



VACANCY
INFORMATION
PACK

HEAD OF
ACADEMIC DRAMA

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 2024, the School has circa 800 students and is now into our second year of co-educational intake into Year 7 with the intention of being a fully co-educational independent day school from September 2027 onwards. The School will continue to be co-educational between the ages of 16 and 18.

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 will be 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.

2024 academic results were impressive; the results were amongst Blue Coat's best with 79% achieving A*- B at A level, and at GCSE 70% 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.

PERFORMING 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, including internationally. 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.rbcs.org.uk

SEE ALSO
**THE MUDDY
STILETTOS
SCHOOLS
REVIEW GUIDE**

<https://berkshire.muddystilettos.co.uk/kids/school-reviews/reading-blue-coat-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.

PERFORMING ARTS

Introduction

This is an exciting opportunity for an enthusiastic and experienced practitioner to lead the continued delivery of high-quality academic Drama within a thriving and popular department, including well-subscribed GCSE and A Level courses.

The successful candidate will have energy, drive and great ideas and is likely to be an experienced teacher of Drama with proven GCSE and A Level success. They will lead on academic drama within the School, whilst also contributing towards raising the profile of drama and ensuring that wide drama opportunities are available to the pupils. This post will be a crucial addition to the Performing Arts which will be led by the Director of Performing Arts and consists of the Director of Music, Head of Dance, Head of Academic Drama, Assistant Director of Music, Technical Theatre Manager, Head of Public Speaking, Head of LAMDA and a Technical Theatre Assistant, alongside a mix of full-time part-time and peripatetic teachers. The Head of Academic Drama will also meet regularly with a member of SLT as is customary for all Academic Head of Department in the school.

The Drama department is well-established and thriving, with a strong reputation for excellence and a history of outstanding results. Drama is a popular subject across all year groups, supported by a vibrant culture of performance and creative engagement. We are proud of the talent within the school and are committed to nurturing and developing it further. While the co-curricular programme is already extensive, we see exciting potential for our new colleague to bring fresh ideas, grow participation even further, and build on our tradition of excellence to ensure Drama continues to flourish as a central part of school life. This new appointee will be required to provide a significant supporting role in the delivery of the extensive co-curricular programme, including directing at least one production per academic year, whilst at the same time delivering teaching timetable in Drama. The Head of Academic Drama will also be expected to support the Drama Scholars programme through mentoring and facilitation of enrichment activities.

Drama at Reading Blue Coat is a significant and exciting part of the school, covering everything from academic studies, House competitions, technical theatre and numerous musical and drama productions. We are a popular choice with pupils at GCSE and have good numbers in our A Level classes. Drama and Dance are compulsory subjects in year 7, with pupils then choosing to study Drama and Dance from year 8 onwards.

Which qualifications do we prepare students for?

The department currently follows Eduqas WJEC A level Drama in Years 12 and 13 (Lower and Upper Sixth) and uses the same exam board for GCSE Drama. We offer both the Acting and Technical Theatre pathways at GCSE and A level. Historically students have achieved excellent results with 100% A*- B at A Level and 100% 9 - 6 at GCSE. Pupils also have the opportunity to study for LAMDA qualifications through peripatetic lessons.

Facilities

The Performing Arts Faculty occupies a number of spaces over the school site including a dedicated Drama Studio (fully equipped for teaching and performing with costumes and props) and a Hall (with high spec lighting). An exciting new development is planned in the future with the construction of a new Performing Arts Centre for which planning permission is in place. The build of this new space, due to start Summer 25, will double the teaching space for academic drama as well as creating a state of the art auditorium and studio spaces.

Co-Curricular Drama and Dance

The School has a long tradition of showcasing large scale productions each year. Annually the school aims to present one full scale musical and at least one other Drama production. In addition to their curriculum duties, the appointee will be expected to contribute and take the lead on productions each academic year as appropriate.

Recent productions have included *Billy Elliot*, *Lord of the Flies*, *Footloose*, *Punk Rock*, *Curtain Call*, *The Crucible*, and *Oliver!*. Cast sizes for productions can average up to 100 students for musical productions and 20 – 50 students for school plays.



For an informal telephone conversation about the role, contact Mr Devin Möller, Director of Drama and Dance, on **0118 944 1005** or email dsm@rbcs.org.uk





LINE MANAGER:

Director of Performing Arts.

DEPARTMENT & RESPONSIBILITY:

Drama. Responsible for Academic Drama staff.

CONTRACT STATUS

Permanent full-time contract to commence in September 2025 or as soon as possible thereafter. The first year of service is served as a probationary period.

SALARY

In accordance with the School Pay Scale for Teachers. Range according to experience from £31,105 to £53,335 per annum. This role will attract a management allowance in the region of £6,775 per annum. 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.

