



Headmaster's Weekly Bulletin

28 MARCH 2024

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Introduction

Dear Students, Carers, Parents and Staff,

Since becoming Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Reading School Academy Trust in January 2024, I have had the opportunity to focus on the importance of purpose, partnerships and strategy. I have also been proud to support the development of Future Stories Community Enterprise and bid for additional funding for International partnerships from the Turing fund. In addition, I have been working with the Reading Foundation to secure funding for celebrations relating to our 900th anniversary in 2025.

An important highlight for me this term is the development of the Kenwrick Sports Pathway (KSP), which is Reading School's inspirational new sports programme, which will commence with the first cohort of 15 Year 7 students in September 2024. We are always looking to provide opportunities for our young people to flourish and this pioneering programme will blend culture and collaboration with sport. It will strengthen teamwork and community, emphasise the joy of effort, the value of social impact, and the development of character. If you work for an organisation that aligns with these aims and would like to discuss partnership opportunities with Reading School, please get in contact by emailing communityrelations@reading-school.co.uk.

The Headmaster, Dr Chris Evans, is currently in Finland with an intrepid group of Year 10 students exploring the delights of trekking in the Arctic Circle. This has given me the opportunity to step in a 'guest contributor' as I have filled in for Dr Evans this week. It has been a week that has showcased our superb students at their best, as ambassadors of Reading School. We hosted two open days for prospective students and in my talk to parents and Year 5 students, I emphasised the commitments of Reading School, in seeking to enable the members of our community to be the best version of themselves, which is encapsulated in our manifesto:

- Our dream is opportunity for others
- We nurture a purpose-driven culture
- We lead through service
- Flourishing with compassion
- Healthy high performance
- We build for sustainable excellence

This is our heart, our commitments, no matter what. No commitment is more important than the next and all connect to each other.

I would like to thank Mrs Penny Hickman and all staff and students for ensuring the smooth running of two very busy Open Days. We received positive feedback from one family who attended, emphasising the ambassadorial role students in the Sixth Form and Year 7 play:

'It was brilliant to learn a bit more about what Reading School is all about, and useful to have the admissions policy etc spelled out. My son's eyes were like saucers taking it all in! I wanted to message to say how exceptional the boys were that took us on the tour. We were so impressed by the balance of information the sixth former gave us, and loved the confidence and enthusiasm of our year 7 guides.'

On Wednesday, we had the pleasure of a visit from David Grindel (OR 1986-1992), a boarder and Head of West House. After flying RAF Chinooks for over 20 years, David now lives in Guernsey. He was able to meet up with one of his teachers, Mr I Sharma, whose A Level Physics lessons inspired him to study aeronautical engineering at university.

In addition, it was a pleasure to welcome back ex-member of staff Mr Chris Nicholas, previously East Wing Boarding Housemaster and now Assistant Headteacher at Pate's Grammar School in Cheltenham. Working in partnership with other high-performing schools is one way in which we can ensure that we are always looking to improve as an organisation. During the same day, as Chris's visit, we also welcomed the return of the whole school photograph which is a rare occasion when the whole school community comes together as one. The logistics heavy day could not have gone ahead and run as smoothly as it did without the excellent planning and foresight of Ms Amy Coates. Photos of the day can be viewed in the photo gallery at the end of this Bulletin.

I would like to highlight the achievement of George Riley (12JTE) who is featured on the front cover. The image was captured immediately after George won his final fight which secured him a bronze medal during the Porec European Judo Cadet Cup 2024 in Croatia on Sunday 17 March. We look forward to speaking with George in the near future to hear more of his journey and achievements in Judo.

In closing, we are entering the 'business end' of the season to paraphrase Sir Alex Ferguson. I would strongly advise all our Year 11 and Year 13 students to redouble their efforts regarding revision and preparation for their forthcoming external examinations. As we build up to exams, please be aware of the Key Information section which includes internal exam guidance following last week's parent's revision webinar.

It is pleasing to note that under Dr Chris Evans operational leadership of the school, as Headmaster, we will continue to engage the next generation of talent, encourage everyone to perform at their best and focus on getting better not bigger. Thus, we will continue to emphasise the importance of a stable core while simultaneously exploring and investing in innovation.

I wish all a restful Easter break.

Ashley Robson
CEO

Key information

Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12

Internal Exam Guidance

Following last week's Parent's Revision Webinar which focussed on how parents can support their children with exam preparation, we are delighted to provide students with subject-specific guidance on how to revise effectively in specific subjects and what needs to be revised for the end of year exams. Following the parental revision webinar and the student revision guide, we re-assert the message from Dr Evans last week that these exams are not a reason to become anxious, but instead to celebrate, practice and improve. All of these documents are available on the school's website to take the uncertainty out of revision, and we thank subject teachers for continuing to go above and beyond in compiling such rich resources.

