



VACANCY INFORMATION PACK

RECEPTIONIST
(PART-TIME)



READING BLUE COAT

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.

Planning permission has been obtained for a new Performing Arts Centre.



ACADEMIC LIFE

The academic curriculum at Reading Blue Coat is based on the principle that all students should experience a broad and balanced range of basic 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. Most lessons are taught initially in classes of mixed ability, although setting occurs in Mathematics in Year 7, in Languages in Year 8, and Science in Year 9. Geology is also a thriving subject. In Year 11, all students take qualifications in English, Maths and Science (all IGCSE) and a Modern Foreign Language. They also take three GCSEs from a broad range of eleven subjects. All students take a GCSE in Religious Studies (full course) in Year 10.

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.rbc.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/reading-blue-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 whilst 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.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

The School Receptionist is the welcoming face of the School and the first point of contact for parents and visitors. The role comes within the management scope of our External Relations (being Admissions, Marketing and Communications).

The Reception function at Reading Blue Coat School is responsible for:

- Welcoming all visitors to the School.
- Handling general email enquiries.
- Receiving all incoming telephone calls.
- Sending, sorting and receiving all post and parcels.
- Supporting the other departments (particularly External Relations and the Foundation Office) when required.
- The External Relations team comprises of seven staff led by the Director of External Relations and supported by a Marketing & Communications Officer, two Admissions Officers, a part time Administration Assistant and two Receptionists (part time).

Our Reception welcomes over 2,500 visitors each year.



For an informal telephone conversation about the role, contact the HR department on **0118 933 5813** or email recruitment@rbc.org.uk



MAIN PURPOSE OF THE JOB:

The main purpose of the role of is to present a professional and welcoming first impression of the School to all visitors, parents and pupils. The Receptionists receive, host and provide an initial point of contact and assistance to all visitors, staff and pupils, whether on the phone or face to face. The Receptionists are friendly, efficient and create a welcoming atmosphere for all our visitors. The Receptionists will also provide support to the rest of the External Relations team (whether Admissions, Marketing or Communications) as required, as well other departments from time to time.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Serve as the first point of contact for all visitors. Direct and advise visitors, staff and students as appropriate.
2. Record all visitors to the School and issue and explain the wearing of visitors passes.
3. Prepare refreshments for visitors where required.
4. Answer telephone calls; deal with enquiries; direct and advise callers as appropriate. Obtain information to be able to respond to enquiries knowledgeably and return calls or take messages to pass on to other staff as required.
5. Liaise between parents and teaching staff for messaging and exchanging information.
6. Manage and resolve telephone network problems, with the support of the IT Department.
7. Manage and operate the franking machine for sending external post and liaise with postal services to ensure a smooth and effective service.
8. Sort/send post, parcels and e-mails.
9. Co-ordinate booking for School minibuses; mobile phones and room allocations, often using online booking systems (e.g. on the School Intranet).
10. Book taxis for staff and visitors.
11. Liaise with the Deputy Bursar regarding any school transport problems.
12. Maintain records of Public Examination scripts which have been received and dispatched.
13. Use the Financial Management System (iFinance).
14. Use the School Management System database (iSAMS).
15. Issue vehicle passes and operate the school entrance barrier and its software.
16. Provide support for and care of sick and wounded pupils awaiting collection from school, liaising with School Medical Centre staff as necessary.
17. Maintain a clean, tidy and smart reception area.
18. Support the wider External Relations department with any production of materials or administration as part of Admissions, Marketing and Communications activities.





LINE MANAGER:

Director of External Relations.

DEPARTMENT:

External Relations

CONTRACT STATUS:

Permanent part-time contract to commence in August 2024 or as soon as possible thereafter. The first 6 months of service is served as a probationary period.

SALARY:

Salary will be in the range of £9,360 to £9,780 per annum pro rata (FTE £23,400 to £24,453) depending on number of hours worked and 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.

Additional Duties

- 19. Perform any other reasonable task required within the limits of capability.
- 20. Promote and safeguard the welfare of pupils at the school.
- 21. Use technical and operational knowledge to ensure a safe environment.

Please note that this Job Description is not exhaustive and the employee may be expected to undertake additional duties if required.



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RECEPTIONIST (PART TIME)

This person specification focuses on the knowledge, skills, experience and qualifications required to undertake the role effectively. It is expected that the successful applicant will have and can demonstrate:

Skills, Personal Attributes, Knowledge and Experience	Essential	Desirable
Relevant experience, training and qualifications and technical ability to carry out the role effectively.	✓	
Reliability.	✓	
Excellent IT skills including word processing, email and the use of an administrative database.	✓	
Strong communication skills.	✓	
Attention to detail.	✓	
Ability to work unsupervised in a busy environment	✓	
Ability to prioritise.	✓	
Have a smart and professional appearance.	✓	
Have a confident, warm and welcoming manner both in person and on the telephone.	✓	
Ability to remain calm, patient and polite.	✓	
Previous experience of working within a school.		✓
Experience of using iSAMS (or similar educational database). Training on this system will be provided.		✓

Closing date for applications: 09:00 on Tuesday 25 June 2024

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

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



PLACE OF WORK

Reading Blue Coat School,
Sonning on Thames, Berkshire.



