



# READING BLUE COAT

## Admissions Policy

Reading Blue Coat School is a co-educational (currently boys only from Year 8 to Year 11) independent day school for students from ages 11 to 18. There is an established co-educational Sixth Form and girls started in Year 7 from September 2023, with the intention of the School being fully co-educational from September 2027 onwards. As at September 2023, the School has circa 800 students.

Deciding on the right school for your child is very important, and we believe that a personal visit is invaluable. We very much hope that you and your child will visit Reading Blue Coat. We usually hold a number of open events in both the Autumn and Summer terms, which give a general introduction to the School. Details are published on our website. We are also very happy to welcome prospective parents and their children at other times. Please contact the School's Admissions Department via email: [admissions@rbcs.org.uk](mailto:admissions@rbcs.org.uk) or by telephone: 0118 933 5806. If it is not possible to hold open events or arrange school visits because of circumstances beyond the School's control, then the School will publish on its website any alternative arrangements put in place.

This policy sets out the selection criteria and procedure for entry to Reading Blue Coat and aims to be consistent with the School's charitable objectives and to be fair to all applicants.

## The Entry Procedure

Reading Blue Coat is an academically selective school. Selection is based upon academic merit which is assessed through academic assessments, an interview at the School, group observations and references and other relevant information from the candidate's previous school. Our selection process is designed to identify students who are able to benefit from our balanced and well-rounded education and to make a positive contribution towards the life of the School.

The usual points of entry are at 11+/Year 7 and 16+/Year 12. The School has capacity to admit 120 students a year at Year 7, and approximately 50 additional students at Year 12. A very limited number of places (usually less than 10) are available at 13+/Year 9.

Applications for other entry points will be considered subject to places becoming available. Parents seeking places outside of the three main entry points should contact the School's Admissions Department in the first instance.

## **Registration**

### **11+ Entry**

Registration for 11+ can take place at any point prior to the entrance assessment days which take place in the Autumn Term of Year 6. However, most students are registered during Year 5 of their Prep or Primary School.

The closing date for applications is Friday 1 December 2023 for students applying for 2024 entry.

### **13+ Entry**

Registration for 13+ can take place at any point prior to the entrance assessments which are held in November of Year 7. The closing date for September 2025 applications is Wednesday 1 November 2023.

### **16+ Entry**

Registration for 16+ generally takes place during Year 10 or the first half of the Autumn Term as students enter Year 11. The closing date for applications is Friday 17 November 2023 for students applying for 2024 entry.

The School's Registration Form is available on the School's website: [www.rbc.org.uk/register/](http://www.rbc.org.uk/register/)

## **Equal Treatment**

Reading Blue Coat encourages applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our students for today's world. Generous means-tested bursaries are offered in order to make it possible for as many as possible who meet the School's admission criteria to attend the School. The School's provision for bursaries is described below.

Reading Blue Coat is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or social background.

## **Special Educational Needs**

Reading Blue Coat does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. The School welcomes students with disabilities and/or special educational needs, provided we can offer them the support that they require and cater for any additional needs and that our site can accommodate them. We aim to ensure that all our students, including those with disabilities and/or special educational needs, are provided with a safe and inclusive environment in which to learn.

Our policy is to apply our admission criteria to all potential students. We require parents of children with special educational needs or physical or mental disabilities to discuss their child's needs with the School before they sit the entrance exam so that we can make adequate provision for them. Parents should provide with the Registration Form a copy of a recent (i.e. within 18 months of application) educational psychologist's report or similar or a medical report, if they have one, as well as details of any Exam Access Arrangements (supported by any specialist professional report). This is so that the School can assess their child's needs and consult with parents about the adjustments which can reasonably be made and so that the School can ensure, for example, that their child will be able to access the education offered and that we are able to ensure their health and safety, and the health and safety of others. An early conversation with the school's Head of Learning Support may be advised.

Where a prospective student is disabled, the School will discuss with parents (and their child's medical advisers, if appropriate) the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if they become a student at the School, to ensure that the prospective student is not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a student who is not disadvantaged because of a disability.

There may be exceptional circumstances in which we are not able to offer a place for reasons relating to a child's disability. For example, if, despite reasonable adjustments, we feel that a prospective student is not going to be able to access the education offered, or that their health and safety or those of other students or staff may be put at risk, we may not be able to offer a place at the School.

