



# Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

22 MARCH 2024

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# Introduction

Dear Students, Carers, Parents and Staff,

Last night I was privileged to attend the Air Ambulance Concert hosted by Kendrick School, which is organised annually by students from Reading and Kendrick School. It was an incredible fusion of talent and purpose, and I am pleased to salute Freddie S (13BSA), Avaneesh R (12JP), and Joshua L-A (12BSA), for their exceptional leadership. As the joint choir sang, "You raise me up" in four part harmony, I felt the hairs on the back of my neck stand up. The performers and leaders did an outstanding job raising much needed funds for Thames Valley Air Ambulance and I thank them all for their hard work.

Similarly, I am thrilled to include in this bulletin, the most recent poem of our poet Laureate, Edward Y (9W), and delighted to report on the success of our tennis team, and glad to praise the incredible work of Sumiktsal S (10W) in recalling 331 digits of Pi in just 10 minutes for Pi Day 2024 (3.14.2024).

Our community possesses so much talent and achieves so much success that we can sometimes take this for granted. Nevertheless, surrounded as we are by such prodigious talent, and familiar with such consistently outstanding outcomes, we can sometimes feel a crushing sense of pressure to succeed. This sort of perfectionism helps no one.

That is why this week Mr Fairchild and Mr McGall led a webinar for parents about revision and managing exam-related stress, while I spoke in Chapel about perfectionism.

Our internal examinations for Years 7-10 in the summer term are low-stakes tests that are designed to help students work out what progress they've made, reflect on how they can make learning 'stick' and consider where they can improve further. Making mistakes in these assessments is the very best method of finding ways to improve, and we urge all parents not to use them as a tool for comparison, nor to obsess over marks. Effective revision, coupled with healthy eating, sensible sleep and ongoing exercise and fresh air are the key ingredients all students need for summer assessments, whether internal and low-stakes, or external and of more significance.

May I therefore once again thank this week's poets, performers, robot crafters and tennis players and encourage all of our students to continue to throw themselves into all the opportunities around them. Doing so sustains a breadth of interests, and protects against an unhealthy approach to high performance. Playing the piano to raise money for charity like Matthew D (13JTE) did yesterday, playing football 'up' an age group to represent the school against older students for the first time, as Tise O (7E) did, participating in the House Humanities Quiz, the Year 9 walk or the Year 10 and 12 French Exchange are all opportunities to experience challenge, to foster curiosity and to develop perspective that may help alleviate pressure and fear!

I suspect that our most resilient students are those who have given lots of things a go, and who have realised that life must necessarily involve making mistakes. Therefore, even though this is a week of triumph and talent, here's to the beauty of imperfection. Here's to liberty from the paralysis of perfectionism. Here's to celebrating those even better than ourselves. Here's to endeavour and not just outcomes. Here's to the value of faithfulness, and not just success.

With best wishes,

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

# Key information

## All Years

### Parents' Revision Webinar – recording

Thank you to all who joined the parents' revision webinar with Mr McGall and Mr Fairchild this Wednesday 20 March. The session focussed on how parents can support their children to revise effectively, build a positive atmosphere at home and ensure that consistent and specific messages around what makes for effective revision are shared between parents, students and teachers.

Parents and students are reminded that there is **nothing** 'high stakes' about these internal end of year exams (they **do not** count towards GCSEs), so no child (or parent) should obsess about marks nor compare themselves with anyone else. The purpose of the exams is four-fold:

- To celebrate the fantastic progress your child has made this year;
- To practice sitting many exams in one go (in silence for extended periods);
- To develop confidence in effective revision strategies ahead of Years 11/13;
- To improve after the teachers give students 'feedforward' after the exams (this is the most important part).

Students and parents will be sent information about the content & format of the internal exams before Easter and:

- Year 10s will be coaching Year 7-9 students in tutor times after Easter;
- The schedule for internal exams will be sent out after Easter.
- Years 7, 9 and 12 have their exams w/c 20 May 2024. Years 8 and 10 have their exams w/c 3 June 2024.
- Year 11 have today had a Chapel session on effective revision techniques, and selected students are receiving additional support from Mrs Majorossy-Young and external partners.

