

# THE BLUE COAT SCHOOL WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

## BLUE COAT SCHOOL PRESENTS HADESTOWN DON'T MISS THIS YEAR'S SCHOOL MUSICAL!

Rehearsals are currently underway for Hadestown, this year's school musical at Blue Coat School Liverpool. Cast, musicians, and crew are working hard to bring this ambitious production to life, showing outstanding dedication and commitment as the performance continues to develop.

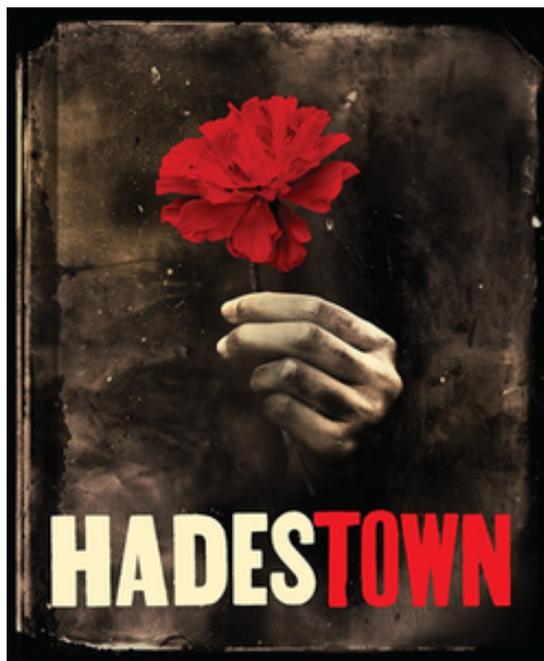
Hadestown is based on the ancient Greek myths of Orpheus and Eurydice and Hades and Persephone. At its heart, the story follows Orpheus, a gifted musician, as he journeys into the underworld to rescue his beloved Eurydice from Hades's realm. His music and hope inspire others, but the path ahead is filled with challenges, choices, and sacrifices. The tale explores themes of love, courage, freedom, and the struggle to create hope in difficult times, making it a rich and dramatic experience for performers and audiences alike.

Performances will take place in Shirley Hall from Monday 9th February to Thursday 12th February 2026, with shows beginning at 7:00pm each evening. This four-night run will give friends, family, and the wider school community multiple opportunities to come together and celebrate the creativity and hard work of our pupils.

Tickets are available via ParentMail or by contacting the school via email, in line with the school's usual communication platforms. Audiences are encouraged to secure their seats early, as Hadestown promises an unforgettable evening of music, drama, and impressive performances from our talented cast and crew. The school musical is a highlight of the Blue Coat calendar and reflects our school's vibrant performing arts culture.

Participation in productions such as Hadestown provides students with invaluable experience in teamwork, performance, and creative expression, while also bringing the whole community together in shared celebration and support.

We look forward to welcoming you to Hadestown—an evening of brilliant music, compelling storytelling, and an inspiring showcase of student talent.



## BLUE COAT BIKEABILITY: BUILDING SAFER, CONFIDENT CYCLISTS

Bikeability is an important part of our commitment to student safety, independence, and healthy living. It equips pupils with the skills and confidence they need to cycle safely and responsibly on the roads. In a time where active travel is increasingly encouraged, Bikeability plays a key role in helping students make informed, safe, and sustainable choices about how they travel.

The programme has been delivered through structured, practical sessions led by trained instructors. Pupils begin by developing control and awareness in a safe environment before progressing to real-road situations. They learn essential skills such as starting and stopping safely, signalling, positioning on the road, understanding junctions, and responding to traffic. The training is progressive and supportive, ensuring that every student can build confidence at their own pace.

Bikeability is not just about riding a bike; it is about developing awareness, responsibility, and decision-making. Pupils learn how to assess risks, communicate clearly with other road users, and take ownership of their own safety. These are life skills that extend far beyond cycling and help prepare students for wider independence.

The programme is important because it promotes physical health, mental wellbeing, and environmental responsibility. Encouraging cycling supports active lifestyles, reduces reliance on cars, and contributes to a more sustainable future. It also empowers students by giving them the confidence to travel independently and safely within their community.



## INTERMEDIATE MATHS CHALLENGE: WISHING OUR ENTRANTS THE BEST OF LUCK

We are delighted to announce that over 100 pupils from Blue Coat will be taking part in the Intermediate Maths Challenge this year. This is a fantastic achievement in itself and reflects the enthusiasm, commitment, and high level of mathematical talent across our school. We wish all students the very best of luck and commend them for having the confidence to challenge themselves.