Please click the links below to access the resources:

[Year 7 Internal Exam Subject Guidance](#)

[Year 8 Internal Exam Subject Guidance](#)

[Year 9 Internal Exam Subject Guidance](#)

[Year 10 Internal Exam Subject Guidance](#)

[Year 12 Internal Exam Subject Guidance](#)

[General Revision Guide](#)

Educational School Trips

This past week, our students have participated in work experience in France and one group are currently cross-country skiing in the wilds of Finland. We have also had recent visits to the Globe Theatre in London and the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. Students have walked through the Chilterns, led community sports events and are on DofE expeditions, as well as a trip to the Azores during the Easter holidays.

We are grateful to all the staff involved in the planning and leadership of trips, particularly Mrs S Phillips our Reading Way Co-ordinator.

Details of the planned major trips for the 2024-25 academic year [can be accessed by clicking this link](#) and we encourage all parents to pay close attention to the year group each trip is targeted at. Expressions of interest for many of these trips will be collected after the Easter holidays.

Staff Gratitude

Expressing gratitude for teachers and staff in educational institutions is of significant value as all staff play crucial roles in shaping the lives of students and the overall effectiveness of schools. From a cleaner who will ensure classrooms and the refectory are clean and hygienic to teachers who go the extra mile for their students and others.

At Reading School, we pride ourselves on creating and maintaining a positive school culture, where appreciation and respect for others is integral to who we are. With this in mind, consider passing on your thanks to a member of staff by [clicking this link](#).

Notifying the school of student absence

The attendance team would like to kindly remind parents that student absence should not be reported by MCAS.

We thank parents in advance of any student absences to contact the school by emailing attendance@reading-school.co.uk before 8:30am on each day of absence.

Start of Summer Term 2024

Reading School will recommence for Summer Term on Monday 15 April, 2024.

Boarders can be dropped back to school on either the morning of Monday 15 April, or on the Sunday 14 April in the evening between 6pm and 8pm.

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](#).

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

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

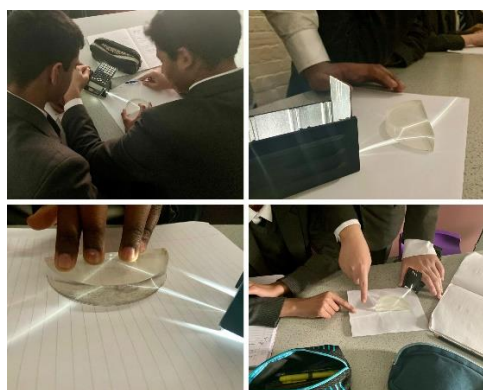
School Community News

Donations making an impact

This time last year, we ran a physics equipment appeal. Your commitment to support has enabled us to provide hands-on learning, which makes it easier to understand challenging theories and concepts. Practical Physics lessons enhance students' scientific knowledge whilst giving insight into methods and understanding scientific investigation and helping to develop their understanding of concepts in an engaging environment.

Without the generous contributions from parents and alumni, it would not have been possible for us to create an optimal learning environment equipped with essential equipment and crucial resources used for experiments throughout every year group.

Ray boxes are commonly used in Physics education to demonstrate and investigate the behaviour of light rays, particularly refraction at the interface of two media. We use ray boxes in Physics lessons at Reading School for ray tracing, image formation, lens and mirror properties, and other optical phenomena. All are hands-on experiments for students to explore and understand the fundamental principles of geometric optics and how light interacts with optical elements.



Head of Physics, Mr A Elmore shared:

"We have recently acquired a class set of battery-operated LED ray boxes to supersede our filament-lamp based devices. Year 10 are currently in the middle of the Waves GCSE topic, and as such are investigating phenomena such as refraction and total internal reflection. In these pictures are members of 10A, the first to use our new devices, marvelling at the improved contrast, clarity, and manoeuvrability of the ray boxes as they prepare to take rigorous data to determine the critical angle for their chosen materials. Thank you once again to our generous donors in making a difference to our students learning."

As many organisations approach the end of the financial year and start a new tax year, you may be considering charitable contributions to benefit from various tax incentives and deductions. We are reaching out to invite you to consider making a donation to support our annual fund, the 'Building for the Future – 365 Fund,' which supports various activities and programmes for our students. A suggested donation of £30 a month or £365 annually can significantly extend education beyond the classroom. Every contribution, no matter the size, fuels our mission and enables us to provide opportunities for our students.

Thank you to all those who have already generously made voluntary parental contributions. Your dedication and support are highly valued, and your contributions play a vital role in supporting our students and enhancing their educational experience.

We encourage those who wish to support to set up a standing order through their own online banking. This ensures that the entire donation amount reaches the school without incurring additional fees through online platforms. Please see details below:


- Bank: Lloyds TSB
- Account name: Reading School Charitable Fund
- Sort Code: 30-67-99
- Account No.: 40733560
- Reference: 365 Fund child's name/form

To maximise the impact of your donation, if applicable, please complete the [Gift Aid form HERE](#). By gift aiding your contribution, we can reclaim an additional 25p for every £1, making your gift worth even more at no extra cost to you.

