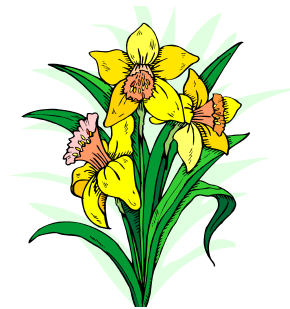




# Reading Girls' School NEWSLETTER



Term 3/4

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

Spring 2014

## NEW BUILD UPDATE.....



The Education Funding Agency has appointed **Interserve Kajima** consortium as the selected bidder under the Priority School Building Programme to design and construct our new school. Interserve Kajima will now work with the school on a six-month detailed design stage through to financial close in late October. Construction is due to start in November with planned completion in August 2016.



### Headteacher's Message

As you can see we have some exciting news to impart to you. The plans for the new school build have been received and you can see the position that the new school build will take on our existing site. There are also a couple of artists' impressions that hopefully can convey some idea what the finished build will look like. We are extremely pleased that our favoured contractor has been successful in their bid. In the next few months there are many design meetings planned and we will ask parents and other interested parties to attend a meeting to be able to see the plans and hopefully a model of the proposed new school. We will inform all interested parties of the date in due course by a press release via our web site and the local press.

As you read through this bumper edition of the newsletter you will see the students are continuing to be involved in a variety of activities. I must say how impressed I am with the girls' willingness to fund raise for some very worthy causes. I also want to congratulate the Magistrates Competition team and wish them every luck in the forthcoming regional finals.

I value very much the support I have received from parents in helping to improve and develop RGS. I would like to invite any parents/carers who may wish to actively support the school further by becoming a school governor. Governors have a very important role to play in education and their skills, expertise and knowledge are invaluable. If you are interested please contact the Clerk to the Governing Body via email at [sgutteridge@readinggirls.reading.sch.uk](mailto:sgutteridge@readinggirls.reading.sch.uk).

It is important to me and the Leadership team to know what our students are thinking about the school and provide us with ideas on how to improve. The School Council is the students' voice within the school.

Parents can also have a voice via the OFSTED website on Parent View.

You are able to contact me directly via email at [vangus@readinggirls.reading.sch.uk](mailto:vangus@readinggirls.reading.sch.uk)

The students here are always a credit to the



school, however can I please request that parents/carers support us further specifically regarding our zero tolerance approach to facial piercings such as eye/lip studs etc. Students are advised of this and are expected to abide by these rules; please help us to help the students as there are many circumstances in the world of work where such expectations also exist. Students are also expected to wear the correct footwear which is flat black shoes.

The first day of next term is Tuesday 22 April - school will begin promptly at 8.40am and 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.





## Senior Prize Giving



2013 was rounded off nicely with our annual celebration of the previous years leavers. It was a well attended event, where girls who left in Summer 2013 received their certificates and prizes. Our guest speaker, Shirley Anstis, reminded the girls of the importance of following both your head and heart in career choices and that sometimes the easy option is not the rewarding one.



## Year 10 trip to Swanage



In October at the start of 'The Coastal Zone' topic Mrs Cunningham and Mr Boyd took the Year 10 GCSE group to Swanage to show the girls what they would be learning about and how it is relevant to today's world. They first visited Old Harrys Rock (a famous arch stack and stump) to look at coastal erosion and coastal features along the south coast. Then they travelled on to Swanage where they continued to look at coastal features and coastal erosion, extending on to look at coastal management. A great day was had by all.

## Music

There has been a great deal of activity in the Music Department during the course of 2014 and a significant involvement from girls in all year groups. The Department is in the process of a make-over and, as such, now has four rooms that pupils are able to use. The main classroom features a beautiful Pearl drum-kit kindly donated to the school in December 2012 which many girls play on a frequent basis, as well as a large number

of keyboards and computers on which we have recently added Sibelius score-writing software.



