



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

8 MARCH 2024

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Introduction

Dear Staff, Students, Parent and Carers,

Today is International Women's Day and this Sunday is Mothering Sunday. This bulletin is therefore a valuable opportunity for us all to acknowledge and celebrate the universal impact of women in shaping the fabric of society, and the lives of the particular women who inspire us most.

However, we ought to note that International Women's Day is not just about recognising achievements; it's also a call for fostering mutual respect and understanding. Indeed, in many ways, it is a sadness for me that we need an International Women's Day. If equity were integral to our culture and society, then we wouldn't need to celebrate the particular achievements of women or address misogyny. Maybe one day we will have addressed historical injustices, and achieved equal opportunity. Maybe one day there will be stab vests for police officers that fit females as well as males. Maybe one day there will be seat belts and cars designed in a way that means women are no longer 47% more likely to be seriously hurt in car crashes than men.

Our goal then, ought not to be a day of celebration, but a culture of continual and complete respect.

I'm pleased to note that one of my first conversations as Headmaster was with Ms Christine Kattirtzi, Headteacher at Kendrick School along with meeting with the Head of The Abbey School, Mr Will Le Fleming this week.

We have a great deal to learn from the best practice of others, and for a long time I have valued conversations with Ms Kattirtzi and her Deputy at Kendrick School. Both have provided much wisdom and insight in relation to education within a girl's school setting. Equally and more recently, joint PSHE education between sixth formers from our school and The Abbey School has been a source of encouragement and a foundation has been laid in order to positively build on.

These partnerships are integral to us, and being a part of an outstanding boys' school must not mean that our students grow up without connections with, and respect for, the equally talented girls in our neighbouring schools.

Finally, I note with sadness and acknowledge that for a number of our students and staff, Mother's Day is a day of grief and remembrance. I share condolences with those in the school who this Sunday are remembering their mothers, rather than seeing them face to face.

In closing, I share a quote from Malala Yousafzai for us to reflect on, 'I raise up my voice - not so I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard...we cannot succeed when half of us are held back.'

With best wishes,

Chris Evans Headmaster



Key information

All Years

Parents' Revision Webinar

We are delighted to invite all parents (but in particular those of Year 7 to 11 students) to an evening online webinar to advise parents about how best they can support their child in the run-up to exams, both internal and external.

Taking place online at **7.30pm on Wednesday 20 March** and hosted by senior leaders from the School, we will be covering both academic and emotional preparation for revision and exams. This is, in addition to and dovetails with the support that students will get in school, to embed consistent and supportive messages about the purpose of exams.

Please access this Teams meeting link in order to join the revision webinar.

Year 7 only

PSHE Education

Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education helps children and young people stay healthy, safe and prepared for life and work after they leave school. According to the PSHE Association, 'when taught well, PSHE education also helps pupils to achieve their academic potential.'

During the Summer Term in April 2024, students in Year 7 will learn about what a healthy lifestyle can look like, which includes the topics: diet, dental care, sleep and puberty. The sessions will include a focus on physical and mental changes that males and females experience during the process of puberty. Students will also learn about consent and FGM in a factual and age appropriate way in order for them to feel empowered and knowledgeable about real world issues.

If you have any questions about the Y7 PSHE curriculum, please contact our KS2-3 Transition Officer, Mrs L Dimmick by emailing <u>ldimmick@reading-school.co.uk</u>

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 English - deadline for applications 9am, Monday 11 March 2024 - <u>click here</u> for further details.

All applicants must complete a Teacher Application Form which can be downloaded by <u>clicking</u> <u>here</u>.

External Teacher Vacancies (Kendrick School)

Head of Geography for September 2024. Deadline for applications 9am Tuesday 12th March 2024

Business and Economics Teacher for September 2024. Deadline for applications 9am Friday 15th March 2024

External Vacancies (General)

Do you have a few hours free per week and would like to work in a paid role as a Personal Care Assistant (PA)?

People who need social care support can source this either through agency carers or through PAs. Reading Borough Council is trying to increase the use of PAs in Reading as this is a really personalised and flexible way of receiving support.

A PA is employed by an individual employer to assist them with their care and support needs; PAs support people with a specific need to live independently and lead their best possible life. It is not a care role in the traditional sense; the role is hugely varied and can include support with:

- preparing meals
- going shopping
- going out and about
- household chores such as washing, cooking and cleaning
- dressing and personal hygiene
- medical appointments and administration of medication.

