



Reading Girls' School NEWSLETTER



Terms 1 & 2

www.readinggirlsschool.co.uk

December 2014



The **Aspire2B** recently held their AGM at Reading Girls' School and this

was followed by a very successful quiz night. A good amount of money was raised for the Aspire2B charity and a lot of fun was had by all contestants in the dozen teams that participated. There were of course winners and losers, the losers are pictured here with their wooden spoons, and the winners with their prizes.



Get on with Business

You may have seen this recent article in the *Reading Evening Post*.

Our Y10 and Y11 Business students had an opportunity to see what happens behind the scenes at Broad Street Mall, when they attended the **Get on with Business** event organised by **Central Berkshire Educational Business Partnership**.

Eleven of the centre's traders and three suppliers were on hand to talk to the students about their roles. Broad Street Mall manager Graham Mountford said: "I am delighted that so many of our tenants have got involved in this very worth enterprise. From the largest Wilko, Argos and TKMaxx to the smaller Card Factory, Subway, Slaters and Virgin". The pupils were set a number of challenges throughout the day including a quiz and competition and a project to choose the best Christmas lights scheme.



Students from RGS in Slaters with Jennifer Masley, store manager David Peverell and Brett Mott.

The event delivered a programme to raise awareness of skills, training and apprenticeship opportunities. This initiative also included the **Thames Valley Skills Show Experience** staged at Ascot Racecourse where a number of our students also visited.

Beverley Graves, joint managing director at CBEBP said: "The enthusiasm of the Broad Street Mall team in hosting this event will mean that young people will gain a full understanding of skills used in business and enterprise. We are grateful for the support of The Skills Show, the National Careers Service and the European Social Fund in making this event a success."



Broad Street Mall manager Graham Mountford talks to the students.

European Day of Languages

The Language Department encouraged all of us to embrace other languages. They asked us all to discuss which languages we speak, and to try to at least say "hello" in a language other than English. There were some spectacular displays for the Y6 Open Evening too. There were three winners for their entries:

- Best Artwork – Chang Shen
- Best Word – Amasha Rajagura
- Highly Commended – Iqra Zamir



Cookery competition

Mrs Kumagai encouraged students to enter the **High Sheriffs Cookery Competition** over the summer. Aisha (Y8), Lucie, Erika and Hana (Y9) and

Shamaila (Y11) entered the competition and all of them went through to the second round at Reading College on Saturday 11 October. Erika was chosen to be the finalist from RGS and she made her beautiful fish dish at Newbury College where she was very close to winning. The High Sheriff will be publishing a cookery book with all the recipes from the competition and we will have a number on sale in school.



Mrs Kumagai is a **School Food Champion** and is trying to increase the uptake of the canteen lunch by liaising with Reading Borough Council and Chartwells. Her first meeting with them was on 21st November and subsequent meetings will discuss how the lunches could be improved – watch this space for more information!

Design Hits



We are always pleased to celebrate the success of our students, even if we only find out later!

We spotted a familiar face when flicking through the *Evening Post*. Neyma (Y11) had not boasted about her win, but we were very glad to congratulate her on her success. Neyma was awarded a prize for her creation for the children's homepage section of the **Royal Berkshire Hospital's** website.

Black History Month

Year 11 students organised this celebration of Black History Month. There were displays of vocal and instrumental talents, a large number of dance displays and a fashion show. In the foyer a range of enticing foods was on sale. During the day, there was a non-uniform event with a "black & white" theme which raised around £180. With advance ticket sales totalling £270, a further £430 was raised by selling tickets on the door and the food/drink making a grand total of £880. Well done Y11. The money will be put towards the Y11 prom next summer.



The School Council

The School Council recently attended an event hosted by the Reading Youth Cabinet and Reading's Youth MP. This was held in the inspiring Great Hall of the University of Reading, and the event was introduced by the Mayor of Reading.



Students from various schools attended and were asked to debate a number of topics. Subjects included mental health, careers advice, personal safety, social media and the idea of voting at age 16. The information and points of view will help the Youth Cabinet decide their priorities for projects for the coming year. Also, as the Youth MP is soon to

attend a Youth Parliament event in the House of Commons this will inform her decision on how to vote.

As Victoria, one of our school council representatives says: "The trip was very interesting, teaching us things regarding politics and life after school. We met members of the Reading Youth Cabinet and learned about their roles within the organisation, debated on topics regarding social media, the legal age to vote, and even took 'selfies' with the Mayor of Reading."