We firmly believe that participation from all parents is key to ensuring the success of our school, and consistent contributions allow us to plan effectively for the coming academic year. We hope you take great pride in the important difference your support will make.

If you have any queries, please contact the Development Team (Mrs Chhokar or Mrs Chong) at development@reading-school.co.uk.

Inspire Lecture



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



From School Leaver to IT Professional: Event details:

Date: Thursday 2 May 2024

Time: 15:45 – 16:30

Venue: Big School, Reading School

Journey of Success

We are delighted to announce an upcoming Inspire Lecture tailored for students in Year 9 and above. On Thursday, 2nd May 2024, Darron Edwards (OR 1980-1985), 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>

If you have any queries in relation to the above lecture or would like to deliver an Inspire Lecture to our students in your respective industry or profession, please contact Mrs Chhokar or Mrs Chong at careers@reading-school.co.uk

Excellence in Music

It has been an exciting time for Reading School students in pursuit of musical excellence with several students taking part in competitions and excelling.

- Dishanth G (8E) won the Jean Telfer Memorial Trophy, Gold medal in the 13 years and under recital, along with a silver medal in his Grade 8 class.
- Abhiram G (9L) won first prize in the Piano Solo (Grade 4) during the recent Woodley Music Festival.
- Nandan K (10C) won a medal for Outstanding Vocal Solo (under 16s), achieved 3rd place for his musical solo and was awarded the McCallum Trophy for 'Most Promising Senior Singer (U15-15)'.

Congratulations to all three students and if you have news of achievements in the arts, sports or education (or any other area) please email communityrelations@reading-school.co.uk with full details of the event and achievement along with images. Alternatively, please encourage your child to share a write up, along with a quote which can be emailed using the address above and an image will be taken at school.



From left to right (Dishanth G, Abhiram G, Nandan K)

After-school Table Tennis Club

SCAN AND BOOK YOUR PLACE
LIMITED SPACES AVAILABLE

For age 11 - 16
Reading School | Gymnasium
Thursdays, starting 18 April
3.30 pm - 4.30 pm

Contact 07879 150 339
coaching@kingfishertabletennisacademy.com
kingfishertabletennisacademy.com

Kingfisher Table Tennis Club will be starting a brand new after school club for Reading School students from April 2024. The club is open to all students 11-16 years old and welcomes players of all levels.

Time: Thursday from 3:30pm to 4:30pm

Location: School gymnasium

Cost: £40 per month

Sessions start: Thursday 18 April 2024

To sign up, please [click here](#).

The after-school club is not run by Reading School and is provided by Kingfisher Table Tennis Club.

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) 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>

We will work with you every step of the way over a 6-month period, helping you navigate the process and effectively prepare for your Cambridge application.

The programme will be delivered entirely online and will run from July 2024 until the end of January 2025.

Please click the [link here](#) to see if you meet the criteria and how to apply – applications will **open in April 2024**.

University of Cambridge upcoming events taking place in person and online: [Upcoming events | Undergraduate Study \(cam.ac.uk\)](#).

Homerton College Essay programme

Aimed at students in Year 12, the Homerton College Essay Programme is intended to equip participants with key skills that are considered highly desirable by university admissions tutors such as critical reading, research design and essay writing. Cross-curricular and multidisciplinary, we welcome applications from interested students studying any combination of subjects who are keen to engage with the annual theme of the programme 'Building a Sustainable and Healthy World'.

This programme is delivered as a collaborative project between current Homerton students and the Homerton College Admissions Team.

On the programme you will have access to a selection of subject-specific and skills-based webinars from **May to July**. We have designed the programme to be flexible to fit around school and examination commitments. Our webinars will provide you with the grounding to devise and produce your own essay in response to a choice of questions related to the programme's theme.

For more information and how to apply click here: [Homerton College Essay Programme | Undergraduate Study \(cam.ac.uk\)](#).

Economics Webinar – Wednesday 1st May 2024

Explore an area of undergraduate study, suitable for anyone interested in studying Economics at Cambridge.

Delivered by Dr Theofanis Papamichalis as part of Murray Edwards College's Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) webinar series.

Click the link to apply: [Economics Webinar | Undergraduate Study \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

Year 10, 11 and 12 only

Sociology Photography Competition 2024

Each year the Department of Sociology at the University of Cambridge hosts a photography competition aimed at students in Year 10,11,12.

Students are invited to enter one photograph and an accompanying paragraph that explains how the photo interprets the theme. This year's theme is "Sociology of Hope".

The prize is £100 for the student and £100 for the school, as well as an invitation to visit the University of Cambridge.

Please note the competition will open for entries from 7 March and will close on the 6 May with the winners being announced by early June.

