



VACANCY INFORMATION PACK

FINANCE APPRENTICE

FULL-TIME, FIXED-TERM



READING BLUE COAT

Dear Applicant,

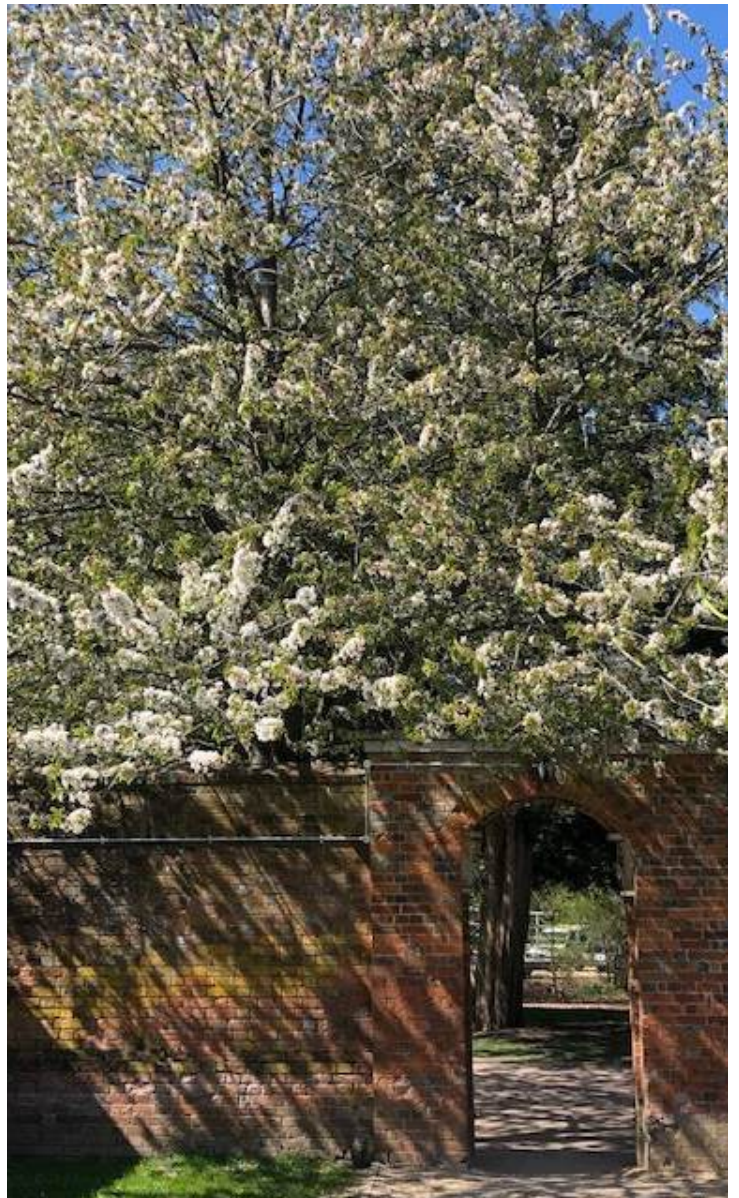
Thank you for your interest in joining the Reading Blue Coat community. I am delighted that you are considering this opportunity, and I hope that this pack gives you a sense of what makes our School such a special place to work.

Reading Blue Coat is a school with a rich heritage and a forward-thinking outlook. Our values – aspiration, compassion, courage, integrity and service – are at the heart of everything we do. They shape not only the enriching education we provide for our students but also the culture we create for our staff: one of ambition, kindness and shared purpose.

We are a vibrant and welcoming school, where talented colleagues work together to inspire a love of learning, nurture individual potential and equip talented young people to thrive in a rapidly changing world. Whether inside or outside the classroom, every role at Blue Coat plays a vital part in our mission to excel.

If you share our commitment to working hard, caring deeply and making a meaningful difference, I encourage you to explore this opportunity further. I would be delighted to meet you soon.