Hair'em Scare'm

Year 10 Hair Students were tasked with creating hair styles for a Halloween Event. There were some great entries, and the judges found it difficult to choose a top three. They thought all the styles would look great at a party or on a catwalk with a Halloween theme! See more photos on our website.



Music

Y7 have made a super start to music since September and it has been brilliant to see many of them coming along to School Choir, Guitar Club and other musical groups at break times and lunchtimes. Many have come along to practise their classwork too and I am especially pleased with the progress they are making. This is also true of girls in Y8 and Y9 where a number are really beginning to show their deep interest in music and desire to progress their skills. This has been particularly true with the guitar and ukulele, but also with voice, keyboard and drum-kit.

September also saw our Y10 GCSE Music course begin and the 15 girls



that chose to follow it have made a promising start. As part of this, we had a piano master class and recital given by international concert pianist Richard Meyrick who runs *The Piano Studio in Mayfair*. This was indeed a super event and one that a small number of Y9 pupils also enjoyed.

Our School Choir, RGSC is working very hard towards festive events and of course to **the VIAM (Voice in a Million)** event at the SSA Stadium, Wembley in March. There are 43 pupils involved with this and we are currently in the process of fund-raising to raise money for the coach to transport us there and back. As such, RGSC will be singing at the **SavaCentre** store on Saturday 13 December (from 3.00 until 5.00pm) and at the local **Morrisons** store on Wednesday 17 December (from 4.00 to 5.00pm) in order to swell the coffers. We are also promoting an 'Animal' quiz which is available from the Music Department for £1.00 – lots of fun, I promise you!

The most recent transformation of the department is the conversion of the smaller practice room into a **Recording Studio**. This is another project that I'm sure will inspire our girls and I look forward to hearing really super work being recorded. I am extremely keen for pupils to have the opportunity to gain instrumental and vocal tuition in school. **Reading Rock Academy** is currently working with our Y10 pupils and they are able to expand tuition to



the wider school. Instrumental lessons are available for keyboard, guitar (acoustic and electric), bass guitar and drum-kit and would cost £5.00 per lesson, payable half termly i.e. £30.00 per half term. If your daughter is interested in considering this opportunity from January, please ask her to collect a letter from me. Of course I'm equally keen to offer instrumental tuition for other musical instruments too; again please don't hesitate to ask, if this is of interest.



BTEC Level 2 Travel and Tourism

'Get On with Hospitality'

We were fortunate to be offered a place on the above course for the Level 2 Travel and Tourism students. This course was organised by the **Central Berkshire Education Business Partnership**. The purpose of the course was to give students the opportunity to experience hands on activities addressing customer service, housekeeping, management and financial management.

The students also had a tour behind the scenes of the hotel. The students thoroughly enjoyed the experience which included identifying and tasting unusual foods, taking part in a silver service relay and having the opportunity to talk to members of staff about their career development.

'Chessington World of Adventures'

As part of the BTEC Level 2 Travel and Tourism course the students went on a trip to Chessington World of

Adventures Park. The students attend a workshop on Customer Service and Human Resources. This provided students with the opportunity to gain further understanding of the customer service provision of a leading visitor attraction which they used as a case study for their coursework. Following the workshop the students were able to enjoy full access to the park for the remainder of the day.

Cache Level 2 - Cinema Trip

One of the first tasks completed on the Cache course is to plan a trip. This year the students decided upon a trip to the cinema. After choosing a date and time for the trip the next decision was "Which film do we want to see?" Unfortunately the staff did not get to choose and the class chose a horror movie. Even the trailer made Mrs Kelly and Mrs Roberts a little anxious.

We all met on a gloomy Tuesday morning and nervously entered the cinema. The Cache students, loaded up with snacks, were ready we all sat on the edge of our seats and I am sure that lessons were disturbed at Reading Girls' School by Hajar's screams. Surprisingly we all survived the film and even managed to enjoy lunch in Pizza Hut before returning to the NTA.

Humanities

To help with their GCSE courses, the Y10 Geography and Leisure & Tourism classes went to **Swanage** for the day.



The geographers were focusing on coastal landforms and processes, while the leisure & tourism group were looking at the area as a tourist

destination. Despite some very heavy rain and strong winds, everyone had a good day and learnt a lot for their subject. By far the most entertaining part of the day for the students was the lunch break spent sheltering from the rain in the amusement arcade! The staff preferred to shelter in the fish and chip shop.