MEALS

Lunch and refreshments are provided free by the School.



SPORTS FACILITIES

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

15 hours (2 days) per week on Thursdays and Fridays. During term-time working hours will be from 10:00 to 18:00 and during school holidays 08:00 to 16:00 with 30-minute unpaid meal break.



PARKING

Free Car parking is available on site.



LEAVE ENTITLEMENT

28 days' paid annual leave plus 8 public holidays (pro-rata). 3 days from the annual leave entitlement must be retained for the period between Christmas and New Year during which the school is closed. This entitlement is pro-rated for part-time staff.



CYCLE SCHEME

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 2024) are £7,095 per term.

MEET THE STAFF

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.rbc.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.

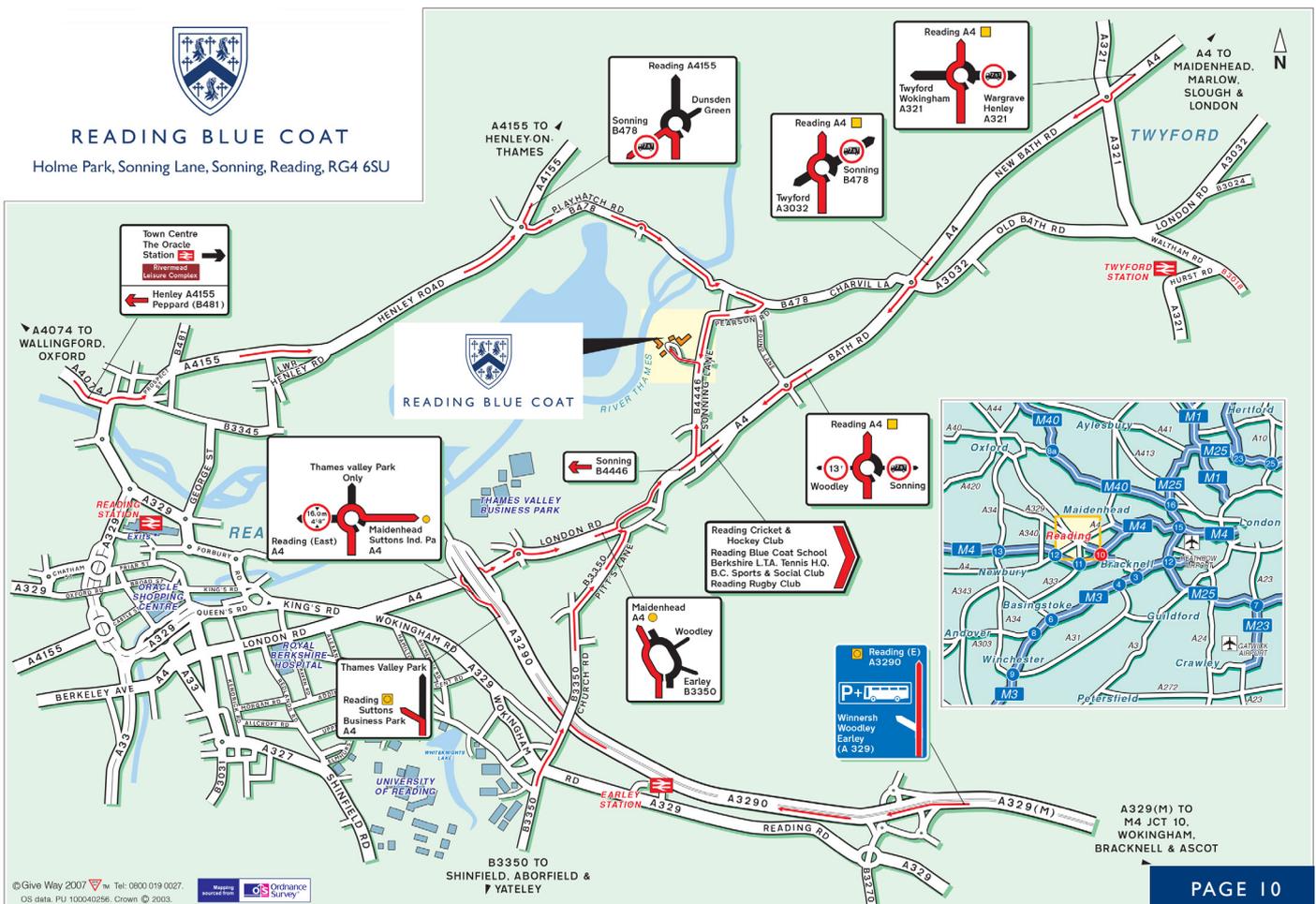
BY TRAIN

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



Holme Park, Sonning Lane, Sonning-on-Thames, Berkshire RG4 6SU

Tel: 0118 944 1005 rbc.org.uk