

# *The Draxonian*

Marking an Historic Year  
2020



READ SCHOOL  

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DRAX



‘While we have faced challenges before, this one is different. This time we join with all nations across the globe in a common endeavour, using the great advances of Science and our instinctive compassion to heal. We will succeed and that success will belong to every one of us. We will take comfort that, while we may still have more to endure, better days will return. We will be with our friends again. We will be with our families again. We will meet again’.

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*HRH Elizabeth II, April 2020.*



# Spring



As optimistic 2020 emerged, Read and its talented pupils hit the ground running and took to the books, sport and music with gusto and commitment.



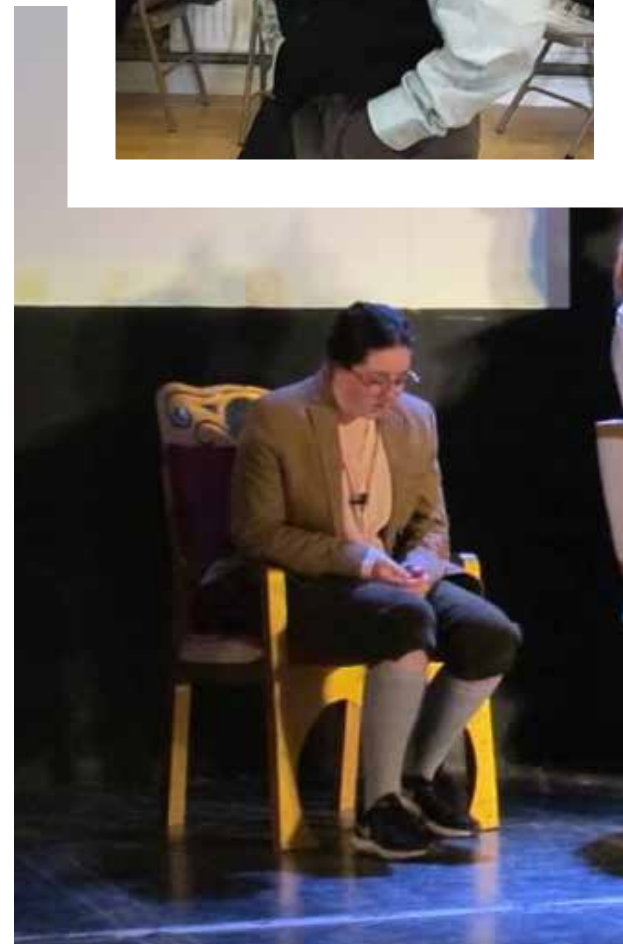
A promising start to the year, Read impressed all with the excellent behaviour – and mastery - on the ski trip, and the truly breathtaking production of Beauty & The Beast with stand-out performances, and theatre-quality costumes and music.

We wished each other all the love & luck for Chinese New Year, enjoying Mandarin lessons, learnt how to make dumplings and ate some tasty Chinese food from our award-winning catering team.