The Intermediate Maths Challenge is a national competition designed to test problem-solving skills, logical reasoning, and mathematical creativity. It is not about memorising formulas, but about thinking deeply, making connections, and approaching unfamiliar problems with confidence. The paper consists of multiple-choice questions that gradually increase in difficulty, encouraging students to manage their time carefully and apply both accuracy and strategy.

The challenge rewards clear thinking and resilience. Early questions build confidence, while later ones stretch even the most able mathematicians, pushing them to explore new ideas and methods. Certificates and awards are given at different levels, celebrating achievement and recognising excellence, with the highest performers progressing to further rounds.

Taking part in the Intermediate Maths Challenge is important because it develops skills that go far beyond the classroom. It builds perseverance, independence, and analytical thinking, all of which are essential for success in mathematics and many other subjects. It also helps students grow in confidence, showing them that they can tackle complex problems and learn from challenge.

We are incredibly proud of everyone who has entered. By participating, students are demonstrating curiosity, ambition, and a willingness to push their own boundaries. Whatever the outcome, taking part in the Intermediate Maths Challenge is an achievement in itself and an excellent example of academic courage and commitment to excellence.



# RAMADAN AT BLUE COAT: A TIME OF REFLECTION, COMMUNITY, AND TOGETHERNESS

Ramadan is a special and significant time for Muslims around the world. It is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and is observed as a period of fasting, reflection, prayer, and generosity. This year, Ramadan offers another opportunity for our Blue Coat community to come together, learn from one another, and celebrate the values of compassion, respect, and unity that lie at the heart of our school.

During Ramadan, Muslims fast from dawn (Suhoor) until sunset (Iftar). This means no food or drink during daylight hours, and a focus on self-discipline, patience, and gratitude. Fasting is not only about abstaining from food; it is also about developing empathy for those who are less fortunate, strengthening moral character, and deepening spiritual awareness. Ramadan is a time to increase acts of kindness, charity, and service to others.

One of the most important moments of the day during Ramadan is Iftar, the meal that breaks the fast at sunset. Traditionally, the fast is opened with dates and water, followed by a meal shared with family, friends, and the wider community. Iftar is a time of joy, gratitude, and togetherness, where people gather to celebrate the end of the day's fast and connect with one another.

We are delighted to invite the entire Blue Coat community to our Blue Coat Iftar on:

**Thursday 5th March 2026  
5:00-7:30pm**

Tickets on sale very soon.

This event is open to everyone: parents, pupils, staff, and families of all faiths.

The Iftar is a celebration of community and an opportunity to experience and learn about an important tradition in Islam in a warm and welcoming environment.

At the Iftar, you can expect:

- A short explanation of what Ramadan and fasting mean to Muslims
- The breaking of the fast at sunset
- Shared food and refreshments
- A chance to talk, connect, and celebrate our diverse community

## Iftar Menu

### Starters

Vegetable samosas  
Lamb samosas  
Lamb seekh kebabs  
Chicken tikka

### Mains

Chicken pilau rice  
Lamb curry  
Butter chicken

### Vegetarian Mains

Plain pilau rice  
Daal makhani  
Vegetable curry

### Sundries

Naan  
Yogurt sauce



The Blue Coat Iftar is not just about food; it is about friendship, understanding, and working together. It reflects our shared commitment to building a school community based on respect, inclusion, and cooperation. By coming together, we show how different cultures and faiths enrich our school and help us work towards a better, more compassionate world.

We look forward to welcoming you and sharing this special evening together at Blue Coat.



## SUPPORTING LIVERPOOL MUSLIM OUTREACH SOCIETY: “NOT FOR ONESELF, BUT FOR ALL” IN ACTION

During this Ramadan, and at our Blue Coat Iftar, we will be raising money for the Liverpool Muslim Outreach Society (LMOS), an organisation whose work powerfully reflects our school motto: Not for oneself, but for all.

Liverpool Muslim Outreach Society is a local charity dedicated to serving the wider community, regardless of faith, background, or circumstance. Their work is rooted in compassion, dignity, and social responsibility. They support vulnerable individuals and families through food distribution, emergency aid, homelessness support, community meals, and outreach projects that aim to reduce hardship and bring people together.

At the heart of their mission is the belief that a strong society is built when people care for one another. They do not ask who you are or where you come from; they focus on what you need. This spirit of service mirrors exactly what we strive to teach and live by at Blue Coat.

