

THE BLUE COAT SCHOOL WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

BLUE COAT SIXTH FORM OPEN MORNING WELCOMES PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

Blue Coat Sixth Form hosted its External Sixth Form Open Morning on Saturday 10th January, and the event was a great success, with a strong turnout of prospective students and their families. The high level of attendance reflected the growing interest in the Sixth Form and the wide range of academic and enrichment opportunities on offer.

Visitors were given the opportunity to tour the school, explore subject departments, and speak directly with teaching staff and current Sixth Form students. These conversations provided valuable insight into the curriculum, enrichment activities, and the strong pastoral support available. Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, with many commenting on the warm, welcoming atmosphere and the professionalism and approachability of both staff and students. The student ambassadors were particularly praised for their confidence, enthusiasm, and honesty in sharing their experiences of life at Blue Coat.

The Open Morning also allowed families to gain a clearer understanding of the Sixth Form ethos, high academic expectations, and the support in place to help students achieve their full potential, both academically and personally.

Following the success of the event, the admissions process for Blue Coat Sixth Form has now officially opened. Applications are made online via the school website, where students can find full details of entry requirements, the application form, key dates, and information about the selection process. Prospective students are advised to visit the website as soon as possible to ensure they have all the necessary information and to submit their application in good time.

The website also provides further guidance on subject choices, progression routes, and what to expect during the admissions process, making it the main point of reference for all applicants.

Blue Coat Sixth Form looks forward to welcoming the next cohort of students and encourages all those who attended the Open Morning, as well as those who were unable to attend, to explore the school website and begin their application journey.

YEAR 11 A-LEVEL OPTIONS EVENING: SUPPORTING STUDENTS' NEXT STEPS

The A-Level Options Evening provided Year 11 students and their families with clear guidance on post-16 pathways and the support available throughout the decision-making process. Information was shared by staff and students, helping families to understand subject choices, expectations, and what Sixth Form life at Blue Coat offers.

Students were reminded of the extensive support in place, including the Options Afternoon on 29 January, subject information on the school website, the Options Information Booklet, assemblies, careers meetings, mock interviews, Parents' Evening on 20 January, and the Careers Fair on 6 March. The electronic Options Form must be submitted by 12 March 2026, with students selecting three A-Levels (or four where eligibility criteria are met), ranking their choices in order of priority and including a reserve option.

The evening also highlighted the structure of the Sixth Form curriculum, including teaching time, personal development lessons, and opportunities such as the EPQ. A wide range of subjects is available, and students were encouraged to make ambitious but realistic choices. Clear guidance was given about the demands of four A-Levels and that universities do not require this route, as it carries a significantly higher workload.

Overall, the event ensured that students and families feel informed, supported, and confident as they prepare for this important stage of their educational journey.



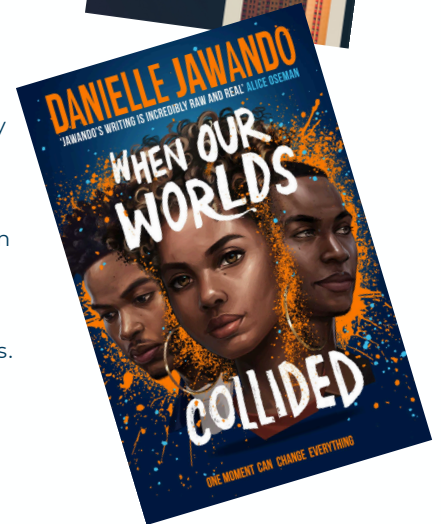
THE POWER OF READING

This term has seen the exciting launch of our new reading books for students in Year 9 and Year 10, marking an important step in strengthening our whole-school reading culture and promoting a genuine love of literature. Year 9 students have begun studying *Glasgow Boys*, a powerful and engaging novel that explores friendship, identity, resilience, and social inequality. The text has already generated thoughtful discussion in lessons, with students responding positively to its relatable characters and contemporary themes while developing empathy, critical thinking, and strong analytical reading skills.

Year 10 students have been introduced to their new core reading text, *When Our Worlds Collided* by Danielle Jawando, a compelling and relevant novel that explores identity, belonging, racism, friendship, and the complexities of growing up in modern Britain. The novel encourages students to engage thoughtfully with challenging social issues, reflect on prejudice and social responsibility, and consider the impact of choices on individuals and communities. Its direct and emotionally engaging style makes it highly accessible while still offering rich opportunities for deep discussion and analysis.