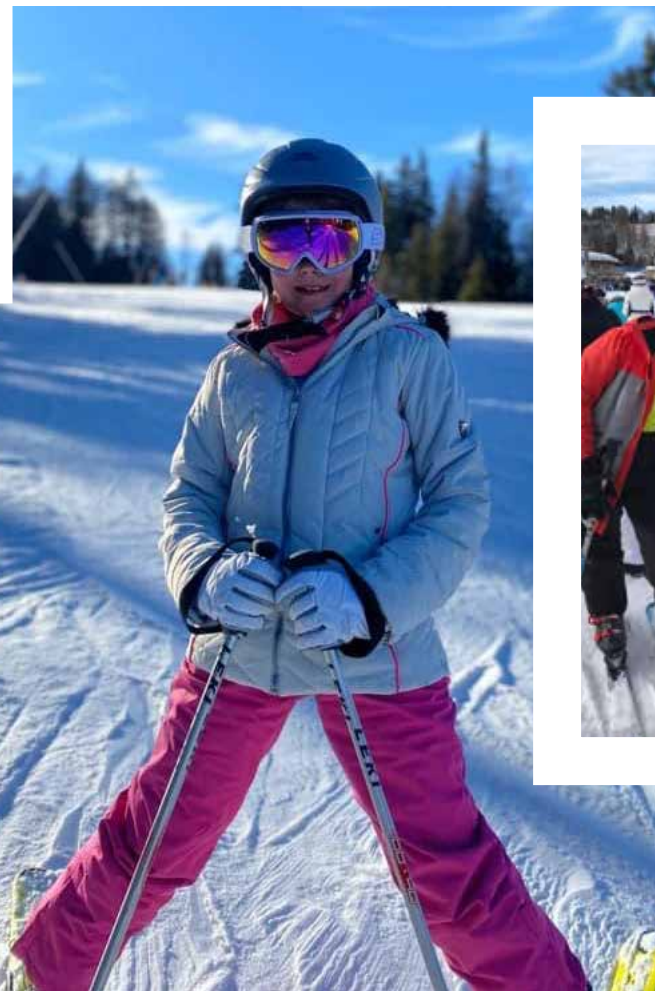
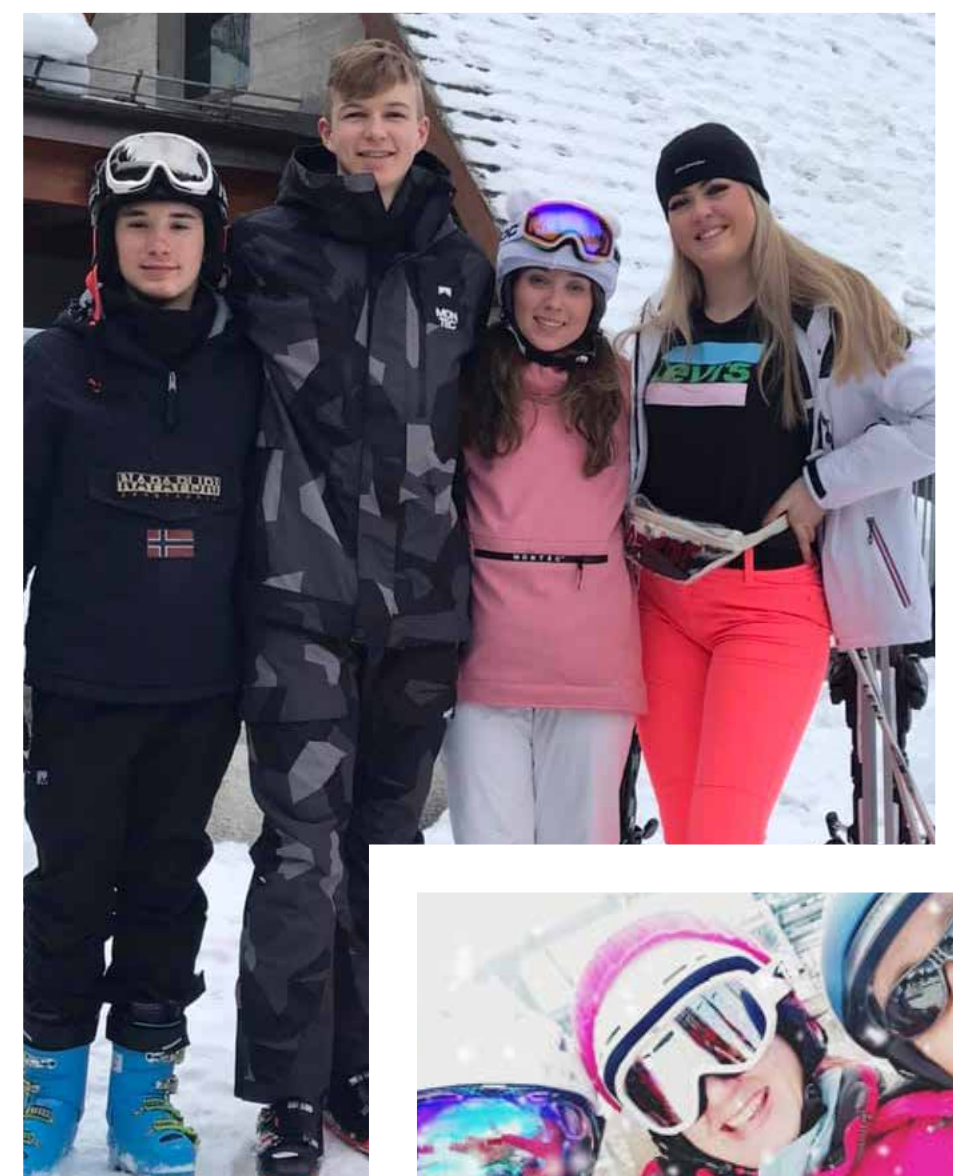
Duke of Edinburgh and Batik painting made for varied extra-curricular activities.















