

PRESS RELEASE – JUNE 2022

Ethical Reading launches new programme to prepare young people for the world of work

Local social enterprise Ethical Reading has launched an Ethics in Education programme to equip students to make a positive contribution in the workplace.

Volunteers have worked with Leighton Park School to develop an Ethics in Business for Secondary Schools initiative and with the University of Reading to run an Ethics in Business Essay Prize competition. Both initiatives under the programme involve local businesses who are Ethical Reading Partners.

The Ethics in Business Essay Prize, funded by NatWest, was presented on 24 June by the University of Reading's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Robert Van der Noort, and Mike Waddelove, Director of NatWest's Working Capital Solutions Group and Invoice Finance. Another Ethical Reading Partner, Grant Thornton, funded a celebratory lunch in honour of the winner.

The competition was open to students at the university taking modules in Philosophy, Politics, Business, Economics or Law.

The winner, Daisy Theophilus, who has just completed a degree in Ethics, Value and Philosophy, commented, "It's fantastic that Ethical Reading has established an award which will further motivate students to explore and engage with ethical problems in business. I'm honoured to receive this prize. Thank you very much to Ethical Reading, the prize funder NatWest, and Grant Thornton who have funded today's celebratory lunch."

Mike Waddelove said, "NatWest Group is delighted to support Ethics in Business at the University of Reading. Ethics in Business is a discussion that should continue to evolve and mature as the world of business does. We are delighted to award Daisy with the prize for her exceptionally thought provoking and incredibly well researched paper."

On 28 June Ethical Reading outlined its Ethics in Business for Secondary Schools initiative at an event at Leighton Park School, attended by heads from other local schools.

As a pilot, Leighton Park's A-level Business students have already carried out ethical appraisals of aspects of NatWest and Grant Thornton's company policies.

In future Ethical Reading plans to hold an Ethics in Business Fair at Leighton Park School each year, where GCSE, BTEC and IB students can discuss ethical issues with representatives of various companies. The aim is to involve as many local state and private schools as possible. The long-term goal is to establish a network of local schools and businesses, geared towards giving secondary school students a better understanding of the role of ethics in business.

The university essay competition will also be an annual event.

Ethical Reading director Brad Hooker, a former University of Reading Philosophy Professor, commented, "We have found the process of devising the programme alongside Leighton Park School enlightening and inspiring. We look forward to many more young people's benefiting in future, enabling them to enter the world of work with a solid understanding of the ethical issues businesses face and how to tackle them."

NOTES FOR EDITORS

About Ethical Reading

Founded in January 2018, Ethical Reading is a not-for-profit community interest company. It exists to help organisations in Reading and their teams do the right thing by each other, the wider community and the environment, and to thrive in the process. It's all about supporting people to take a compassionate, respectful and responsible approach when making decisions at every level, from the board room to everyday interactions.

www.ethicalreading.org.uk

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