Both texts play a vital role in developing students' higher-level reading skills as they progress towards GCSE study. Students are encouraged to practise inference, evaluation, and interpretation, analyse character perspectives, explore moral dilemmas, and consider how writers use language and structure to shape meaning. These skills not only strengthen academic performance but also support students in expressing their ideas clearly, engaging in respectful debate, and approaching complex topics with confidence and maturity.

Reading is a powerful vehicle for personal development as well as academic success. Through exposure to diverse voices, experiences, and perspectives, students build empathy, emotional intelligence, and a broader understanding of the world. Together, *Glasgow Boys* and *When Our Worlds Collided* exemplify the power of reading to shape character, deepen social awareness, and foster a lifelong engagement with literature, reflecting the school's commitment to literacy as the foundation of both achievement and personal growth.



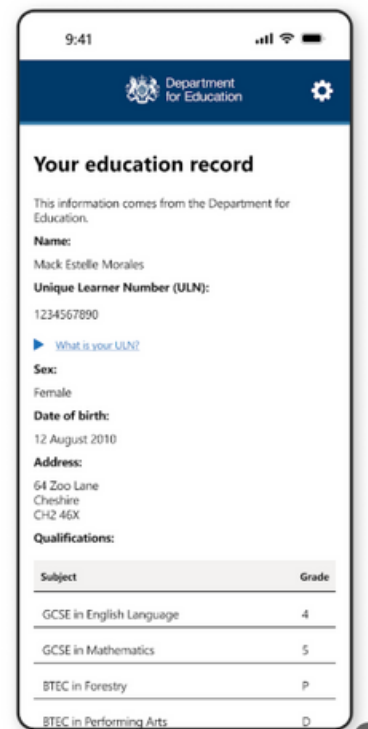
BLUE COAT JOINS NATIONAL PILOT FOR DIGITAL EDUCATION RECORDS

Blue Coat is proud to be taking part in the Department for Education's national pilot of the Digital Education Record for Year 11 pupils. This innovative initiative represents an important step forward in how students access and manage their educational information, giving them secure, lifelong access to verified data about their achievements, including GCSE results and vocational awards, through a mobile app.

The Education Record brings together all essential educational information in one place, supporting pupils as they move from secondary school into sixth form, further education, training, or employment. Having instant, mobile access to official exam results helps to remove barriers during post-16 applications and enrolment, ensuring that no pupil is disadvantaged by lost paperwork or delays in accessing important documentation. Over time, this will reduce reliance on paper certificates and make the transition into the next stage of education smoother and less stressful.

For pupils, the app will automatically update with their GCSE results from 11am on results day, once the Department for Education receives confirmation from awarding bodies. The results shown in the app will match the official paper slips issued by the school, giving students confidence that the information is accurate and fully accredited. This provides reassurance and empowers pupils to take ownership of their educational journey with trusted, official data at their fingertips.

By signing up to this national pilot, Blue Coat is demonstrating its commitment to innovation, digital readiness, and improving outcomes for students. The scheme also strengthens long-term links between schools and pupils by providing robust destination and progression data, helping to support future guidance and development. We are proud to be part of a forward-thinking programme that enhances accessibility, supports post-16 engagement, and equips our pupils with the tools they need to succeed in education and beyond.



SUCCESS IN THE MATHS OLYMPIAD



Congratulations to William (10CU), who has achieved an outstanding result in the recent Maths Olympiad, being awarded a Distinction and progressing through to the next round of the competition. This is a significant achievement and reflects both his mathematical ability and his commitment to developing advanced problem-solving skills.

The Maths Olympiad is a prestigious national competition designed to challenge students beyond the standard curriculum. It focuses on deep mathematical thinking, logical reasoning, and creative problem solving rather than routine calculations. The questions are often multi-step and require students to apply their knowledge in unfamiliar and sophisticated ways, encouraging them to think independently and analytically.

Participants are tested on their ability to interpret complex problems, make logical connections, and present clear, structured solutions. Success in the Olympiad demands resilience, precision, and a genuine enthusiasm for mathematics, as well as the confidence to tackle challenging and unfamiliar material.

William's Distinction and progression to the next round is an excellent accomplishment and highlights the high level of talent within the school. He is to be commended for his dedication and hard work, and the school wishes him every success in the next stage of the competition.