Click here to apply: [Sociology Photography Competition 2024 | Undergraduate Study \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

Year 11 work experience opportunity

Cisco Pathways Work Experience – 8th to 12th July 2024

The applications for our July Pathways Work Experience programme for Years 11 are now open.

There are three options to attend. For students who live close enough to travel to our offices in West London or Manchester there is an option of a hybrid week with the Monday and Friday in the office at Bedfont Lakes, Feltham or Didsbury, Manchester. The third option is fully virtual option. We've decided on this approach to ensure we can continue to include students from right across the UK and Ireland. This programme is for Years 11 and runs 8-12 July 2024.

This is a weeklong programme with the aim of showing students the range of jobs within a global IT company. Cisco is not a one size fits all organisation and we welcome applications from any year 11 students from anywhere in the UK & Ireland. We will also be developing presenting, team working, employability skills and building confidence through online modules and interactive sessions. Your passion is our interest.

The programme doesn't require students to choose technical or business as in addition to the mandatory core parts of the programme they will be allowed to select the sessions that are of interest to them.

Applications for Cisco's July Pathways Work Experience, for young people in Years 11, are now open. You can find more information [on the Cisco website](#) or apply using the links below.

How to apply:

- Dates: 08-12 July.
- Option 1 – Hybrid in Feltham, West London or Didsbury near Manchester (2 days in office & 3 days virtual)
 - Follow this [link](#) to apply if you wish to attend the HYBRID format
- Option 2 – fully virtual
 - Follow this [link](#) to apply if you wish to attend the VIRTUAL format

Please be careful and make sure you apply for the programme you want to attend. If you intend to attend the hybrid programme you should research where the offices are and make sure that you can get there.

Last year we had over 200 applications so may close early this year if we exceed that number. So please apply early and don't leave it to the last minute.

The programme will provide opportunities to learn about Cisco and the IT industry. You'll hear from technical teams and business teams. There'll be a challenge that you work on as a group and then present to our Cisco judges and we'll be learning about and practising employability skills such as interviewing and CVs. We will also be developing presenting, team working, employability skills and building confidence through online modules and interactive sessions. Your passion is our interest. This is a full five days of learning opportunities. You will need a device, preferably with

a camera, to join the virtual meetings. A laptop is best, with a tablet and then a phone in the order of how to get the best experience.

Year 10 or 12 only

Get Ahead & Fast-track your apprenticeship career with AWE!

Wednesday 3rd April 10.00 to 15.00

Are you in years 10 or 12 and living near to the Reading area? If so, AWE would like to invite you to their in-person Taster Day at their head-office!

AWE has a critical mission: to support the defence and security of the UK. Their role in keeping the nation safe is to manufacture, maintain and develop the warheads for Trident, the UK's ultimate deterrent.

Their Skills Academy has been offering apprenticeships for as long as they've been in business. With a range of opportunities, from **Level 2 up to Level 7 Degree Apprenticeships**, they develop both the talent of young people right at the start of their careers, and those looking to change their career.

During this event, you will explore the opportunities available at AWE, including their **Level 2 & level 3 Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths roles!**

For further details and to register please click the link here: [Get Ahead & Fast-track your apprenticeship career with AWE! - Pathway CTM.](#)

School Uniform Shop

The RSPA Team would like to thank everyone who came to the two shop openings last week. We raised nearly £700 over two days. All funds raised by the RSPA goes back to the school in order to positively impact children's education and development so that they can thrive.

We are now preparing for the exclusive sale for next year's new Year 7s and would welcome any donations of the following:

- Up to 34" blazers
- House ties
- Up to age 13 shirts
- Macron kit
- Grey or blue V-neck jumpers.

Please send any donations into school reception in a bag marked "Uniform Shop donations" and you can email shop@readingschoolparents.co.uk with any queries.

Happy Easter 2024.

From all at the RSPA Team

Lent Term – Week 12

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.

