



Dear prospective Reading Blue Coat Bursar,

A potentially pivotal role awaits you! Few positions have the ability to so positively impact on the health and heart of a school with a great history and bold plans for the future.

Blue Coat is a vibrant, purposeful and ambitious school, with a committed and talented team of over 200 teaching and operations staff who look after nearly 800 students, a beautiful 46-acre Thames-fronted site and excellent facilities. Significant work in recent years has continued to develop the School and we are seeking to appoint a caring and talented leader, with the right mix of skills and qualities to enable Blue Coat's people, purse and projects to thrive through the Sector's current and anticipated challenges and opportunities in the years to come.

There is undoubtedly much to consider before submitting your application, but if as you read through this pack and feel your character, experience and skills might well be the right fit for Blue Coat, I look forward to meeting you in the near future!

Pete Thomas

Headmaster



Blue Coat is at an exciting stage of its long history as we move to full co-education over the coming years. Alongside this, the School has ambitious plans to reinvest in and to improve further our beautiful campus as the School roll grows. We are seeking a Bursar who will bring drive and energy, a strategic approach to school development, and who can demonstrate a keen intellect and strong inter-personal skills. The ideal candidate will have had previous experience as a Bursar in a similarly large, thriving school and will be familiar with the financial challenges and opportunities that independent schools face today.

Howard Williams

Chair of Governors





INTRODUCTION

Reading Blue Coat School is a leading independent day school for students from ages 11 to 18.As at September 2023, the School has circa 800 students and has welcomed our first co-educational intake into Year 7 with the intention of being a fully co-educational independent day school from September 2027 onwards. The School has been co-educational at Sixth Form for over 30 years and this continues.

The School was founded in 1646 by Richard Aldworth, a Master of The Skinners' Company, and a Governor of Christ's Hospital. The School was established near St Mary's Minster Church in Reading and was originally known by its historic name of Aldworth's Hospital. In 1947, Reading Blue Coat School moved to the magnificent estate of Holme Park in the Berkshire village of Sonning, where it remains today.

The ethos of the School derives from its Christian foundation and traditions, fostering care and concern within the community and enabling all students to develop their full potential. The School aims to provide a stimulating and friendly atmosphere in which each student can realise his or her full intellectual, physical, and creative potential. Students are encouraged to be self-reliant and adaptable, and the School intends that they will learn the basis of good citizenship, founded on honesty, fairness and understanding of the needs of others. The curriculum provides a balanced blend of academic and co-curricular activities that combine to meet these objectives.

The School employs more than 200 salaried staff, of whom about 50% are academic. Reflecting the character of our co-educational sixth form, nearly half of our academic staff are female.

FACILITIES

Reading Blue Coat is located four miles from the centre of Reading, in the Thames-side village of Sonning. It is also three miles from Twyford, which is located on Crossrail, with fast train service across London. Set in 46 acres of land for students to enjoy, the facilities are very well maintained, and the School continues to invest in the site to add to an impressive infrastructure of buildings.

We have ambitious plans to upgrade our Performing Arts facilities in the near future



ACADEMIC LIFE

Unashamedly academic, the curriculum at Reading Blue Coat is based on the principle that all students should experience a broad and balanced range of subjects and skills. From Year 9 onwards, this range is gradually modified, by elements of choice, enabling both the interests and aptitudes of individual students to be reflected.

In the Sixth Form students can choose from a range of 24 subjects, including subjects most will not have studied before, such as Economics, Politics and Psychology. Enrichment opportunities in the Sixth Form include the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), and a weekly schedule of visiting speakers. Reading Blue Coat always seeks to stretch and challenge students and the School's Learning Support Department ensures that students with specific learning needs are supported effectively. The School's Learning Research Group ensures a sustained focus on developing teachers and pedagogical enrichment.

2023 academic results were impressive; the results were amongst Blue Coat's best with 74.4% achieving A*- B at A level, and at GCSE 78.1% gaining Grades 9 to 7.

The majority of Year 13 leavers proceed to degree courses at universities of which approximately 78% go to the Russell Group Plus universities. Each year over 75% of our students attain places at their first choice university, whilst others are successful in securing future learning opportunities in their chosen career.

PASTORAL

Pastoral care, focused on the individual, is at the heart of the School. Reading Blue Coat's pastoral structure is based around the tutorial system, within the framework of the House system. In September 2021, we increased our houses from four to six: Aldworth, Hall, Malthus, Rich, Norwood and West.