Experience in care is not essential as training will be given. Online learning and classroom training are available. The pay starts at \pounds 12 per hour (\pounds 15.24 for self-employed PAs) depending on the role.

If you would like to find out more, please email Reading Borough Council's PA Team: <u>pa.register@reading.gov.uk</u>. You could also look at <u>Personal Assistants - Reading Borough</u> <u>Council</u>

School Community News

2023 / 2024 McIIroy Essay Competition

We are pleased to announce that James T (12RC) has won the annual McIlroy Essay Competition, with his response to this year's task-title "*How Writing Makes Life Better*".

James's essay was anonymously judged by the panel, drawn from the Reading School staff, to be a terrifically inspiring and well-expressed piece of writing. It will be published in a future edition of "Floreat Redingensis", available on the school's website, via our social media channels and by <u>clicking here</u>.

James says:

"It is fantastic to have won the McIlroy Essay Competition; I'm incredibly grateful to all of the judges who took the time to consider my essay. Participation in this competition reminds us of the impact that words can have – how they can be used to connect with others, evoke emotion, and provoke thought. The ability to articulate ideas effectively and craft compelling narratives is an essential skill that, I believe, all of us at Reading School should all be actively trying to hone. That is why participation in this competition is so important, and why I decided to take part. The message is simple – no matter whether you're studying an English qualification or not, or whether your interests lie with STEM more than the Humanities, this competition is an opportunity for us all to experiment beyond mark schemes, push past the curriculum, and personally investigate a topic area with significant license for independence. I would strongly encourage you to push yourself, and give it a go!"

Once again, students from across all the year groups took up the challenge, and the panel enjoyed carefully reading each one the of the submissions to the 2023 / 2024 competition. Thank you to every student who invested time, thought and skill in crafting an essay.

The McIlroy Essay Competition has been running in its current format since 2013, and the English Department would like to thank the school and the Reading Foundation for its continued generous support by funding the £250 prize. We all passionately believe in providing a wide range of opportunities for Reading School students to express their thoughts and feelings in a creative and reflective way, and this is just one such outlet.

The competition will open again in September 2024 with a special challenge related to the school's 900th anniversary celebrations.



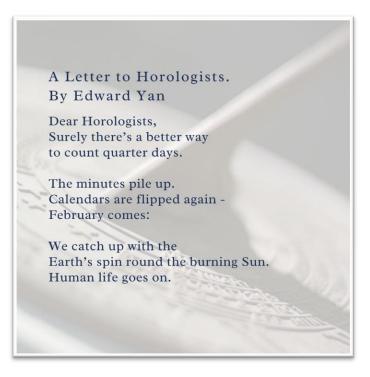
Excellence in Medicine



'DocTalk – Navigating Knowledge, Igniting Minds' is an exciting new podcast for aspiring medics that has been created and launched by Sri S (12RC) and Bhavin B (12FEH), alongside their website DocPortal. The student-run platform, 'aims to connect aspiring medics and medical students around the world' and invites students to, 'dive into a wealth of resources, engage in vibrant discussions, and access invaluable insights as you navigate your medical education journey.'

We encourage any student with an interest in medicine to access the podcasts by clicking here.

A Poem by Edward Yan (Poet Laureate)



Sleep Better, Work Better, Feel Better

On Wednesday 6 March, several of our students had the opportunity to attend the Jo Trott Memorial Lecture hosted by Abbey School. The Lecture was delivered by Professor Russell Foster CBE, the Head of Oxford's Nuffield Laboratory of Ophthalmology.

Professor Foster spoke about his work and latest book, the best-selling Life Time: The Science of the Body Clock, and How It Can Revolutionize Your Sleep and Health.

Aluinn M (12AC), who attended the lecture, shared:



"The lecture was very informative, providing us with knowledge on the importance of biological time, sleep and circadian rhythm disruption. Firstly, we learnt about the molecular clock and the Circadian Network, exploring different functions and processes; in which I found the fact that disease can occur from internal de-synchronization particularly interesting. Furthermore, we also learnt about the differences between adults and teenagers in the time of day for processing information, drawing upon different factors such as reaction times, memory recall and problem solving. As we moved onto learning about the negative effects of a deficit in sleep, such as in decreased concentration or increased anxiety, it

became clear that a lot of value could be taken from this lecture, in order to implement a better sleep regime into our daily lives. We were very grateful to have the opportunity of attending such an insightful lecture and to be able to speak to Professor Russell Foster. At the end of the talk, we asked questions about performance and caffeine use. A key takeaway from this lecture was that a good amount of sleep can improve performance in a wide range of venues, whether that be school, sports, music, or even during general communication with the people around you."