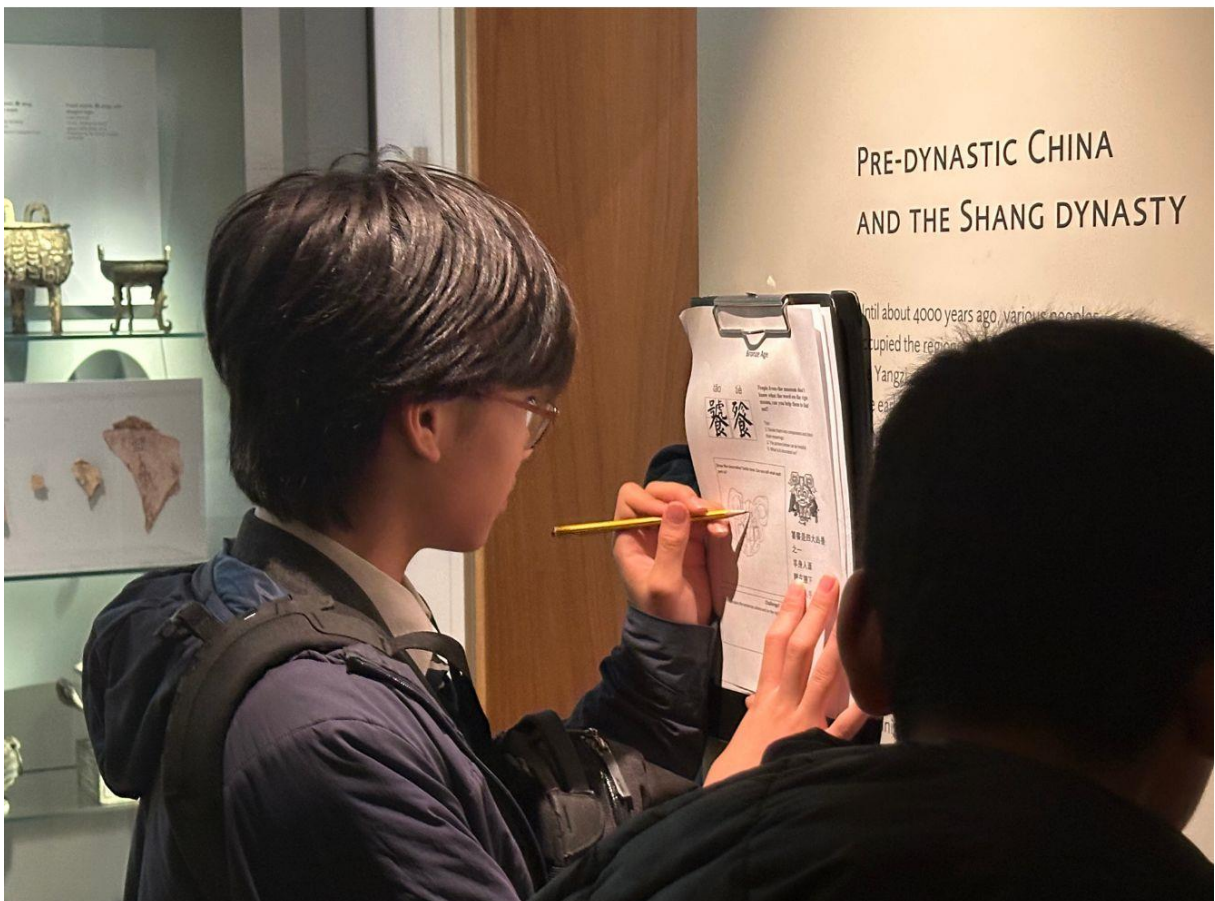


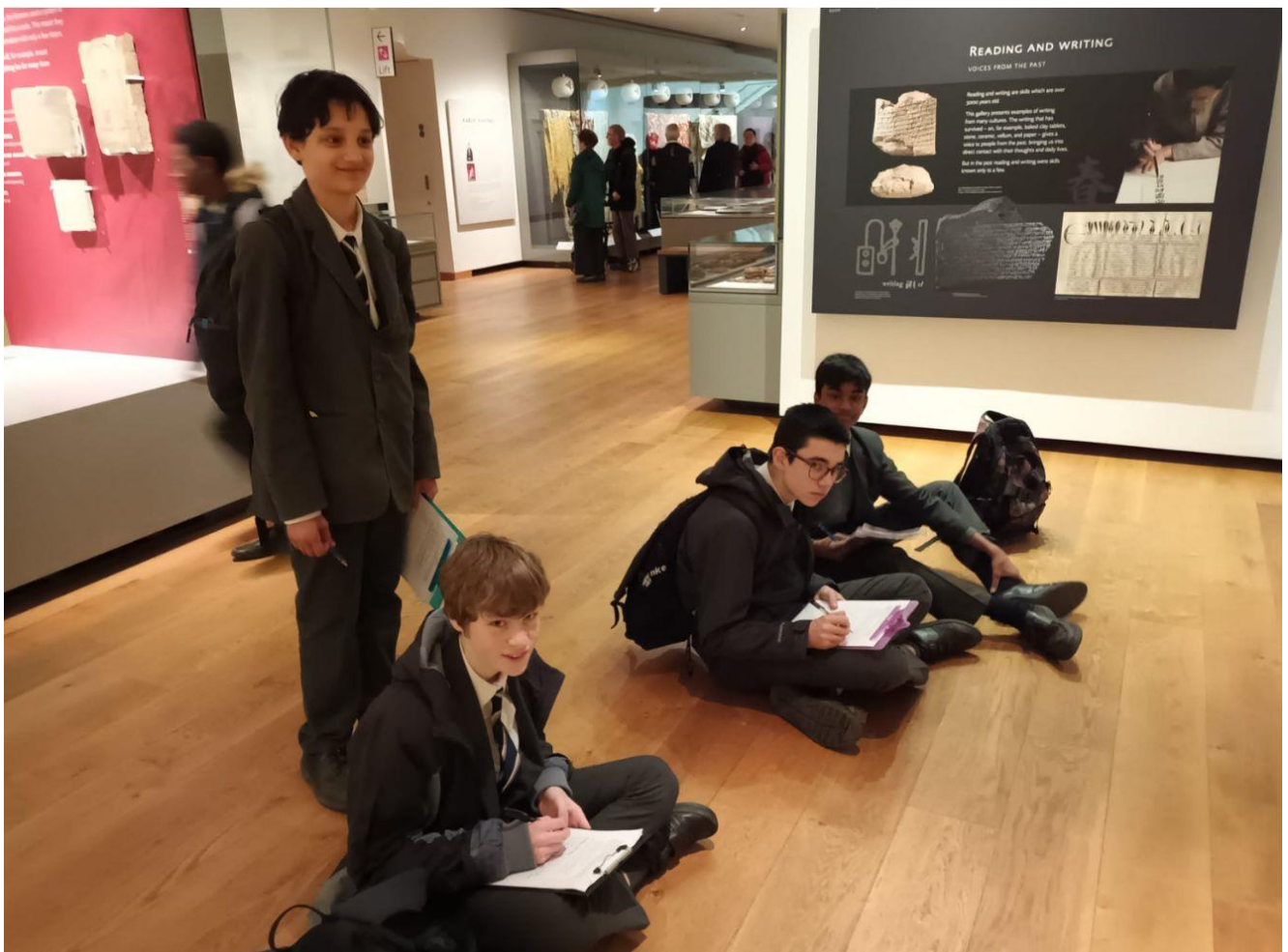
The Ashmolean

Year 9 students of culture, led by Mr Wu (Teacher of Mandarin), Mrs Haugvik and Mr Wang, got to experience the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford last week to learn about both Eastern and Western ancient cultures. The Ashmolean is the University of Oxford's Museum of art and archaeology, founded in 1683 and houses world famous collections ranging from Egyptian mummies to contemporary art, telling human stories across cultures and across time.



Students got to study artefacts that have survived thousands of years along with learning about their origins and stories. The experience offered students the opportunity to see how different cultures influenced each other and created a diverse yet correlated world that we live in today.









Year 10 Trip to Finland

Year 10 students have had the opportunity to ski in Finland with Reading School partners Adventure Apes. Departing last Sunday, the group had the exciting opportunity to familiarise themselves with their all-important trekking kit. Departing the lodge on Monday, students set-up camp at each basecamp, demonstrate teamwork and prepare meals outdoors.











