured a diverse line up of guest speakers, each bringing unique perspectives to this timeless inquiry. The day began with an inspiring talk by Aftab Habib, an England International Cricket Player and County Championship winner with Leicestershire in 1998. Habib shared his journey in cricket, emphasising how motivation and perseverance can transcend the boundaries of sport. His insights encouraged students to aim high and pursue their goals with determination, illustrating that a good life is often intertwined with ambition and resilience.

Following Habib, Imam Anees Ahmed from Wokingham Mosque offered a different perspective, focusing on the importance of avoiding complaints and inviting happiness into one's life. His message highlighted the significance of gratitude and positivity, suggesting that a contented life is one where happiness is actively cultivated.

In the afternoon session, Rev Martin Davy from Holy Trinity Theale brought his legal background into the discussion, challenging students to consider the existence of an objective good in the universe. His talk prompted students to reflect on moral and ethical dimensions, suggesting that a good life might be rooted in universal principles that transcend individual experiences.

The day concluded with Professor David Oderberg from the University of Reading, who engaged students in considering that a fulfilling life may require a balance of various elements. In his talk, Oderberg referenced philosophical giants such as Spinoza, Hobbes, Augustine, and Aquinas, as well as enlightenment thinkers like Bentham, Mill, and contemporary philosophers including Peter Singer. He emphasised the pursuit of knowledge, meaningful recreation, and an appreciation of art and beauty as essential components of a good life, guided by the thoughts of Aquinas in his Natural Law. By drawing on these philosophers, Oderberg encouraged students to explore diverse ethical frameworks and consider how these ideas might inform their own understanding of fulfilment.

Throughout the day, Reading School students, with their rich background in Theology and Philosophy, actively engaged with the speakers, participating in lively discussions and debates. The event provided a platform for students to explore diverse viewpoints and deepen their understanding of what constitutes a good life.



From clockwise direction: Aftab Habib, Professor David Oderberg, Imam Anees Ahmed and Rev Martin Davy

November Poem

This poem, by Reading School's Poet Laureate, is best enjoyed while playing "Wonderwall" by Oasis.

Paywall

Henry R

Today is gonna be the day that we want Oasis back,
Right now, I've realised somehow that it's Britpop we all lack,
I don't believe that anybody does it better than you: Liam and Noel,
And I know the 90s had to go and we're not there any more,
I just wish that at least for a bit, we could have it like it was before,
I think that everybody feels the way I do: Liam and Noel.

And all the songs that come out now are boring,
Sabrina Carpenter just has me snoring,
No other band is quite as good as you, we need you now,

Cause Oasis, you're gonna be the ones who save us,
But after it all, you scammed us all.

Today was gonna be the day, but now I need a second mortgage,
Right now, I'm feeling somehow, that your music's garbage,
I don't believe that anybody could be so cold-hearted: Liam and Noel,
We all wish, you hadn't done it, and used dynamic pricing,
We all hope, that you can't cope and you remain icy,
I can't believe you, it's horrible, I wish you hadn't started: Liam and Noel.

And I know it's hard being a band these days,
But we both know you're rich anyway,
There are many things I'd like to say to you, but I'm not allowed,

Cause Oasis, you could have been the ones that save us,
But after it all, you've scammed us all.

RSPA

Teachers' Amazon Wishlist 2024

It's HERE... it's LIVE... and it's, "FABULOUS"! The Teachers' Amazon Wishlist appeal – is now OPEN for the FOURTH year running! Every department has again been given the opportunity to request items up to the value of £250. The list consists of a combination of much needed resources and some fun items to benefit student's overall learning experience. We cannot stress how much the Teachers appreciate this particular fundraiser, as these are items that are outside the budget that School otherwise have. [The current list can be viewed by clicking this link.](#)

There are a wide range of requests and costs of items, from toys to a bass guitar, and hopefully something to suit every family who wishes to contribute. However, if you can't make your mind up then Gift Vouchers are most welcome. You are also welcome to add your own comments or messages to a particular Teacher, to thank them for their efforts...we will be sharing the best ones for you to enjoy!

Can we also kindly request that you first link to our RSPA account at Easyfundraising and choose Amazon as your retailer, before purchasing. This raises further money for the students with no extra cost to you.

For existing members use <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/rspareadingpa>

For new Easyfundraising members, please [use this link as we will receive £1 extra as soon as you register and make your purchase!](#)

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 Sunday 15th December 2024. If you have any queries, please do email Jo Wyles – jwyles@readingschoolparents.co.uk

We hope that you all have a teacher that you wish to thank.