Pete Thomas
Headmaster



INTRODUCTION

Reading Blue Coat is a leading independent co-educational day school for students from ages 11 to 18. As at September 2025, the School has over 850 students and is now into our third year of full co-educational from Year 7 upwards – our Sixth Form has been fully co-educational for over 40 years; all year groups will be co-educational by September 2027.

The School was founded in 1646 by Richard Aldworth, a Master of The Skinners' Company, and a Governor of Christ's Hospital in Horsham, West Sussex. Inspired by the philanthropic nature of Christ's Hospital, Richard Aldworth set aside £4,000 in his Will 'For the education and bringing upp of twenty poore boyes of Reading' Through this one, simple act, Aldworth's Hospital, now Reading Blue Coat, was created. In 1660 the first students walked through the doors of a former inn in Silver Street in the Centre of Reading. And in 1947, Reading Blue Coat 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.

In living this ethos, we strive to fulfil our purpose to:

- Inspire in our students a life-long love of learning, and the confidence to individually flourish.
- Equip our students to thrive in a rapidly changing world.
- Cultivate a warm, kind, noticing culture where students are happy, inclusion is the norm, and diversity is celebrated.
- Develop grounded, socially responsible, outward looking students, ready to lead fulfilling lives and make a positive contribution to the world.
- Nurture a community based on our shared values of aspiration, compassion, courage, integrity and service.

The School employs more than 200 salaried staff, of whom about 50% are teaching staff. Reflecting the move to full co-education, nearly half of our teaching 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, 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. The School makes full use of its riverside location.

Work on our new Performing Arts Centre commenced in summer 2025 and is expected to conclude by summer 2027.

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 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.

2025 academic results were impressive; the results were amongst Blue Coat's best with 84% achieving A*- B at A level, and at GCSE 83% 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 90% 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. We place significant emphasis upon building warm relationships and effective communication with students, for example through regular one-to-one conversations between students and their tutors. Well trained staff provide effective support for student wellbeing, promoting friendship, positive physical and mental health, and helping students find their purpose and passions. Reading Blue Coat's pastoral structure is based around the tutorial system, which is structured in terms of year group and the House system (e.g., 'Year 8 Malthus' tutor group).

There are six Houses: Aldworth, Hall, Malthus, Rich, Norwood and West. The tutors who lead tutor groups are the 'go-to' members of staff for each student, and they are personally responsible for checking in with students each day and 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 the activities of tutor groups and Houses seek to promote and embed these values. In addition to pastoral support, the House system further enables students to take part in activities that foster enjoyment and group spirit through a variety of opportunities that include performing arts and sport.

Beyond the core tutor group, Reading Blue Coat provides a rich variety of other forms of pastoral care. Students also benefit from pastoral education through an exciting and responsive Wellbeing and Futures curriculum, which helps them to develop the skills, knowledge, and habits to lead happy and fulfilling lives. They also find themselves in a highly inclusive environment, thoughtfully promoted and celebrated through our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion programme. When additional support is required, students may also access our newly renovated (2023) Wellbeing Centre, where they may find support from healthcare professionals or access counselling sessions.

CO CURRICULAR

Our co-curricular provision is vibrant and diverse with high levels of engagement throughout the student body. Focused very much on developing the characteristics that make up the school values our co-curricular provision incorporates the Performing Arts, Sport, Activities, Adventure Education, Clubs and Enrichment. All academic staff at the school are expected to contribute to the School's co-curricular provision in a meaningful way.

PERFORMING ARTS

Reading Blue Coat has a highly regarded reputation for drama, dance, music and public speaking with an extensive programme of enrichment, rehearsals and performances throughout the year.

Music is at the heart of the School and many of our pupils attend our weekly ensemble rehearsals which amount to over fourteen every week. Alongside this, a huge number of pupils take the opportunity learn a musical instrument during one-to-one lessons timetabled during the school day. The music department develops a diverse programme of music concerts over every academic year including large scale concerts as well as more intimate recitals, they are also heavily involved in the school musicals.

