



READING BLUE COAT SCHOOL

VACANCY INFORMATION PACK

GROUNDSPERSON



Closing date for applications: Friday 23 November 2018 at 09:00

Interviews will be held during the week of 3 December 2018, although suitable candidates may be seen sooner.

Applications may be submitted by CV or School Support Staff 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. You will be required to complete an Application Form if invited to attend an interview.

Contact for questions about the application process should be addressed to: Mr Ian King, HR Manager, Reading Blue Coat School, Holme Park, Sonning Lane, Sonning-on-Thames, RG4 6SU.



READING BLUE COAT SCHOOL

BACKGROUND

Reading Blue Coat School (RBCS) is a leading independent day school with 760 pupils. Boys aged 11 – 18 and girls aged 16 – 18. The School was founded in 1646 by Richard Aldworth, a merchant 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 46 acre estate of Holme Park in the Berkshire Thames side village of Sonning, four miles east of Reading, where it remains today. The ethos of the School derives from its Christian foundation and traditions, fostering care and consideration within the community. The School aims to provide a stimulating and friendly atmosphere in which each pupil can realise his or her full intellectual, physical and creative potential. Pupils 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 non-academic activities that combine to meet these objectives.

The School employs in excess of 170 salaried staff, of whom about 50% are academic staff.

FACILITIES

The School enjoys excellent facilities and continues to invest in the site.

Key developments over the past five years include;

- the Richard Aldworth Building, a 25-classroom block that provides first-class teaching facilities for a number of major departments including English, Mathematics, Modern Languages, Classics, Geography, Art and a common room for Middle School pupils with views over the sports pitches;
- the Sixth Form Centre;
- a Psychology and Geology Centre;
- a riverside boathouse;
- an IT Centre;
- a Design & Technology Centre;
- a Drama Studio;
- and various other amenities have been completed.

The new buildings add to an already impressive list of facilities including the Sports Complex, the Science Centre, Reception and the Messer Building.

The Governors have further ambitions for the School and we have planning permission for the next phase in our development which will include:

- a new Grounds, Maintenance and Activities Centre;
- a new Performing Arts Centre.

ACADEMIC LIFE

The academic curriculum at Reading Blue Coat is based on the principle that all pupils 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 pupils to be reflected. Most lessons are taught initially in classes of mixed ability, although setting occurs in Mathematics and French in Year 7, Languages in Year 8 and Science in Year 10.



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Geology is also a thriving subject, with a new Geology and Psychology Centre supporting the increased levels of interest.

In Year 11, all pupils 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 pupils take a GCSE in Religious Studies in Year 10.

In the Sixth Form pupils can choose from a range of 24 subjects, including subjects most will not have studied before, such as Economics, Government and Politics and Psychology. Enrichment opportunities in the Sixth Form include the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), visiting speakers and the School's own UP (university preparation) programme. Reading Blue Coat School always seeks to stretch and challenge pupils and the School's Learning Support Department ensure that pupils with specific learning needs are supported effectively.

The School's Learning Research Group ensures a sustained focus on developing teachers and pedagogical enrichment. 2017 academic results were impressive; the A Level results were Blue Coat's best ever with 82.7% achieving A*-B and at GCSE the School has achieved 90% A*- B five years running.

Virtually all Year 13 leavers proceed to degree courses at universities of which approximately 70% go to the Russell Group of universities. Each year, four or five students attain places at Oxbridge. In 2017 just under 90% of students achieved places at their preferred university.

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 four houses: Aldworth, Hall, Malthus and Rich. All pupils are part of a tutor group that is overseen by a member of staff who is responsible for their well-being and the development of their character and intellectual curiosity. The School prides itself on mutual respect, tolerance and courtesy, and all activities seek to strengthen these values. The house system enables pupils to take part in activities that foster the development of these ideals through music, sport, drama and public speaking.

SPORT

Reading Blue Coat has an enviable reputation both locally and nationally for the high quality of its sporting teams. Sport plays a key role in developing every pupil's potential – physical fitness and skill, teamwork and learning how to win and lose. Sports are coached to a very high level while providing for, and encouraging, those for whom participation rather than excellence is important. Major sports are athletics, cricket, football, rowing, rugby and girls' hockey and netball. Other competitive sports include, but are not limited to, badminton, basketball, boys' hockey, cross country, golf, tennis and touch rugby.

DRAMA, MUSIC AND THE ARTS

Reading Blue Coat School has a reputation for drama performances of the highest quality, with an extensive programme of performances throughout the year. The main expressions of artistic undertakings at Reading Blue Coat are music, drama, public speaking and painting. Pupils' endeavours in the arts are highly successful and widely acclaimed, including internationally. Music is at the heart of the School; all boys are auditioned for the choir and many learn a musical instrument. The breadth and depth of musical and dramatic talent at the School is evident in the wide range of plays, concerts, "Swing into Summer time" – an outdoor festival of the arts, and other eclectic events that take place across the year.