Sometimes, the situation of students with disabilities and/or special educational needs changes between an offer of a place being made and the student starting at the School. The School requires parents to be pro-active in updating the School as to any significant changes which mean that the information provided during the application process is out of date or incomplete. In the vast majority of cases, this will not affect a student's place at the School. However the School may, in exceptional circumstances, need to reconsider the offer of a place if a student's circumstances change materially and we are unable to reasonably meet their needs. It is in the student's interests that any such decision is made as early as possible to avoid any disruption to their education, so parents are urged to be forthcoming in their communications with the School about any material change to their child's circumstances.

## **The Assessment Process**

The aim of the process is to identify potential. Reading Blue Coat is looking for well-rounded students with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word, with interests that stretch beyond the confines of the academic curriculum. The School has strong traditions in art, drama, music, public speaking and sport. There are many co-curricular activities, all of which are important in developing a well-balanced, confident individual.

No specific preparation for our entrance tests is needed; all candidates start on an equal footing, with identical opportunities to display their academic aptitude and extra-curricular skills where appropriate.

The following sections detail the criteria for entry at each of the 11+, 13+ and 16+ entry points.

### **Criteria for entry: 11+ September 2024**

The student selection process has four elements:

- An Interview;
- Academic assessment
- Group observations; and
- A report from the student's current school confirming a positive approach.

Each of these elements is considered equally important in assessing each student's potential and capacity to benefit from the education offered here in its fullest sense: co-curricular as well as academic.

In the Autumn Term of Year 6 parents of registered students will receive an email inviting their child to attend an assessment day.

The School does not take any responsibility for administrative errors or communications that go astray.

### ***Interview***

Interviews are conducted during an assessment day in the Autumn Term either by the Headmaster or another experienced member of staff. Interviews last for approximately 15 minutes and are meant to be informal.

### ***Academic Assessments***

The 11+ entrance assessments take place during an assessment day at the School in the academic year before the student would be due to join the School.

Students sit computer tests in English, verbal reasoning, maths, non-verbal reasoning and puzzles. There are no practice papers available. These computer tests are run by Atom Learning (a third-party provider of formative assessments for children) and no preparation is necessary.

Whilst performance in the tests is not all-important, a satisfactory performance is required to demonstrate the student's ability to cope with the pace and rigour of the academic curriculum at the School.

### ***Other***

The test results are not published and the School is not obliged to state its reasons for rejection of an applicant.

It is not possible to defer an 11+ offer to 13+ entry.

### **Criteria for entry: 13+ September 2025**

The student selection process has four elements:

- An Interview;
- Academic assessment
- Group observations; and
- A report from the student's current school confirming a positive approach.

Each of these elements is considered equally important in assessing each student's potential and capacity to benefit from the education offered here in its fullest sense: co-curricular as well as academic.

In the Autumn term of Year 7, parents of registered students will receive an email inviting their child to attend an assessment day.

The School does not take responsibility for administrative errors or communications that go astray.

### ***Interview***

Interviews are conducted during an assessment day either by the Headmaster or another experienced and senior member of staff. Interviews last for approximately 15 minutes and are meant to be informal.

### ***Academic Assessments***

The 13+ entrance assessments take place at the School in November 2023 when the student is in Year 7. Students sit computer tests in English, verbal reasoning, maths, non-verbal reasoning and puzzles. There are no practice papers available. These computer tests are run by Atom Learning (a third-party provider of formative assessments for children) and no preparation is necessary.

Whilst performance in the tests is not all-important, a satisfactory performance is required to demonstrate the student's ability to cope with the pace and rigour of the academic curriculum at the School.

Other than in exceptional circumstances, students who have taken the 11+ entrance assessments are not permitted to resit for the 13+ assessments.

### ***Other***

The test results are not published and the School is not obliged to state its reasons for rejection of an applicant.

Offers of places are unconditional and candidates are not obliged to sit Common Entrance examinations.

### **Criteria for entry: 16+ September 2024**

Reading Blue Coat has a vibrant Sixth Form which has grown in size and popularity in recent years. There is a strong academic ethos and all students are expected to take a positive approach to their studies and embrace the co-curricular programme.