We hope the webinar provided valuable insights and information in order to prepare your children for their revision and exams and [a recording is available to watch by clicking this link](#).

## End of Term arrangements – Thursday 28 March

08:20	Tutor Time				
08:30	Lesson 1				
09:20	Lesson 2				
10:05 /10:25	Lesson 3 – break as normal				
11:15	Lesson 4				
12:00	County Chapel	Break	Tutor time	Tutor Time	Break
12:15	Tutor Time	East Chapel	Tutor time	Tutor Time	Break
12:30	Tutor Time	Tutor Time	West Chapel	Break	Tutor Time
12:45	Break	Tutor Time	Break	School Chapel	Tutor Time
13:00	Depart	Depart	Depart	Depart	Laud Chapel
13:15					Depart

## Year 9 only

### Higher Project Qualification (HPQ)

Year 9 students are working towards the completion of their HPQ Project, an independent research project that fosters skills in critical thinking, source analysis and public speaking. Students have shown outstanding resilience throughout the year in producing original work and the HPQ is recognised throughout the UK by higher education bodies, universities and employers. We look forward to seeing the final results next term and please click the thumbnail below (or by [clicking here](#)) to view a short video from HPQ Coordinator, Mr Clack.



## 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:

### Reading School Teacher Vacancies

Teacher of Theology & Philosophy – for more details, [please click here](#).