LIVERPOOL CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION LECTURE AT BLUE COAT

Blue Coat was delighted to host a Liverpool Classical Association public lecture in the LRC on Thursday 15 January, welcoming students, staff and around 60 members of the wider community for an enriching evening of Classical scholarship. The event formed part of the Association's annual programme, which aims to promote interest and engagement in the Classical world.

The lecture, 'It's an Old Song: Greek Myth and the Modern Musical', was delivered by Professor Emma Stafford, Professor of Greek Culture at the University of Leeds. Professor Stafford offered a lively and entertaining exploration of how Greek and Roman myths continue to inspire opera and modern musical theatre, demonstrating the enduring relevance of Classical stories in contemporary culture.

Particularly fitting given this year's school production of *Hadestown*, the talk examined the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, drawing links between ancient accounts by Ovid and Virgil and their modern musical retelling. Several cast members attended and found their understanding of the show significantly enriched. The lecture also explored a wide range of works, from Renaissance opera to modern musicals such as Disney's *Hercules*.

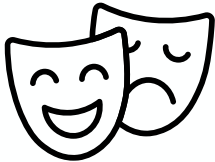
The event provided valuable insight into how Classics connects with literature, drama, music, and popular culture, while also offering a taste of academic-style learning similar to that experienced at university. Hosting events such as this reflects Blue Coat's strong commitment to academic enrichment beyond the classroom, fostering curiosity, cultural awareness, and a lifelong appreciation of Classical studies.



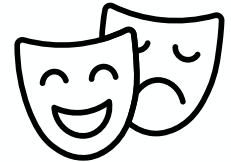
SCHOOL PRODUCTION: HADESTOWN

We are thrilled to announce that this year's school production is Hadestown, a powerful and imaginative retelling of the ancient Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. Set in a world that blends mythology with a modern, jazz and folk-inspired style, Hadestown tells a story of love, hope, sacrifice, and the struggle between freedom and control. It follows Orpheus as he journeys to the underworld in an attempt to rescue Eurydice, while also exploring the story of Hades and Persephone and the balance between power and compassion. The production offers a rich combination of music, drama, and storytelling, making it both emotionally moving and visually striking.

Over the last few weeks, rehearsals have intensified as cast, musicians, and crew have worked with tremendous commitment and professionalism. The standard of performance continues to rise, with students showing exceptional dedication to their roles, whether on stage, in the band, or behind the scenes. Long rehearsals, detailed character work, and careful attention to music and staging have brought the production together, creating a show that promises to be both exciting and memorable. The collaborative spirit and enthusiasm of everyone involved has been a real highlight of the process.



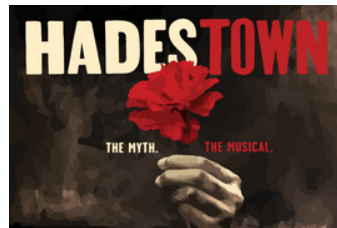
Hadestown will be performed in the final week of this half term:
Monday 9th February 2026 - Thursday 12th February 2026



Tickets will be priced at:
•£10 for adults
•£7 for students/concessions

Tickets can be purchased via Parentmail. and will be available from Wednesday 21st January 2026
If you do not have access to ParentMail but would like to purchase tickets, please email seo@bluecoatschool.org.uk

We strongly encourage families, friends, and members of the wider school community to come along and support what promises to be an outstanding production. This is a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the talent, creativity, and hard work of our students, and we look forward to welcoming you to Hadestown.



OLD BLUE MCKEWEN OWENS SPEAKS AT ECONOMICS SOCIETY

The Economics Society was delighted to welcome Old Blue Mckewen Owens, who delivered an insightful talk on careers in investment banking. His visit provided students with a valuable opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge of the industry and to better understand the pathways into one of the most competitive and fast-paced sectors in finance.

Mckewen explained that investment banking involves advising companies and governments on major financial decisions, such as raising capital, mergers and acquisitions, and strategic investments. He outlined how the role requires strong analytical skills, confidence with data and numbers, clear communication, and the ability to work effectively under pressure. Students were particularly interested in the variety of work involved and the global nature of the profession.