On Friday 28 November, eight Year 9 students went to Microsoft, in Thames Valley Park. The girls took part in a competition, which aimed to encourage more females to consider a career in the STEM industry (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths).

The pupils received a warm welcome by the Microsoft staff and were led into Chicago, a cinema-like conference room, which was also occupied by all the other schools competing. Next, they had a very inspiring talk by a computer scientist, Sadia Ahmed. She told them about her journey to her career path and also about her current project, the Rainforest, which looks at how computer logistics can help us make conclusions and predictions about how human globalisation will affect our environment and climate.

After that, the students were briefed on their challenge, to design an app that fitted within their given category. The schools were then split up into different buildings. Reading Girls' was given the category entitled 'Health, Fitness and Sport'. The girls then had to work as a team to create a video that presented their ideas and also showed how inventive they were with the use of the technology all around them. They were supervised by Microsoft staff members and Mr Goff.

After lunch, the girls were given a talk by a group of inventors, who were working on a project named 'Guide Dogs'. This project included the use of technology to help blind people to travel around more easily. This piece of technology is still being modified and has only just attracted media attention.



Then, the girls had the opportunity to ask questions to members of staff and apprentices. After having a jam-packed afternoon, the girls had the chance to see some of the latest technology being developed in Microsoft. The girls had great fun participating in a *Just Dance Central* game. Even the teachers joined in!

Finally, it was the prize giving, and although the students worked very hard, they didn't win first prize. "However, it was an enthralling experience and has definitely opened my eyes to how many exciting and interesting STEM job careers there are!" said Victoria Turchyn, 9R. Overall, the girls really enjoyed their time at Microsoft.

Science Club

is back with new and exciting activities. With the collaboration of the "Chemistry for All" project from the University of Reading, RGS students have been growing their own crystals and enhancing important skills like working as a group. New activities will come up next term.



SCIENCE CAFÉ



This year the Science department is running an exciting initiative called the Science Café for pupils at Reading Girls' School. Once a term we will be inviting scientists and professionals from a range of areas such as academia, the health profession and engineering industry to speak to the

girls about their experiences studying and working in scientific fields.

This term Mrs Sammie Buzzard from the Meteorology Investigation Department at Reading University came to RGS and shared her experience with a lecture theatre full of excited young scientists.

Uniform 2015 and Punctuality Drive

When students return to school on Monday 5th January 2015 we are requesting that parents help in ensuring students are in full uniform. We expect **all students** to be wearing the navy blue school jumper with logo, white open-neck blouse, navy blue pleated skirt or formal trousers - not skinny trousers - and sturdy black shoes.



Any students who are not in full uniform will be asked to return home to dress appropriately and then return to school.

Punctuality

Students are expected to be in their tutor bases by **8.40 am each morning**. Students who arrive after this time will be detained after school that day to make up the time they have missed. I ask parents to support us in this as this requirement for punctuality is a life skill that all employers will expect.

Senior Prize Giving Ceremony

This year, the event was less formal than in previous years, and the girls had plenty of time to chat with their old friends – many of the girls had not seen each other since results day in August. The girls arrived to the sound of "Happy" as we played the video produced at the end of year 11.

The first presentations were of GCSE and BTEC certificates. Our girls had worked hard to meet or exceed their targets, so they were well deserved. This was followed by the nominations for subject prizes, chosen by the lead teachers in the subjects. The next category was for students who had achieved 100% attendance in Year 11 and 99%+ from Years 7-11 and finally the special awards were presented:

100% attendance from Y7 to Y11 -

Marie Jones

Governors' Cup for outstanding

Progress - Raminta Klimaite

Dunning Cup for Endeavour - Louise Martin

Hughesdon Award for Outstanding Academic Achievement - Yashna Rajendra

Pat Monaghan Memorial Trophy for Outstanding Attitude and Effort - Shreya Gurung

The Jessica Cecil Cup for services to the school - Mwango Hwalima

Allen Award for Senior Enterprise - Nieema Hassan

The Marsha Carey-Elms Award for Student of the Year - Kathryn De Oliveira

Headteacher's Award - Sandra Abone and Mairead Casey (Joint winners)

