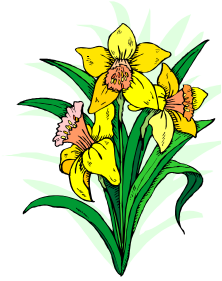




Reading Girls' School NEWSLETTER



www.readinggirlsschool.co.uk

Term 4

April 2011

Message from the Head

Another successful term comes to a close. The students at RGS continue to improve their skills in many different areas of the curriculum and extra curriculum activities. As you will note as you read through the newsletter the students have been involved and participated in a number of different events.

Red Nose day on Friday 18 March saw the whole school transformed into a blur of red; there were examples of big hair, sponsored silences and all the staff seemed to have metamorphosed into a host of different characters – all with red noses. The school raised over £730 for charity.

We are very keen to ensure 100% attendance at the school and run many challenges for students – this term saw the students in Year 7 participate in a Drumming workshop as a reward for attaining 100% attendance.



The students have been involved in numerous activities both inside and outside of the school where their enterprising skills have been employed to

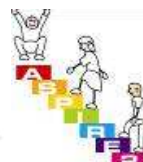
good effect. Events such as TeenTech, Year 7 Build Your Own Castle, and a radio interview with Maggie Philbin are just a few.

Can I ask support from parents regarding the use of mobile phones during the school day. We are aware that parents would like to ensure their daughters are safe travelling to and from school and would ask that if you need to contact your daughter during the day this is done via the main school office and a message will be relayed. Mobile phones which have access to the internet are causing problems within school via inappropriate Facebook messages. No students under the age of 15 should have Facebook accounts and I would ask that you monitor these to ensure no offensive messages are uploaded. The students have been informed that mobile phones will be confiscated if used during lessons. Continual offenders will have their phone confiscated and we will ask parents to collect them.

The first day of next term is Tuesday 26 April and school will begin promptly at 8.40am – students are expected to attend in full uniform. Your support and cooperation are very much appreciated.

I hope you all have a safe and pleasant Easter holiday.

St Augustus



Dance Festival 2011

This is the second year running that Reading Girls' School hosted the Dance Festival. The dance festival was as a result of the collaboration of work from primary and secondary schools within the Reading Schools Sports Partnership. The children had worked on their performances in both curriculum time and out of school hours.



It was a celebration of dance with local primary schools participating (Oxford Road, Geoffrey Field, Battle and Wilson) The schools performed different dances in a range of styles to an audience of proud parents, family and teachers including a modern version of *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* by Reading Girls' students.

Kendrick Assembly

On Wednesday 16 March students from Kendrick School gave a very dramatic assembly presentation to the Year 10 girls. It was all to highlight human trafficking, and raise awareness of the dangers faced and how to give or seek help. Everyone was



riveted by the performance, there was a distinct lack of fidgeting. The girls remained behind to speak to any students who were interested in the issues raised or had any concerns. The charity STOP THE TRAFFIK is working all over the world to prevent human trafficking for whatever purpose.

Comic Relief 2011

The BTEC Business Studies students held a 'funny money' stall on Monday 14 March where they made and sold samosas, cakes and drinks.



On Tuesday 15 March the Post-16 Centre held a 'Wear a Hat Day' with staff and students taking part.

They wore hats, hairbands, tiaras or just something red. The students raised a total of £51 for Comic Relief.



Elsewhere in the school Friday 18 March was Comic Relief Day. As usual there was plenty of support for a non-uniform day. It was a sight for sore eyes, with staff making as much effort as the students in many cases! There were many people participating in sponsored events and cake sales. During period 5 there was a special assembly for Years 7 and 8 where prizes were handed out for the best costumes.

Thanks to every one's efforts we raised over £730 with some sponsorship money still to be collected, we will announce a final total shortly. There are further pictures of the day on the school website.

More photos can be seen on the back page.



Message from the Governors

The school governors have been attending the school parents' evenings this year and will be available at future parents' evenings throughout the year. Please come and talk to us about the school or if you would like to

know more about what we do as governors, or simply if you would like a chat! We look forward to meeting you on future occasions.

*Peter Kayes
Chair of Governors*

Geography trip

On Tuesday 22 March, 32 Year 10 geography students went to the River and Rowing Museum in Henley on Thames as part of their



GCSE 'Thames in Flood' day. This involved a river walk as well as activities in the museum itself, building hills out of sponge and flood defences out of plasticine. It was a very productive day where the learning in class could be seen in practice.

Budding Actresses

All students from Years 7 to 11 were sent a email back in February asking them if they wanted to apply for a part in the production of Billy Elliot to take place in June at the Wilde Theatre in Bracknell.