Pupils in Year 7, with instrumental skills (as part of the 'Wider Opportunities' programme in Years 4 and 5) are now continuing these skills at RGS. The Music Department has flutes, clarinets, trumpets, trombones, tenor horns, violins, a viola and a cello and I am extremely keen to see these instruments being used. Currently we are running String, Flute, Clarinet and Brass sessions during the week and I would encourage you to steer your daughter towards these groups, particularly if they have had previous instrumental experience. Similarly, we are also running a Guitar club (ably led by Year 8 pupils) and have regular attendance of over twenty pupils. If there is demand for individual or small group lessons on any of these instruments or voice, I am quite happy to consider 'outside' tuition; if this is of interest to you, please let me know.

Singing is also an integral part of Music Making at RGS. The School Choir made their 2014 debut as part of the excellent 'Arabian Nights' production in February (*see back page*) and has since gone from strength to strength, so much so that they performed at the Hexagon theatre on Wednesday 26 March in the final of 'Let's Sing!', a competition organised by the Mayor of Reading, Councillor Marian Livingston.



**GiG Night** is the most recent activity to take place within Music at RGS. Pupils are



able to sign up to perform in the hall after school on Fridays, as part of 'GiG Night'.



## Art Exhibition

Year 10 GCSE Art completed an in-depth study looking at the candy paintings of Sarah Graham. The students' target was



to create an original painting inspired by her work and to look closely at using tone and blending in an effective way. The end results are currently displayed in the foyer.



## Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme

Mr Boyd has worked hard to ensure Reading Girls' School is now a Directly Licensed Centre (DLC) for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. This allows us to give Bronze and Silver Awards.





The Duke of Edinburgh's award is an internationally recognised award showing that the young person has a certain set of skills: Self-management, Problem solving, Team working, Communication and enthusiasm, the skills the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, colleges and universities are looking for. Girls will achieve their Awards by completing a personal programme of activities in four sections Volunteering, Physical, Skills, Expedition.

### Fundraising for the Human Appeal

On the Friday before half term, the Year 11 citizenship girls raised £500 with a non-uniform day, and over £150 from their international food sales, and Henna. They also had a permit for street collections



and other fundraising netted another £600! The total to be sent to the charity is in excess of £1200. The girls chose this charity to

support Syrian children who have been affected by recent upheavals in their country. They are hoping that a member of the charity will be able to come in to school to pick up the donation.



### Fundraising for Great Ormond Street Hospital—Man vs Food

Year 11 held another fundraiser this time for Great Ormond Street Hospital. They invited Rob Wilson MP to come along and questioned him about why hospitals need to raise funds, why wasn't everything covered by the NHS? He is getting used to being grilled by our girls on various subjects! He took a turn selling refreshments, and then said a few words before the main event commenced.



Four male teachers bravely volunteered to eat not one but two large cakes and drink a pint of milk during the lunch

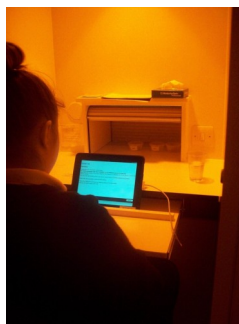
break. The eventual winner being the one who consumed the most was Mr Nichols.

The girls raised over £500 during the day's entertainment and just under £200 by collecting money in town after school. So they will be sending a total of £700 to Great Ormond Street Hospital, and I'm sure the money will be well used.



### RSSL Mondelez

A number of Year 9 students interested in science and careers focusing on chemicals and biochemicals, were invited to Reading University to look at the work of **RSSL Mondelez**. RSSL is a wholly owned subsidiary of Mondelez International which employs over 3,500 scientists within research and development. RSSL provides opportunities to work across a broad range of scientific disciplines from analytical research and laboratory analysis through to project management. The girls were briefed on health and safety and then appropriately dressed, worked with tempering chocolate and participated in taste testing in individual booths.



### Berkshire Apprenticeship Adventure 2014



Year 9 students recently attended the Berkshire Apprenticeships Adventure which was held at the **Royal Berkshire Conference Centre** at the Madejski Stadium. They were a bit daunted when they arrived. Instead of staying with people they knew, they were all split into different groups and had to work in teams with students from other schools. The event was designed to be like 'work'. They rose to the challenge and did very well.