...And then things became complicated and unknown, as news of a new virus sweeping the world became the only subject in the news. Our pupils handled this uncertain time with maturity and resilience, in the safe hands of our nurturing staff but it has undoubtedly been a tough time for everyone across the globe.







The standard of music at Read never fails to astonish. New parents always gasp at our soloists and groups whether they are singing, playing instruments, composing their own music, or all of the above.



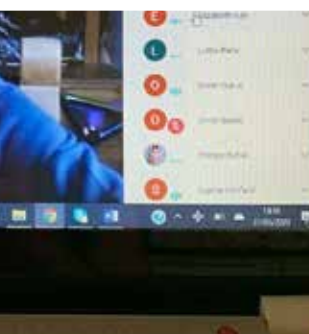
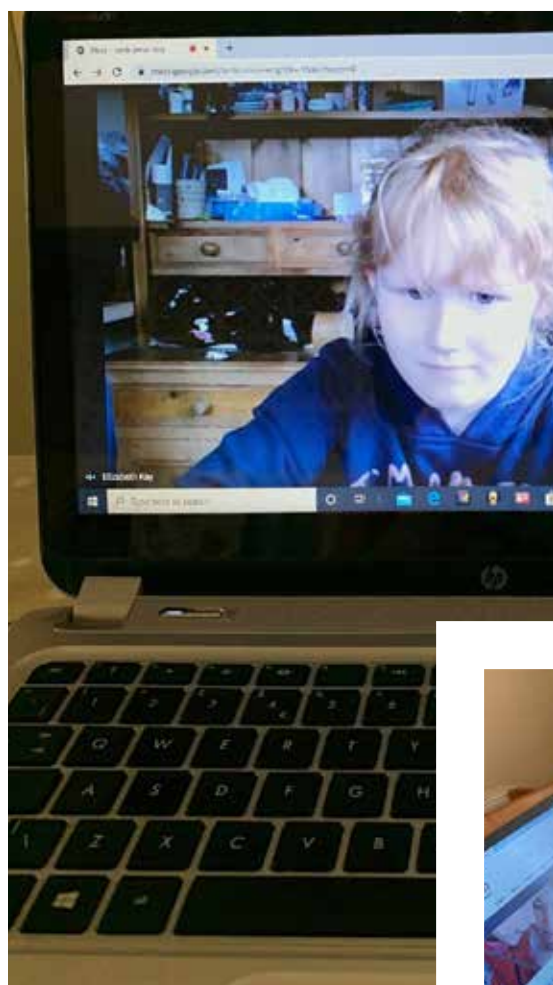




COVID-19 was a blight on the whole year, and a difficult concept, especially for younger pupils.

...But the emerging pandemic couldn't keep Read School, from helping pupils be the best they can be. We simply refused to let it. All safety protocols were quickly put in place and we cultivated a sense of business as usual to keep pupils focused and to protect their wellbeing, always a priority.

Our remote learning offering emerged swiftly, and general parent feedback was that it hit the spot; looking after pupils' futures in terms of grades, and mental health in terms of full, structured days.











Our pupils amazed us more than ever this year. The creativity and quality of their independent remote learning was off the scale. Bravo, Read pupils, their families, and all staff. We applaud you.