The School productions are highlights of the cultural calendar and often involve casts of over 60 pupils. Our most recent production of Oliver was a roaring success and perfectly showcased the talent at Reading Blue Coat. Our other recent productions have included Billy Elliot, Lord of the Flies, Footloose, Punk Rock, Curtain Call, The Lion King, The Crucible, and Oliver!. Cast sizes for productions can average up to 100 students for musical productions and 20 – 50 students for school plays. Pupils are also given the opportunity to participate in LAMDA lessons on a one to one basis. Pupils interested in Theatre are also given the opportunity to participate in workshops, playwriting, directing, backstage work and our student technical theatre team is flourishing.

The dance programme is ever evolving with a range of clubs on offer, including street dance, contemporary and commercial dance. Pupils are able to showcase their work in a range of performances and are looking forwards to this years 'Feel the Beat' performance. Our inaugural internal dance competition was a huge success this year with over 60 dancers taking part and showcasing their own choreography. Our pupils have also had the opportunity to represent the school at external dance competitions and have achieved great success in their respective areas.

Public speaking is a hugely popular aspect of school life with over 100 pupils actively involved each week. Over the course of the academic year pupils are able to attend weekly session to hone their skills which are then showcased in a variety of different performances.

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 physical potential whilst embodying the values of the School. Sports are coached to a very high level while providing for, and encouraging those, for whom participation rather than excellence is important.

All students have a timetabled games afternoon where they participate in competitive and recreational team sports with a focus on developing skills and teamwork. The focus sports are athletics, cricket, football, netball, hockey, rowing, and rugby. School sport fixtures and training take place on a Saturday and we are very proud to have 63 competitive teams and around 80% of our student population representing the school at fixtures over the course of an academic year. In recent years a number of our sports teams have achieved national champion status and we have netballers, rowers and rugby players who have been selected to international age group teams and gone on to play professionally.

Alongside our core sport offering we also provide a diverse range of alternative sports that pupils can either participate in recreationally or competitively, these include swimming, basketball, tennis, touch rugby, rugby 7's, cross-country and table tennis.

ACTIVITIES

Our Activities programme is unique to Reading Blue Coat School and allows pupils the opportunity to explore our co-curricular provision during dedicated timetabled lessons every week. Pupils in year 7 to year 9 explore a variety of Adventure Education sessions including Sailing, Bouldering, Paddle Boarding and are also given the opportunity to explore our state of the art on-site High and Low Ropes Course. Activities is also the place where our pupils are introduced to Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and the Aldworth Partnership.

Pupils in years 10 to 13 come together every Thursday to participate in Senior Activities. This is split into six categories and pupils are encouraged to choose a different strand each term. The sections are: Adventure, Creative Arts, Leadership and Social Action, Sport and Wellbeing, Service, Super Curriculum. There are over 40 sessions available to students with the aim of the sessions being to explore new interests and challenge themselves whilst embodying the school's values.

ADVENTURE EDUCATION

Our Adventure Education allows pupils the opportunity to explore our wonderful site and surrounding areas whilst really focusing on character education. The Adventure Education programme is very much intertwined with our Activities programme which runs each week for every year group across the school. We are very proud of our Adventure Education facilities which includes use of the river for paddle sports, a high and low ropes course as well as an indoor climbing wall.

Alongside our weekly adventurous activities we are also very proud of our successful Duke of Edinburgh programme which is open to all pupils from year 9 and above. Pupils are highly engaged and we recently had over 100 pupils complete their Bronze Award from year 9.

As part of our Adventure provision we also run a programme of expeditions each academic year, this year our pupils will have the opportunity to visit Eswatini over the Summer break. During every summer term every pupil will participate in a school residential with year groups visiting a range of destinations like Pembrokeshire, Devon and the Peak District.

The Adventure Education department is also home to our Combined Cadet Force where pupils have the opportunity to join the Army, Navy and RAF sections. CCF sessions take place during Activities sessions and are hugely popular with over 170 students on roll.