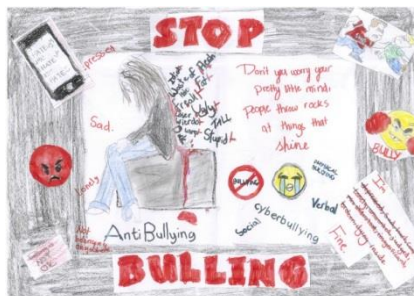
Anti-Bullying week

At Reading Girls' School we actively promote the message of bullying not being acceptable and actively raise awareness about what is bullying as well as what support is available to

students. This year during Global Entrepreneurship Week, the theme of the campaign was 'stop bullying



for all' with a focus on more vulnerable children. This year as part of raising awareness we ran a completion with the winners being entered into the *Actionwork's* national competition as well as all entrants receiving house points.



Actionwork produces a FREE anti-bullying week competition every

year. This competition is a chance for students and schools to win prizes, to help schools have a focus for their anti-bullying work, to promote creativity in dealing with bullying and to showcase the anti-bullying work of young people across the UK. We would like to thank everybody who entered.



Year 11 Mock Interviews

On the PSHE day on 8 December, Year 11 students took part in mock Interviews with volunteers from local organisations. They experienced a pretend interview followed by feedback and the chance to ask questions. For the Business Studies students this was a requirement of their course, and for all the students this will be a big help when they come to a real interview.

Some of the girls were very nervous before they went in but all of them

came out with smiles on their faces, having received personalised tips, guidance and advice. The feedback sheets will be passed on to the girls to take home. Our thanks go to the volunteers for their time and support, including **KPMG, Verizon, Chiltern Training, Olswang, Siemens, and Teaching Personnel Ltd**, as well as the volunteers from **STEM Net, Inspiring the Future and the Rotary Club**.

Reading Inspires!



All the Year 9 Students recently attended 'Reading Inspires!' which was held in the beautiful Great Hall of the University of Reading. This event was organised by **Business in the Community** with business volunteers from **Prudential, AWE, Peter Brett Associates, KPMG, Galliford Try, Fujitsu, Centrica, Covea Insurance** and also some publishing firms.



Students each had the opportunity to take part in workshops and talk to representatives from six companies during the course of the morning. However the main focus of the event was for them to understand the CBI's definitions of Employability Skills, and how important these skills are within the workplace. These include: Positive Attitude, Self Management, Team Working, Problem Solving, Communication and Literacy, Numeracy and Application of Technology. Transport to and from the event was funded by **KPMG** and we are grateful for their support.

Engineering Construction Industry workshop

Year 9 students also attended a workshop on careers in the Engineering Construction Industry. Engineering Construction is the process whereby some things are manufactured, such as biscuit wrappers, trainers, light bulbs and so on. This lively, fun and interactive workshop also talked about different careers paths such as apprenticeships and university.



Rotary Technology Challenge

A team of Year 8 students and a team of Year 10 students recently took part in a Technology Challenge run by the **Rotary Clubs of Loddon Vale and Maiden Erlegh**. This took place at the **REME Museum at Arborfield**, and there were teams of various age groups from Bulmershe, Forest, Waingels and Piggott schools.

The teams were given dowling, string, board, a battery-operated motor and some other bits and bobs. Their challenge was to make a machine to carry a box across a 'gorge' on a wire. The year 10s also had to make the machine unload the box, and the one Year 12 team that took part from the various schools was also given the challenge to make the machine return across the wire.

The girls worked very hard. They tried out all sorts of ideas and made adjustments to their designs. As well as their scientific knowledge, they had



to use many personal skills - teamwork, creative thinking, and communication, as well as perseverance, patience and resilience! Their machines nearly worked but failed in the final test (as did many of the machines created by the other teams).

All the students who attended were given certificates for taking part.

Also taking place recently:

- Students in Year 11 and Year 9 have attended sessions of independent careers advice and guidance from **Adviza**.
- **KPMG** are providing mentors for some of our year 11 students to help them over the next few months.
- **Central Berkshire Enterprise & Business Partnership** will be working with a group of Year 10 students.