# School Community News

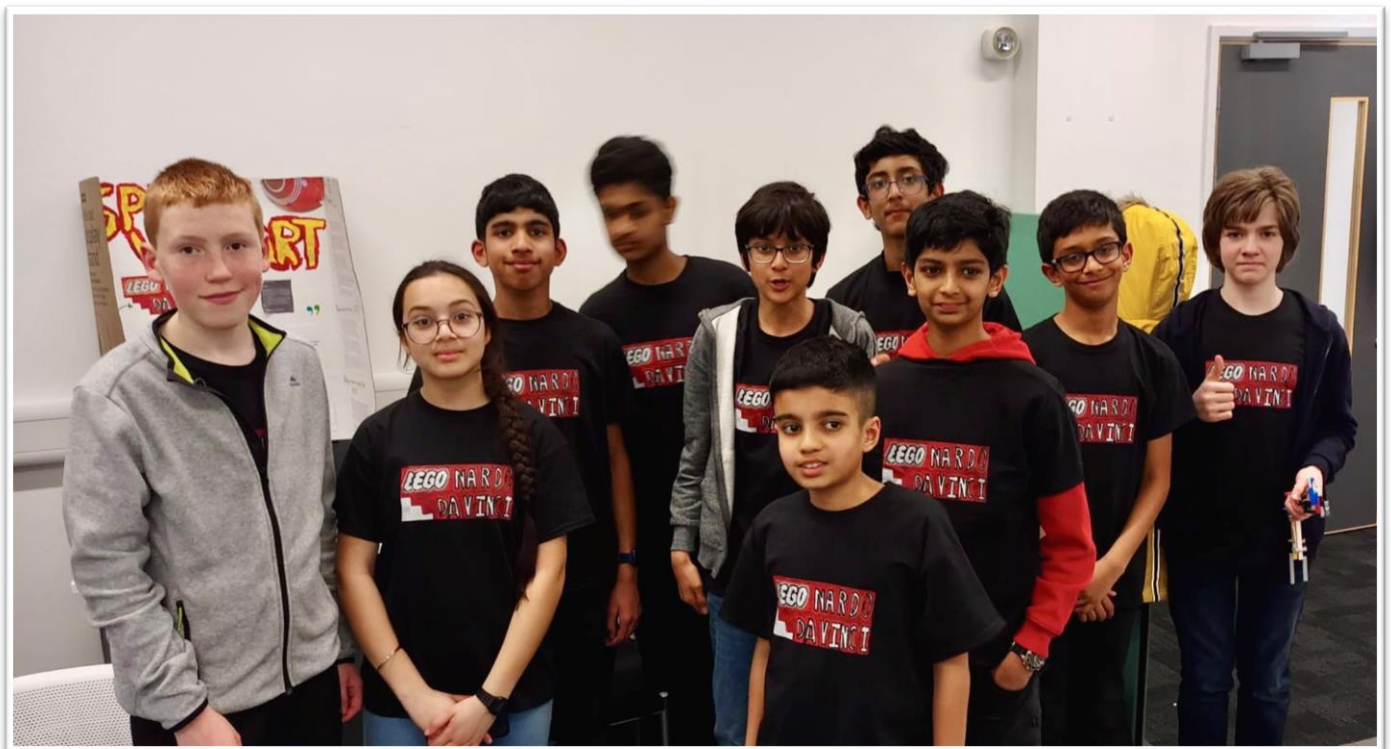
## Excellence in Lego League

We would like to thank parent, Dr Saritha Arunkumar, for sharing positive news of nine Reading School students (and an Abbey School student) who collaboratively created a group to embark on an exciting journey into the world of robotics.

Dr Arunkumar shared:

'The children got together and formed a club of 'robotcrafters', calling their team "Legonardo Da Vinci". The club has been igniting curiosity and creativity in both boys and girls, preparing them to participate in the [First Lego League](#) (FLL). Before, during and after the event, they explored the endless possibilities of technology, teamwork, and innovation and have been meeting once every week since September 2023 in order to prepare for the regional FFL held on Thursday 14 March at Cranfield University Aerospace Integration Research Center.

The students had to design a robot that would complete a number of missions within 150 seconds and also complete an innovation project with this year's theme being 'Sports via Art'. Team Legonardo Da Vinci collaborated with the Whiteknights Bowls Club and analysed the problem that the club needed help with, namely needing more people under the age of 60 to become members. In order to help the club, the students had detailed conversations with the chairman of the bowls club and the top England player of the club.



The team went onto create a solution through social media and produced a reel to help resolve their issue. The bowls club was very impressed with the video created by the students which has gone onto generate over [2000 views](#) across various platforms including Facebook, X and Instagram.

The bowls club quoted:

“We are really enthused by your energy and understanding of how we try to attract a new and younger audience into bowls at Whiteknights. The game is at a real cross roads, and we need to find new and innovative ways for us to introduce bowls to a wider audience. We are delighted with the video that the students have created and we are keen to continue working in partnership and collaboration with the local community, Reading school and Abbey school students. We look forward to showcasing the excellent work the students have been making.”



The students did really well in the whole-day competition which featured various matches and innovation project presentations and Lego design presentations to a panel of judges. The team went onto win the prestigious “Community Award” for their excellent work on giving back to the community. We would like to congratulate all the students for their efforts and dedication throughout this.’

Well done to Anish P (8C), Arnav H (8C), Harsheel D (8C), Neel K (8W), Rajat N (8L), Rupert T (8C), Sri R V (8C), Tejas K S (Abbey School Y8), Toby B (8C) and Vihaan T (8W) along with all parents who supported the team.

## Excellence in Biology - update

Following last week’s news congratulating students who had achieved Gold in the British Biology Olympiad 2024, we would like to wish good luck to Nikolas A (13MK) who has been selected to attend the Biology Olympiad team selection final at the University of Warwick from Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> – 10th April, where a team of four students will be selected to represent the UK at this year’s International Biology Olympiad (IBO) in Kazakhstan. The final selection will be conducted in collaboration with the University of Warwick and consist of practical and theoretical aspects of the international competition.



From left to right: Nikolaos A (13MK), Thomas L (13FEH), Aadith C (13AC), Harry V (13MJK) and Jonathan H (13MRC), Arav T (13SA and not pictured).