Our school motto, Not for oneself, but for all, reminds us that education is not only about personal success, but about responsibility to the wider world. Supporting LMOS allows our community to:

- Show empathy and solidarity with those in need
- Actively contribute to positive change in our city
- Demonstrate that service and generosity cross all cultural and religious boundaries

Fundraising at the Blue Coat Iftar is therefore about more than raising money. It is about standing together as one community, united by shared values of kindness, fairness, and collective responsibility. It shows our pupils that real impact comes when we look beyond ourselves and work for the benefit of others.



## WHY THE DfE IS EXPECTING SCHOOLS TO BE PHONE-FREE

The Department for Education (DfE) is expecting schools to become phone-free environments in order to support pupils' learning, wellbeing, and personal development. This expectation is based on growing evidence that mobile phones can be a major distraction in school and can negatively affect concentration, behaviour, and social interaction.

Mobile phones make it harder for students to focus fully on lessons. Notifications, messages, and the temptation to check social media can interrupt thinking and reduce engagement with learning. By removing phones from daily school use, classrooms become calmer, more focused spaces where pupils can give their full attention to their teachers and their work.

The DfE is also concerned about the impact of phones on mental health and wellbeing. Constant access to social media can increase anxiety, pressure, and comparison, and can make it harder for young people to switch off. A phone-free school day gives students a break from online pressures and helps them build healthier relationships with technology.

Another key reason is safeguarding. Limiting phone use reduces risks associated with inappropriate content, online bullying, and misuse of images or videos. It helps schools create a safer environment where pupils are protected and supported.

Phone-free policies also encourage stronger social skills. Without phones, pupils are more likely to talk to one another, form friendships, and develop communication and cooperation. Break times become opportunities for real interaction, play, and community building.

By moving towards phone-free environments, schools are helping pupils develop focus, resilience, and healthy habits. It supports a culture where learning comes first, wellbeing is protected, and students are encouraged to engage fully with the world around them.



## BLUE COAT YEAR 11 OPTIONS AFTERNOON

On Thursday 29th January 2026, Blue Coat held its Year 11 Options Afternoon, an important event designed to support pupils as they began planning their next steps in education and preparing for progression into Sixth Form or other post-16 pathways. This was a key moment for students to explore future subjects, ask questions, and make informed decisions about their options and post-GCSE pathways.

The afternoon gave pupils and parents the opportunity to meet subject teachers, Sixth Form staff, and pastoral teams to discuss available courses, entry requirements, and progression routes. This was especially valuable for those considering applying to Blue Coat Sixth Form, where a broad and academically rich timetable supports further success. Guidance was available to help pupils reflect on their strengths, interests, and ambitions, ensuring that decisions were based on both passion and potential. Sixth Form tutors and subject leaders were on hand to answer questions about courses such as A-Levels, Extended Projects, and enrichment opportunities.

For Year 11 pupils wishing to apply to Blue Coat Sixth Form, the application process is already underway. External applications opened on 12th January 2026 and the deadline for submission is Friday 13th February 2026. After applications are reviewed, shortlisted students will be invited to attend a short interview before August 2026. All application forms and supporting documents—such as predicted grades, school reference, and attendance records—must be submitted by this deadline to be considered.

Choosing options and planning for post-16 study is a significant step, and this event is designed to ensure that every student feels confident, supported, and well-informed. We strongly encourage all Year 11 students and their families to attend. Your engagement is vital in helping pupils make choices that set them on the right path for success and personal development.

Further details about the Sixth Form application process—including entry criteria, course lists, and support materials—are available in the Sixth Form section of the Blue Coat School Liverpool website, where pupils and parents can access guides, FAQs, and contact information for additional support.

The Options Afternoon reflects our commitment to supporting students not just academically, but in preparing them for the next stage of their journey. By engaging with this process and exploring opportunities like Blue Coat Sixth Form, students are empowered to take ownership of their future and make choices that align with their goals.



## STUDENT COUNCIL MEETINGS: SHAPING THE FUTURE OF OUR SCHOOL

Recently, Mr Sexton, Headteacher, met with the Student Council from each key stage to discuss issues that matter most to pupils and to explore ideas for improving school life. These meetings gave students the opportunity to share their views, raise concerns, and contribute directly to decisions that help shape the future of our school.