PE News

Year 7 Interform Benchball Tournament

It was with great excitement that the Year 7's embarked on their first inter-house sports competition. The first few matches were completed in lessons, with the remainder being played on the PSHCE day. Much planning and preparation had gone into discussing strategies to outwit the other teams. All five tutor groups gave it their all and played really well, all the matches finishing quite closely amid very loud cheering. The final results were:

1st = 7B
2nd = 7C and 7S
4th = 7R
5th = 7A



Yr7 Interform Benchball winners

Year 8 and 9 Football Team

This was the first time the league had moved to 9 a-side format meaning the games were a lot tougher as there was more ground to cover. There were some excellent skills on display but not quite enough to make an impact this year.

Year 10 and 11 Football Team

This was also the first time they were playing in the 9 a-side format for the school league. Although they suffered a few losses they drew some games and had a couple of good wins. It was also good to welcome some new players to the team.



Year 10 GCSE PE students attempt Paralympic Sports

The girls had a go at a number of different Paralympic sports to increase their awareness of this topic. They did blind football, blind running with a guide and sitting volleyball. They now have an improved appreciation of how much talent is required to perform these events.



Sports Ambassadors Conference

Due to our excellent reputation of having good Sports leaders, RGS was asked to provide eight Sports Ambassadors for this year's School

Games Berkshire Finals in the summer. We selected a combination of Year 9 and Year 10 girls whom we felt were confident leaders and would contribute well to both the PE department and to the School Games.



The girls attended the Sports Ambassadors Conference at Reading University where they had the chance to further develop their skills and to find out more about their role. As part of their day they had the chance to meet and listen to Graham Edmunds who competed in the GB Paralympic swimming team and won Gold medals in Athens and Beijing.

Year 7 Football Team

We had a very keen and enthusiastic squad this year. The girls developed week by week improving their skills and positioning. By the last round of the league, of their four games, they drew one and won three, winning the last game against Blessed Hugh Faringdon 3-0. Well done.



Yr7 Football team

Trampoline Squad

We had eight girls competing in junior and senior level competition. They all beat their nerves to perform their routines really well. Milly Philpott from 8R won her competition and will go through for the second year in a row to the Berkshire Finals. We are anticipating that a few other girls will also get selected for the Berkshire Team. Well done.



Year 8 Hockey Team

The girls played some very skilful hockey showing some excellent attacking and defending skills, they had some close matches throughout, but finished on a high beating Little Heath 5-0 in their final game.



Importance of Maths

Volunteers from a variety of job roles recently visited some of our Y10 students to encourage them in their Maths studies. They talked with the students about their jobs and career paths, focussing on the importance of Maths: why they needed their Maths GCSE to get started, and how they use Maths in their work.



The volunteers were from a wide range of jobs and the students heard their career histories, including two staff from **Peter Brett Associates**. Other volunteers, sourced by Business In the Community, included **Galliford Try Construction Company, Thames Water, KPMG Accountants, CGI, Fujitsu** and an air hostess from **British Airways!** Thank you to them all.

Lego Robotics

On Monday 15 December, twelve girls embarked on a journey to the University of Reading to compete in the First Lego League - World Class competition. Weeks of preparation by all of the girls involved to design and programme a robot as well as create a presentation about how people learn.



The day started well with our team being one of the first out on the robot competition board and showing off their hard work completing four of the ten challenges. Throughout the day the girls competed in different elements of the competition, showing off their talents of teamwork, collaboration and determination. After three robot runs the programming was such a success that the girls not only made it to the quarter and semi-finals but the final. They were narrowly beaten by another team but an amazing effort was put in by everyone. Although we came second overall out of sixteen teams the girls' robot won the best design, securing a Lego trophy for their hard work.



The day out was a roaring success for everyone involved and this would have not been possible without the supporters from **Proctor & Gamble**, so a big thank you to Graham, Shirley and Ian who supported the team in the design and programming of the robot.



The Festive Season

The last two weeks of term are always busy with 'Christmas' themed events. The Year 11 Drama students presented their Whitley themed pantomime of "Cinderella" and saw some excellent performances by the students involved and of course, the special guest!



This was followed by 'Christmas Jumper Day' in aid of **Save the Children** which raised £135 for the charity – both staff and students joined in with some wonderful hand-made designs.



Christmas lunch was served to students over two days in the usual tradition by staff and we saw another special guest handing out presents.



Year 7 students went to **The Hexagon** to see the professional version of the pantomime Cinderella.



A multi-cultural 'mash-up' event will be held on Thursday evening and this will be reported on via the school website along with the final event of the season – **the Christmas Door Competition** due to take place during Tutor Time on Friday 19 December.