CLUBS AND ENRICHMENT

We have a huge number of clubs and enrichment activities that run at Reading Blue Coat with over 100 different sessions running every week. These sessions take place during lunch time and after school and all academic staff are expected to contribute to our co-curricular provision. Nearly all of our activities are included in the school fees and pupils are welcome to participate in as many as they want. Our pupils are heavily involved in shaping the provision and in the last 18 months we have seen the introduction of Dungeons and Dragons Club, Photography Club and Craft Club at the request of our pupils.

FOUNDATIONERS & FOUNDATION AWARDS

The diversity of our educational community is underpinned by the School's centuries long commitment to transformational bursaries. Reading Blue Coat offers means tested bursaries worth 100% of the school fees, plus additional extras such as uniform, lunch, travel, trips and a laptop, to two students annually who live within the borough of Reading. Our ambition is to grow the number of Foundationers in the School through fundraising.



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 through the work of the Aldworth Partnership. The Aldworth Partnership is the umbrella term for the School's student led partnership and charity work. As well as fundraising for local charities such as crisis charities, special needs schools, food banks and homeless charities, the Aldworth Partnership also has strong links to local primary schools. Work with these primary schools includes helping with lunch time clubs, running a school choir and reading clubs. We also often host primary schools for Science and Design and Technology days onsite as well as in our Forest School based in our woodlands. Whilst our main focus is for our students to take part in meaningful partnership work, it is also an opportunity for our Staff to give back to the local community. . .

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 Foundation Office provides links with our alumni (Old Blues) after they leave the School so that they continue to feel part of our special community. Old Blues are offered many opportunities to come back to Blue Coat for reunions and social events. There are also opportunities to give back through our Futures programme such as mentoring opportunities and giving talks to students. Reading Blue Coat Connect is a networking site specifically for Blue Coat community and Parents, Old Blues and Staff are encouraged to join. The Foundation Office fundraises for specific School projects such as bursaries and capital projects as the need arises.

Further information is available on the School's website at www.rbc.org.uk and Good Schools Guide <https://www.goodschoolsguide.co.uk/uk-schools/review/reading-blue-coat-school>



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, a Purchase Ledger and Trading Subsidiary Controller and a Fees Billing Accountant. The Finance Apprentice would work alongside these team members, learning from and supporting their work.

The School has an annual sales turnover of c. £17 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.

This newly created role offers exceptional exposure to all areas of the finance function, providing a comprehensive grounding in financial operations, accounting processes, payroll, fees billing, purchase ledger and financial reporting. As part of a fast-paced and varied environment, the apprentice will develop practical skills, build professional confidence and gain a broad understanding of finance within the education sector. The position is ideal for someone looking to begin a rewarding career in finance, with opportunities to take on increasing responsibility and contribute to delivering an excellent service to colleagues, parents and other stakeholders.

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 and will be supported to achieve their AAT or equivalent qualification(s) during the course of their apprenticeship.



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



LINE MANAGER

Finance Bursar

DEPARTMENT

Bursary

CONTRACT STATUS

Fixed-term contract commencing as soon as possible for the duration of the apprenticeship, expected to last two years. The first four months of service is served as a probationary period.

SALARY

Salary will be in accordance with UK National Minimum Wage guidelines for apprentices. 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.

MAIN PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

The Finance Apprentice will support the day-to-day operations of the Finance Department while studying towards a relevant finance qualification. The role provides practical experience across all core finance functions, assisting with transactional processing, reconciliations, and stakeholder queries, while developing strong financial and IT skills.

The postholder will work closely with all members of the Finance team, contributing to the smooth running of school finances and ensuring high standards of accuracy, service and compliance. They will be given appropriate time within School hours for completion of learning activities in support of completing the apprenticeship qualification.

Key Responsibilities

Purchase Ledger & Payments Support

- Assist with processing supplier invoices onto the finance system.
- Help ensure invoices are appropriately authorised and coded.
- Support preparation of payment runs (BACS).
- Respond to supplier queries in a timely and professional manner.
- Assist with supplier statement reconciliations.

