

# Sixth Form Prospectus



The Blue Coat School

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## A message from The Director of Sixth Form

Welcome! I am delighted that you are considering joining the Sixth Form at The Blue Coat School. If you are keen to become part of a positive, vibrant and high achieving establishment, where you will be encouraged to extend yourself and strive for excellence, then Blue Coat Sixth Form is most definitely for you.

We recognise that choosing where you want to study after your GCSEs is a big decision. Sixth Form involves more than academic study; it's a time for maturing as a young adult, and preparing for the independence and responsibilities that come with Higher Education, Advanced Apprenticeships, and careers. The choice that you make now will shape your future.

Blue Coat is an outstanding multi-faith, multi-ethnic and multi-talented Sixth Form, committed to academic excellence and the personal growth and enrichment of all our students,

who leave us not only with the highest grades and qualifications, but also a CV that reflects the wide range of opportunities for personal development and leadership that our sixth form provides.

Whether you are new to the school or an existing Year 11 student at Blue Coat, we will build on your strengths, broaden your horizons, and support you to take responsibility for your own future and rise to the challenges, choices and opportunities that will affect the rest of your life.

*Justine Tipler*  
**Director of Sixth Form  
The Blue Coat School**

*Rob Higgins*  
**Headteacher  
The Blue Coat School**

# The Blue Coat School

## Sixth Form

Although our Year 12 and 13 students at Blue Coat play an inherent part in the whole school life, the Sixth Form maintains a distinctive character which is very much its own. The Sixth Form 'Mezz', the Sixth Form Independent Learning Centre, the school library and restaurant provide areas for academic study, alongside relaxation and socialising. The core values of Faith, Vision and Nurture continue into our Sixth Form. In recognition of the growing maturity of our students we focus very much on the development of community spirit, encouraging our students to self-manage and to take a collective responsibility for themselves and their peers.

Sixth Form students at Blue Coat are role models and ambassadors for the school, and we expect them to present themselves accordingly. For example you won't wear school uniform – rather, we expect you to dress in a manner that is appropriate for a professional environment and which also makes you fully distinguishable as a senior member of the school community.

Sixth Formers are very visible around the school using main school resources and specialist facilities in their day-to-day studies. All students are encouraged to take an active part in the wider school activities through sport, music, drama, clubs and societies and in organising social and charity events, developing leadership, team work and organisation skills, which are so important for your CV. All our Sixth Form students have the opportunity to apply for positions as Senior Students in their second year of Sixth Form study.

The Sixth Form is friendly and caring, a community where everyone is valued, respected, rewarded and celebrated for what they achieve and contribute. It is large enough to ensure fantastic opportunities and choices, yet small enough to be personal, a place where every student is known by name and cared for as an individual.

**“As a new student at Blue Coat, I felt extremely welcome and comfortable thanks to both the teachers and students at the school”**







# The Sixth Form Community

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## A Message from the Senior Students

“Blue Coat has challenged, supported and developed me as an individual both academically and socially. Teachers are dedicated and approachable – they offer the perfect blend of help, advice and enthusiasm to make both the classroom and self-directed learning enjoyable and engaging. Study support, extra-curricular activities, leadership opportunities and friendly peers all enable students to achieve their potential, grow in confidence and become well-rounded and assured.

The school has made me believe in myself and encouraged me not only to meet my targets, but to strive to exceed them. There is a passion that you can feel throughout the school which creates the work ethic and allows everyone to be an individual and follow their own path.”

## Leadership Opportunities

All students are given the opportunity to excel, to consolidate their strengths and follow their passions. We encourage all our students to develop as leaders, to have a sense of responsibility and team spirit, qualities which are invaluable in future life. As ambassadors for the school our Sixth Form students are frequently called upon to play a pivotal part in the daily life of the school. This involves input into the Year 12 Blues Award, school House system, major sport events, music and drama productions alongside charitable and fundraising events. By taking part in a wide range of experiences, students at Blue Coat develop personal qualities, skills and the ability to manage themselves and lead others.