Keeping active was easier said than done in lockdown with limited options but our pupils persevered and thought of inventive ways to be fit, healthy and also to help others.

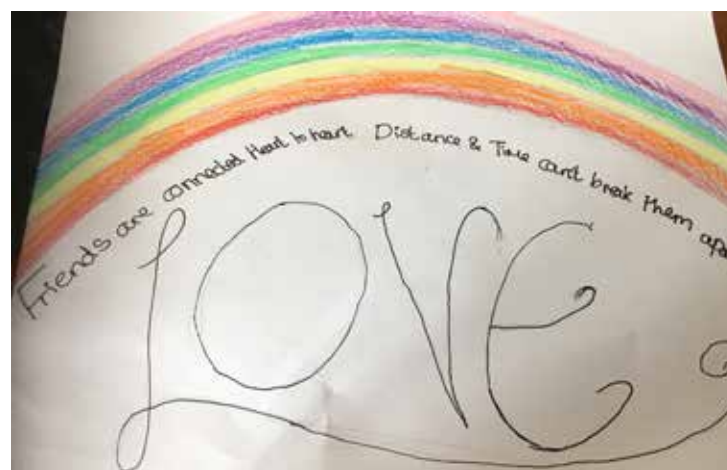
A terribly sad day for Read was saying goodbye to Read hero and Old Boy, our wonderful Chair of Governors, Peter Watt whom we sadly lost this year. His dynamism, commitment and philanthropy made a lasting impact on the school, and the importance of his legacy cannot be underestimated. Our love goes out to all Peter's family and friends and we extend our thanks to Brian Watt who has now assumed the role of Chair of Governors. Peter would be very proud of all that the school community has accomplished throughout this tumultuous year.







Thank you was not enough for the brave and hardworking NHS and other key workers who didn't get a break throughout 2020. Our Creative Arts team partnered with local schools to manufacture PPE to donate to local hospitals. In addition, the teaching profession across the board never wavered from their responsibilities to their pupils. Read rose to the challenge and looked forward, confident that this bleak situation would not last forever.

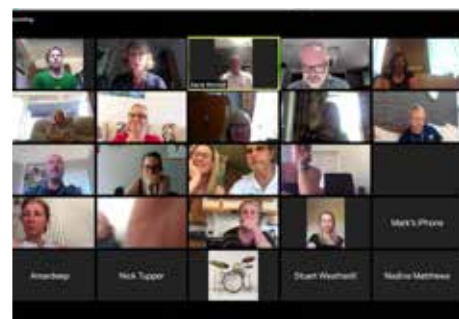
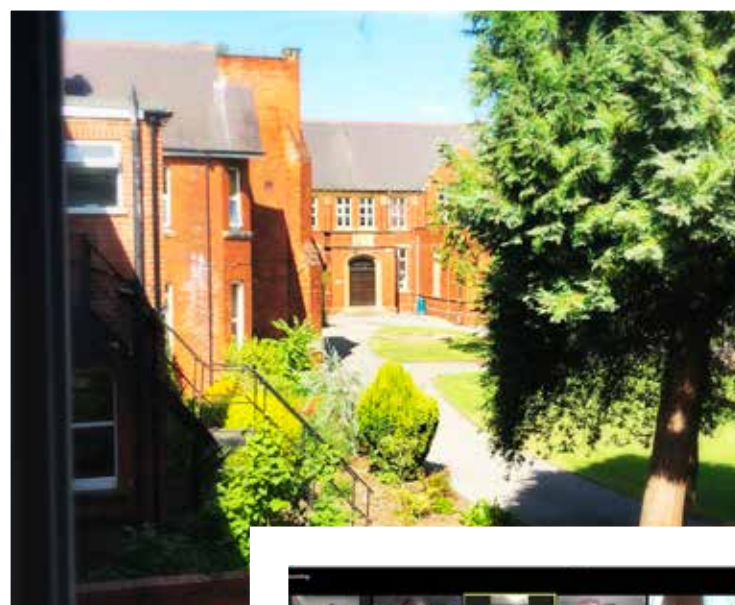
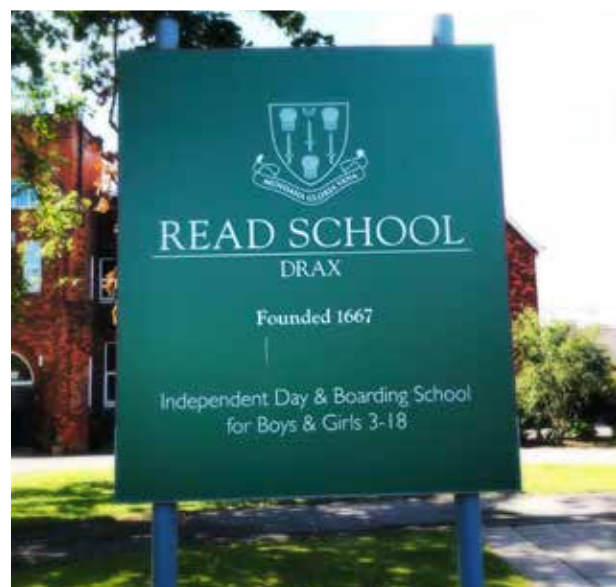






