



# Reading Girls' School NEWSLETTER



Business &  
Enterprise

Term 1

[www.readinggirlsschool.co.uk](http://www.readinggirlsschool.co.uk)

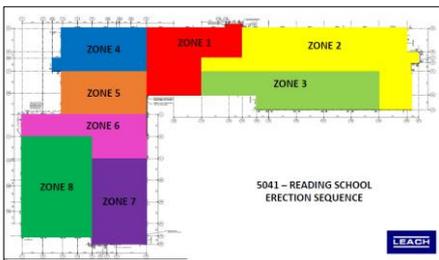
October 2015



## New build update

There was a huge amount of activity over the summer holidays and the new building is starting to take shape.

The construction for structural steel works on lot 1 (zone 1-3, see plan below) is now complete with all floor slabs (Bison Beams) with structural topping installed this has now released the area for SFS frame work installation and roof works.



We have commenced structural steel installation on lot 2 (zones 4 and 5).



## New School Minibus

We are delighted to have taken delivery of our new school minibus this term. The students are now very proud to be taken to sporting fixtures and other visits in our impressive new minibus.



The MUGA sub-base installation has started and is in progress with tarmac to follow shortly.



This has been made possible thanks to a number of fundraising activities held in the school and a donation of £1000 from Aldermore Bank.



Looking ahead, brickwork is due to commence in lot 1 following the SFS and we have started to receive supplies of bricks.

Aldermore's donation followed a team from the school winning an enterprise activity run by Aldermore and Visionpath. The students involved chose to put this donation towards the fund for the new minibus.



Other students are currently working with staff from Aldermore again for another project organised by Visionpath. The final of this will take place at the London Stock Exchange in November. The teams are looking forward to this exciting trip and we wish them well in the competition.



# FIRST WORLD WAR CENTENARY BATTLEFIELD TOURS PROGRAMME

A national education programme led by UCL Institute of Education

by Sidra Karim

Last year was the 100th anniversary of World War One, and to commemorate the event two students from every state funded secondary school had the chance to go to France and Belgium in an educational visit to increase awareness of the tragedy of 'the war to end all others'. Our school ran a competition with entries that were to be no longer than one side of A4 (something that we all found quite difficult!), with the question to answer being: Do the events of the First World War have any relevance to our lives today? Amasha Rajaguru and I both answered yes in two very different ways, but our poem and essay were unified in our answer of relevance.



So on Friday 9 October we met up with our supervising teacher, Mr Nichols, and were on our way. A coach picked us up and, making stops to pick other schools on the way, we headed to Grosvenor Hall in Ashford where we would be spending the first night. There we took part in team building activities and some of us even went for a 'leap of faith' which was daunting to say the least. After an exciting and nerve wracking evening during which I realised I didn't have wings and didn't particularly want them, we settled down to look at the itinerary for this once in a lifetime trip. Over the weekend we visited several sites and learnt an amazing amount. One of our first stops was Flanders Field Museum and the amount of information on show was overwhelming. A 3D projection of the trench lines and how they changed



was particularly interesting. The highlight of the tour was definitely the Menin Gate Ceremony though.



Although all the battlefields and such we visited were important, as they showed the brutal reality of war on such a large scale, there was something incredibly moving about witnessing the unity of so many people, in order to remember the dead. This architectural tribute is inscribed with the names of thousands of soldiers whose bodies were never found. I felt the frosty and somewhat eerie fog was quite appropriate. The ceremony was mainly a procession of people laying wreaths in silent respect and gratitude, and to our joy Amasha was chosen to take part. The trip was amazing though slightly oppressive at times. Standing at the centre of Tyne Cot Cemetery, rows and rows of sombre silent white



graves stretching in all directions, the impact of this all too real atrocity seems so much more real. Have you ever closed your eyes in a minute of silence and had difficulty connecting with those that laid their lives down for us.

In Tyne Cot, the largest British and Commonwealth cemetery, where the silence supersedes all, the inhumanity of war is all too transparent and a notion that also struck true at Langemark, which is one of the few German cemeteries in Belgium. There, the dark plaques that lay on top of mass graves and under tall dark oak trees provided a startling comparison. A little known fact is that on the night after the first day of the Battle of the Somme, German soldiers left their trenches to help the British carry the wounded back. There's a lesson for all of us in that.

This program has been amazing. I've learned so much, done so much, and challenged the typical views we all get bogged down with. I've seen trenches, sculpted pottery soldiers, and slept



extremely soundly at Flanders Lodge. Now all that's left is our project. We're trying to educate our local community about a subject that has relevance to us, and we have chosen Huntley and Palmer's. This biscuit company provided rations for soldiers; we were actually told about an account where a Huntley and Palmers biscuit tin was found with a dead soldier! History has never felt more relevant and, on that trip, it had truly never felt so real.

### Citizenship visit by Taaiba Khawaja

On 24 August I had the opportunity to visit the Army Public School and College in Peshawar, Pakistan which was at the centre of last year's deadly terrorist attack that left 141 children between the ages of 11-18 and 19 teachers dead.