## Expectations

What characterises our Sixth Form is the high level of expectation of both teachers and students. Our students learn to manage their time and plan their work. We expect students to be organised, punctual, smart in appearance, ready for work and proactive in exploring everything the Sixth Form has to offer. Their personal tutor, together with subject teachers, guide and support in a relationship that is a partnership, with a shared focus on success. All of this underpins students’ outstanding achievement.

## Aim High

Every year over 90% of our students will go on to university, including Oxbridge, to study everything from Astrophysics to Zoology. As routes into professional qualifications change we are also seeing an increasing number going straight into training for their career from A-level – for example in accountancy – or taking up advanced apprenticeships. We also support and advise students who want to go straight into work or choose to take a Gap Year.

The key is that this is their informed choice, for which they are fully prepared.

“Blue Coat makes you independent, you are given both the encouragement and freedom to develop as an individual, to take ownership of your learning, but this is always backed up by the support, advice and guidance from your teachers.”

“My son today received a first class degree from Edinburgh in Computer Science. He has turned down jobs with ARM and Skyscanner to take up a massive opportunity with Microsoft. He has a fabulous future career ahead of him, with worldwide opportunities. Thank you for the support and dedication of your staff who helped him along his way.”



# The Sixth Form Curriculum

## The Sixth Form Study Programme

Our aim is to ensure that all our students realise their true potential and are able to secure coveted places in the highly competitive world of Higher Education, apprenticeships and employment. University offers are based on a candidate's best three predicted A-Level grades, with a minimum of ABB being required for many of the more competitive courses. We therefore ask students to choose and focus on achieving good grades in 3 A Level subjects.

## Linear A Levels

Students who join us at Blue Coat will follow a 2-year linear course in 3 A-Level subjects, with public examinations at the end of Year 13.

## A Level Subjects on Offer

With nearly 30 subjects on offer in the Sixth Form we aim to maintain flexibility in the choice of subject combinations which will allow you to move successfully into the next phase of your chosen career.

## Futures Programme

Blue Coat students also take a co-curricular 'Futures' pathway, which offers personal development and increased breadth to extend your study beyond your 3 chosen subjects,

and give you the edge when it comes to higher education and professional applications. This offer includes:

## Pre-University Global Perspective

The Pre-U GP is designed to prepare young people to engage positively with a world where change is the only constant. By studying global issues you explore different and sometimes opposing perspectives, and develop transferable thinking and reasoning skills, plus research and communication skills. The key knowledge is particularly relevant for future lawyers, scientists, medics and academic researchers, and complements social sciences and humanities A-Levels.

## Core Maths

Level 3 Mathematical Studies (Core Maths) is designed for students who have achieved a grade 5 or above at GCSE. It supports courses such as A-level Psychology, Sciences and Geography as well as technical and vocational qualifications by maintaining and developing real-life maths skills. What you study is not purely theoretical or abstract; it can be applied on a day-to-day basis in work, study or life.

## A fourth A Level

In a small number of cases some students may opt for a fourth subject

such as Further Mathematics at AS level as part of their Futures programme. This would most likely be to support a university application where an understanding of an additional field would be beneficial.

**“Make the most of your time at the Blue Coat School. I have made many friends and have been given fantastic opportunities. These have taught me core values such as leadership, teamwork and determination. Alongside the education aspect, I’ve gained some amazing memories from school trips abroad and extra-curricular activities that will remain with me for life. Overall my time at Blue Coat School has been phenomenal, from first walking through the gates in year 8 to my very last day of Year 13”**





# Academic Achievement

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The structure of our extremely successful, hugely popular and ever expanding Sixth Form is built on a foundation of hard work and a desire to learn. Your progress will be tracked continuously across the 2 years that you spend in Sixth Form.

## Assessment

As part of your 2-year linear programme you will be regularly assessed to ensure that your progress is in line with your expected target grade. This will ensure that your personal progress is carefully monitored and discussed, allowing you to succeed in your studies and to excel during and beyond your time in Sixth Form.