All students are part of a tutor group that is overseen by a member of staff who is responsible for their well-being and for personally overseeing the development of their character and intellectual curiosity. At the heart of the School are the values of aspiration, courage, compassion, integrity and service and all activities seek to re-enforce these. The House system enables students to take part in activities that foster the development of these ideals through a variety of opportunities that include dance, drama, music, public speaking and sport.

DRAMA, MUSIC & THE ARTS

Reading Blue Coat has a reputation for drama and musical performances of the highest quality, with an extensive programme of performances throughout the year. Students' endeavours in the arts are highly successful and widely acclaimed. Music is at the heart of the School, all students are auditioned for the choir and many learn a musical instrument. The School Musical or Play is one of the highlights of the cultural calendar and there are further opportunities to perform on stage throughout the academic year. The breadth and depth of musical and dramatic talent at the School is evident in the wide range of plays, concerts, and exhibitions that take place throughout the year.







Further information is available on the School's website at www.rbcs.org.uk

SEE ALSO THE GOOD SCHOOL GUIDE:

https://www.goodschoolsguide.co.uk/schools/102976/reading-blue-coat-school

AND MUDDY STILETTOS SCHOOLS REVIEW GUIDE:

https://berkshire.muddystilettos.co.uk/kids-2/school-reviews-kids-fashion-2/readingblue-coats-sonning/

SPORT

The School has a strong reputation for the high quality of its sporting teams. Sport plays a key role in developing every student's potential whist embodying the principles of Respect, Belief, Commitment and Sportsmanship (team RBCS). Sports are coached to a very high level while providing for, and encouraging those, for whom participation rather than excellence is important.

The core sports are athletics, cricket, football, netball, hockey, rowing, and rugby. The School competes with great success at local, regional, and even national level. We have recent national competition winners in rowing and cross country running, and cricketers, netballers and rugby players who have been selected to international age group teams and gone on to play professionally. Other sports on offer include cross country, golf, tennis, swimming, and touch rugby.

ACTIVITIES

The activities programme is designed to enable students to develop practical and social skills such as communication, leadership, and teamwork. Reading Blue Coat offers a number of exciting options from which students can choose for their weekly activities session, including Adventure Education, Combined Cadet Force (Army, Navy, RAF), Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, Model United Nations and Enterprise Champions.

COMMUNITY

Reading Blue Coat students are encouraged to be aware of their place in the wider world and to show consideration for all those with whom they come into contact. These principles are based on the ideas handed down by Richard Aldworth who founded the School in 1646.

In recent years the School has greatly enhanced its links with the wider community under what is now called the Aldworth Partnership. One example is the Primary Schools Placement programme which gives students the opportunity to assist with tuition in English, Maths and Modern Foreign Languages in local primary schools. We also have our own community garden which produces fresh produce for a local foodbank charity and our students have recently begun a project to convert a horse trailer into a community café.

Internationally the School has a strong relationship with the charity Brass for Africa and our students support their work amongst disadvantaged children and young people in Uganda through music. As the Aldworth Partnership continues to grow, the long-term aim is that all Blue Coat students have the opportunity to be involved in transformative service projects in the local and wider community at some point in their school career.

The Governors are seeking to appoint an outstanding Bursar and Clerk to the Governors.

Reading Blue Coat is a prestigious and ambitious School with a healthy financial position and plans to develop and enhance its reputation still further. The Bursar is appointed by the Governing Body, in consultation with the Headmaster. The Bursar is accountable to the Chair of Governors but reports on a day-to-day basis to the Headmaster.

Whilst a formal accountancy qualification is not required the successful candidate will be highly numerate with an ability to gather, interpret and explain financial and management information with confidence. The Bursar will be a strategic thinker, possess strong people management skills and an ability to lead the day-to-day non-educational operations of the School. They will work closely with the Headmaster. The Bursar is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and has direct line management responsibilities for the Deputy Bursar, Finance Bursar, Head of HR, IT Services & Support Manager, Grounds Manager, Head of Property and the Catering General Services Manager and their respective teams.