### ***Entry requirements***

It is expected that all students (existing Reading Blue Coat students and new applicants) wishing to enter the Sixth Form will achieve a minimum of eight GCSE passes at Grade 5 or above. Ideally two of these grades should be Grade 7 or above, a further four grades at Grade 6 and two at Grade 5. All students are required to have passed both English Language and Mathematics at Grade 5 or above.

Some A Level subjects require students to have achieved certain minimum GCSE grades. Further information about entry requirements for specific A Level subjects can be found in the Sixth Form Information Booklet which is updated each year.

### ***Entry procedure for external applicants***

The student selection process has three elements:

- An Interview;
- A formal letter of application from the student setting out their reasons for application; and
- A report from the student's current school confirming a positive approach to study as well as predicted GCSE grades.

Each of these three elements is considered equally important in assessing each student's potential and capacity to benefit from the education offered here in its fullest sense: co-curricular as well as academic.

In the Autumn Term of Year 11, parents of registered students will receive an email inviting their child for interview.

The School does not take responsibility for administrative errors or correspondence that go astray.

### ***Interview***

Interviews are conducted in November in the academic year before the student would be due to join the School, either by the Headmaster or another experienced member of staff. Interviews last for approximately 15 minutes and are meant to be informal.

## **Offer of Places**

### ***11+ Entry***

Parents receive letters confirming the outcome of their child's application during the week prior to the February Half Term holiday.

### ***13+ Entry***

Parents receive letters confirming the outcome of their child's application at the end of the Autumn Term in Year 7.

### ***16+ Entry***

Parents receive letters confirming the outcome of their child's application on the 1 December prior to entry. Offers are conditional upon a student meeting the minimum GCSE entry requirements.

## **Payment of Deposit**

Parents wishing to accept an offer of a place are required to pay a deposit of £1,250. A sum of £250 will be retained as a lifetime subscription to the Reading Blue Coat Foundation. The remaining £1,000 will be retained in the general funds of the School until the student leaves and will be repaid by means of a credit without interest to the final payment of Fees or other sums due to the School on leaving or unless the parents wish to donate the remaining amount to the School's Foundation.

Please see the School's Terms and Conditions for information on how and when the Acceptance Deposit may be refunded.

## **Waiting Lists**

The number of suitable applicants for any year group normally exceeds the number of places available. The School therefore maintains waiting lists which are ranked and maintained until the start of the new term in September.

## **Late Applications**

Late applicants may sit the entrance assessments by appointment, and if successful, will be offered a place if available or a place on the waiting list if the year group is fully subscribed.

## **Sibling Policy**

A number of siblings join us at Reading Blue Coat School. However, admission is not automatic and there may be occasions where the School judges that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment.

## **Scholarships**

Reading Blue Coat School offers a number of scholarships a year for excellence in:

- Academic subjects 11+ and 16+
- Art Scholarship at 13+ and 16+
- Dance Scholarship at 11+, 13+ and 16+

- Drama scholarship at 11+, 13+ and 16+
- Sports Scholarship at 16+ (Athlete Development Programme at 12+ and 14+)
- Music 11+, 13+ 16+

A scholarship may be withdrawn in accordance with the terms upon which such award is made or in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions.

### ***Purpose of Scholarships***

Scholarships are designed to reward excellence and to celebrate exceptional talent. In recognition of this achievement, the scholar is offered a 5% reduction in the fees throughout their time at the School. Details of the scholarship application process are sent to all registered students in the Autumn Term prior to admission or the Autumn Term of Year 7 for those applying for 13+ entry.

We encourage parents of scholars who anticipate that they will experience difficulty in meeting the balance of the tuition fees to apply for one of the School's means-tested bursaries described below. Bursary applications should be made in the Autumn Term prior to admission the following year. For 11+ and 16+ applicants for 2024 entry, this should be in the Autumn Term of 2023 and no later than Friday 1 December 2023 (noon).

A scholarship may be withdrawn in accordance with the terms upon which such award is made or in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions.

### ***Academic Scholarships***

A small number of Academic scholarships are available at 11+. These are awarded on the basis of performance in the 11+ Assessments and therefore no additional exam/assessment is necessary.