“Tell me and I’ll forget, show me and I may remember, involve me and I will understand.”

*Confucius*



On 8th May, Read marked the 75th anniversary of VE Day with an inventive array of wonderful celebrations, keeping our school family together in spirit. Dame Vera Lynn’s, We’ll Meet Again, was indeed an apt song this year...



Head Boy and Senior Cadet, Harry Woodall on the farm, paying his respects on VE Day.





Throwback Thursday was launched, celebrating past pupils and glories.



We became one of a handful of schools to offer the highly-regarded Leiths Cookery Course which sees our pupils cooking as chefs, with ambitious three-course offerings that most adults would struggle to achieve. The Hollandaise was divine!



## The Sporting Champion Winners

Year 3/4 Boy: **Zac Matthews (D)**  
Year 3/4 Girl: **Sophie Winfield (P)**

Year 7 Boy: **Peter Winfield (P)**  
Year 7 Girl: **Evelyn Crompton (P)**

Year 5 Boy: **Charlie Bellman (D)**  
Year 5 Girl: **Matilda Wormald (U)**

Year 8 Boy: **Philip Suddes (P)**  
Year 8 Girl: **Ella Frost (P)**

Year 6 Boy: **Lucas Matthews (D)**  
Year 6 Girl: **Emily Kaye (U)**

Year 9 Boy: **Jamie Holdich (D)**  
Year 9 Girl: **Sophie Marshman (D)**

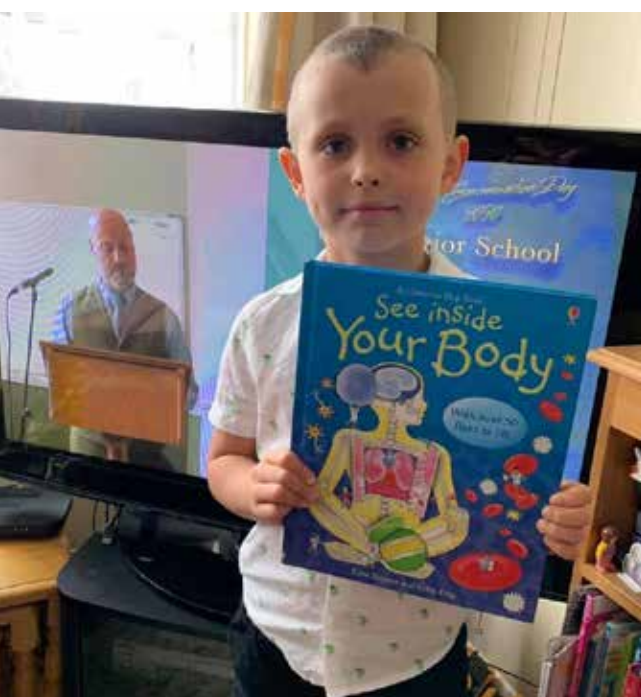
Male Parent: **Mr Madden (D)**  
Female Parent: **Mrs Frost (P)**

Year 10 Boy: **Zach Lewis (P)**  
Year 10 Girl: **Charlotte Fildes (D)**

Thank you to all pupils and parents who have joined in with the challenges - there has been some fantastic efforts! Well done.