## A poem by Reading School's Poet Laureate

Daylight Saving  
by Edward Y (9W)

Springing forward, falling back,  
Late and early, hours stack.  
Wasting time, or saving slack,  
Before the evening turns to black?

Savour daylight, savour sun -  
Over hill and dale, it runs.  
When the buds of spring have sprung,  
Cause Winter's binds to come undone.

Time to slumber, time to wake,  
Seize the day, it's yours to take,  
When the daylight saved shall break,  
What will you this season make?

# Essay Writing Competition

[Doughty Street Chambers](#) is currently running its Annual Essay Writing Competition aimed at students aged between 16 – 21 years old. This year's essay topic is climate change and social justice and the question is as follows:

***Should the right to protest have any limits?***

The application form is available to download by [clicking here](#) and please send your completed form along with your essay to Raimonda Krasninkeviciute ([r.krasninkeviciute@doughtystreet.co.uk](mailto:r.krasninkeviciute@doughtystreet.co.uk)) no later than midnight on 31 March 2024.

The winner will receive a £500 voucher and ongoing access to mentoring from a member of Doughty Street Chambers for the next 12 - 24 months. The two runners up will receive a £100 voucher each.

Those shortlisted will be invited to Chambers in Spring 2024 for a ceremony where the winners and runners up will be announced.

More information on this can be found on our Outreach page here:

<https://www.doughtystreet.co.uk/outreach>

## $\pi$ memorising competition 2024

3. Memorizing Competition on March 24th (Fri Day)

- Write down as many digits as you know in the correct order, starting from 3.14.
- To participate, you must know at least the first 40 digits (including 3.14).
- Please leave as soon as you've checked out after we've written
- Ensure that your written digits are clear and legible.

Your name: Sunkeat Sathien Form: 10W

3.	1	4	1	5	9	2	6	5	3	5	8	9	7	9	3	2	9	5	4
6	2	8	4	0	3	7	3	3	2	7	1	5	0	2	0	8	4	1	9
1	4	7	3	1	9	1	7	5	1	0	4	5	8	2	0	9	7	4	1
4	5	1	2	3	0	7	9	1	4	0	6	2	8	4	0	2	0	8	9
1	8	6	2	8	0	3	4	8	2	5	3	4	2	1	1	7	0	6	7
9	8	2	1	4	0	9	6	5	1	3	2	8	2	3	0	6	6	4	7
7	0	9	3	8	4	4	6	0	1	5	5	0	5	8	2	2	3	1	7
3	5	3	5	4	0	8	1	2	8	4	8	1	1	1	7	4	5	0	1
2	8	4	1	0	2	7	0	1	4	3	8	5	2	1	1	0	5	5	5
9	3	6	3	6	2	2	9	4	8	4	5	4	9	3	0	3	8	1	9
6	4	4	2	8	8	1	0	4	7	2	6	6	5	9	3	3	4	6	6
1	2	8	4	7	5	6	4	0	8	2	3	3	7	8	6	7	8	3	1
5	2	7	1	2	0	1	4	0	1	4	4	5	4	8	5	6	6	4	9
2	3	4	6	0	3	4	8	6	1	0	4	5	4	3	2	6	6	4	8
2	1	3	3	4	3	6	0	7	2	6	0	2	4	9	1	4	1	1	1
3	7	2	4	5	8	7	0	0	6	6	0	6	3	1	5	2	8	2	1
7	4	8	1	5	2	0	9	2	0	2	8	4	6	5	4	0	2	5	4
0	9	1	7	1	5	3	6	4	3	6	7	3	8	7	5	4	0	3	6
0	0	1	1	3	0	5	5	0	5	4	8	5	2	0	4	6	6	5	8
2	1	3	8	4	1	4	6	9	5	1	4	4	1	5	1	1	6	0	9

Thursday 14 March, also known as Pi Day (3.14), saw our school host a Pi memorising competition, led by Dr Hu, to showcase the remarkable memory skills of our students. The results were:

5th place went to Sanit K (13L) with 108 digits, 4th place went to Rujul N (11S) with 144 digits, third and second place went to Zian C (11L) with 208 digits and Prayrit A (10S) respectively. Both students demonstrated incredible skills in memorising numbers in chunks. Prayrit amazingly wrote down 251 digits correctly within 10 minutes.