## Communication

The relationship between yourself, Sixth Form and home is very important. At a time when you are developing as young adults, and maturing as individuals, it is important that we involve your parents and guardians in the adult conversations about your progress. You and your parents/guardians will receive regular reports home on your progress and they will also be invited to several parents' communication evenings throughout your time with us.



## The Blues Award

At Blue Coat we encourage our students to rise to new challenges. All Year 12 students will work towards their Blues Award during their first year in the Sixth Form. This involves “24 hours of giving” where students support subject and extra-curricular opportunities, giving 24 hours back to the whole school community.

Alongside academic work we want you to become well-rounded young adults, and, just as importantly to be happy in your time with us, have fun and to develop interests and build friendships that will stay with you well into your future.





# Personal Development

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## Duke of Edinburgh

The hugely popular Silver and Gold Award schemes play a very important part of many of our Sixth Formers' lives. A team of dedicated staff organise challenges, trips and expeditions. Students also undertake service components, which help them develop skills as team players and leaders.

## Trips and Visits

Students at Blue Coat have opportunities galore to support and extend their studies and personal experience through the wide choice of trips and visits on offer to them during their time in Sixth Form. Recent visits have included New York, China, Cern, London (Parliament and the theatre), and field trips across the country.

## Music

From the grandeur of the Senior Choir at the Royal Albert Hall, to the intimacy of a chamber music performance in front of peers, music at Blue Coat allows the personal development of an individual to stretch as far as they wish to take it.

## Sport

We're proud of our sport facilities, and our teams regularly compete at local, regional and national levels.

## Student Leaders

The Sixth Form Senior Students play an active role in chairing the Blue Coat School Council. They lead on assemblies, speak at parent information evenings and help students at every level to shape their school.

## Active Citizenship

A vast majority of our students take part in some form of active citizenship. This is a chance to work outside the school community, developing work-based skills, independence and to contribute something to the life of the town.

## Work Shadowing

Many students do not know when they start Sixth Form what career they will ultimately follow. In Year 12 you will take part in a work-shadowing scheme to allow you to experience and explore possible future career paths and employment opportunities. This is not the same as work experience, which is the experience of the workplace and generic skills for the working environment. Work-shadowing is about finding out about a specific career, and because you are over 16, you are able to participate at a different level.

## Nuffield Bursaries

Every year a team of Year 12 students undertake exciting research projects at Manchester University as part of the Nuffield Bursary Scheme. The scheme pays the students an allowance, and students then deliver a presentation at the Celebration Day in November. Recently students have completed projects on Particle Physics, Medical Physics and Radiography, all of which will have a huge impact on their university applications and personal statements.

## Engineering Education Scheme

Blue Coat Sixth Form offers the full range of academic A-Levels and historically has had a science and maths specialism. The Engineering Education Scheme allows students to work throughout the year with

a practising engineer on a real-life problem and to experience the challenges and excitement of the engineer's life.

## University Links

Our students work with university departments to extend their knowledge and understanding, and to help bridge the gap between Sixth Form and Higher Education. Universities also play an active role in our Futures Exhibition and "What Next" progression week. This is a key week in the Sixth Form calendar where visiting universities, employers and past students all come together to give advice, support and guidance to our students as they begin to make decisions about their future.

## Oxbridge and The Sutton Trust US Programme

Students in the Sixth Form achieve academic success with many attaining grades that allow them to access the most competitive and prestigious universities both in the UK and America. We believe that there should be no limits placed on student aspiration. We want our students to aim high and we actively encourage and support our highest achievers in their applications to Oxford, Cambridge and Ivy League universities. In the Sixth Form we offer a comprehensive support programme for students wishing to follow this pathway. Our extensive support for applications begins when students are in Year 12 and includes residential trips, visits to universities, support with specialist admissions tests, personal statements and interview preparation.