JOB PURPOSE

In this varied and dynamic role, the post holder will be a key member of the thriving Performing Arts faculty leading on the academic delivery of Drama throughout the School. They will play a central role in shaping and developing the Drama curriculum, while working closely with colleagues in the Music and Dance departments to enrich the School's wider performing arts offering. The successful candidate will also contribute to the School's extensive co-curricular programme, ensuring pupils are supported, challenged, and inspired both in and beyond the classroom.

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- To work within the Performing Arts Faculty to further develop Drama opportunities at Reading Blue Coat School and to continue raising the profile of Drama both internally and externally.
- To be the first point of contact in the school for all matters relating to Academic Drama.
- To ensure that high-quality Drama lessons are delivered effectively across Years 7–13.
- To ensure schemes of work and lesson planning are completed to the highest standards and are communicated in a timely and efficient manner.
- To create exam materials, mark schemes and resources for the department as appropriate.
- To manage the budget for Academic Drama.
- To manage work scrutiny across the department ensuring outstanding pupil outcomes are being achieved across all lessons.
- To ensure communication with and paperwork for all external exam boards is of excellent quality.
- To analyse exam results and identify strategies to improve outcomes for pupils.
- To work with the school timetabler to ensure staff allocations for Drama are completed in a way that best supports pupil progress.
- To ensure lesson observations, both formal and informal, are completed throughout the academic year and all members of the department are encouraged to share best practice.
- To ensure that the use of ICT and digital resources in Drama is in line with the School's Digital aims and/or strategy.

- To attend all Heads of Department meetings and other academic meetings as appropriate.
- To work with pastoral staff and learning support to ensure the needs of all pupils are being met in Drama.
- To contribute to the planning and delivery of a wide range of lunchtime and afterschool Drama clubs and activities.
- To create and deliver opportunities that stretch and challenge our most able Drama pupils, while supporting inclusive participation.
- To direct and/or organise school Drama productions and events, including showcases, House Drama competitions, and collaborative performances with local schools or organisations.
- To collaborate with colleagues in the Performing Arts faculty on school productions and cross-disciplinary projects.
- To personally plan and deliver a broad range of well-planned and engaging Drama lessons that reflect best practice and foster pupil progress.
- To develop partnerships with external theatre companies, practitioners, and organisations to enhance learning and enrichment opportunities.
- To manage and deliver a programme that supports Drama Scholars and outstandingly able pupils, while also promoting wider access and engagement across the broader student body.
- Under the direction of the Director of Performing Arts, co-ordinate, schedule, and communicate co-curricular Drama activities, rehearsals, and venue use effectively.
- To liaise with parents regarding Drama lessons and co-curricular involvement, providing expert guidance and support.
- To ensure that timely and informative reports are prepared and shared with parents regarding pupils' progress.
- To co-ordinate any Drama-related examination entries and support students through the process.
- To organise Drama trips, theatre visits, and enrichment activities, attending as appropriate.
- To oversee the administration of Drama using the school's IT systems, ensuring accurate and up-to-date records.
- To work flexibly within the Performing Arts faculty and offer support across the wider department as required.
- To attend a range of academic related events including parent meetings and open mornings.

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



HEAD OF ACADEMIC DRAMA

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:

Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
• Experience in teaching drama.	✓	
• Degree in Drama or related subject.	✓	
• Qualified Teacher Status.		✓
• Experience in teaching the following syllabi: Eduqas		✓
• Proven track record of success within the subject area.	✓	

Knowledge and Experience	Essential	Desirable
• Experience of directing and producing productions.	✓	
• Proven experience of successfully running extra-curricular clubs and activities.	✓	
• Proven experience of working with young people at KS3 to 5.	✓	
• Experience of teaching a range of different genres and techniques.	✓	
• Experience of working with Drama Companies and/or practitioners.		✓
• Experience in delivering technical theatre GCSE & A Level.		✓
• Experience of managing peripatetic staff.		✓



Skills and Attributes	Essential	Desirable
• Enthusiastic, positive and hard working.	✓	
• Commitment to the safeguarding of young people.	✓	
• Ability to inspire, motivate and support.	✓	
• Flexible and approachable attitude.	✓	
• Ability to solve problems and make sound judgements	✓	
• Commitment to the improvement and development of own teaching and performance.	✓	
• Ability to work under pressure, with attention to detail.	✓	
• High levels of organisation with excellent communication skills.	✓	
• Drive and stamina to develop a thriving dance department.	✓	
• Willingness to engage and collaborate with other departments.	✓	
• A passion for working with young people.	✓	

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



Closing date for applications: 09:00 on Monday 12 May 2025

Applications should be submitted using the School's 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, Director of HR, Reading Blue Coat School, Holme Park, Sonning Lane, Sonning-on-Thames, RG4 6SU. Email: recruitment@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

Confidential independent support service available to staff when you most need it.