Forms were obtained from the Pastoral Office and two Year 11 students gained parts: Alia Hussain and Asharne Francis. Asharne managed to get a leading part as the 'Nan'. Lets hope they remember RGS when their names are up in lights—well done girls.





Policing Trial

Reading Girls' School in collaboration with Thames Valley Police is to trial a new method of beating cyber bullies.

From Monday 28 February, Reading Safer Schools Officer PC Dave Thomas, with help from a teenage police volunteer, has been investigating and dealing with reports of bullying or harassment using the social network site. By addressing the problem at an early stage it will prevent the issue from escalating and the perpetrators being investigated as a serious crime.

Once a cyber bullying issue on Facebook is flagged by the school or parent to an officer, PC Thomas and his team will investigate what has been written and, if it is deemed inappropriate, they will send the bully a message warning them if they continue they could be breaking the law. The young person will be made aware they could be prosecuted.

In addition, the young person's parents are sent a letter informing them what their child has been doing and the potential consequences of their actions. By alerting their parents to the problem, we are aiming to nip the problem in the bud and prevent it become something more serious.

PC Thomas said "Social networkers, whatever their age, often don't think about what they are writing in the same way they would think about what they write in a letter or an email.

"If we have to investigate Facebook messages as harassment or public order offences and the young person gets charged, it could seriously affect their future.

While we want them to realise how serious the matter is, we also want to avoid that and keep young people out of the criminal justice system if possible."

For more information, contact Andrew Heath on 01865 846699.



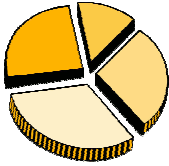
IMPORTANT NOTICES TO PARENTS:

Ear stretchers — are a fashion fad and our school uniform policy clearly states what is allowed - one small pair of earrings, therefore ear stretchers are not permitted. Students should remove them and have a plaster over their ears whilst in school.

Attendance/holidays — You will be aware that term 5 begins on Tuesday 26 April and three days later on Friday 29 it is the Royal Wedding followed by Bank Holiday Monday. May I remind all parents that students ARE expected to be in school for **all three days** and this time should not be taken as extended leave. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Mobile phones — Can I ask support from parents regarding the use of mobile phones during the school day. We are aware that parents would like to ensure their daughters are safe travelling to and from school and would ask that if you need to contact your daughter during the day this is done via the main school office and a message will be relayed. The students have been informed that mobile phones will be confiscated if used during lessons. Continual offenders will have their phone confiscated and we will ask parents to collect them.

Reading Station Upgrade — we have been asked by Reading Borough Council to inform students and parents of the changes being made to Reading Railway Station. From **18 April 2011** Station Approach which is currently used by buses, taxis and cycles will be closed and a new traffic system introduced in the central area. This will mean changes to where students will pick up the local buses. A map of the area will be on display in the main school reception and we strongly recommend that you look at the RBC website giving further detailed information: www.reading.gov.uk/station or contact **Chris Butler** on **0118 9372068**. Information will be on display at the Civic Centre and the drop in centre at **6 Cross Street, Reading between 8.30am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.**



Business &
Enterprise

Business & Enterprise

BBC RADIO BERKSHIRE



pba
peterbrett

In the run up
to Teentech
we were

asked to take some students to be interviewed by Maggie Philbin of BBC Radio Berkshire to help publicise the event. Two students (Carrie Richards and Karola Kane) visited the offices of Peter Brett Associates where they took part in some mini-challenges. Peter Brett Associates are civil engineers and the girls soon realised that engineering was involved in almost everything that they looked at in the building, garden and street. The interview was broadcast on Friday 18 March.

TEENTECH



Reading Girls' School participated in the third annual Teentech event held at Madejski Stadium

on Friday 25 March hosted by BBC Reporter Maggie Philbin. The aim of the day was to convince the 300 teenagers that careers in science, engineering and technology can be cool — and organisers (Berkshire Education Business Partnership) are convinced they succeeded.

The girls were joined by other local schools including Kendrick and JMA and working in teams of



ten they moved through challenge, insight and innovation zones and tackled tasks from taking BlackBerrys apart to holding a hissing cockroach, all designed to open their eyes to opportunities ahead. Companies who took part included Google, 3M, Foster Wheeler, Oracle and Reading University.

Mahbuba Ahmed said: "One of the things we did was designing a rollercoaster, we had to think about the height and attractions and use our imaginations. I also liked the project where we had to design a snowboard because it allowed you to work with your team and give ideas as well as having your own job. We won one of the iPods for the best ideas for the 2052 Olympics—when you took the wrapper off your snack, the rubbish automatically flew to the bin."

The team consisted of: Aishah Jibreel, Mahbuba Ahmed, Carrie Richards, Karola Kane and Mollie

Barker — wearing a harness used by BT engineers when they climb telegraph poles.