Commemoration Day – always a favourite at Read – was online, and not the same sociable gathering we've come to love. What didn't change was the chance to celebrate the plethora of talents, gifts and qualities that continue to shine from our outstanding young people, more impressive by the fact that they continued to strive over lockdown when it would have been so easy to give up!



A well-attended, COVID-safe, Summer Enrichment Programme helped pupils and parents bridge the gap from July to September with a wide choice of fun educational and sporting activities.











(L-R) Olivia Crossley, Ellie Harrison, Evie Harness, Edward Woodall, Amy McGill, Keish Fowler, Polly Brooks (27-06-09 51)

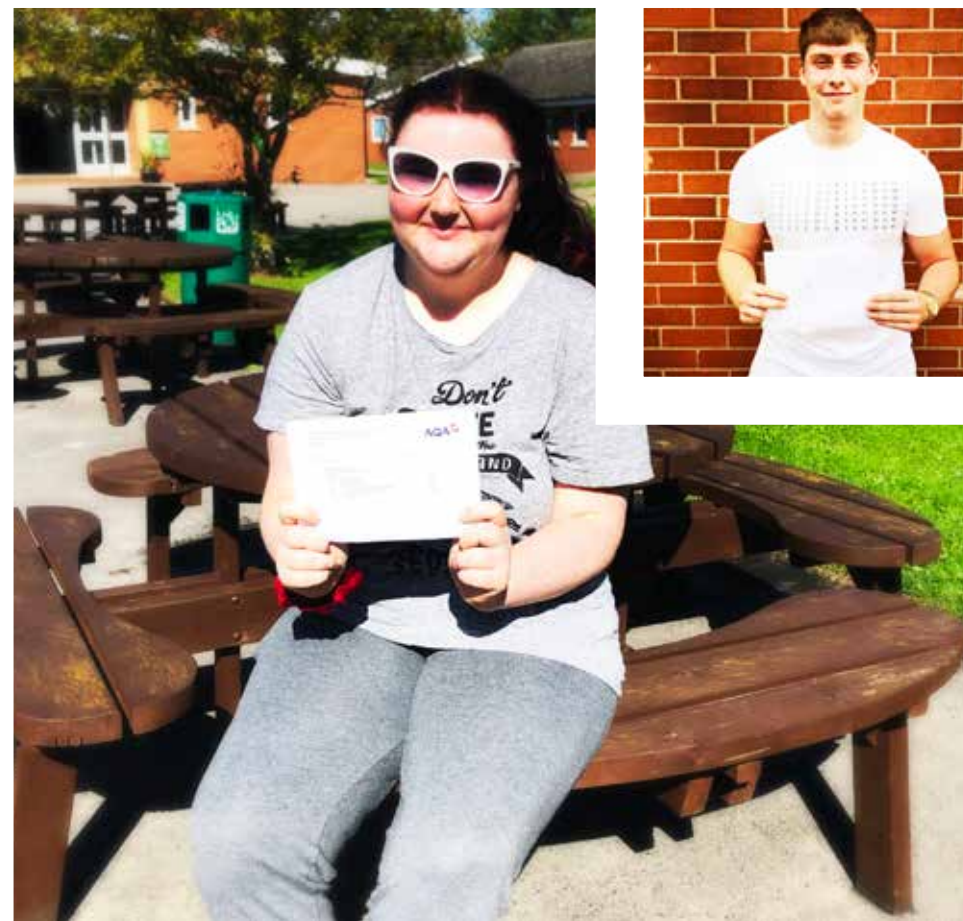
## The Read School, Drax

Read School in Drax is celebrating the GCSE results day after returning a 100 per cent pass for all students. Described as a "dramatic exam grades system", the school's staff were thrilled to share their students' success. A 99 per cent pass rate was achieved with a grade 4 or above, while 34 per cent of students were awarded grades 7 to 9, and 16 per cent received 6 to 9. Head teacher Ruth Ainley said: "Our resilient GCSE pupils have triumphed yet again today with a truly fantastic set of results and each one deserves this wonderful recognition of their success. "2020 has been a tough year all round but our young people have shown they can keep their heads and apply themselves despite this changing world. "Their commitment to remote learning, which our teachers rolled out so efficiently from the start of the pandemic, and which parents have fed back they are delighted with, meant the long-term impact on pupils' studies was minimal. Their well-deserved high grades are testament to this. "Alongside academic achievements, we are taking time today to celebrate the diverse range of other skills our pupils have acquired at Read including the Combined Cadet Force, Duke of Edinburgh and Leiths Food Award Wine School. "We have limited Sixth Form places available from September." Deputy Head, Mark Vosey, said: "At Read today, we've all had tears of joy, and elbow bumps