Ramadan

In December 2023, students were invited to share with the school community what their religious and/or cultural celebrations and traditions meant to them and their families. This included (by date order): Christmas, Hannukah, Lunar New Year and Ramadan. We would like to thank Abdullah K (12MK) for sharing what the holy month of Ramadan, which begins this month for billions of Muslims across the world, means to him:



Ramadan to me and my family is not just a month of fasting, but a month of spiritual reflection, and a month to focus on your personal relationship with God. I would describe it as a pit stop in a race, it helps you spiritually strengthen and take time to reflect on life. Ramadan is significantly important to me and my family as we believe that the first revelation of the Quran was during this month, and this is pivotal, as Muslims use the Quran as a living guide for life and in what to do in every single situation. We believe that the Quran is one of the biggest blessings given to us, as without it we would be confused and lost, a reason why this month is widely celebrated by Muslims.

The following are some ways my family and I spend the month of Ramadan:

- 3 or 4 days before Ramadan starts, we decorate the outside of our house with starry lights. This creates a spiritual atmosphere to enter the blessed month.
- One of the most significant ways is fasting. It starts in the morning (between 4am-5am) when we wake for 'Suhoor' which is when we eat before we fast. Our family eats a variety of filling foods, including yoghurt, omelette, and 'paratha' (layered flatbread). During Suhoor, my family and I will talk and joke around, while reminding each other of ways to improve ourselves spiritually. After eating, me, my dad and brother go to the mosque to pray 'Fajr' the morning prayer.
- Around the time of sunset, we break our fast. We often break it with dates and water, and some savoury foods like samosas and my mums' delicious chicken. We might invite some guests over or talk to our extended family and enjoy each other's company. Throughout the fast, we gain an increase in God-piety because every time we feel hungry or thirsty, we

remember God is watching us, so it encourages us to speak kind words and remember God as much as possible.

- We often listen to recitations of the Quran from various and popular reciters with beautiful voices, making us ponder over the meanings of the Quran.
- We pray a night prayer 'Taraweeh' in the mosque which only occurs during Ramadan. In this we recite as much of the Quran as possible and while in prayer, to honour and reflect upon the first revelation of the Quran, and the noble meanings of it. It also increases unity within the Muslim community as everyone is together in the mosque.
- One other pivotal faith booster my family and I participate in is during the last 10 nights of Ramadan, in which we pray a night prayer specific to the last ten nights called 'Qiyam-al-Layl'. The prayer is significant because we believe the first revelation was during these last 10 nights, so we increase our recitation of the Quran to strengthen the connection with the Quran.

We wish all those in the Reading School Community who will be observing Ramadan, a blessed month.

If you would like to contribute to this ongoing series (no matter your faith or religion), please email <u>communityrelations@reading-school.co.uk</u> (submissions should be up to 500 words and images are welcome).

Squash at Reading School: Cultivating a culture of excellence



At Reading School, we are committed to fostering a culture of excellence, and squash has emerged as a platform for promoting health, fitness, and camaraderie amongst our pupils. Thanks to the support of Berkshire Squash, and the enthusiasm of Dr Lewis-Brown, we have been able to introduce our boys to the joys of squash and its many benefits.

Under the expert guidance of Craig Banyard, Berkshire Squash's County Development Officer, the squash club has flourished, with over 60 enthusiastic players actively participating and honing their skills in the weekly sessions, and 20 competing for the school in various fixtures and competitions. Craig promotes not only the fundamentals of the game but also imparts essential values of sportsmanship, teamwork, and seizing opportunities. The overwhelming enthusiasm and dedication of our players underscore the success of our squash programme.

This is an exciting time for squash at our school. We are keen to continue the association with Berkshire Squash and tap

into the vast experience of their 'new recruit' Carla Khan, former World #21, who is passionate about junior squash. For any parents interested in exploring squash as an avenue for their children, please get in touch.

Last weekend, eight of our talented players proudly represented us in the Berkshire Closed Squash Tournament. Maxim H (8S), Vihaan T (8W), Dheeran R (7S) and Advik K (7S), showcased their prowess in the U13 category, while Abraham S (9C), Henry Robson (9E), Oscar Zaum (9W), and Vihaan G (8W) demonstrated their skills in the U15 category. That in itself is quite impressive.

It is with great pleasure that we share the news that Maxim H clinched the title of this year's County Closed U13 Champion. A remarkable achievement that reflects his hard work and commitment. In the U15 category, Abraham S and Henry R finished second and third respectively, further highlighting the calibre of our players.