Build your own Factory

"Building Blocks of Revolution" was the Chronicle headline after they attended our Year 8 Enterprise Event.

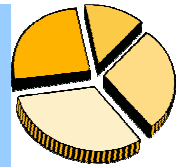
Students led a revolution on Thursday 10 February as they teamed up to build their own factories. The students had a hands-on history lesson to launch their industrial revolution unit, and spent the day stepping into the roles of factory owners and town leaders. They studied maps from the 19th Century to make decisions about the best type of factory for the area and its conditions.



The exercise was designed to get the girls thinking about the responsibilities of business, while making decisions about the working conditions for employees, the impact on the environment and profit margins.

History teacher Mr Nichols said: "The girls really enjoy it and seemed to work well together, dividing up the roles. The students did seem more interested in making the most money than improving the conditions for the workers or saving the environment! It looks like they've got all the natural entrepreneurial skills."

Business & Enterprise



Business & Enterprise

Build your own Castle

On Thursday 24 March it was the turn of sets I,D,E in Year 7 for an enterprise day in History.

The purpose of the day was to get them to create their own castle which links into the medieval curriculum they are studying and to help improve their enterprise skills such as teamwork and creativity. The groups started off making decisions about their castle. What would they build it out of? Where would they locate it? What would they do with the rebels from the nearby town? Most ended up hanging from trees!



The groups were then given their materials, bricks and cement, and then planned the design for their castle. Features such as round towers and concentric walls were included as well as a few draw-bridges (and some slightly unhistorical sharks in the moat).



Groups then presented their castles to the class, explaining their decisions and features and any aspects they would change. The girls worked really well together and many of the designs looked fit for a queen.

Guest Speakers

We have been delighted to have a couple of excellent guest speakers recently.



Ian Summerfield of Optim IP Ltd was an inspirational and thought-provoking speaker for the students studying AS Business Studies. He told them about his experience in the business world and how he had built up his businesses. He also stressed to them that, though good qualifications will get your CV read and get you an interview, it is your handshake and personal skills that will get you a job or make a sale.

These soft skills– communication, teamwork, independence, etc – are the emphasis of enterprise education and it was excellent to hear this reiterated to students by a very successful businessman.



The Willows Day Nursery provided a guest speaker for the students studying Child Development. Rebecca talked about working with children, life in a nursery and the range of jobs and activities they do. She also talked about pathways into careers with children, the timings

of these courses at Reading College and the qualifications/requirements needed at GCSE as well as salaries and progression.

She wasn't used to public speaking so was a little nervous at first, but she answered all the questions very fully and gave an excellent insight into working with children.

On Wednesday 16 March some of the BAF Diploma students travelled to Reading Town Hall for the Area Board Finals of the Young Enterprise competition.



The 'DYNAMIC' presentation at the event earned the girls a place in the May Regional Finals.



Also this month:

A group of 4 students from Year 11 attended the Breaking the Mould Science Enterprise Day run by the Financial Mail.

Two teams of 4 students from Year 8 visited the RHS (Royal Horticultural Society) Gardens at Wisley to take part in the Seed Dispersal Challenge.

Travel and Tourism

On Wednesday 16 February, the BTEC First Diploma Travel and Tourism students went to Windsor. The purpose of the trip was to study the appeal Windsor has as a tourist destination for overseas visitors. The students had the opportunity to research Windsor's facilities including accommodation, arts and entertainment and shopping. They also watched the Changing of the Guard. The trip was concluded with a walk along the River Thames to Eton Village.



The following week the students were taken to Brighton. This provided them with the opportunity to understand and experience what Brighton has to offer in terms of a seaside holiday destination.



Both trips were a big success and students found visiting them invaluable in helping them to complete their coursework.

World Book Day

RGS celebrated World Book Day this year with a number of literary themed activities. In tutor time, students had the opportunity to

complete a quiz about books and literary terminology, as well as start a number of tutor activities such as creating a Tutor Anthology or preparing reviews/adverts of their favourite books.

During the day we played the Character Challenge – teachers wore stickers with a visual and verbal 'clue' as to which book character they were meant to be (with Mrs Angus in the role of Miss Trunchball, of Matilda fame of course). They handed in their completed lists by 3.15pm in order to be in with a chance of winning a prize...

At lunchtime, the Quest for Gold challenge was launched and a number of avid readers from every tutor group were invited to the library to start the quest. Students will win house points for reading and reviewing books from different categories, and if they complete all 16 books they will enter a prize draw. The draw will take place in the library on World Book Day 2012.

PE and Sports News

Netball Leagues and Tournaments

Girls in all years have taken part in the Reading Schools' Netball Leagues and then the Reading Schools' Netball Tournaments this term.