The following job description should be seen as enabling rather than restrictive and will be subject to regular review as the needs of the School evolve. The successful candidate will be required to undertake other comparable duties as the Headmaster may require from time-to-time.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Financial Management

Oversee the Finance Bursar to ensure the delivery of:

- Produce regular, timely and accurate financial information reports and accounts for reporting to, and advising, the Senior Leadership Team, Finance & General Purposes Committee and Governing Body.
- Ensure financial procedures and controls are reliable, robust, and fit for purpose.
- Provide a comprehensive budget setting and reporting process including annual budgets within the School. They
 will work in consultation with the Headmaster and the Deputy Heads responsible for academic and co-curricular
 activities on departmental budgets.
- Prepare financial modelling and maintain the 10-Year Model, i.e. the long-term assessments of the future financial performance of the School, including cash flow projections.
- Maximise opportunities to bring about improvements in operational surplus.
- Ensure timely preparation of annual statutory accounts and management of the audit process.
- Oversee treasury and savings management.
- Liaise with other professional advisers including bankers, insurers, lawyers etc.
- Advise on the projected level of fee income, ensure systems are in place for the timely collection of fees and the allocation of scholarships and bursaries, and manage systems for dealing with debtors.
- Maintain close liaison with the Director of External Relations in respect of the present and predicted school pupil roll.
- Maintain close liaison with the Director of Foundation in relation to generating income from donations.
- Advise on salaries (including remuneration and reward strategies).
- Oversee the School's procurement procedures and ensure compliance with procurement policy for all major contracts, the purchase of all goods and services, insurance, and services including gas, electricity and water.
- Keep analyses of costs and other statistical records, contribute to benchmarking surveys and present significant findings to the Finance & General Purposes Committee and the Governing Body.
- Advise on general financial policy, taxation, and the implications of charitable status.
- Ensure contracts and licenses are reviewed and fit for purpose.
- Ensure the maintenance of Asset Registers Development Programme & Campus Strategy.

The Bursar will be responsible for the financial plan to enable the School's physical development programme to proceed. In relation to this the Bursar will receive assistance from the School's specialist Project Management Consultant to ensure effective planning for, and delivery of, major capital projects.

Estates & Facilities Management

Oversee the Head of Property and the Grounds Manager to ensure the delivery of:

- Effectively plan for, and ensure delivery of, the rolling programme of refurbishment and enhancement of existing facilities.
- Ensure the School's estate and buildings are kept in excellent order, through the management of regular maintenance, caretaking, site security and grounds services. This includes off site rented facilities at Holme Park Sports Ground and Berkshire County Sports Club.
- Manage staff accommodation, catering & cleaning functions. The Bursar oversees the catering and cleaning provision provided by Sodexo.

Staff Leadership & Management

Oversee the Head of HR to ensure the delivery of:

- Manage staff costs within agreed budgets.
- Provide line management for direct reports including all aspects of performance management.
- Advise the Headmaster on teaching staff appointments where appropriate.
- Provide outstanding leadership for members of the non-teaching staff ensuring their integration with teaching staff and understanding of the School's educational requirements.
- Conduct annual pay reviews.
- Ensure an effective appraisal system is in place for non-teaching staff.
- Support the training and professional development of non-teaching staff.
- Develop HR policies and practices for the School that meet current compliance (including safeguarding) and good practice standards.
- Advise on employment legislation and the management of the Single Central Register (SCR).

Risk Management, Compliance, and Health & Safety

Oversee the Deputy Bursar, Health & Safety Manager and the School's specialist H&S Consultant to ensure the delivery of:

- Chair the H&S Committee.
- Oversee risk management.
- Oversee policies and procedures for compliance in Health & Safety.
- Plan for critical incident and business continuity planning, including responding to COVID-19 guidelines.
- Advise on Charity legislation.
- Advise on ISI Inspection protocols Data Protection.

The Bursar is responsible for overseeing Data Protection compliance including GDPR. They are the School's Data Protection Coordinator.

Information Technology

Oversee the IT Services and Support Manager to ensure the delivery of:

- The running of an effective IT infrastructure which meets the evolving needs of the School
- Digital security.
- Financial planning for the network department. The Bursar chairs the School's Information Technology Committee.



LINE MANAGER

Headteacher.

CONTRACT STATUS

Permanent full-time contract commencing as soon as possible

SALARY

Salary will be in the range of £90,000 to £115,000 per annum depending on experience and qualifications. Annual salary is paid by bank transfer on the 25th of the month, or next working day thereafter, in 12 equal payments throughout the year.