### ***Art Scholarships***

Art scholarships are available at 13+ and 16+. These are awarded on the basis of a portfolio of work and an interview with the Head of Art.

### ***Dance Scholarships***

Dance scholarships are available at 11+, 13+ and 16+. These are awarded on the basis of an audition with the Head of Dance.

### ***Drama Scholarships***

Drama scholarships are available at 11+, 13+ and 16+. These are awarded on the basis of an audition with the Director of Drama.

### ***Music Scholarships***

Music scholarships are awarded to outstanding musicians who play any instrument or sing with exceptional ability. Music scholarships are available at 11+, 13+ and 16+ and are awarded on the basis of an audition with the School's Director of Music or a member of the Music department.

### ***Sports Scholarships***

A Sports Scholarship is available at 16+ for those who are currently active at a representative level, are involved in academies or are already competing at national or international level.

All Scholars will be expected to demonstrate enthusiasm for and commitment to the subject for which they have received an award and will be expected to make a contribution to the relevant section throughout their time at the School.

Scholarships will only be awarded to students who have passed the School's entrance assessments.

### **Bursaries**

Reading Blue Coat's bursary programme is generous and is designed to make it possible for as many as possible of those who meet the School's entry criteria to take up a place here. The School offers means-tested awards annually to entrants at the usual points of entry. Bursaries are means-tested in accordance with the School's Bursary Policy published on the School's website. Both parents are required to provide proof of their income and assets. The level of support varies according to parental need, but can extend to 100% fee remission in cases of proven need. Before the offer of a bursary is confirmed, a member of staff or external assessor appointed by the School will normally visit the family at their home.

Bursaries are always offered for 12 months at a time. The family is required to provide fresh information about its circumstances for every year that their child attends the School. Levels of support may vary with fluctuations in income or wealth.

The School's expectation is that parents who do not choose to apply for a bursary at the time that their child is being assessed will not require financial support throughout the time that their child attends the School, except in wholly unforeseen circumstances.

Our bursary policy can be viewed on our website or can be obtained from the External Relations department.

A bursary may be withdrawn in accordance with the terms upon which such award is made or otherwise in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions.

### **Overseas Applicants**

We welcome overseas students, who can study at Reading Blue Coat provided that they have the legal right to enter and study in the UK and have a relative or responsible adult living in the UK with whom they can stay.

### **Fluency in English**

In order to cope with the high academic and social demands of Reading Blue Coat School, students must be fluent English speakers. Normally students should have been educated in the English medium for at least two years before coming to the School. It may be possible to arrange for tuition in English as an Additional Language (EAL) at the parent's expense.

### **Religious Beliefs**

Reading Blue Coat welcomes applications from prospective students of all faiths and of no faith.



Although Reading Blue Coat School has Christian roots, the School does not select for entry on the basis of religious belief, and it offers the opportunity for Christians, Jews, Hindus, Muslims, etc to practise their own faiths.

However, parents should be aware that students may be expected to attend religious services during their time at the School.

### **School's Terms and Conditions**

The School's Terms and Conditions will be made available to parents as part of the Admissions process.

### **Complaints**

The School's Complaints Procedure is on the School's website and can be sent to prospective parents on request.

### **Records and Review**

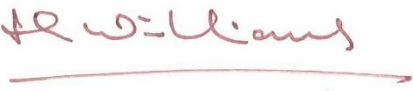
Applicants' details will be held on file with due regard to data protection legislation and the School's Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy.

The School will not hold the personal data of you or your child for longer than is necessary for a lawful purpose. This will generally be no more than 6 months following an unsuccessful application, but there may be specific reasons to retain for longer.

### **Conclusion**

The School is keen to support prospective parents throughout the applications process and parents are encouraged to contact:

The Director of External Relations or a member of the Admissions Team via [admissions@rbcs.org.uk](mailto:admissions@rbcs.org.uk).

Author(s):	Fiona Robinson (Director of External Relations)
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Review Frequency:	Annually
Next Review Date:	September 2024
Related Policies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bursary</li><li>• Data Protection</li><li>• Learning Support Policy</li></ul>
Agreed by:	 Howard Williams (Chair of Governors)
Date of Agreement:	September 2023