A selection of employers were on hand for them to try challenges for teamwork, communication, planning and creative thinking. CISCO systems had a green screen to demonstrate special effects with IT, Compass caterers had a food challenge, and BA had students building towers of balloons in an engineering challenge. The boys from other schools particularly loved bursting the balloons afterwards! Much amusement was caused by Virgin Media's challenge – passing a band of elastic over and under each student standing in a circle holding hands without breaking a circle! They tried out taster sessions of different college courses such as business studies, construction and hair and beauty. It was



amazing the number of boys wandering around with nail varnish on by the end of the morning! There was also childcare, where they held virtual, crying babies and tried on a maternity apron to see what it is like to be 6 months' pregnant! A particular favourite was catering – where they got to decorate and eat biscuits!



### Intermediate Maths Challenge

The Intermediate Mathematics challenge is aimed at pupils in Year 11 or below in England and Wales. The challenge involves answering 25 multiple choice questions in one hour and is sat in school under normal exam conditions. The top 40% of students nationally receive a gold, silver or bronze certificate in the ratio 1:2:3 and each institution receives a Best

in School certificate. Around 500 of the highest scorers in each school year are invited to take part in the Intermediate Mathematical Olympiad. Pupils who obtain the top score in their school may be invited to one of the UKMT "Best in School" events.



Although Reading Girls' didn't win the competition both teams performed really well and came away with certificates and medals.



## Magistrates' Court Mock Trial Competition

On Saturday 8 March, a group of students gathered at Reading Crown Court. After weeks of work and preparation, they were taking part in one of the local heats of the Magistrates' Court Mock Trial Competition.

This prestigious competition, which has been running annually since 1994, introduces the legal system to young people in an innovative and exciting way. In the roles of lawyers, witnesses, magistrates and court staff, students prosecute and defend specially written criminal cases. Teams compete against each other in real Magistrates' courts in front of real magistrates. The competition is organised by The Citizenship Foundation working with HM Courts & Tribunal Service.

Our team for the defence was up against Windsor Girls' Team 2, then our prosecution team was against Herschel Grammar. The girls were excellent. The usher instructed 'All Rise' loudly, she swore the witnesses in clearly, and looked impressive in her black gown. The lawyers' questions were clear and well thought out, and they thought on their feet. The witnesses were believable as their characters, mostly remembered their statements, and answered some tricky questions. The defendant even 'cried' on the witness stand. The legal adviser gave a clear and concise summary of the case, and the magistrates listened carefully and debated the decision in the retiring room. The court artist and reporter (also reserve) noted everything to report on later.

Ten school teams took part in our heat including Blessed Hugh Faringdon, Maiden Erlegh, Brakenhale, Herschel Grammar, Windsor Girls', Theale Green and St Bernards. The winner of the heat was St Bartholomews, Newbury. We were very proud that our team came 2<sup>nd</sup>, and are also through to the next round. We wish them all the best for the Regional heat on Saturday 10 May.



We are very grateful for the help received from one of the school's Youth Workers Tina Heaford, who is also a magistrate. She helped the girls study the case, and arranged for our students to visit the Reading Magistrates' Court to see them in action working on real trials, which was very interesting and beneficial for your girls. We are very grateful for her time, advice and support.



Reading Girls' is trying to engage with former students by working with a company called *Future First*. We hope to utilise the Alumni as mentors to current students, possibly make contacts that will be able to offer work experience opportunities/internships, or potentially raise funds for much needed projects (like a new minibus!). With the school being rebuilt, there is lots of potential for everyone including former students to get involved, as we hope to have some exciting launch events. If you are a former student, please go to <https://networks.futurefirst.org.uk/former-student/readinggirls> and sign up to let us know you are around and would like to be kept informed. If you have friends or relatives who are former students, please let them know too! You can access the link and find more information about how Future First works though the **parents** tab on our website [www.readinggirlsschool.co.uk](http://www.readinggirlsschool.co.uk). We are also encouraging the current Year 11s to join up, *their* link is on the front page of the school intranet, and Miss Sipson will be talking to them about it in assembly.

## World Book Day

To celebrate World Book Day two competitions were held; a book quiz for the readers and a book cover re-design for the artists! The winners of the Book Quiz were: Rosie Mulhern and Caitlin Murray (from Year 8) and the winning book covers were



## University Science Challenge

Reading Girls' was delighted to host the local heat of the University Science Challenge. We welcomed teams from Emmbrook School; Blessed Hugh Faringdon; Highdown; and the John Madejski Academy.