Other school players also won accolades. Advik K received recognition for the 'most improved forehand' of the tournament, Henry the 'best lob serve' and Oscar the 'best sneaky drop-shot'! Vihaan's commendation for 'best attitude' reflects the values of sportsmanship and perseverance instilled within our players. Well done to all of you and you have all done yourselves, and your school very proud.

Behind the Scenes spotlight



This week, we have spoken with Mrs Holly Thorne, Reading School's HR Officer as she shined a light on her role and why it's integral to Reading School.

Q: Please tell us a little about yourself

A: My name's Holly Thorne and I've been at Reading School since January 2020, initially as CCF Adjutant and HR Administrator, now as HR Officer. My role is essentially about keeping our students safe by ensuring everyone we employ meets the required standards to work with young people. It's also about ensuring our staffs' wellbeing, and making sure that everything is in place for them to be able to do what they need to do. It's about guiding line managers when it comes to managing people and it's about making sure our Payroll Manager, Lily, has the right information so we all get paid!

Q: Can you share a little about your career path into Human Resources?

A: It feels like I ended up in HR by accident as I've got quite a varied background. After university I found myself getting a job as an Assistant to an Office Manager and then moved into a PA role. Naturally, as part of being a PA you pick up knowledge of HR processes and over time HR has become more of my specialism. I ran my own consultancy business for six years, where we supported small businesses including helping them to set up their own HR processes to make sure they were compliant.

Q: Tell is one thing we don't know about you

A: I spent six years in the Metropolitan Police working as a frontline officer for two and a half years, and then as part of a specialist drugs and firearms unit. That led to two years working within Central Intelligence and Critical Incidents.

Q: How did you find yourself becoming part of the Reading School Community?

A: After having my daughter, I found that running a business and raising a baby was quite a challenge so I looked for something where I could balance parenting and a career. A CCF role came up at Reading School and I'd previously been involved in the Combined Cadet Force, so I applied and the rest as they say, is history.

Q: There appears to be a career related theme of roles that require service – what are your thoughts about this?

A: I hadn't seen it in that way... I was a CCF cadet and CCF was a positive and stable influence for me as a teenager. It taught me a lot of skills at a young age and gave me access to activities and opportunities that I wouldn't have otherwise had. I was lucky enough to be awarded a flying scholarship which led to me flying solo before I'd even driven a car! I've always enjoyed the feeling of giving back in some way and seeing others thrive, that's really important to me. Then again, my mum being a police officer may have also contributed to my career choices.

Q: What do you enjoy most about your role?

A: After I've actually made it to my office chair and gone through a mountain of emails?! I think what I love most about my role is that it gives you lots of scope for ownership and autonomy which means being able to create and deliver change in the right way. It can be very busy and it can be challenging at times, but I have many more good days than bad.

Q: How would your colleagues describe you in three words?

A: I'd like to think helpful, organised and knowledgeable.

Events

Unlock your potential



During Easter, an international organisation and charity, The Art of Living, will be delivering a three-day meditation and breath workshop at Reading School. The organiser, Priyanka Thombre invites the Reading School Community to, '*join a transformative journey towards inner peace, joy and self-discovery which is designed to empower you with practical tools and techniques to navigate life's challenges with grace and resilience.*'

The three-day course (three-hour sessions each day) offers an opportunity to learn:

- The power of breathing techniques that harmonise the body, mind and spirit and which can lead to a profound sense of well-being.
- Yoga and meditation techniques that reduce stress, increase energy and enhance mental clarity.
- Valuable insights and practical wisdom to help lead a more fulfilling and purposeful life.

Dates: Friday 29 March, Saturday 30 March and Sunday 31 March **Times**: 9:30am – 12:30pm **Location**: Reading School, Erleigh Road, Reading, RG1 5LW

To register: http://bit.ly/SKYMarch2024

For all enquiries please contact Priyanka Thombre by: E: priyankathombre@uk.artofliving.org M: 07311 223487 or 0778 5246544

Reading School is not affiliated with the Art of Living and this is an external event being held at the school.

Air Ambulance Chamber Choir

Experience the harmonious melodies of the Air Ambulance Chamber Choir, soloists and instrumentalists from both Reading School and Kendrick School for an hour of music, featuring a wide array of repertoire from Coldplay to Paganini.