He went on to describe the typical route into investment banking, highlighting the importance of strong academic performance, particularly in subjects such as Mathematics, Economics, and Business. He stressed the value of studying a competitive degree at university, often in subjects such as Economics, Finance, Mathematics, or Engineering, and the significance of securing internships and work experience to build industry knowledge and professional networks. Mckewen also emphasised the importance of extracurricular activities, leadership experience, and demonstrating commitment and resilience.

The session was both informative and inspiring, giving students a realistic understanding of the demands and rewards of a career in investment banking. It reinforced the importance of ambition, preparation, and perseverance, and showed how the skills developed at school can play a crucial role in future success. We are very grateful to Mckewen for giving his time and for motivating our students to aim high and explore exciting career pathways in finance.



SPORTS REPORT

It has been another excellent period for Blue Coat basketball, with strong performances and important progress made across several age groups.

The U16 boys continued their impressive run of form with two dominant victories. They defeated Wright Robinson 74–47 in a confident and well-controlled performance, before following this up with an outstanding 83–33 win against Allerton. These results mean the U16s have now progressed to the last 16 of the English Schools competition, a fantastic achievement that reflects both their quality and consistency throughout the season.

The U19 team were involved in a highly competitive fixture against Xaverian, narrowly losing by just seven points in a closely fought match. Despite the result, their overall campaign has been very successful, with the team progressing through to the preliminary rounds before the play-offs. This represents strong development and resilience against high-level opposition.

In further positive news, the U14 boys have also secured their place in the play-offs, underlining the strength and depth of basketball across the school and the promising future of the programme. These results highlight the continued growth of basketball at Blue Coat and the dedication of players and staff. Congratulations to all teams involved on their hard work, commitment, and achievements.



DUKE OF EDINBURGH BRONZE AWARD SUCCESS

Congratulations to a significant number of Year 10 students who have successfully completed and achieved their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award. This is a fantastic accomplishment that reflects their commitment, resilience, and dedication both in and out of school.

For students who have not yet completed their online eDoE sections, please ensure these are finished as soon as possible so that your achievements can also be recognised and celebrated in assembly.

Well done to everyone involved, we look forward to celebrating even more success very soon.



LAITH (7TO)



JAMES (7RO)



POPPY (8TO)



MARYAM (7TU)



RIHANNA (10RO)



KARLA (8SE)



KEY DATES

Date	Event
Saturday 17th January 2026	Trustee Development Day
Monday 19th January 2026	RCO accreditation visit & organ recital - 1:30pm
Tuesday 20th January 2026	Y11 Parents Evening - 4:15pm
Tuesday 27th January 2026	Y8 Online Parents Evening - 4:15pm
Thursday 29th January 2026	Year 11 Options Afternoon
Monday 9th February - Thursday 12th February 2026	School Show - Hadestown
Friday 13th February 2026	Term ends at 3:30pm
Monday 16th February 2026 - Friday 20th February 2026	Half Term / Ski Trip
Monday 23rd February 2026	Students Return
Tuesday 24th February 2026	Y13 UCAS Next Steps Evening
Tuesday 3rd March 2026	Y13 Parents' Evening - 4:15pm
Friday 6th March 2026	Careers Fair
Tuesday 10th March 2026	Y12 Next Steps Evening
Thursday 12th March 2026	Y11 options deadline
Monday 16th March 2026	Y8 Careers Day
Friday 20th March 2026 - Saturday 21st March 2026	Y9 DofE Bronze practice expedition
Thursday 26th March 2026	Open Day
Thursday 26th March 2026	Term ends at 3:30pm
Friday 27th March 2026 - Friday 10th April 2026	Easter Break

SUPPORT THE EXPERIENCES THAT HELP SHAPE STUDENTS

From clubs and competitions to creative projects and performances, our students gain so much from extracurricular opportunities, and your support keeps them going.

A contribution of just £10 per term (£30 per year) per student makes a real difference. Plus, every £10 donation earns a chance to win £50 in our monthly raffle!

See Parentmail for payment details and give today, together we can keep our enrichment programme rich, varied, and open to all.



The Liverpool Blue Coat School Foundation

DEDICATE A PLAQUE ON OUR CHAPEL PEWS



We invite alumni, families and friends of the school to leave a lasting mark on our community by sponsoring a personalised plaque on a chapel pew.

For £100, you can dedicate a plaque in your name or in memory of a former student, becoming a meaningful part of the school's history for generations to come. This is a unique opportunity to honour a loved one, celebrate your connection to the school, and support the ongoing care of our cherished chapel.