Strategic Management

The Bursar will:

- Work in partnership with the Headmaster and Governors to shape and implement the School's short, medium, and long-term strategy.
- Develop and implement a long-term strategy for the commercial aspects of the School.
- Review, lead, and continuously improve the School's operational, financial, risk management and contingency action strategies.
- Ensure the prioritisation, planning and delivery of capital projects, including further development, review and implementation of the Campus Strategy.
- Plan for the provision of capital to support the execution of the Governors' Campus Strategy.

Clerk to the Governing Body

As Clerk, the Bursar will:

- Communicate regularly with the Chair of Governors over governance matters (nominations, governor induction & training, sub-committee membership, committee terms of reference, retirements, skills audits, governor compliance matters etc.)
- Dispatch relevant papers to all members and arrange for minutes of the above meetings to be kept and issued promptly.
- Maintain records of attendance and notifiable interests.
- Advise Governors on legislation and guidance affecting their responsibilities and liabilities.
- Secure appropriate insurance for Governors and take professional advice on Governors' behalf.
- Establish and service Governors' panels for hearings associated with staff disciplinary matters, the exclusion of pupils or the complaints procedure.
- Carry out the duties of Company Secretary and make statutory returns to Companies House and the Charities Commission as required.
- Maintain the Matters Reserved for the Board document.



For an informal telephone conversation about the role, contact Inga Gregory, Head of HR, on **0118 913 5813** or email **rig@rbcs.org.uk**

BURSAR

The Governors are seeking to appoint a Bursar with strong leadership and management skills, vision, empathy, and the highest standards of personal integrity. They will have excellent people skills and be capable of building close working relationships with all members of the School community. Candidates must be able to demonstrate empathy with and commitment to the ethos of a thriving senior independent school.

Qualifications & Experience

Degree level or equivalent.

Professional qualification in a relevant field.

Member of a senior leadership team in a sizeable School organisation; it is possible, however, that this experience may have been gained in a commercial environment.

Leadership and management of a multi-disciplinary team.

Extensive experience of effective financial management and budgeting.

Experience of managing major projects, ideally with a development/construction element.

Business acumen to be able to assist the Governing Body and the Headmaster to develop and implement a vision for the School's future.

Skills & Knowledge

Ability to contribute effectively to the strategic development of the School whilst maintaining direct operational responsibilities.

Financial literacy (budgeting, cost management, financial planning, and reporting) with strong analytical skills and the ability to present financial information clearly and concisel.

Technical and IT literacy and aptitude and an understanding of IT infrastructure and its impact in education and business.

Delegation skills and the ability to manage a range of tasks and priorities whilst working to tight deadlines.

Strong interpersonal skills with a track record of working successfully with a diverse range of stakeholders.





Personal Attributes

Commitment to high professional standards.

Leads by example, is transparent and commands the respect of staff and parents.

Committed team player with a collegiate and collaborative approach.

Develops and maintains strong and positive relationships with Governors, the Headmaster, staff, and parents.

Demonstrates good judgement, and a fair and calm approach.

Proactive, energetic & enthusiastic, with a positive outlook and a good sense of humour.

Presents incisive arguments; is willing to challenge constructively and effectively whilst accepting collective decisions and acting on them.

Ability to motivate and engage others.

Comfortable working at both a strategic and operational level.

Comfortable working in a regulated environment and committed to ensuring that the School is compliant.

Personal integrity, honesty, and dedication.

Closing date for applications: 09:00 on Tuesday 3 January 2023

Applications should be submitted by School employment Application Form, which can be downloaded from our website "Vacancies" page www.rbcs.org.uk/vacancies/

This should be submitted with your letter of application, by email to: recruitment@rbcs.org.uk

Contact for questions about the application process should be addressed to Mrs Inga Gregory, Head of HR, Reading Blue Coat School, Holme Park, Sonning Lane, Sonning-on-Thames, RG4 6SU. Email: rig@rbcs.org.uk







PLACE OF WORK

Reading Blue Coat School, Sonning on Thames, Berkshire.



MEALS

Lunch and refreshments are provided free by the School.



Free membership of the School Sports Centre with access to fully equipped gym and swimming pool.



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (EAP)

Confidential independent support service available to staff when you most need it.