Fees Billing & Income Support

- Assist with preparing and processing pupil charges and recharges (e.g. trips, extras).
- Support the administration of fee billing cycles.
- Help respond to parent queries regarding fees and charges.
- Assist with maintaining accurate records on the billing system.

Bank & Balance Sheet Reconciliations

- Perform regular bank reconciliations under supervision.
- Assist with reconciling control accounts and balance sheet accounts.
- Investigate and resolve discrepancies in a timely manner.
- Support month-end and term-end reconciliation processes.

Payroll & Finance Administration Support

- Assist with processing payroll data changes (e.g. starters/leavers, variations).
- Support administration of staff expenses, timesheets etc.
- Maintain accurate employee and financial records.
- Assist with payroll reporting and data preparation.

MAIN PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

Trips, Recharges & School Activities

- Assist with administration of pupil trips and associated costs.
- Help track expenditure and ensure accurate recharges to parents.
- Support reconciliation of trip accounts and follow up discrepancies.
- Liaise with staff organising trips to ensure financial processes are followed.

Enterprise Finance Administration Support

- Assist the Enterprise manager with the finance administration of running in house camps.
- Reconcile third party booking platform to the School's finance system.

General Finance & Team Support

- Provide general administrative support to the Finance team.
- Assist with maintaining financial records and filing systems.
- Support audit preparation and year-end processes.
- Provide cover for team members where appropriate.
- Contribute to continuous improvement of finance processes.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Act as a point of contact for finance-related queries from staff, parents and suppliers.
- Ensure all communications are professional, helpful and timely.
- Build positive working relationships across the school community.

Additional duties:

- Act as a point of contact for finance-related queries from staff, parents and suppliers.
- Ensure all communications are professional, helpful and timely.
- Build positive working relationships across the school community.

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



FINANCE APPRENTICE

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:

Essential Skills & Experience	Essential	Desirable
Strong IT skills, particularly Microsoft Excel.	x	
Good numerical and analytical skills.	x	
High level of accuracy and attention to detail.	x	
Strong organisational skills and ability to manage workload.	x	
Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal.	x	
Ability to deal confidently and professionally with staff and parents.	x	
A-levels (or equivalent), ideally including Maths or Business-related subject.		x
Interest in pursuing a finance/accounting qualification (e.g. ACA, ACCA, CIMA, AAT).	x	
Previous experience in an administrative or finance-related role.		x
Personal Attributes	Essential	Desirable
Proactive and willing to learn.	x	
Strong team player.	x	
Reliable and professional.	x	
Discreet, with ability to handle confidential information.	x	
Positive and flexible approach.	x	

Training & Development

- Full support provided for a relevant Apprenticeship programme
- On-the-job training across all areas of the Finance function
- Exposure to school financial management, systems, and processes
- Development of technical accounting, systems, and stakeholder skills

This role is designed to provide broad exposure to all aspects of school finance, developing the apprentice into a well-rounded finance professional while supporting the efficiency and effectiveness of the Finance team.

Closing date for applications: 09:00 on Monday 24 August 2026

Applications should be submitted via our website "Work with us" page <https://rbcs.org.uk/about/work-with-us/>

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@rbcs.org.uk





PLACE OF WORK

Reading Blue Coat School,
Sonning on Thames, Berkshire.



MEALS

Lunch and break time refreshments
are provided free of charge 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, from 08:30 to 16:30, Monday to Friday,
with 30-minute meal break, all year round.
Appropriate time will be allocated within School
hours for completion of learning activities in support
of completing the apprenticeship qualifications.
Additional hours will be required for the support of
school events.



PARKING

Free Car parking is available on site.



LEAVE ENTITLEMENT

30 days' paid annual leave plus
8 public holidays. Three days of annual
leave are required to be used for 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). Life Assurance at
2x gross 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.



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 2026)
are £8,700 per term (inclusive of VAT).

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.