rather than hugs, as our eager pupils tore open their envelopes and gasped in relief. "We worked closely with each pupil during lockdown, creating bespoke learning packages, and got pupils back to school as soon as it was safe to do so. Our spacious school buildings but small class sizes, meant we were able to get pupils back in far earlier than other schools, and we are fully prepared should autumn bring further challenges. "It was wonderful to see our pupils reap these rewards they so deserve from their years of hard work, and we look forward to some of them continuing on in to Sixth Form."

No wonder students were literally jumping for joy in photographs in the local press with GCSE and A Level results that would make anyone leap and whoop.

Congratulations to those students who didn't let a little thing like a world virus get in the way of their bright futures. Teaching staff were cock-a-hoop with 100% pass rate for all A-levels: 65% at A\* - B. All pupils achieving first-choice university destinations, including many Russell Group.

In addition, 99% GCSE passes were at grade 4+, with 34% of grades 7-9 (A/A\*/+) & 66% of grades 6-9 (A\*-B). Standout individual results across Sciences, Maths, Languages, Music & PE, with five grade 9s awarded – higher than old A\*. Not too shabby.



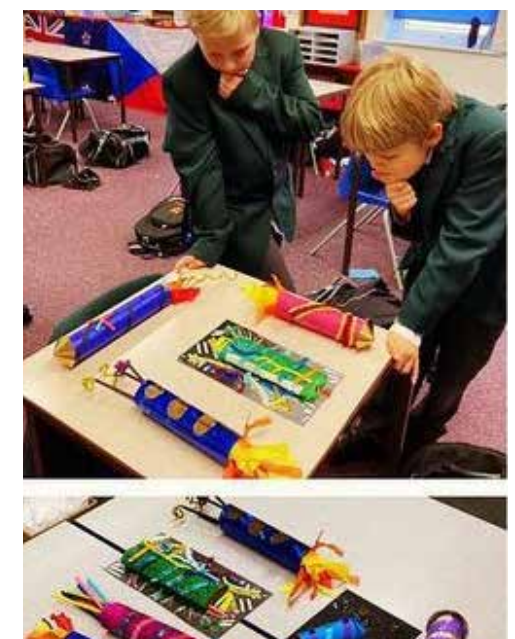




And they're back..! It was wonderful to see all Read School pupils back in school on September 7th and it soon felt like we'd never been away. As ever, Read pupils were a credit to us all, calmly taking on board new procedures, helping each other and looking very smart in new uniforms and shiny shoes. Finally! Never had 'back to school in September' been so sweet!



Project Agricola – reconnecting with our farming community.







A superb term of sport was enjoyed by all, despite the absence of inter-school fixtures, ending with the MUGA being generously gifted new state-of-the-art LCD floodlights.







With French, Spanish, Mandarin and Latin taught in school, Read is committed to language learning and celebrated the European Week of Languages in September with great enthusiasm. Oh là là!