The Year 7 Netball Squad improved dramatically over the term developing their attacking and defending skills.



Year 8 A Team – Unbeaten League Winners!

The Year 8 A and B team gained from their commitment to regular training coming 1st and 3rd in their respective leagues. Both teams displayed some excellent skills particularly intercepting the ball and quickly moving into attack.



The **Year 9 Netball Squad** had some very competitive games and displayed some excellent shooting skills.

The Year 10 and 11 teams played in a combined team in the league and as separate teams in the tournament. They displayed some excellent skills and tactics. The final game of the tournament was Year 10 v Year 11 which the Year 11 team just won.

Year 7 and 8 Reading Schools' Gymnastics Competition



This was a new competition introduced this year. The girls had to complete two vaults and a floor routine. Despite being nervous, the girls performed very well, carrying out accurate vaults and good floor routines.

KS3 Basketball Match RGS v Piggott

A combined team of Years 7, 8 and 9 beat Piggott School in a match held at RGS. The lead changed three times throughout the match but RGS proved too strong winning what was a very exciting game.



Berkshire Schools Orienteering Competition, Dorney Lake

The girls competed around a route next to Dorney Lake, the site of the Olympic Rowing competitions for 2012. The girls set off at intervals to complete different routes next to the lake. The girls found it challenging but performed well.



Berkshire Schools Indoor Rowing Competition

The girls competed in the rowing club house at Dorney Lake Rowing Centre. Each had to compete in individual and team relay races. It was a tough and exhausting day but the girls enjoyed competing in

a new activity.



KS3 and KS4 11-a-side Hockey Tournament



KS3 Hockey Team



KS4 Hockey Team

Both teams played in their respective 11 a-side tournament for the first time. They were up against some very experienced teams but made lots of improvement with each match. Good effort girls.

Year 8 Tag Rugby Team



Year 7 Tag Rugby Team



On a very wet and muddy afternoon both teams got stuck in to their matches. They played extremely well in difficult conditions getting very muddy in the process.

Year 10 BTEC SPORT class go climbing!

As part of their Unit 11 work the girls have designed a training programme to improve their climbing. The girls went to the indoor climbing centre in Reading to find out how good their climbing skills were. They completed a number of different climbing routes to challenge their skills and also took charge of the ropes as well.



Habigale Gray Lois Maxwell

PSHCEE Relationships

On Tuesday 29 March, Year 10 took part in the Explore Conference that was aimed to give us more of an insight into relationships and in particular marriage. After a brief introduction we dispersed into groups to brainstorm our hopes and fears of being in a relationship and starting a family.

The main responses were the hopes and fears of commitment or lack of, the strength of trust and communication and the hope of everlasting love and devotion. This helped to aid the question and answer sessions held with some very kind married couples to come into school. The first couple had been married over 50 years and you could still see the love and compassion they had for each other. The second couple told us that marriage is a learning experience and “you learn as you go along”. They also shared with us the importance of standing by each other even when things don’t go to plan.

Initially I wasn’t too keen on taking part but afterward I was glad to have had the experience. It’s important for young people today because of the negative role models in the media.

Evonnee Bentley-Holder—Year 10

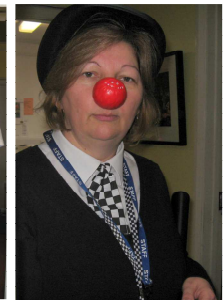
WEC Council

On Wednesday 23 March, the WEC Pupil Council (Fatoumata Darboe, Doreen Chengula and Nimrah Iqbal) held their termly meeting at the Madejski Stadium. They were given a tour of the stadium, and had the chance to see many parts that are not generally seen by the public. The students lined up in the tunnel and imagined as they went out into the arena the crowds that would be cheering on their heroes.

In the meeting that followed the students reviewed the value of the Council and came up with lots of ideas. It is a good opportunity for different schools to see what can be improved in Whitley and also gives students confidence as they express their views to a wider audience. As representatives of the children of Whitley, the council can help with

some of the dilemmas affecting young people: ‘We are capable of raising thousands of children’s ideas and issues to make our community a lot better’.

More Red Nose Day Photos



Holidays are fine but not in term time

Any absence in term time undermines the continuity of your child’s education and reduces her chances of success. **Parents and carers are asked to take family holidays during the school holidays.** The Headteacher may authorise leave of absence but will consider the reasons for the request, the effect on the continuity of your daughter’s learning and her overall attendance. Please be aware that if you take your child out of school for an unauthorised holiday during term time, you may be issued with a **fixed penalty notice of £50 per parent for each child.** School holiday dates for 2011 are as follows:

Mid term break Monday 30 May to Friday 3 June
End of term Friday 22 July