Join us at the Royal Berkshire Hospital's main hospital entrance on Craven Road from 16:00 to 17:00 on **Monday 11 March** for an uplifting musical journey. This event aims to spread joy to patients, NHS staff, and passers-by, while also raising money for the Royal Berkshire Hospital charity. Remember to bring your loose change and be a part of this meaningful cause.

Charity Concert Fundraiser for Thames Valley Air Ambulance



In collaboration with Kendrick School, our students Freddie S (13BSA), Avaneesh R (12JP), and Joshua L-A (12BSA) are hosting a charity concert to support the Thames Valley Air Ambulance. Join us on Thursday, 21 March at 18:30 (doors open at 18:00) at Kendrick School, Main Hall (RG1 5BN) for an evening of music and philanthropy.

Tickets are priced from £10 for individuals aged 12 and above, and £6 for those under 12, with all proceeds benefiting the lifesaving efforts of the Air Ambulance service across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire. For over ten years, this concert has raised funds after Thames Valley Air Ambulance saved the life of Toby Darrington, a Reading School student who had an accident whilst cycling on Oxford Road. His sister Alicia began the charity concert the following year to thank them.

Book your tickets by clicking the link to support this vital cause: <u>Air Ambulance Charity Concert</u> 2024 <u>Tickets</u>

If you would like to support the concert in advance, any donations would be greatly appreciated. Thames Valley Air Ambulance is an independent charity and receives no government or national lottery funding, relying solely on donations from generous supporters like you.



Careers and additional opportunities

Reading School is committed to providing comprehensive and accurate career information to support our students in making informed decisions about their future endeavours. It is essential to note that the information shared by the school is for informational purposes only, and the inclusion of any company, organization, or external resource does not constitute an endorsement or recommendation of their products or services. Parents and students should undertake their own research and due diligence.

Opportunities and information are shared weekly in Teams for students to access please remind your child(ren) to keep an eye out for these when they are posted.

All Years - InvestIN

Free InvestIN Student Webinars - throughout March and in the theme of National Careers Week, InvestIN are running a number of free student webinars covering our most popular industries. Students can sign up <u>via this link</u>.

- 12th March 6pm Breaking into Creative Arts Breaking into Psychology
- 13th March 6pm Breaking into Engineering Breaking into Law
- 14th March 6pm <u>Breaking into Medicine</u> <u>Breaking into Banking</u>

Free InvestIN events for parents - We are delighted to announce our upcoming free webinars, designed to help parents supercharge their child's career potential.

- <u>Competing for Corporate Careers</u>
 <u>Wednesday, March 20th, 7-8pm (UK time)</u>
 Gain insights from industry professionals on diverse corporate opportunities and learn how to support your child's entry into the field.
- <u>Effective Leadership & How to Follow</u>
 <u>Wednesday, 27th March, 7-8pm (UK time)</u>
 Learn strategies for skill development and discover how to nurture your child's ability to lead and follow effectively.

If you are unable to join the sessions live, you can still register for the event to receive the recording and follow-up resources.

InvestIN Summer Experience 2024 – InvestIN offer summer experiences.. Last year 6 of our students attended and the feedback was outstanding. InvestIN offers a unique platform for young minds to explore various industries and gain valuable insights into their future careers. As a partnership school, students can get 10% off when using their discount code: **READING10**, click here to view <u>opportunities via this link</u>. We understand that the cost of such experiences can be a consideration, and we want to emphasise that attendance is not a pre-requisite. However, for those eager to explore, learn, and enhance their skills, this discount provides an excellent opportunity.

InvestIN Scholarships – InvestIN will provide us with a maximum of **2 places for students** to apply for a fully-funded place on our 1-Week Summer Experiences! Application form linked <u>here</u>, please ensure you meet the criteria found <u>here</u>). Please note that given the **highly competitive** nature of these places, the process is a lot more thorough and initial applications and will be

closing on the **5th April at 5pm**! If you are applying for one of these places please can you email <u>Careers@reading-school.co.uk</u> so we are ware you have submitted an application.

Year 12 and 13 only

Audit, Tax & Consulting Year 12/13 Work Shadowing Programme at RSM UK

Date: 8th April to 12 April 2024 based in Reading

RSM are offering an exciting hybrid work shadowing programme across Audit, Tax and Consulting for those who have a desire to learn more about the accountancy profession.

If anyone is interested we encourage you to apply quickly at: <u>https://careers.rsmuk.com/uk/en/job/req8812/Year-12-13-Work-Shadowing-Programme-Reading-April-2024</u>

Please note there will be further opportunities in the future.