Reading School's champion, Sumiktsal S (10W), utilised the more advanced Memory Palace technique to great effect,

achieving an impressive 331 digits correctly within the allocated time, *despite having knowledge of over 400 digits*. This exemplifies how mastering such mind-hacking techniques can lead to extraordinary results, showcasing the incredible potential of our brains.

Special congratulations are extended to Tise O (7E), who memorised the most digits correctly (102) out of Years 7, 8, and 9, narrowly beating Pranab D (8E) by one digit. Harry B (9E) successfully memorised 97 digits.

Special mentions are also given to the other participants in the top 12: Austin H (7L), Marcus W (7W) who attempted 100 digits but made just one error, Ethan L (8C), and Thenuk A (7L), both memorising 70 digits correctly.

Incredible achievements by all and well done.

# Inspire Lecture

## From School Leaver to IT Professional: A Journey of Success



### INSPIRE LECTURE 2023

#### From School Leaver to IT Professional: A Journey of Success

##### Presenters:

Darron Edwards, Partner Technologist, HPE  
Meg Marshall, STEM lead, HPE

Darron Edwards (OR1980-1985) serves as a Partner Technologist at Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE), offering trusted advice to strategic partners and clients. He specialises in guiding the development of hybrid clouds, ensuring they are secure, resilient, cost-effective, and environmentally conscious.

Darron will share his personal journey from being a school leaver with no defined career path to becoming a successful professional in the IT industry. The talk will focus on how individuals can build a successful career organically, highlighting the opportunities available in the industry through the speaker's experiences.

In addition, Darron will be joined by Meg Marshall, STEM lead at HPE, to discuss the array of growth opportunities available at HPE, including apprenticeships, internships, and graduate roles.

Thursday 2nd May 2024  
15:45 to 16:30  
Big School, Reading School



We are delighted to announce an upcoming Inspire Lecture tailored for students in Year 9 and above. On Thursday, 2nd May 2024, Darron Edwards (OR1980-1985), Partner Technologist at Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE), will be returning to school to share his career journey and valuable insights into hybrid cloud technology. Joining him will be Meg Marshall, STEM lead at HPE, discussing growth opportunities at HPE, including apprenticeships, internships, and graduate roles.

This is a fantastic chance for students to gain insights into cutting-edge technology and explore potential career pathways. We strongly encourage students in Year 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13 to attend this lecture. We kindly request your support in encouraging your son to register for this informative and inspiring event.

RSVP is simple; students can register as "Guests" here: <https://alumni.reading-school.co.uk/event/inspire-lecture-by-darron-edwards-or1980-1985>

### Event details:

Date: Thursday 2 May 2024

Time: 15:45 – 16:30

Venue: Big School, Reading School

About the Speaker: Darron Edwards is a Partner Technologist at HPE, where he provides trusted advice to strategic partners and clients. With his expertise in guiding the development of hybrid clouds, Darron ensures they are secure, resilient, cost-effective, and environmentally conscious. He advocates for customers, making impactful decisions to drive success and better outcomes for both people and the planet.



## Donations to School Uniform Shop

Thank you to all parents who supported the Uniform Shop last week.

The next opening days will be on:

Friday 22 March 3:30 – 5:00pm

Saturday 23 March 10:30am – 12:30pm

Please email [shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk](mailto:shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk) with any queries.

## Tales from Lost Property

Lost Property Manager, Mrs Helen Sturk, shares her experience of managing the large volume of lost property that accrues on a weekly basis:

As the weather is now getting warmer, I thought I would round up my son's winter coat and any other of this term's Lost property. My intention is, as always, to turn Lost into found property.