With Sixth Form students, discussions focused on developing new learning and study spaces, improving printer access, and investigating a wider range of food options. These conversations highlighted the importance of providing facilities that support independent study, wellbeing, and the daily practical needs of older students as they prepare for life beyond school.

At Key Stage 3 and 4, pupils spoke enthusiastically about introducing new clubs and events, increasing opportunities for STEM activities, and making recycling a stronger focus across the school. There was also discussion about improving breakfast and breaktime food options, ensuring they are both varied and supportive of healthy choices.

The Student Council plays a vital role in developing our school and setting future priorities. By working closely with school leadership, students help ensure that decisions reflect the real experiences and needs of the school community. Their ideas show creativity, responsibility, and a genuine commitment to making Blue Coat an even better place to learn and grow.

These meetings reinforce how important student voice is to our school. When pupils are actively involved in planning and development, they gain confidence, leadership skills, and a sense of ownership in their environment. Together, we continue to build a school that listens, adapts, and moves forward with the ideas and energy of its students at the heart of every decision.

Last Friday marked an exciting milestone for our Year 10 STEM students as two teams of four – Amartya, Jing Chen, Mohamed, Nathan, Darcey, Malika, Lauren and Cara – travelled to Cronton Sixth Form College to take part in the annual Mond Tournament. They competed against students from 20 other schools in a fast-paced and highly challenging STEM competition.

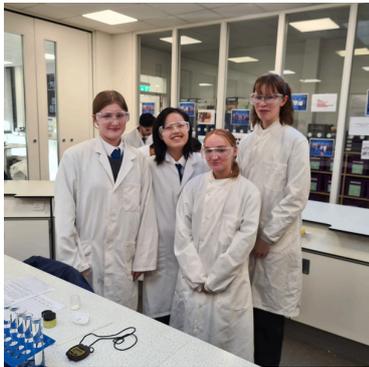
Named after Ludvig Mond, the 19th-century chemist with strong local connections, the tournament is designed to test students' problem-solving skills across a wide range of disciplines, including Physics, Biochemistry, Mathematics and Engineering. Throughout the day, teams were required to think analytically, work collaboratively and apply their subject knowledge under pressure.

Our students rose to the challenge with outstanding enthusiasm, resilience and teamwork. They demonstrated not only strong academic ability but also excellent communication and leadership skills, embodying exactly what STEM learning is about.

A special congratulations goes to the girls' team, who achieved the highest Maths score in the entire competition – an exceptional accomplishment and a fantastic example of excellence in action. Their success is a powerful reminder of the vital role girls play in STEM and the impact of confidence and determination in competitive environments.

The day was a brilliant blend of challenge, discovery and achievement, rounded off perfectly with a well-earned pizza reward. Experiences like this inspire curiosity, build ambition and help shape the future scientists, engineers and innovators of tomorrow.

An incredibly proud moment for our school and a celebration of what hard work, teamwork and passion for learning can achieve.



## CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS 2026

We are excited to invite the Blue Coat community to come together and join our Chinese community in celebrating Chinese New Year 2026. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn, share, and celebrate one of the most important festivals in Chinese culture, while strengthening our sense of community and togetherness.

Each Chinese New Year is associated with an animal from the Chinese Zodiac, which follows a 12-year cycle. The zodiac animal is believed to influence the character and energy of the year, encouraging people to reflect on the qualities they hope to develop, such as courage, kindness, perseverance, or wisdom. In 2026, we welcome the Year of the Horse, which begins on 17th February. The Horse symbolises energy, enthusiasm, confidence, and progress, and is associated with ambition, independence, and forward movement.

Chinese New Year is traditionally celebrated with family gatherings and special meals, red decorations symbolising good luck and prosperity, red envelopes for good fortune, lion dances, music, storytelling, and preparing homes for a fresh start. At Blue Coat, our celebrations will reflect this joyful spirit, with fun cultural activities, traditional crafts, opportunities to learn more about the Year of the Horse, and delicious food to share and enjoy together.

We are delighted to host our Chinese New Year Celebration Event in school on Thursday 26th February, from 3.30–5.30pm. Pupils, families, and staff are warmly invited to attend and take part in this vibrant celebration.

These celebrations are important because they promote understanding, respect, and appreciation of different cultures. They allow pupils and families to experience traditions that may be new to them, while giving our Chinese community the chance to share something deeply meaningful to their heritage. By celebrating the Year of the Horse at Blue Coat, we highlight our commitment to working hard, moving forward together, and supporting one another—building a stronger, more inclusive community that truly lives by the values of ambition, cooperation, and striving not for oneself, but for all.