I visited the school to give them messages of condolences and to show our support while gifting them three interactive smart products; brought by extensive fundraising efforts including the money fundraised by Reading Girls GCSE Citizenship class for their coursework. We managed to buy APSAC boys an Interactive Smart Lightraise, Pakistan's first ever, and an Interactive Smartboard-while also buying APSAC girls an Interactive Smartboard.



During the initial processes of fundraising we spoke with Lord Rosser and MP Rob Wilson, who hoped for the success of the project and with Syed Ibne Abbas, the Pakistani High Commissioner for UK who commended our efforts. I spent two days at the school actively engaging and interacting with the students, listening to horrific accounts of the attack and stories of immense bravery while motivating them to stay strong for a bright future

ahead. The students expressed what an honour it was for them to have been in contact with Reading Girls' School and that they felt more connected with the international community.



### The School Council

Student voice is very important at Reading Girls' School and October is the time for School Council elections.

Each tutor group has two students who represent them on the Year Council which meet once every half term. Of the Year Council, three students are elected to represent their year on the full School Council. For this each of the class representatives gives a short speech in assembly talking of their skills and the ideas they could bring to the School Council. The students then vote for the person they think would represent their year best on the School Council who meet every three weeks.

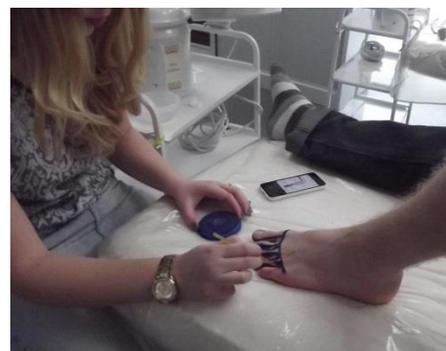
The School Council for this year has now been elected and the first meeting will take place in November.

Members of the School Council are:

- Year 7 Evie Gardner, Paige Grigg and Meg Warot
- Year 8 Sidrah Butt, Kalkidan Mengesha and Nimisha Pant
- Year 9 Sannah Ishteyaq, Bity Rai and Maleehah Ali
- Year 10 Reem Mukhtar, Chiara Perera and Sharon Anatole
- Year 11 Khama Gunde, Billiey McKeown and Aleena Gulzar
- Head Girls Ofuase Dirisu and Atiya Chowdhury



Level 2 beauty students learning where the veins and arteries are located in the foot and leg.



Dermalogica training at the Funky Bliss Salon.



Please keep

**Thursday 10 December**

free for the fabulous Reading  
Girls' School production of  
**Mother Goose starting at  
6:30pm.**

Featuring students from all year  
groups and the school choir.

## Music Department

It's been a real treat to see Year 7 pupils working so well in Music and I'm more than pleased with the progress that they are making, particularly with their playing of the 'Snake Dance' on the keyboard. A number of Year 7 pupils have been developing their work during break and lunchtimes, which is good to see, and I'm equally pleased with those in Year 7 who have joined RGSC - the School Choir.

RGSC involves pupils from each year group and featured in the Music Department's presentation at the recent Open Evening. Choir rehearsals take place on Mondays after school and all pupils are welcome to join. The next event for RGSC is VIAM (Voice in a Million) which will take place in Wembley Arena during March next year. Any pupils that wish to find out more about this should come and see me.



Also, during this term we had a super Music Composition workshop presented by 'Readipop' which involved pupils from Years 9 and 10 working together with six professional musicians

to create original music for film. This was a taster session for a wider 'Urban Orchestra' which some girls may well be involved with and was wholly successful.



New extra-curricular groups will be starting after half term. There will be clubs for guitar, keyboard and recorder which all pupils are welcome to join. A timetable for these events will be available in school and on the website. Miss Morgan coaches a flute group on Thursdays at break time and there is also a clarinet group at lunchtime on Thursdays.



Presently, we don't have instrumental tuition in school, but I am very keen for this to take place. If pupils wish to take instrumental lessons on piano, guitar, bass guitar, drum-kit, keyboard, brass, woodwind or string instruments, please let me know.

Last year we ran an extremely successful piano workshop and master class with the eminent concert pianist Richard Meyrick who recently told



me that he enjoyed working with RGS girls so much that he's keen to repeat the event again in early 2016. Any pupils who have piano pieces in preparation will be invited to join in this event and further details will be available in the new term.

Year 10 have made a super start to their GCSE course and Year 11 are completing coursework assignments and preparing for their imminent mock examinations. We are a busy department and there's a great deal going on. There's also a big 'thank you' to Erika and Lucie in Year 10 for mounting work from Year 8 and 9 pupils on the Music Department notice board. It looks brilliant!

## 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 reason 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 absence during term time, you may be issued with a **fixed penalty notice of £60 per parent for each child doubling to £120 if not paid within 28 days.**

**School holiday dates for 2015/16 are as follows:**

Christmas break Monday 21 December to Friday 1 January  
Mid-term break Monday 15 to Friday 19 February  
Easter break Friday 25 March to Friday 8 April  
Mid-term break Monday 30 May to Friday 3 June  
End of term Friday 22 July