RSPA

Donations to School Uniform Shop

Preloved uniforms can be donated to School Uniform Shop and we would welcome your donations. Parents, carers and students can 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.

The Uniform Shop will be open on:

Friday 22 March 3:30 - 5:00pm

Saturday 23 March 10:30am - 12:30pm

Please email <u>shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk</u> with any queries.

School Lottery



Win a £1,000 Sainsbury's eGift Card!

You will receive one entry into this draw for each weekly ticket that you have. Buy more tickets for more entries. Stock up your wardrobe for spring with Tu, freshen up your home with Habitat homewares, or just save some money on your groceries - what a way to kick-start spring! Get your tickets before Saturday 30th March to be in with your chance to win. Already have tickets? Don't forget, you can top-up your tickets just for Super Draw week!

You will receive one entry into this draw for each weekly ticket that you have. Buy more tickets for more entries.

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

Thank you and have a lovely weekend.

The RSPA Team

Lent Term – Week 9

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.











Book Week 2024

Lewis Dartnell





Simon Singh







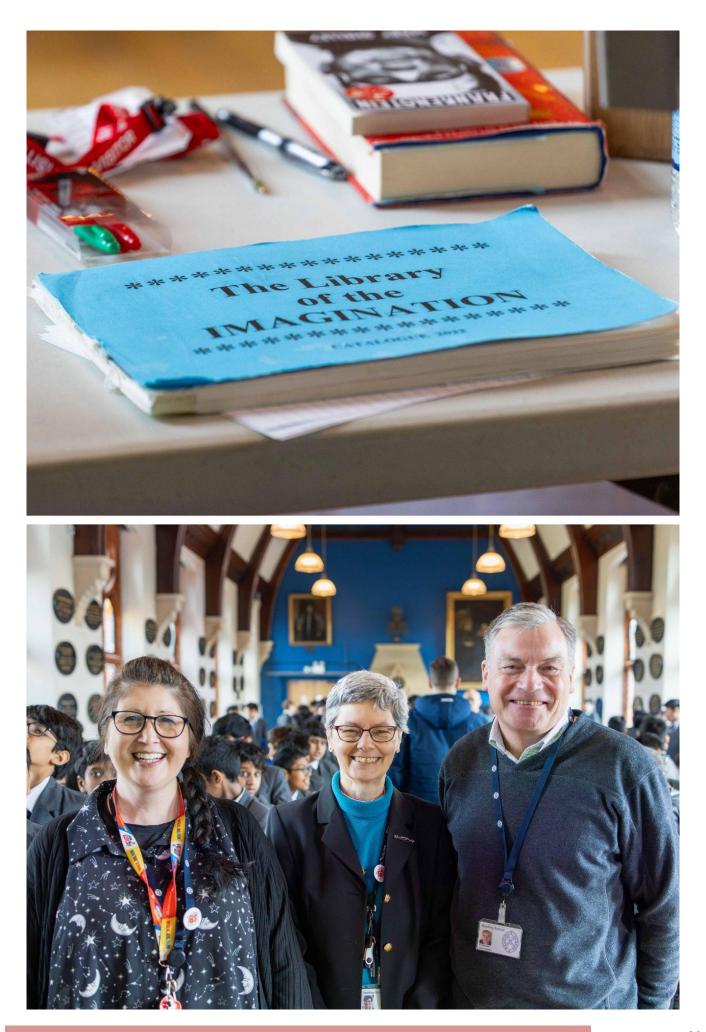
Ross Welford











Sarah Govett





Reading School's brand-new golf team made their debut on the Schools Golf circuit. Four students, Charlie H (12ZMC), Andy A (12RW), James C (11L) and Aneesh S (7S) represented Reading School against a host of other schools at the prestigious Woking Golf Club.



Despite being novices in competition golf, each of the players overcame any nerves and produced fantastic displays. The opening tee shots were indicative of how unfazed they were, with each of the boys in turn splitting the fairway with exceptional composure.

Perhaps the highlight of the day was Aneesh putting his tee shot on the par 3, 10th to a foot: so close to an ace. However, the overall result in their first ever competition was a very impressive third place finish in the team competition and a superb overall victory in the stableford competition for Charlie Hamer. We look forward to replicating this success in May when the team will head to Windlesham Golf Club for their second fixture. <u>Click here for video of the Hole 1 opening tee shot</u>.

Feedback is important to us and if you have any positive news, comments or suggestions, please contact the Community Relations Office by emailing <u>communityrelations@reading-school.co.uk</u>