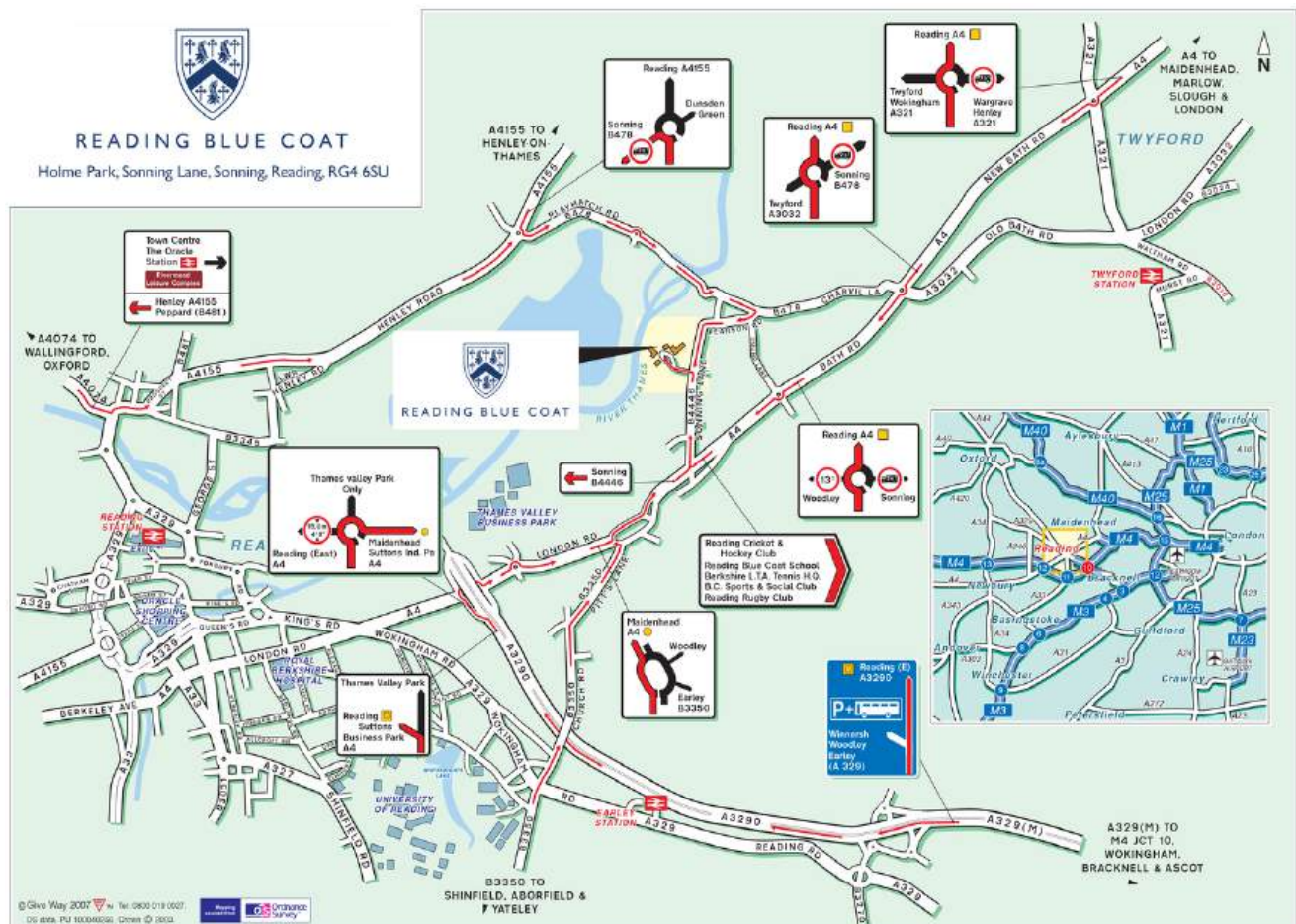
BY TRAIN

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 —



READING BLUE COAT

Holme Park, Sonning Lane, Sonning-on-Thames, Berkshire RG4 6SU
Tel: 0118 944 1005 rbcs.org.uk