# Support All The Way

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## The Sixth Form Team

We want your time at Blue Coat Sixth Form to be happy and productive. The Director of Sixth Form, Head of Sixth Form, Year Heads, dedicated Progress Leads, Sixth Form tutors and specialist subject teachers all operate in close consultation to give you the support and guidance you need with every step of your journey.

## Personal Tutors

You will meet your personal tutor twice a day. This offers you 1:1 advice and guidance on a regular basis. The tutor group system is vertical and includes Year 12 and 13 students; this encourages communication, community and mutual support between the 2 years and also allows time to organise a range of social activities.

## Assembly

We are a multi-ethnic, multi-talented and multi-faith community. Collective worship takes place at least once a week, and gives all of our students time to reflect on the challenging questions that life throws up. The school's foundation is the Church of England and that underpins our approach and values. We nurture Christians, support students of other faiths in theirs, and offer challenge to those of no faith to consider the big questions about life, ethics and meaning.

## Well-Being

We appreciate that there are changes as you move from Year 11 into Year 12, and we want to ensure that you feel safe and secure during your time with us. The fortnightly well-being sessions

are designed to offer a programme of support and insight into social influences which may impact on your individual well-being.

## Lectures

Our fortnightly lecture programme supports you to rise to the challenge of independent Sixth Form work, dealing with issues such as time-management, study skills and personal targets. These skills also make you a successful life-long learner.

**“I was so worried that I wouldn't fit in, but everyone was so welcoming. I finally felt like I belonged somewhere.”**



## Destinations

Whatever your chosen path we will offer you the necessary support, advice and guidance to ensure that you are able to plan carefully for your future. The vast majority of our students go direct to university, but as high-level apprenticeships also become a potential means of moving into your chosen career we will encourage you to explore all the options available, and weigh up the value, advantages and disadvantages of all routes, which will mean that you take responsibility for making your own decisions about your future.

## UCAS

You will be supported in your application to university by a team of highly qualified and very experienced

staff. Your personal form tutor will work with you to plan out your application, compose your personal statement, and complete the UCAS online application form. They will advise on courses, open days and interviews. The Sixth Form student mentor and Head of Year will work with your personal tutor to write your reference, to reflect your abilities as a student on both an academic and personal level. Alongside your predicted grades this reference will be central in a successful application to the university of your choice. You will have access to independent and impartial careers advice and will be able to book an individual appointment to discuss possible options for your future career.

## Unifrog

We register all of our Sixth Form students with the online Unifrog

platform. This web-based facility is designed to help students access the right university course or high-level apprenticeship. Its search facility helps you filter through the thousands of university courses and higher-level apprenticeships available to you, ensuring that your choice for the future is the right one and that it is based on a list of criteria that is important to you as an individual.

**“Blue Coat is without doubt the best place to further your education.”**





“The ethos of the school can be seen throughout all the staff, and it definitely rubs off on the students. The respect between the teachers and students is very much mutual, and this helps create a very happy learning environment.”



# The Application Process

- ## 1 Sixth Form Open Evening

All students interested in joining our Sixth Form are invited to our Sixth Form Information Evening in October. This event will give you the opportunity to find out more about the school, meet our subject specialists and most importantly find out all that you need to know about the subjects that interest you.
- ## 2 The Application Form

The next stage in the process involves completing an application form where you indicate which A Level subjects you would like to study in Sixth Form.
- ## 3 Advice and Guidance Meeting

We will invite you to an Advice and Guidance meeting to discuss with a senior member of the staff your future ambitions, career plans and choice of subject courses.
- ## 4 A Letter Home

We will write to you to tell you whether you have been successful in securing a provisional place.
- ## 5 Pre-Enrolment

Successful applicants will be invited to attend a pre-enrolment event in late June/early July. This is important, because it's where we start the preparation for your successful transition from GCSE to A Level study.
- ## 6 Results & Enrolment

When you receive your GCSE results in August you complete your enrolment with us before starting your studies in September.