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CO-CURRICULAR

Co-curricular activities are designed to enable pupils to develop practical and social skills such as leadership, enterprise and communication. As part of the extensive co-curricular programme, Reading Blue Coat School offers a number of exciting options from which pupils can choose for their weekly activities session. Activities offered include Combined Cadet Force (all services), Duke of Edinburgh, Young Enterprise, Film Club, Archery, Creative Writing and Journalism.

COMMUNITY

Reading Blue Coat pupils 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 our founder, Richard Aldworth. Today the School has strong links with the wider community and pupils have many opportunities to engage with the world beyond the School gates. The Sports Leaders programme is particularly popular, as it prepares Sixth Formers to go out into primary schools in Sonning, Caversham and Maidenhead to coach a number of sports. Reading Blue Coat's Primary Schools Placement programme also gives pupils the opportunity to assist with tuition in Maths, English and languages in local primary schools and A Level Philosophy pupils have delivered an introduction to Philosophy in a nearby school. Further afield, the School has an established partnership with a school in Ghana.

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

Contact for questions about careers at the School and the application process should be addressed to: Mr Ian King, HR Manager, Reading Blue Coat School, Holme Park, Sonning Lane, Sonning-on-Thames, RG4 6SU or by email to recruitment@rbcs.org.uk



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GROUNDS DEPARTMENT

The School estate covers 46 acres of rural Berkshire. It is located on the banks of the River Thames in Sonning-on-Thames.

The grounds consist of a large number of prestige sports pitches; formal lawns and gardens; and extensive woodland. The Grounds Department are a highly motivated team consisting of the following:

Grounds Manager
Deputy Head Groundsperson
Senior Gardener
2 Grounds persons
Estates Assistant (part time)

The School has a significant ongoing development programme with new facilities, buildings and playing areas, with substantial new landscaping planned

Planned investment in the Grounds Department, includes a new purpose built Grounds and Maintenance building which will incorporate workshops, storage and staff rest area.

The department uses a variety of professional equipment, ranging from tractors of varying sizes; a pedestrian fleet of mowers; and a new maintenance fleet of hand held equipment.

This is a busy department responsible for the maintenance and improvements of the School estate and outstanding visual presentation of the School facilities. The team work together to produce well-presented grounds and gardens that receive frequent accolades and are enjoyed by parents, students and visitors.

The Groundsperson will work closely with the Deputy Head Groundsperson and the Senior Gardener, overseen by the Grounds Manager, focussing primarily on the day-to-day set up and maintenance of the School's sports pitches and surrounding grounds, and assisting with the planting and maintenance of formal gardens and floral displays around the campus.

We work to recognised national standards and expect the highest standards of Groundsmanship at all times.

For an informal telephone conversation about the role, contact Matt Wharton, Grounds Manager, on 0118 933 5850 or email mxw@rbcs.org.uk



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ROLE DESCRIPTION

GROUNDSPERSON

Line Manager: Grounds Manager

On a daily basis, taking directions from the Deputy Head Groundsperson and the Senior Gardener in delivering a detailed work rota in the specialist areas.

Department: Grounds

Purpose of the job:

Working as part of the Grounds team, to ensure that the grounds and gardens of the School campus are maintained to the highest standard. This will include general groundsmanship duties, as well as extensive sports turf maintenance, and a wide variety of tasks including upkeep of all sports grounds, gardens, woodland and amenity areas within the site.

Duties:

- To prepare and maintain the sports grounds, lawns, gardens, woodland and amenity areas to the high standards set out by the Grounds Manager.
- To carry out a wide range of turf operations, including mowing, aerating, scarifying and seeding.
- Under the supervision of the Senior Gardener, undertake horticultural operations, e.g. soil cultivation, digging, forking, mulching, watering, raking, weeding, edging, pruning, seed sowing, bed preparation and planting.
- Maintain the gardens of the Headmasters house on the estate.
- Use machinery in renovation of grass areas.
- Use of cylinder and rotary mowers, strimmers, leaf blowers.
- Adjustments of mower height and quality of cut, etc. Oil level checks and check for damage to any mower.
- Mark out pitches.
- Ensure equipment stores and associated washdown areas are clean and tidy.
- To maintain and operate safely and professionally a range of vehicles and equipment required for grounds care operations, including tractors with PTO driven implements.
- To operate powered hand tools including mowers, strimmers and hedge cutters.
- To undertake the general maintenance of machinery on a day to day basis.
- Ensure all equipment is correctly maintained and serviced.
- To assist in weed control throughout the School site through chemical and mechanical operations.
- To carry out gritting, salt spreading, snow cleaning, as necessary, including roads and footpaths through the School.
- Carry estate maintenance work, including woodland management; checking and maintaining fencing; development projects, etc.
- Ensure the efficient use of resources.