The event was a little like *University Challenge*— it consisted of two minute

rounds, with starter and subsidiary questions. At the end of the event, three teams tied for 1<sup>st</sup> place, two of which were Reading Girls' teams. Both Reading Girls' A and Reading Girls' B teams were invited to the Science Day at Brooklands College, Weybridge on Thursday 20 March where both teams had a place in the finals quiz along with Highdown School who kindly transported us there. So, many congratulations to Reading Girls' A and B teams for reaching the finals!

**20 March Finals**—Having travelled with Highdown to Brooklands



College with friendly banter on the minibus it was down to business.





designed by: Apsara Gurung and Chang Shen (from Year 10). They were all invited to collect prizes and certificates from the library by Mr Williams and Miss Morgan.

### STEM Careers Fair

Some Year 10 students recently attended a careers fair at The Holt School in Wokingham which focussed on careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths.



### BITC Careers Event

Some Year 9 students were involved in a careers related event organised by Business in the Community. The event was also attended by students from Denefield School.

Firstly, students took part in a game of 'What's My Line?' where they had to try to guess the job of guest speakers. Then they had a speed networking activity where 2 or 3 students spoke with a volunteer for 4 minutes before moving on to the next volunteer. This gave them the chance to find out about the volunteers' work, career path, courses they had studied etc. It helped them realise that not everyone knows what they want to do when they leave school and that work and careers often change depending on personal circumstances.



Thank you to BITC and the business volunteers from KPMG, Shoosmiths, SSE, Fujitsu, Prudential, CGI, AWE, Miller Construction and Wrigleys.

### The Science Club

It has been a great academic year for the Science Club. Since we started more and more students have joined to learn about science. This club is an easy way to learn science and have some fun at the same time. We started off by looking at how the eye works and the tricks it can play on us. For autumn we imprinted leaves on glass

jars. Christmas time we made Choir boys from recycled material using glue which we made ourselves. Over the last term we have taken part in a creative project looking at the solar system. After some research on each planet, we made a 3D model of the system. There'll be a sweet treat in store for Easter – baking a cake in a cup. If this sounds interesting and you would like to take part in more exciting challenges come and find us on after school Wednesdays week 2 in S3.



### First Lego League

Back in December, Reading Girls' School entered two teams in to the First Lego League, a competition where students design and build a robot to take part in a series of challenges to help solve a problem. The girls put in an excellent effort and out of the 15 teams that entered, RGS was placed 8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. We would also like to thank Proctor and Gamble for their support throughout the lead up to the tournament. Recruitment for next year's league begins in Term 6.



As part of the Transformation Trust and Dell partnership, RGS was invited to take part in the Powering Transformations Workshop. For a week students borrowed equipment provided by DELL to make a range of videos about issues passionate to them. The week was a roaring success with lots of students getting to use brand new tablets and laptops. As a bonus, all Year 8 students were able to take part in the 'Team Challenge', where if they win against the other ten local schools, they will win a trip to the National Science Centre. The ICT department would also like to thank the Dell Volunteers that supported the students throughout the event.

### PE News

#### Year 7 and 8 Touch Rugby League

The Year 7 and Year 8 rugby teams played in a mini league with three other



teams. They played well developing their confidence and skills. There were some close games with only a point or two in it. Both teams finished 3<sup>rd</sup> overall.

#### Year 9, 10 and 11 Rugby Tournament



The Year 9, 10 and 11 rugby team was competing in a triangular match against JMA and Hugh Faringdon in full contact rugby. This was held at Reading Girls' School. The tournament took place on what was a relatively dry day during the heavy rain season so the pitch quickly deteriorated into a mud bath. The girls played some really excellent competitive and aggressive rugby with strong tackling on both sides. RGS comfortably beat JMA but couldn't quite get past Hugh Faringdon.

#### Sports Hall Athletics Team and Leaders

We had eight Year 8 girls competing in an indoor athletics competition and four girls who were assisting as sports leaders.



It was a good competition with a mixture of sprint, middle distance, throwing and jumping tasks which had been adapted for indoor competition. Our girls came 3<sup>rd</sup> overall and our leaders did an excellent job.