## Entry Requirements

The following entry requirements will secure your offer of a place in Blue Coat Sixth Form:

**Condition 1:** To guarantee a place at Blue Coat Sixth Form, all students must hold a minimum of **5 GCSE's at Grades 9-5** including a **Grade 5** in English (Language or Literature) and Maths.

**Condition 2:** In addition, students must achieve at least a **Grade 6** in the subjects that they wish to study in order to guarantee a place on their chosen courses. An equivalent subject with a similar skill set will be taken into account as an alternative measure in the case of an A Level course, which is not part of the standard GCSE curriculum.

**Condition 3:** For the specific subject combination of more than one Science studied together (e.g. Biology with Chemistry or Biology, Chemistry, Physics etc.), students must also achieve a **Grade 6** in Maths in order to guarantee their chosen study programme.

Please see the school website for full details on our application policy.

# A-Z Subject Glossary

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## Applied Science

Scientific advances often raise moral and ethical issues – is it right for the NHS to pay for a very costly lifesaving drug to treat cancer when cuts are being made in other areas? Science often asks more questions than it answers, and this course will equip you with the knowledge and the skills to make your own judgements on scientific issues.

## Art

You will explore a wide range of fine art media, processes and techniques. You explore the use of drawing for different purposes, and use a variety of methods and media on a range of scales. Gallery visits and study of contemporary and traditional artists are central to the course.

## Biology

Biology is the study of living things, from the molecules within our cells to the organisms that make up ecosystems. You'll need to think and work like a real scientist if you choose this A level – you'll develop your ability to design practical investigations, analyse valid data, and improve your understanding of how scientists work.

## Business Studies

Why have Cadburys decided to pay more for Fair Trade cocoa beans? Why have Apple released two versions of the same phone? The answers to these questions will provide an insight to the strategies of some of the most successful organisations in the world. A level Business Studies is not only a qualification; it's a handbook for anyone thinking of entering the complex world of commerce.

## Chemistry

Chemistry deals with an atomic and molecular interpretation of the world around us. It is often called the 'Central Science' because it underpins all other

branches of science. Chemistry ties together fundamental concepts from biology, physics and mathematics, and plays an important role in the development of technology and other forces that change our lives.

## Computer Science

Computer Science is an exciting subject that encourages students to think creatively, logically and critically and to develop advanced problem-solving skills. You don't have to be able to program before taking the course, but you must have a genuine interest in developing your programming skills outside of lessons.

## Design and Technology - 3D Design

In a time not so long ago, humanity existed without the Internet, social media, mobiles, electric lighting and even the taps that give us running water! All these products have come from the imagination of Product Designers. This course involves spotting problems, researching and then producing exciting new products that use materials in unusual and surprising ways.

## Drama and Theatre

Theatre has been a part of our life for thousands of years. Studying this course will give you a deeper understanding of how theatre works. You will have the opportunity to be a performer, a designer and a critical audience member.

## Economics

In light of the momentous decision to leave the EU, what are the likely short-term and long-term costs and benefits for individuals and firms? How important is financial market sentiment to the lives of ordinary people in a period of uncertainty and instability? If you would like to develop a deeper understanding of our recent past in the context of a rigorous academic subject, then Economics might well be for you.

## English Language

Are you interested in the power of language? Do you know how manipulative language can be? Perhaps you enjoy writing and want to develop your skills. English Language is about the analysis of texts as critical readers, aware of the writer behind every text. This awareness will make you a sophisticated reader of others' texts and a highly effective writer of your own.

## English Literature

Do you love reading stories or going to the theatre? Are you interested in other people's imaginations, thoughts and ideas? English Literature enables you to become a sophisticated reader who understands that literature is the product of exciting and imaginative thinking.

## French/German

Do you enjoy learning a language? Would you like to be able to communicate more effectively and find out what it's really like to live in another country? You'll explore social issues and current trends, and study a film in Year 12 and a literary text in Year 13. Topics include music, festivals, immigration, 20th century history and education.