WORKING HOURS

Full time, Monday to Friday, with a 60-minute meal break. Additional hours will be required for the delivery of co-curricular activities; school events; open evenings; parents' evenings; etc.



PARKING

Free Car parking is available on site.



LEAVE ENTITLEMENT

School holidays in accordance with the published School calendar.



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 APTIS Personal Pension Scheme (employee minimum contribution of 5% of salary and employer contribution is 22% of salary). Life Assurance at 4x gross salary and Income Protection cover.



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



Reduction in RBCS school fees for employees' children school fees offered after 6 months service:



50% reduction for all full time staff (pro-rated for part time staff).



Fees (from September 2025) are £8,279 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.

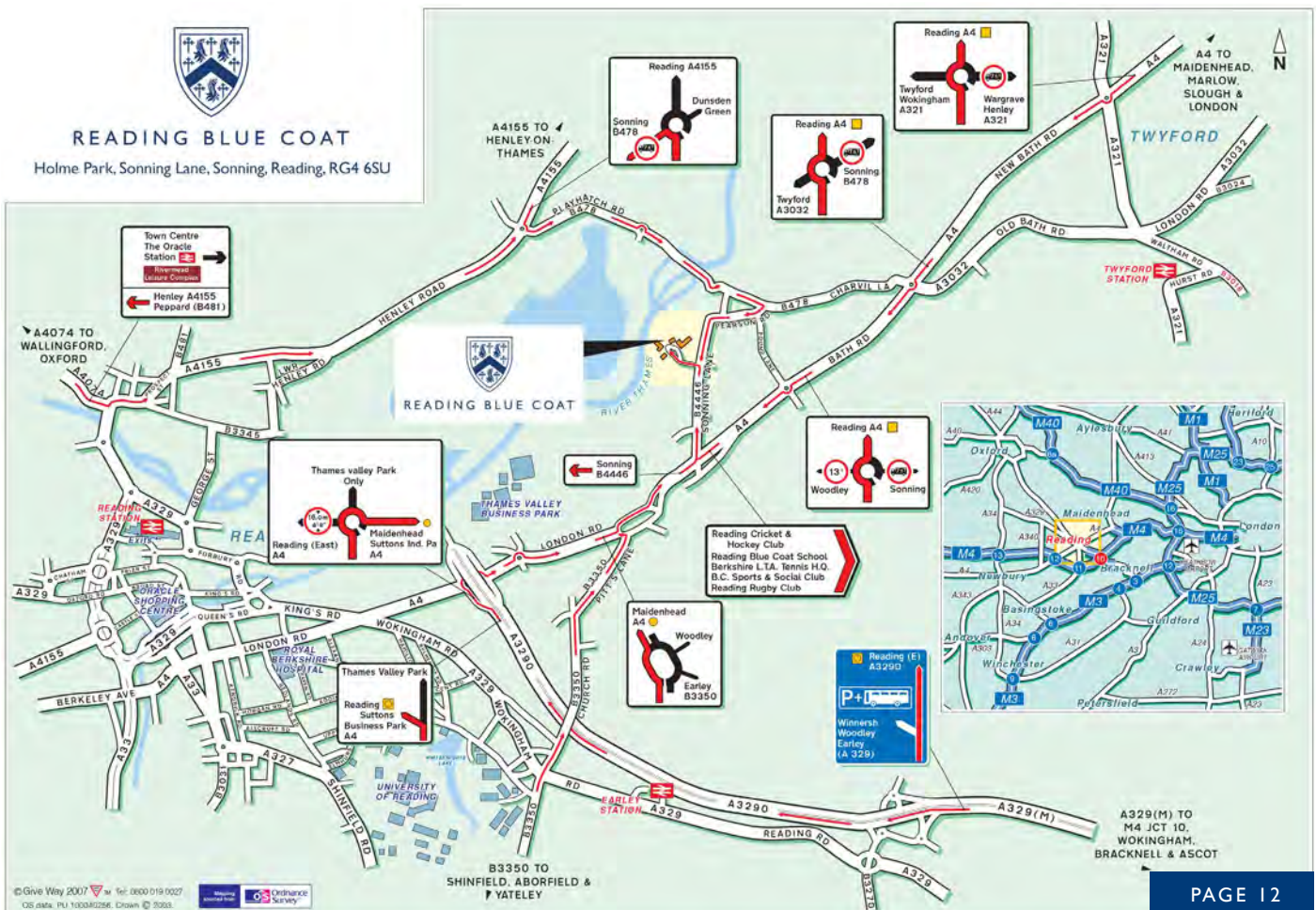
BY TRAIN

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