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- To work alongside other departments to facilitate and deliver the smooth operation of school functions and events. This will include helping with car parking and marshalling visitors and other such duties.
- Promote, and by example, ensure that safe working practices are followed at all time.
- To follow all Health and Safety Policy guidelines and policies as stated within the School's Health and Safety Policy.
- To act professionally and with good conduct at all times.
- To undergo training as required.
- To undertake such other duties, as detailed by your line manager, that may from time to time be required to ensure the smooth running of the school.

Additional Duties

- The post holder is also responsible for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of pupils at the school.
- The post holder is responsible for using technical and operational knowledge to ensure a safe environment



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PERSON SPECIFICATION

GROUNDSPERSON

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:

Knowledge And Experience

- Good working knowledge of all aspects of groundsmanship and grass sports playing surfaces E
- Clear understanding of relevant Health and safety legislation E
- Some gardening/ horticultural experience would be beneficial. D
- Knowledge of plants D

Skills and Personal Attributes

- Skilled in sports pitch preparation, setting out and turf management. E
- Ability to prepare cricket wickets. D
- Competent machine operator. E
- Ability to work without supervision and be part of a team. E
- Hard working with attention to detail. E
- Quality driven E
- Good team worker E
- Trustworthy, reliable and prepared to work in all weathers. E
- Supportive of others – a helpful disposition E
- A pleasant and cheerful personality E
- Flexible approach to work and willing to work extra hours when required (including some Saturdays) E
- A keen interest in sports (including cricket would be useful). D

Qualifications

- NVQ level 2 Sports Turf Maintenance qualification D
- OR
- City & Guilds qualification in horticulture D
- IOG National Certificate/Diploma or similar. D
- PA1 and PA6 spraying certificates D
- Practical experience is valued and a lack of formal qualifications will not necessarily preclude an experienced candidate.
- A valid driving licence. E

Requirement

E – Essential

D - Desirable



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SUMMARY TERMS & CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT AND BENEFITS

- **Contract Status:** This is a permanent, full time, all year round role. Commencing as soon as possible.
- **Salary:** A competitive salary is provided dependent upon skills, qualifications and experience. 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.
- **Place of Work:** Reading Blue Coat School, Sonning on Thames, Berkshire
- **Working hours:** A total of 40 hours per week. From 08:00 to 16:30, Monday to Friday, with 30 minute unpaid meal break.

In addition some Saturday working is required (usually on a one weekend in three rota during term time) for which overtime payments or time off in lieu is provided.
- **Leave entitlement:** Your paid holiday entitlement is 6.6 weeks (i.e. 33 days) per annum (pro rata to contracted period of service in year of commencement/leaving), and inclusive of public and bank holidays. Holiday year runs from 1 April to 31 March annually. Holidays must be taken during school breaks.

In addition, on a discretionary basis, some additional paid days off are granted, i.e. period between Christmas and New Year.
- **Pension:** A contributory employer's pension scheme is available (5% employee contribution; 8% employer contribution).
- **Meals:** Lunch and refreshments are provided free by the School.
- **Parking:** Free Car parking is available on site
- **Fee Discounts:** Reduction in RBCS school fees for employees' children offered after 6 months service.
 - 50% reduction for all full time staff, pro-rated for part time staff
 - Fees (from 1 September 2018) are currently £5,565 per term
- **Sports facilities:** Membership of the School Sports Centre with access to fully equipped gym and swimming pool
- **Professional Development:** Strong commitment to support ongoing professional development.

Full details and terms and conditions of employment will be issued if an offer of employment is made.



READING BLUE COAT SCHOOL

POLICY STATEMENT

CHILD PROTECTION and DATA PROTECTION

- Reading Blue Coat School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
- This post may involve unsupervised contact with children and young people.
- The successful candidate will be required to undertake the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) enhanced criminal records clearance process.

Interview

- The selection process will test and assess the above issues. As required by regulation, the interview will be based on;
 - 'competency questioning',
 - and where appropriate will address: the candidate's attitude towards children and young people;
 - his/her ability to support the School's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
 - gaps in his/her employment history;
 - Concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or a referee.
- In addition to the candidates' ability to perform the duties of the post, the interview will also explore related issues including:
 - motivation to work with children and young people;
 - ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people;
 - emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours;
 - Attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline.

Recruitment, selection and disclosure policy and procedure

- Candidates are advised to read the School's policy on recruitment, selection and disclosure before submitting an application for employment. This can be downloaded on the School website, "Policies" page.

Data Protection

The School will process personal data in accordance with the Data Protection laws and its Privacy Notices. If you wish to read our privacy notices and how we handle your data please follow this link: <https://www.rbc.org.uk/privacy-notices/>