



**Robert Blake Science College**  
Aspire | Achieve | Celebrate

# Robert Blake Science College

## General Application Information



Dear Applicant

I am delighted that you are interested in working at Robert Blake Science College and look forward to welcoming you to our friendly school for a visit if you wish. We are looking for staff committed to the school's ethos of 'Aspire|Achieve|Celebrate'.

All post holders take a lead role in improving the life chances and accelerating progress for all students regardless of their starting point. Ultimately, we want our students to leave Robert Blake at the end of Year 11 academically and socially successful and ready to take their place in society as a positive citizen whether globally or locally. Successful candidates will need to be committed to the school's vision and have a relentless drive for improvement.

Robert Blake is at an exciting time of change with a rapidly growing student population, state of the art facilities and future expansion, due to take place in 2021. There have been changes to key post holders at all levels of the school, which will result in an increased capacity to improve. Part of this evolution at senior level has been the introduction of Assistant Headteacher posts for English, maths and science, putting these core subject leaders at the forefront of strategic decision making.

In our recent Ofsted Inspection, we were delighted that Inspectors noted that, "Leaders and students are proud of their school and want a school where every pupil can do their best." The Personal Development of our students was recognised as Good with the report acknowledging that, "The good behaviour of other pupils has helped them learn more." Despite having a 4-year trend of improvement in academic success, the school was judged to require further improvement in December 2019. We recognise that there is work to be done however, there is also much to celebrate at the school and we are well placed to improve.

At Robert Blake we value every person in our school community and we aspire to do our very best. We have high expectations of ourselves and our students and celebrate our achievements within and beyond the school community. We value teachers and will provide excellent opportunities for you to build on your skills and experience for promotion or progression in your career. Our fantastic CPD programme supports this and recognises the benefits of lifelong learning.

We have very close links with a number of partners including the COMPASS group of local primary schools, other secondary schools, FE colleges and alternative providers in the area. These partnerships support our key aims of ensuring that students make the best possible progress in order to achieve the qualifications and experience they need to reach their aspirations.

This pack contains some general information about the school. As separate documents, you will find a job description and an application form. I would also draw your attention to the school website, which contains a significant amount of additional information about the school. Our twitter feed (@RobertBlakeSC) and Facebook page (facebook.com/RobertBlakeSC) will give you a better insight into our most recent celebrations of student achievement.

Applications should be sent or emailed to Mrs S Ward ([Sara.Ward@robertblake.org.uk](mailto:Sara.Ward@robertblake.org.uk)).

I look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely



Miss D Loveridge  
Headteacher

## **The School Context**

Robert Blake Science College is an 11-16 comprehensive with an admission number of 194 students per year group, with the likelihood of this increasing in the future. The school currently has just over 850 students on roll and we expect this to continue to grow rapidly over the coming years. Our September 2019 was oversubscribed and we ended up taking 207 into Year 7. We are co-located with Elmwood School which is a secondary provision for students with a range of learning needs including, but not limited to, moderate, severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural issues, communication needs and autism. Within the next 18 months Elmwood School will move away from this site and into a new purpose built special school building, incorporating Penrose School, in another part of Bridgwater. This will allow our continued expansion towards a final capacity of 1200.

The school serves one of the more deprived communities in Somerset in terms of social and economic deprivation. Currently 38.6% of students are regarded as disadvantaged. We are an inclusive school with relatively high levels of SEN (16.8%) and we have an increasing number of students from minority ethnic groups (13%).

We value the individual and due to our size are able to get to know our students really well. We strive to ensure each student achieves their potential through an intensive system of monitoring progress and by challenging and supporting at all levels. Our knowledge of the individual student enables us to provide stimulating and challenging opportunities for the highly-able and support for the less able.

The school has an incredibly strong culture of staff togetherness and sharing practice and it is this drive for school improvement, through the improving leadership and quality of teaching and learning, that makes Robert Blake such an exciting place to work at this current time.





## Accommodation and Facilities

In November 2012 Robert Blake Science College moved into a contemporary new building, one of the last under the Building Schools for the Future programme. The building has been designed to a very high standard and boasts wonderful facilities throughout all areas. It is light, airy, and has been designed to allow a flexible approach to learning.



We are currently co-located on the site with Elmwood Special School, which is part of the Elmwood/Penrose Federation. Robert Blake and Elmwood have built up a close working relationship over a number of years. This is a true co-location with some shared facilities in order to achieve economy of scale from the space available to the benefit of both schools. Elmwood are due to expand and move into a new purpose built environment at the beginning of 2021, allowing Robert Blake to expand into the space later that year. Also on site and accessed through the main entrance is a paediatric health centre funded through the NHS as part of the build.

The school has been built by BAM under a PFI scheme, with BAM FM carrying out all facilities management under the terms of the 25 year contract. Previous school site staff were TUPE transferred to BAM FM in November 2012. Outside of school core hours (7am-5pm) leisure services are managed by 1610, a Somerset based leisure trust. Staff have free access to the fitness facilities.

ICT technical support in the school is delivered by Research Machines (RM) through a managed service contract. Facilities are extensive and include:-

- 2 ICT suites with fixed PCs;
- a Music Technology Studio of iMacs;
- smart boards, short-throw projectors and visualisers to all main learning spaces;
- Laptops and iPads for all curriculum areas



The school's budget is in a relatively healthy position. Long term planning and investment has protected the budget against the adverse effect of the PFI Scheme. The school will move into the 2020/21 financial year with a healthy revenue and capital balance, together with a rising roll. In addition, the new National Funding Formula will see an improved allocation for Somerset schools. However, we are always wary of increasing financial pressures on schools.

## **Partnerships and Collaboration**

Robert Blake Science College is firmly committed to working in effective partnership with secondary schools, primary schools, special schools, Bridgwater and Taunton College, and alternative providers both on and off site; sharing learning and resources, extending opportunities for students, and ensuring post 16 progression.

The school works closely with our cluster of primary schools, known as the COMPASS group, to ensure smooth primary to secondary progression and develop a strong culture of achievement. We continue to work on shared projects focussed on developing the effective academic and pastoral transition of students from the primary to secondary phase. We are members of the Somerset Association of Secondary Headteachers (SASH).

We play an active role in the Challenge Partners initiative, working with other schools to constantly support and challenge each other, leading to sustained improvement. We are heavily involved with PiXL programmes, and have been running successful middle leadership programmes internally. We have a very strong relationship with TeachFirst, enabling us to recruit and support the development of new teachers into the profession within the subject areas of Maths, English, Science, Geography and MFL. To date every teacher completing the TeachFirst programme at Robert Blake has been judged as outstanding. We also work with the Mid Somerset Consortium (MSC) and offer appointments to trainee teachers in many subject areas. We are the only secondary school in Somerset to have been awarded the 'gold standard' for our work in supporting NQTs.