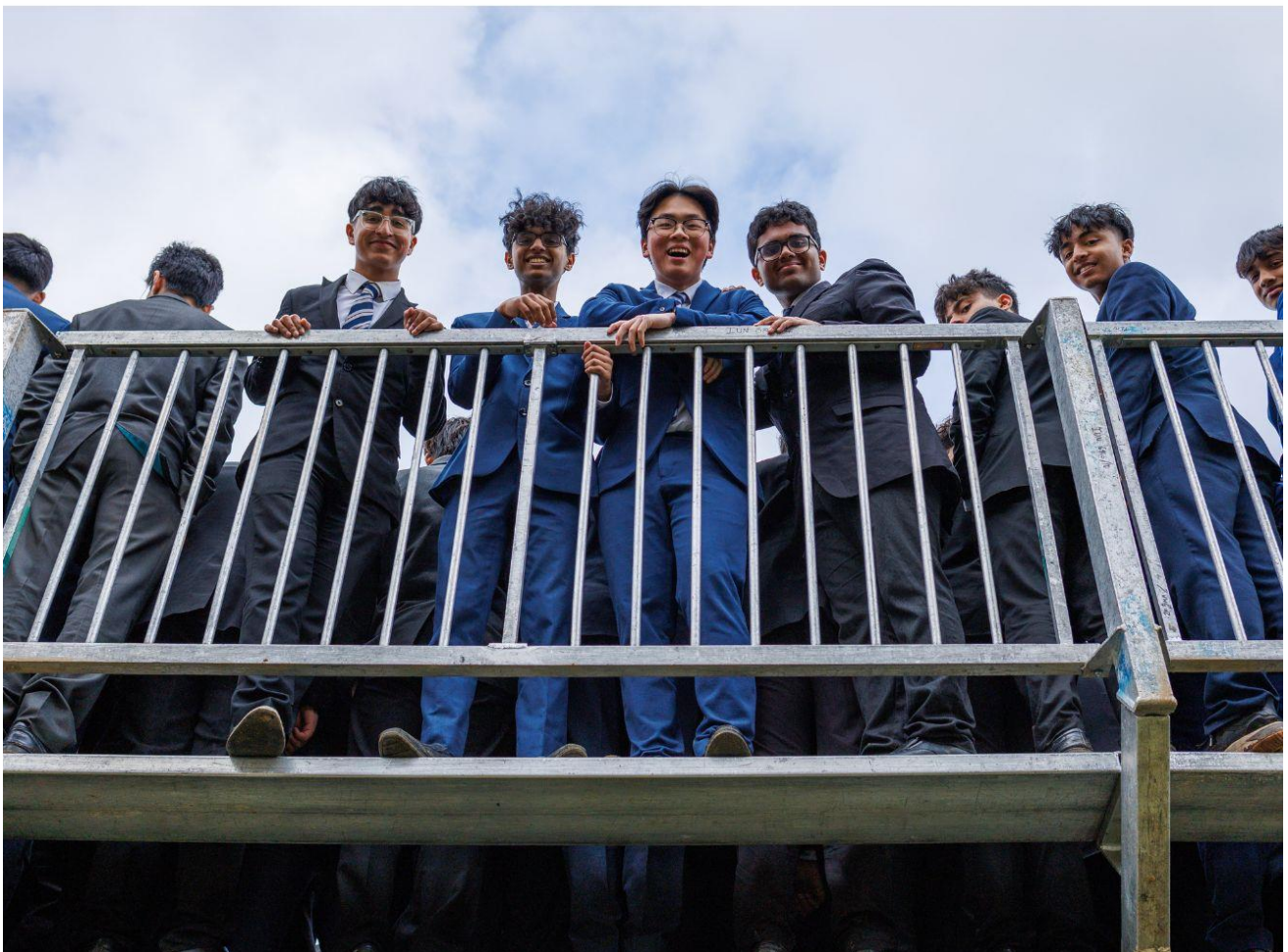


Reading School's whole school photograph 2024









'From Bits to Clouds Distributed Systems' – Computer Science Lecture

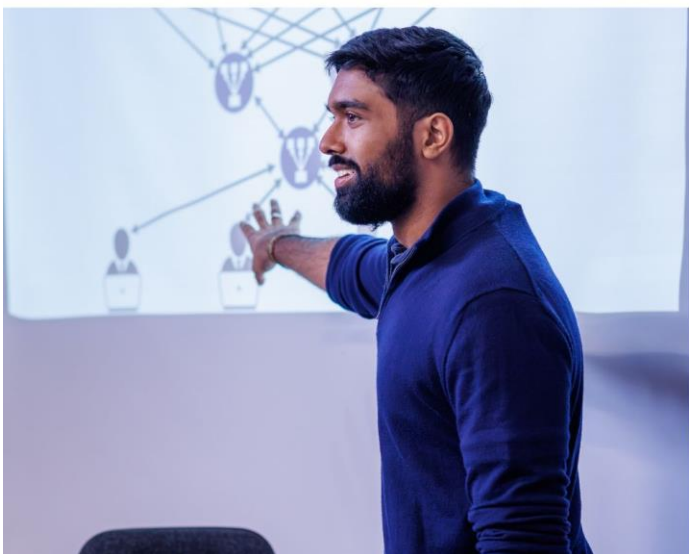
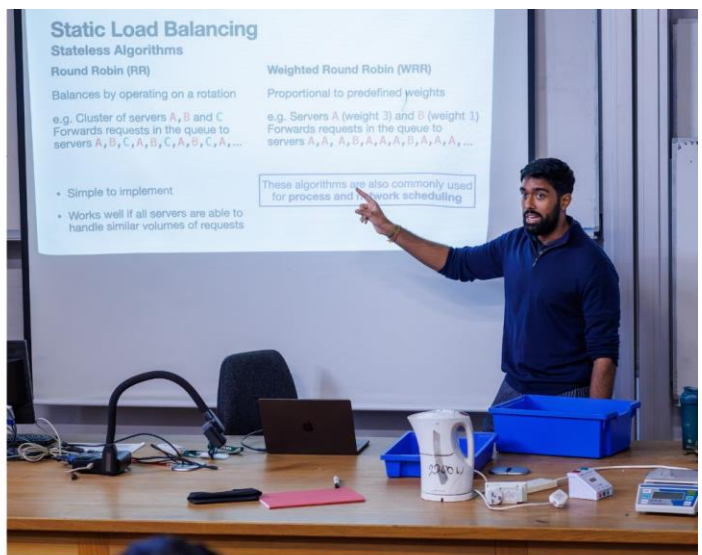
Rushil Ambati (OR 2014-2021) returned to Reading School this week in order to deliver a Computer Science Lecture, 'From Bits to Clouds Distributed Systems' for our students.

Following the lecture, Rushil shared:

"I hope all the students who attended left learning something new and I was particularly impressed by some of the juniors' questions! A huge thanks to you all and Srisht C (12BSA) for organising the lecture."