Happy Shopping everyone!

Last Year's Year 10 photos

The RSPA Team is thankful to all last year's Year 10 parents and the school for supporting the Year 10 photo project and we successfully raised £1200!

We are thankful to our member Mrs Kerry O'Brien-Kingston for her wonderful work.

The Pre-Loved Uniform Shop

The Pre-loved Uniform Shop will be open on

- Friday 6th December 3.30pm to 4.30pm
- Saturday 7th December from 10.30am to 12.30pm

There will be hoodies for sale on Saturday 7th December.

Please note: There is no parking available on site on Friday 6th December.

In the event of a poor weather forecast the opening will be cancelled and if this happens, information will be sent via WhatsApp groups and Classlist. We hope to see you there and please email shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk with any queries.

Michaelmas Term – Week 13

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.



Reading School House Music Competition 2024

Now in its 89th year, this annual and much-loved event celebrates musical talent and the spirit of House competition, along with the school's commitment to the arts. Click the image below to view brief highlights.

Congratulations to this year's winners...School House!









Year 8 and Year 11 trip to Chateau de la Baudonniere in Normandy, France

A look back at an exciting 5 days of immersion in language, culture, visits and activities in early November.

"Aylan had a great time in France with his peers and created fond memories including tasting snails, taking part in the assault course and baking bread. He enjoyed speaking French with the hosts and hopes to return to France very soon." – Year 8 parent



All staff at the chateau (les animateurs) deliver the experience of adventure activities, language lessons, excursions, mealtimes and evening entertainment in French in a fun and supportive environment. And our Reading School teachers all spoke in French with our students too, even those colleagues from other departments!



This residential trip gives the students a first experience of full immersion in the French language and culture, preparing them to the French exchange in Year 10 and Year 12. The trip allows students to develop their skills so that they hear, see and use French throughout their stay in an authentic setting.



"Beyond the educational benefits, the trip to France provided Svanik with a sense of independence and responsibility. He learnt to navigate new situations, communicate in a different language, and appreciate the value of cultural exchange. These are life skills that will serve him well beyond the classroom. Svanik particularly found the assault course very entertaining and kept saying how all the instructors and teachers made the immersion in French easy, fun and enjoyable." – Year 8 parent



Thank you to all the animateurs at the chateau as well as all the teachers who gave their time to run this trip and embraced the ethos of language immersion: Mme McAllister, Mrs Haugvik, Ms Hooker, Mr McAllister, Mr Till, and Mme Fondu who was the trip leader.



"Thank you for taking Daniel on the chateau trip to France. He clearly had a great time and spoke plenty of French, as evidenced by him answering in French a question about the trip without realising (he was talking to a non French speaker and had to translate). He is a lucky boy to have had such an opportunity." – Year 11 parent



Reading School Combined Cadet Force Annual Dinner 2024



The dinner was attended by Guest of Honour, Dr Stefan Fafinski, the Deputy Lord Lieutenant for the Royal County of Berkshire who used his after dinner speech to thank the Cadet Force Adult Volunteer community for their dedication and service to the CCF



A significant number of recent CCF Alumni from both Reading and Kendrick were present. We were particularly pleased to have all 4 x Armed Services represented with guests from the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, British Army and Royal Air Force. Music was provided by the immensely talented Joshua L-A (Year 13) and Cadets from Year 10 assisted to provide service on the evening.



The dinner saw a number of firsts, with two Kendrick Senior Cadets, Cadet CSM Joshika M, and Cadet FS Sudiksha D on duty for the first time as Dinner President and Vice President respectively. It was also the first time the CCF have displayed the Sir Arthur Lawrance Silver Casket at a dinner night. Sir Arthur was a notable OR whose time at Reading (1891-98) narrowly pre-dated the formation of the Cadet Corps.



The Contingent Commander Lt Col Flexman commented, "The CCF were delighted to welcome Dr Fafinski to our Annual Dinner and his words to commend the Adult Volunteers were especially warmly received at this time. It was fantastic to see so many recently departed alumni back with us, and to see some of our former Cadets who are now serving in the Armed Forces, such as Sub Lt Rowan Hogbin RN (OR 2019). The CCF thanks Mr Woodley and his team for the fantastic food, Sgt Robbie Jackson our PMC who led the delivery of the event, and all who assisted to deliver a memorable evening."



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.