Email: foundation@bluecoatschool.org.uk for more information



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

AI-ENABLED SCAMS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Artificial intelligence (AI) is quickly becoming a widely used tool, with lots of positive applications being discussed and developed. Sadly, however, as with most technology tools, there are those who will seek to use it for malicious and dishonest practices, with children and other vulnerable groups particularly at risk.

PHISHING EMAILS: BETTER & QUICKER

Phishing scams – emails designed to trick people into handing over login details or money – are not new, and do not rely on AI; however, AI has made them far more dangerous. Criminals can now generate highly convincing emails at speed, mimicking an organisation's tone, branding and language with ease. This makes phishing attempts harder to spot, especially for young people who may not yet know what to look out for.

ONLINE MARKETPLACE FRAUD

Online marketplaces are now a common way to buy and sell everything, from second-hand clothes to cars. Criminals are exploiting this by using AI to enhance or completely fake product photos and videos, and pressure buyers into paying deposits or full amounts upfront. These tactics are becoming more advanced, making it vital to pause, check, and verify the sale before parting with any money.

VOICE IMPERSONATION

AI can now realistically impersonate a person's voice when given a small sample of someone's speech patterns. This is especially concerning where voice has been enabled as an alternative to password-based logins. One such example was the use of AI deepfake audio as part of a fake kidnapping scam: the criminals used an AI voice clone of a 15-year-old to convince her parents she had been kidnapped and elicit a ransom.

EMPLOYMENT SCAMS

Using AI, criminals can create fake online profiles that seem completely real. These synthetic identities can chat with young people about fake job offers, asking for money to secure a visa or paperwork. In 2025, The Guardian reported a scam targeting young people with promises of quick cash, posing as TikTok staff.

INFLUENCER & INVESTMENT SCAMS

AI tools now make it easy to manipulate video and audio, with technology available that can generate entirely fake content using the likeness of celebrities or influencers. Criminals are using this to create convincing videos of well-known figures promoting fake products or services, which young people can be particularly susceptible to. Cryptocurrency scams are a common tactic, luring people into investing in schemes that do not exist. Once payment is made, the criminal simply disappears with the money.

ROMANCE SCAMS & SEXTORTION

AI chat bots can now mimic real conversations, often accompanied with realistic fake photos and videos, which makes it easier for criminals to build trust with young people – among other things, this can lead to fraud or sextortion. In 2024, the NCA's CEOP Safety Centre received 380 reports of sextortion. Alarmingly, in the first five months alone, police received an average of 117 monthly reports involving under-18s, showing how serious and targeted this threat has become.

Advice for Parents & Educators

THINK CRITICALLY

The key to addressing the increasing growth of AI-enabled scams is to think critically and show caution. Inform children that if something is too good to be true, then it probably is. Encourage them to stop and carefully consider what they are seeing and reading before taking any action. For example, if a social media post expresses urgency, proceed with caution; if content seems unusual, even from a known person, it may be that their account has been hacked.

USE TRUSTWORTHY SITES AND SERVICES

Online marketplaces are useful when buying and selling items; however, where possible, encourage children to use reputable companies and their online shopping sites. These companies are likely to have more sophisticated cyber-security safeguards in place, underpinned by consumer legislation, enabling them to control how products and services are displayed and traded on their sites.

SEEK TO VERIFY

Criminals may breach an influencer's account or spread misinformation and fake content; however, their approach will generally be limited to a single account, site or service. Where possible, show children how to verify information to check its legitimacy before proceeding. Small actions, such as phoning the person who is the subject of a suspicious email, or checking content via an individual or company website or social media sites can make the difference. The greater the risk, the more effort we should expend to confirm whether the information presented is true or false.

REPORT IT

As the sophistication of scams increases, the likelihood of being tricked by them also increases, especially when not paying attention or acting quickly. It is important that young people know how to report incidents as they happen. Show children how to report their concerns to the social media site, Action Fraud, banks, and other individuals or organisations linked or involved. If you are unsure of the most effective reporting channel, contact Action Fraud.

Meet Our Expert

Gary Handerson is the Director of IT at Millfield, a large independent boarding school in Somerset, as well as a member of the Digital Futures Group, Vice Chair of the ISC Digital Advisory Group and an Association of Network Managers in Education (ANME) Ambassador.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College