Students who return to Reading School in order to share their real-world experience after leaving is invaluable as they can offer valuable insights relevant to their fields. ORs who have achieved success in their careers can serve as inspirational role models for current students, especially when sharing their stories of pursuing their passions, overcoming challenges and achieving their goals. Every journey is unique and ORs can bring diverse perspectives and backgrounds into the classroom and this can enrich discussions and expose current students to different ways of viewing the world and approaching problems.

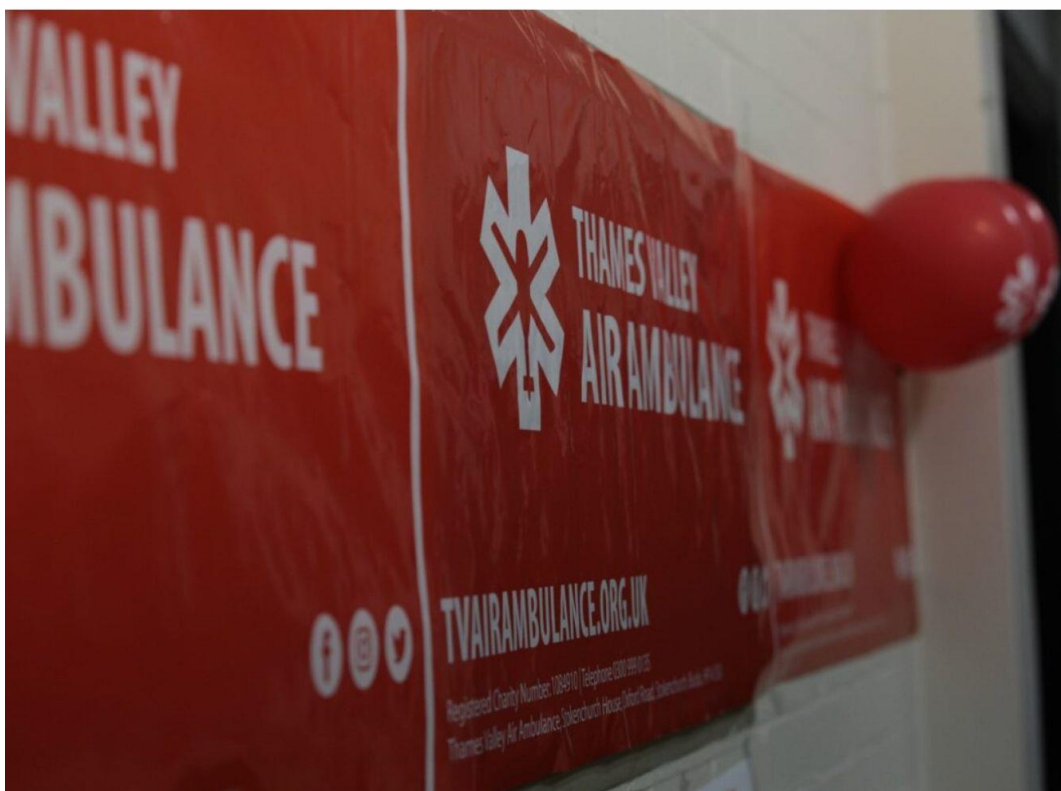
Are you a parent with real world experience who would like to deliver a lecture? Please get in touch by emailing events@reading-school.co.uk



Thames Valley Air Ambulance Concert 2024

Reading School & Kendrick School Thames Valley Air Ambulance Concert held on Thursday 21 March 2024 at Kendrick School.

An annual student-led concert that sees students from both schools coming together over a number of months in order to practice and perform in order to raise money for charity. The concert was originally started as an act of gratitude after the Thames Valley Air Ambulance service came to the aid of a student and the concert has taken place for over a decade.



Over 200 audience members came to watch the concert and contributed even more via a raffle on the night, refreshments and donations.

Around £3,000 was raised while the final figure is yet to be announced.

Photo credits: Prabhav B (12BSA)



'Organising this concert has been an incredible opportunity for developing our interpersonal, musical and leadership skills; we've really enjoyed taking the baton and creating something special! Thank you to everyone who played a part, big or small, in bringing our ideas to reality - we are extremely proud!' - Avaneesh R (12JP), Joshua L-A (12BSA), and Ananya P (Kendrick)



'This Air Ambulance concert was driven by a warm community spirit from all the students involved! It almost goes without saying that the performances were of a superb standard, but that is of course entirely credit to the great amount of work put into this by the students and the support from staff too. The translation from students' hard work into the benefits that the Air Ambulance have received is truly a joy to see, and I am grateful for the chance I have had to play my role in charity. I am both delighted to have been a part of the event as well as a bit saddened by the fact that it is my last... Wishing it continued success in future years!' - Yash S (13RC)



Full performance: [Full Performance Preview - Air Ambulance Charity Concert 2024 \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

A visit by Mr Chris Nicholas, previously East Wing Boarding Housemaster
and Teacher of Geography



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