#### Year 9 Inter House Benchball

The Year 9's had their inter house benchball competition during the PSHEE day. It was a tough competition but 9R proved to be too strong for the opposition.

Final results were:  
9R – 1<sup>st</sup>, 9B – 2<sup>nd</sup>,  
9S – 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9A – 4<sup>th</sup>  
and 9C – 5<sup>th</sup>.



#### Year 9, 10 and 11 Volleyball Tournament

For the first time Reading Schools introduced a Volleyball Tournament. The



RGS squad trained very hard during lunch time club and extra training sessions at break time. Their commitment paid off as they won all six of their games to win the tournament outright. Well done girls.

### U13 Cricket League

The U13 cricket team was mostly made up of Year 7's so this was their first time playing cricket. There was some good batting and fielding but the opposition proved too strong.

### U15 Cricket League

The U15 cricket team welcomed some new players this year from the girls increasing their sport time for their Duke of Edinburgh Award. Despite moments of excellence in batting, fielding and bowling we didn't quite get enough runs to beat the other teams.



### Year 7 Netball League and Tournament

The Year 7 team has had an excellent first season and has showed there is a lot more to come. They were 3<sup>rd</sup> in the netball league and finalists in the netball tournament. As a result of this they have qualified for the School Games county finals in April. Well done girls.



### Year 8 Netball League and Tournament



The Year 8's showed a lot of improvement from last year and played some very good netball. They were 5<sup>th</sup> in the league and finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in their group for the tournament.

### Year 9 Netball League and Tournament

The Year 9 team faced some tough matches in their league and tournament this year but played some excellent netball with the defence having to work hard to keep out the opposition teams. They finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the league and 3<sup>rd</sup> in their group for the tournament.

### Year 10/11 Netball League and Tournament

The Year 11 team played consistently well in the league to finish 5<sup>th</sup>. The Year 10 and 11 combined team both played in the tournament. They had some tough games but played well.



*Year 10 Netball Team assisted by Aaliah from Year 7.*



*Year 11 Netball Team*

### Year 11 BTEC Sport class Multi Skills Festival

As part of their Unit 7 coursework, the Year 11 BTEC Sport class organised a Multi-skills Festival for 48 Year 4 students from Palmer Academy. They devised eight activities which developed the Year 4's skills in agility, balance, coordination and quickness. The girls ran a well-organised festival which the Year 4's enjoyed and the Palmer Academy staff were very complimentary on how well the Year 11's had done.





### NTA Showcase Event Day

On Wednesday 12 March the NTA held its showcase event. During the morning, all of the NTA students participated in various workshops, set up with the help of external providers. The students were involved in CV clinics; letter writing workshops; and mock interviews. They also had banking and budgeting advice. Companies involved included Microsoft and Barclays bank.



There was also a mini jobs fair, with representatives from CBEPP; Adviza; New Directions and the Princes Trust.



Several of the external participants complimented the students on their enthusiasm and interest in helping themselves to improve their employability.



Later in the day, we were privileged to receive a visit from the Mayor of Reading, Councillor Marian Livingston. After a tour of the facilities, she cut the ribbon to officially re-open the re-vamped and renamed Hair and Beauty Salon "Funky Bliss".



### Travel and Tourism

The Level 2 Travel and Tourism students have been busy completing two units: *Unit 1 – The Travel and Tourism Industry* and *unit 3 – Understanding the Nature and Effects of Worldwide Travel*.

They have produced some excellent work with some students achieving a merit overall. On Thursday 6 February they were fortunate to go on a trip to Windsor and then onto Earls Court. The purpose of the trip to Windsor was to experience first hand the appeal of Windsor as a tourism destination for Inbound tourists. This was a fact finding mission to enable them to complete their coursework next term for *Unit 6 – UK Tourism Destinations*.



The students were extremely positive despite the torrential rain and high winds. In the afternoon we then travelled to Earls Court to go to the 'Destinations – Holiday and Travel Show 2014'. Here students were able to meet representatives from the travel and tourism industry. This was an excellent opportunity for the students to develop an understanding of the industry as a whole and gain new experiences. One student even volunteered to eat the delicious dead caterpillars being offered on one of the tourism stands.

