



VACANCY INFORMATION PACK

FEEs BILLING
ACCOUNTANT

PERMANENT
FULL-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.

ADVENTURE EDUCATION

The adventure education 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 FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The Finance function at Reading Blue Coat School sits within the Bursary Department and is responsible for delivering all aspects of the financial management of the School.

The department comprises a team of four led by the Finance Bursar (who reports to the Bursar) and supported by a full time Management Accountant / Payroll Officer and a Purchase Ledger and Trading Subsidiary Controller along with the Fees Billing Accountant.

The School has an annual sales turnover of c. £16 million and is in good financial health. Our sales ledger is primarily concerned with billing school fees with c.800 active accounts. The purchase ledger consists of approximately 1000 active supplier accounts covering an annual expenditure of c. £3m. Our payroll consists of approximately 200 active records amounting to an annual cost to the school of c. £9m.

The Fee Billing Accountant will be responsible for the running of the termly fees billing, including liaising with parents and staff at Reading Blue Coat School to ensure it is effectively and efficiently managed. All areas of payments, such as direct debit processing and credit control will form part of the remit. In addition, the role will include bank reconciliations of the main school accounts and maintaining the fixed asset register.

We are a friendly and welcoming department who are happy to help each other out along with providing helpful, timely advice to the rest of the School community.

The successful candidate is expected to demonstrate a record of Continuous Professional Development. Ongoing training and professional development will be supported during their career at Reading Blue Coat.



For an informal telephone conversation about the role, contact Ms Samantha Whitty (Finance Bursar), on **0118 944 1005** or email SAW@rbcs.org.uk



MAIN PURPOSE OF THE JOB:

The main focus of the role is to:

- Manage the accurate and timely billing of fees and extra charges on a termly basis and deal with parent queries.
- Bank reconciliations; daily bank cash receipts and payments posting.
- Update and maintain the Fixed Asset Register (FAR).
- Maintain accurate nominal ledger records and reconcile balance sheet accounts.
- Assist in the day to day running of finance and cover for colleagues.

Resources:

Operate the ISAMs system for fees billing and iFinance for the financial accounting.

Main Responsibilities:

1. Fees billing:

- Prepare the termly fee bills and direct debit paperwork.
- Prepare the pupil extra charges for inclusion in the fee bills.
- Manage the monthly/termly direct debit process.
- Apply discounts (e.g. bursaries, scholarships, staff discounts).
- Prepare and load termly bills to the School portal and email to parents via ISAMs.
- Work with the Bursar and Finance Bursar to manage the Fees in Advance scheme.
- Collect debts and prepare outstanding debtor reports for reporting to the Bursar, Finance Bursar and Governors.
- Reconcile the Fees Billing system (ISAM's) with the Fee Debtors and Pupil Deposits accounts in iFinance.
- Ensure fees and charges are reflected in the financial accounts in the correct periods.
- Manage and reconcile other payment platforms e.g. Squid, Sum up.

2. Fixed Asset Register (FAR):

- Update the fixed asset register on a regular basis, checking formulas, calculating depreciation and recognising any fixed asset additions and disposals.
- Finalise the FAR at year end and post the relevant year end journals (additions, disposals, depreciation).
- Make the FAR and statutory summary available to the auditors and answer in queries that may arise.
- Work with Finance Bursar to migrate FAR onto iFinance.

3. Nominal ledger:

- Reconcile major balance sheet and income accounts on a monthly and termly basis e.g. Fee debtors, Deposits repayable, Fee income, Fees in Advance, Bursaries, with the reconciliations signed off by the Finance Bursar.
- At year end, reconcile the fixed asset and related depreciation accounts to the fixed asset register and to closing balances in the statutory accounts from the previous year.



**LINE MANAGER:**

Finance Bursar.

DEPARTMENT:

Bursary.

CONTRACT STATUS:

Permanent full-time contract commencing as soon as possible.

SALARY:

Salary will be in the range of £30,000 to £35,000 per annum (pro rata) 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.

Additional Duties:

- Assist with year-end accounts process and audit.
- Oversight of the Finance email inbox.
- Cover for other members of the Finance team when necessary to ensure that operations continue and objectives are met (e.g. during holidays and staff sickness).
- Assist with carrying out financial transactions for School events (including personal attendance at events) – for example, School Annual Fireworks Display; Summer Ball.
- Any other reasonable tasks required.
- Responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of pupils at the school.
- Responsibility for using 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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FEES BILLING ACCOUNTANT

The 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
• Accounting qualification (AAT or similar).	✓	
• Familiar with basic accounting practices and costing principles.	✓	
• Experience of financial accounts systems.	✓	
• Organised and methodical with ability to present information to senior management.	✓	
• Able to learn quickly and adapt to changes when needed.	✓	
• Good time management and prioritisation skills.	✓	
• Accuracy and attention to detail.	✓	
• Will express themselves clearly with a calm, confident and pleasant telephone manner.	✓	
• Able to establish positive working relationships with staff throughout the organisation and be the go-to person with regards to fee billing.	✓	
• Effective team member with sufficient flexibility and willingness to take on roles outside of their normal functional responsibility when required.	✓	
• Have the stamina and perseverance to cope with heavy workloads when required.	✓	
• Able to think critically about processes to suggest improvements in efficiency.	✓	
Whilst not essential candidates with the following skills may be prioritised over other applicants	Essential	Desirable
• School experience.	✓	
• Knowledge of ISAMs Fees Billing package and iFinance (Or a similar system. Additional training can be provided).	✓	
• Experience of accounts administration in the commercial or charity sector.		✓
• Experience of producing and managing accounts in a school finance department.		✓
• Knowledge of/experience in the Education sector.		✓

Closing date for applications: 09:00 on 24 June 2024.

Applications are reviewed and shortlisted on a rolling basis and we reserve the right to interview, appoint and close adverts early due to the volume of applications we receive.

We therefore encourage you to apply at the earliest opportunity to avoid disappointment as once we have closed a vacancy you will be unable to submit your application form.

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, RG4 6SU.



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

Full-time, from 08:30 to 16:30, Monday to Friday, with 30-minute meal break, all year round. We would also consider candidates, with proven experience, who would like to work reduced hours (minimum of 30 hours per week).



PARKING

Free Car parking is available on site.



LEAVE ENTITLEMENT

25 days' paid annual leave plus 8 public holidays and some additional discretionary days over the Christmas closedown period. Holiday year runs from 1 September to 31 August annually.



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.

ONE READING BLUE COAT

our community



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

Tel: 0118 944 1005 rbc.org.uk