This process requires trawling through the heaps of stinking wet kit that has found its way onto the shelves outside the Drama studio or into the unruly pile outside the door of Student Services (SS). I'm always surprised to find anything outside SS as the Drama shelves were put up so that all the Lost property could be kept there. Yet for some reason the presence of an old manky cardboard box implies that lost souls gather there. The shelves house a bunch of grey bins in which there are beautiful coats, fabulous single football boots, gloves single and pairs, and any number of Macron tops. Sometimes these items are wonderfully folded which I'm told is a detention task, and sometimes there is a heap into which it takes great courage to put my hands into. Back home I identify the name from the classic biro or a fancy stud label. I track down any parent and send them a message via RSPA Class list. You may be interested to learn that this term East house is worst at leaving property and especially Year 9.

Back at base I fold, label, and list every piece of lost property that I have found. From there I take them back to SS. Sadly these items often then stay there, never claimed. I have set up Found Property Bins inside SS. Each bin is marked with a house name and all years stacked into them. I have tried to contact every parent either via Class list or WhatsApp (via your class rep). I know that SS is a little under pressure at the moment so what we need is your child to come and look for their property.

Finding your stuff - Start in the place you think you lost it. Then head to the Drama shelves.

Next go to outside SS and then to the found property bins inside. Lost lunch boxes, water bottles, phones or keys are also at SS. At my last count there were 8 iPhones sitting in a tray waiting for owners. I have put out Found property lists in the SS office and at school reception which lists all the named items found.

Anything unnamed becomes a donation to the school shop. I leave them on the shelves for a sensible amount of time hoping that the kids will come and find them. After a while we take coats and put them on display at the next preloved Uniform sale (23rd March), but after that they will be added to general stock. Any item of kit that isn't named is washed and added to general shop stock.

I use my final words to ask if anyone has seen a black fleece lined coat from Decathlon that has the name Sturk in it. Could you please let me know, as I still haven't found it for my son!

Thank you and have a lovely weekend.

The RSPA Team and Mrs Helen Sturk

## Lent Term – Week 11

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.



On Monday 18 March, James T (12RC) refereed at the world's largest school rugby tournament, [Rosslyn Park National Schools 7s Competition](#) in Richmond, London. The event, which began in 1939 and has been held every year since, has evolved into the world's largest rugby tournament with over 14,000 boys and girls aged 11 - 18 competing annually.



The Spanish Conjugation Challenge was a competition that took place on Tuesday 12 March at the North London Collegiate School where three teams of Reading School students got to take part. Some of the challenges included writing and reciting full conjugations, writing creative sentences, completing sentences with the appropriate verb form and tense and playing detective to spot mistakes.

Well done to all our teams, including the Year 9 team who won first place against Haberdashers' Boys' School, North London Collegiate School and Bentley Wood. Thank you to Ms Kiszka and Ms Head for leading and supporting the teams.

Daniel M (11L) shared:

*'The Spanish Conjugation Challenge at NLCS was an amazing experience. The SCC gave me and my teammates some great opportunities to improve our Spanish skills, especially conjugating verbs! We all revised the verb tenses that we had been assigned to on the bus journey to NLCS, and it 100% benefited us. The competition consisted of reciting verb tenses, filling in the gaps, spotting errors with verbs, and singing conjugations of verbs with music in the background. Once all the years had finished their challenges, we sat in the hall and waited for the results; we were incredibly happy when we realised that we won!'*



## Geography Teachers Conference 2024 hosted by Reading School

Keynote speaker Professor Nigel Arnell from the University of Reading delivered the keynote lecture on the theme of climate change. Professor Arnell shared his insights about the impacts and consequences of climate change on different scales and explored how we can use scenarios and stories to inspire optimism when talking about climate change.

The first ever Reading School Geography Teacher's Conference was led by Head of Geography, Dr Kate Young, and we share our gratitude with Reading Blue Coat School, Wilson's School, Wilmington Grammar School, The Oratory School, Sir William Borlase's Grammar School and Queen Anne's School.



Congratulations to Reading School's Senior Tennis Team who secured the second spot in the South East Regional Championships.



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)