## Geography

Climate change, earthquakes in Nepal and European migration crises – these, amongst others, are all explored in Geography. Why do these things happen? Do people contribute to the causes? Fieldtrips are an integral part of geography and offer you the chance to learn outside the classroom and experience our world and its current issues.

## History

Are you naturally curious and inspired to investigate why events occur? Or how people's views and actions have shaped the past that we are taught as truth today? Are you intrigued as to why



some people are willing to die for their beliefs? If you like analysing, evaluating evidence and creating arguments as well as unpicking people's ideas and actions, then studying History is the subject for you.

## Mathematics/ Further Mathematics

The study of Mathematics develops your imagination and trains you to problem-solve in a clear and logical way. In Maths you will develop a way of thinking that will stay with you for the rest of your life, allowing you to analyse problems and come up with creative solutions in lots of different situations. Further Maths is an additional A level, which probes deeper into further topic areas at a more challenging and demanding level.

## Media Studies

If you've ever wondered how films are made, how adverts work, if we can believe the news we hear, and why you can always predict storylines in soaps... then you're beginning to think like a media analyst. Choose Media Studies, and you'll have the chance to discuss, analyse and create a wide range of media texts.

## Music

Do you enjoy performing? Have you had a go at composing your own music? Do you enjoy listening to a wide variety of music, and thinking about how it works? If you play an instrument and enjoy discussing and composing music, then an A level in Music could be the course for you.

## Photography

Photography is an art-based subject. You will be taught basic and more advanced photographic skills alongside creative use of digital software including Photoshop and Apple software on iMac computers. If you're interested in expressing yourself through the lens and have a desire to master image manipulation and enhancement, then this is the course for you.

## Physical Education

Have you ever wondered how athletes reach elite level? Or how an elite athlete's body compares to that of the everyday individual and allows them to push the boundaries of human capabilities? The Technical Award in Sport and Physical Activity looks at questions such as these and also gives you the opportunity to experience and develop an interest in a variety of roles in sport such as performer and coach.

## Physics

Physics is at the heart of everything, making it the basis of all modern science and technological developments. You'll delve inside the nucleus to discover sub-atomic particles, consider the true nature of light and how its properties may be exploited. It's a course to develop your imagination, investigative skills and mathematical ability.

## Politics

Politics is focused on developing a broad knowledge and understanding of political institutions such as the Houses of Parliament in the UK and United States Congress. Alongside this, we look in detail at the political allegiances different parties hold, for example what makes the Conservatives and Labour so different; or what makes the Republicans and Democrats so different. As part of this, we gain theoretical and philosophical understanding of ideology: socialism, conservatism and liberalism for example to put in to context where much of our democratic principles have originated from.

## Psychology

Psychology is the scientific study of human behaviour. The A level course gives you an insight into why people behave in the way that they do. You'll consider key questions: can watching violent TV make you aggressive? Why do we obey authority and conform to others in a group? Only when we understand behaviour can we predict it and modify it.

## Religion, Philosophy and Ethics

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics gives you the fascinating challenge of debating philosophical and ethical questions which might have no answer, such as 'does God exist?' and 'how should we behave?' You will look at significant Christian practices and beliefs that shape religious identity, as well as considering ultimate philosophical questions and learning about different ethical theories.

## Sociology

Sociology aims to understand how societies work: sociologists investigate the structures and cultures of different societies throughout the world and throughout history. At the centre of the course is the search for how our identities are formed, and how aspects of our identities such as class, gender and ethnicity affect our lives.

## Textiles

Textile Design is an exciting, flexible and diverse course, written for people who are both passionate and creative. It is delivered by specialists with backgrounds in Fashion Design, Fine Art and Textiles Art who will help you to learn develop new processes, giving you a broad experience of skills to draw on as you develop.

This prospectus is for information only. Although every effort has been made to ensure its accuracy, certain information in the prospectus may be subject to change. If parents have any specific queries they should check with the school.

## Faith Vision Nurture



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