### Hairdressing Competition

Our Year 10 students studying hairdressing took part in a competition to design a hairstyle suitable for a 'Valentine Dinner'. Picking a winner was pretty difficult, the winning heads are on display in the main school foyer.





## Arabian Nights

On Thursday 13 February 2014 the intriguing tales of 'Arabian Nights' came to life at Reading Girls' School. This play encompassed tales of adventure and anticipation that made the audience smile and laugh as well as consider the more romantic message of this classic story – that true love is more than skin deep.



The main roles were played by our very own RGS acting couple extraordinaire – Olivia Miller and Mairead Casey – as King and Queen, who watched the stories unfold before them. Some of the well-known yarns that were acted out included *The Story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, *The Wife Who Wouldn't Eat*, *The Envious Sisters* and not forgetting *The Story of the Geographers*. It may not have been a classic legend from the original script, but this humorous skit certainly became a classic in its own right thanks to Mrs Cunningham and Mr Boyd's comic timing!

Students from all years came together to put on an exquisite display of a performance that involved not only acting but also dancing, beautiful Arabian clothing, accessories and make-up. The up and coming RGS choir added another great element to make the whole



experience even more exciting and enjoyable, performing a melange of modern songs, such as Jessie J's 'Price Tag' and classic numbers like 'A Whole New World', culminating with a beautiful rendition of the timeless 'Your Song' by Elton John.

On behalf of the cast, crew and choir I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff members who made all of this possible: Mr Williams, Mrs Edwards, Miss Morgan, Mr Greenway and Miss Barnett.

**Messia Afonso—11B**

**Anxhela Krasniqi (11A), who played the**



**part of the King's Vizier, writes:** *I felt that in the end, Arabian Nights turned out to be much better than I initially expected it to! Many of us thought we would not be able to pull it off as we were all so busy at the time with different things. There was a lot of hard work put in by all of us but we were pleased that it ultimately paid off as the production was a huge success! All the extra time we put in for rehearsals*



*was definitely worth it. Overall I thought the outcome of the play was fantastic and I enjoyed working closely with Mrs Edwards, as it helped me learn my lines and develop my acting skills. Everyone said they really enjoyed the play and it was great fun to be a part of it!*

## **Cast:**

Sharazad - Mairead Casey (Y11)  
 Sharayar - Olivia Miller (Y11)  
 Dinarzad - Messia Afonso (Y11)  
 Vizier - Anxhela Krasniqi (Y11)  
 Ali Baba - Aisha Alobaidi (Y10)  
 Captain - Ashka Jani (Y10)  
 Ali Baba's wife - Kanza Manzoor (Y10)  
 Karim - Mollie Barker (Y11)  
 Karim's wife - Emelia Heleweska (Y10)  
 Marjanah - Katie Masterman (Y7)  
 Geographer 1 - Mrs Cunningham  
 Geographer 2 - Mr Boyd  
 Haroun - Kala Coles (Y9)  
 Sidi 1 - Sanya Hussain (Y9)  
 Sidi 2 - Chloe Lunnon (Y9)  
 Amina - Nishfa Nismy (Y9)  
 Sorceress/ Daughter - Joan Pyuza (Y8)  
 Customer 1 - Jazmine Devkota (Y8)  
 Customer 2 - Emma Philpott (Y8)  
 Baker - Shisam Gurung (Y8)  
 King - Kirsten Newman (Y9)  
 Eldest sister - Zeenat Jabbar (Y10)  
 2<sup>nd</sup> sister - Lucy Lee (Y11)  
 Youngest sister - Alma Dirisu (Y10)  
 Steward - Ajeje Hassan (Y9)  
 Bahman - Lauren Butler (Y9)  
 Perviz - Leah Williams (Y9)  
 Parizade - Kunashe Mukupuki (Y9)

## **Choir:**

Ema Begum (7A)  
 Sandra Borgula (10B)  
 Grace Ewing (7R)  
 Sujana Jugjali (7R)  
 Hafsah Kelly (7C)  
 Danielle Maling (7S)  
 Jareen Rahman (7C)  
 Sasha Trethowan (7R)