WORKING HOURS

Full-time, typically worked Monday to Friday.Additional hours will be required for attendance at school events; governance meetings, etc.



PARKING

Free Car parking is available on site.



ENTITLEMENT

28 days' paid annual leave which includes 3 days to be used over the Christmas closedown period, plus 8 public holidays. Holiday year runs from I September to 31 August annually.



Tax-free Cycle to Work Scheme is offered by salary sacrifice.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Strong commitment to support professional development with a dedicated people development budget.



PENSION

Membership of the RBCS Group Personal Pension Scheme (employee contribution of 5% of salary and employer contribution is 8% of salary).



CAR SCHEME

Leased cars scheme offered by salary sacrifice affording large savings.



THE BLUE COAT **BENEFIT HUB**

Through the Blue Coat Benefit Hub you can access discounts, rewards, and perks on thousands of the brands that you love to shop with including travel; motoring; electronics; clothing; education; entertainment; restaurants; health and wellness; beauty and spa; insurance; sports and outdoors.

DISCOUNTS



Employee car scheme offered by salary sacrifice affording large savings on new cars.



50% reduction for all full time staff (pro-rated for part time staff).



Fees (from 1 September 2023) are £6,655 per term.

All staff, both teaching and support, form part of a qualified and experienced team, which functions at its best in being mutually supportive in a common goal: to provide the best possible education for all Blue Coat pupils.

Relationships between staff and pupils at Blue Coat are often remarked upon by visitors and parents for being warm, relaxed and mutually respectful.

Click on the link to find out more about some of our staff. Can you see yourself as part of the Blue Coat team?

www.rbcs.org.uk/the-school/meet-the-staff/



GETTING HERE

BY CAR

We are located in the village of Sonning-on-Thames, just off the A4, between Reading and Twyford.

We are about 15 minutes' drive from Junction 10 of the M4 motorway. From there, take the Reading / Bracknell turnoff at Junction 10 on to the A329M to Reading. At the roundabout by the flyover take the third exit (A4) towards Maidenhead. Follow the dual carriageway over the next roundabout and up the hill. Over the railway bridge, turn left into Sonning Lane. The School is about ½ mile on the left.

BY BUS

The School and village of Sonning is served by local bus services 128 and 129 (operated by Courtney) from Reading to Wokingham.

Also by service 850 (operated by Arriva Bus) from High Wycombe, Marlow, Henley, Twyford to Reading. Alight at the junction of Sonning Lane and Bath Road, from where it is a short walk.

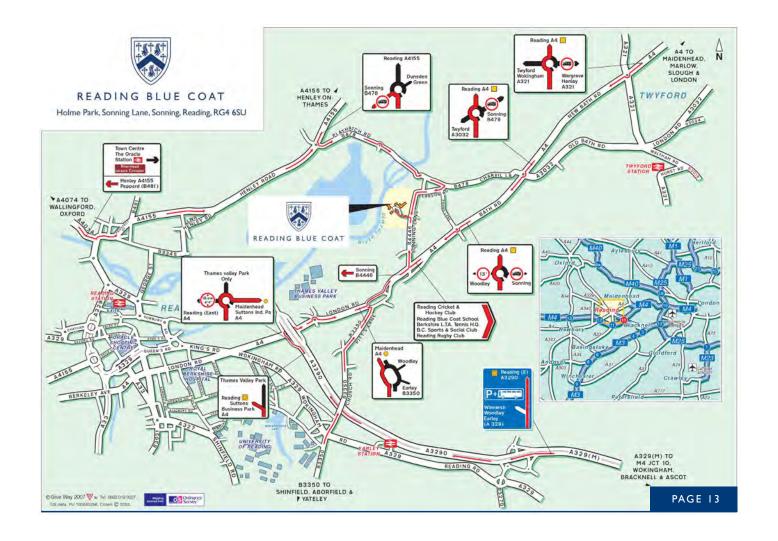
BY TRAIN

Our nearest rail links are at Reading central station (mainline to London, Wales and the West), which is about 5 miles from the School (about 15 minutes by taxi).

We are also served by local stations at Twyford, which is about 3 miles away (about 10 minutes by taxi), and at Earley, which is about 4 miles away (about 15 minutes by taxi).



For information, call Reception: 0118 944 1005



ONE READING BLUE COAT

our community -