Meet our Science leaders of tomorrow. Many schools stopped practical Science for most of 2020 but at Read we felt it was important to safely promote this essential subject that, after all, has contributed towards finding a vaccine for the pandemic.







Younger pupils get the best start at Read's award-winning Lower Junior School, characterised by wonderment, second-to-none teaching and pastoral care. There's a palpable nurturing and family ethos, with small class sizes in acres of space as well as high-quality before and after school care.







The new Leiths Cookery Programme which had kicked off with much success as part of the Summer Enrichment Programme now became part of the Read curriculum with pupils producing skilled menus not out of place in an à la carte restaurant!





The Read School Memorial Library underwent a massive refurbishment and replenishment, inspiring even more reading across the entire school. Meanwhile we continued to celebrate the plethora of out-of-school achievements of our many talented pupils.



Read School has more than its fair share of talented pupils across academic subjects, music and sport, as well as extra-curricular and out-of-school activities. There are award-winning skeet shooters, golf captains, elite athletes, published poets and accomplished artists, to name a few. Bravo, Read!







Read pupils have been raising hundreds of pounds for a dozen brilliant charities in our 12 Months of Giving campaign, all celebrated on a wall tree outside the school dining hall. Pupils pondered how they could make a difference for our worthy causes with many great ideas and donations rolling in.



More than ever the generosity and commitment to fundraising as a whole school has blown us away. From selling homemade masks to cycling long distances to knitting woollen hearts, our empathetic pupils have impressed us daily.

The re-emergence of kindness is often talked about in the media, but our smiling pupils show the authentic family ethos at Read. Small class sizes mean we know each other well and we genuinely care.



Meet our newly elected school councillors, ready to listen to their peers and offer plans and suggestions on how to make Read even better!



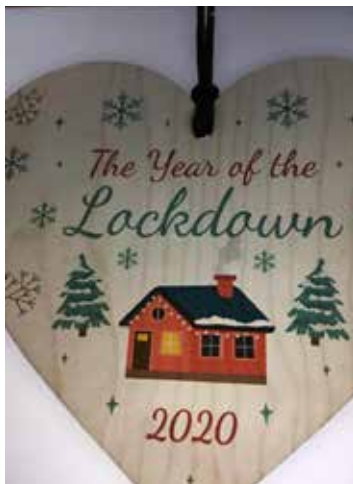


Remembrance was different this year with a beautiful socially-distanced service in the school grounds, rather than in church. Thanks to all involved – especially our smart and disciplined Combined Cadet Force (CCF) – for a memorable tribute to the fallen and let's hope we're back in Drax Church next November. In the meantime, a socially-distanced Artisan Fair is planned in Moloney Hall, and it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas (at last)...



Another beautiful moment this year that was a symbol of hope in dark times, was the generosity of The Selby Bell Ringers who donated their stunning, huge set of handmade bells to the school, and have already started training up the next generation. Watch this space for mini campanologists fine-tuning their skills at Read...





With the phenomenal news we all waited for that a vaccine now exists and will start to be rolled out before Christmas, Read had some further good news of its own to celebrate: making the esteemed Sunday Times Parent Power List 2020 – 69th out of 100 in the coveted list of top independent schools in the country. This accolade is testament to our astounding pupils and committed staff team who have demonstrated unswerving determination and harnessed innovation throughout this most taxing of years.

2020 tested us all in so many ways; our love and sympathy go out to anyone who has suffered illness or bereavement as a result. We would never have wished for this kind of year but in some ways, it has also been a time to reflect, and reprioritise, for society, and for Read School. We will continue

to provide bespoke education where all talents and skills are celebrated, and everyone is welcome and valued.

Have a peaceful Christmastime and a Happy New Year. 2021 will not see us getting straight back to normality but let's hope that by the summer, and certainly Christmas 2021, we can all get back to the wonderful traditions that make Read so unique and special.

Thank you for your ongoing support for the school and please stay safe and well.

With every best wish,

*The Read Team*





# READ SCHOOL

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