## SPORTING SUCCESSES ACROSS THE SCHOOL

### Badminton

Huge congratulations to our KS3 boys' badminton team, who have been crowned Merseyside Champions! Their outstanding performance has also secured them a place in the regional finals—an incredible achievement and a fantastic opportunity to compete at the next level. Well done to all involved!

### Basketball

A brilliant result for Blue Coat U19s, who defeated Northampton U19s 78–68. This victory means our team is now through to the play-offs, and we are extremely proud of their hard work and determination.

### Handball

Our U14 Boys A & B teams took part in the U14 National County League on Sunday. The teams showed real resilience and competitive spirit throughout the day.

#### U14 Boys A

- Beat Newcastle 17–14
- Lost to Trafford 21–7

#### U14 Boys B

- Lost to Newcastle 16–6
- Lost to Kingsmead Hawks 15–6

Well done to both teams for representing the school so positively and for their continued commitment to the sport.



**HONGYANG (7T0)**

**MARYAM (7TU)**

**JAMES (7R0)**

**KARLA (8SE)**

**JAMES (7R0)**

**MICHELLE (8TU)**

## KEY DATES

Date	Event
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
<b>Thursday 26th February 2026</b>	<b>Chinese New Year Celebration Event - 3.30-5.30pm</b>
Tuesday 3rd March 2026	Y13 Parents' Evening - 4:15pm
<b>Thursday 5th March 2026</b>	<b>Community Iftar - 5:00-7:30pm</b>
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

**\*new event on the calendar**



## 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](mailto:foundation@bluecoatschool.org.uk) for more information





It can be challenging for parents and carers to know whether children are spending too much time on their devices. Furthermore, it's even more of a challenge to know whether a child is addicted to the internet and social media. As technology is becoming more pervasive, children and young people are experiencing tech-related dependencies. Do we as parents and carers have the knowledge to identify and support children and young people who may be developing an addiction to their devices?



# What parents need to know about SCREEN ADDICTION



## HEALTH & WELLBEING

Children as young as 13 are attending 'smartphone rehab' following growing concerns over screen time. There are now help centers in the UK which deal with screen addiction for children and adults showing the seriousness of device addiction. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has officially recognised gaming addiction as a modern disease. The condition was confirmed as part of their International Classification of Diseases (ICD) which serves as an international standard for diagnosing and treating health conditions.

## LACK OF SLEEP

7 out of 10 children said they had missed out on sleep because of their online habits and 60% said they had neglected school work as a result. It is important that children get the sleep they need in order to focus the next day.

## LOSS OF INTEREST IN OTHER THINGS

Your child may become less interested in anything that does not include their device. You may notice that your child is missing school time and generally being less engaged with other activities in the home. It is important to discuss this with your child as soon as you notice a behaviour change.



## CONFIDENCE, SUPPORT & ADVICE

The Children's Commissioner report 'Life in Likes', explored how children aged 8-11 are using social media today. It showed that children are using their devices to speak to their online friends about their problems and seek acceptance and support, removing face to face interactions.

## APPS CAN BE ADDICTIVE

Apps have been designed with 'psychological tricks' to constantly keep grabbing your attention. One example of this is on the app Snapchat, where you can gain 'streaks' when interacting with your friends. If you don't respond, you lose the streak. This addictive nature of apps aims to engage children and keep them coming back for more.



## Top Tips for Parents



## LIMIT SCREEN TIME

In today's digital age, technology is an important part of a child's development so completely banning them from their device will mean they are missing out on a lot, including conversations and communication with their friends. Rather than banning them from using their devices, we suggest setting a screen time limit. Work out what you think is a suitable and healthy amount of time for your child to be on their device per week. Remember that your child may need to use devices for their school homework so only set screen limits on recreational time on their device. Once you have established this, have the conversation with them to discuss why you are implementing a screen limit. There will be others in your child's friendship group who will not have screen limits set and will be sending messages when they do not have access to their phones.

## LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Children model their behavior on their peers, so if their parents are constantly on their device, they will see this as acceptable. Try limiting your own screen time and follow the same rules you have set for them. If you have asked your child to not use their device at the table, make sure you don't. Try setting house rules that the whole family abide by.

## REMOVE DEVICES FROM THEIR BEDROOM

Setting a rule about removing devices from bedrooms will help your child to get the sleep they need and be more focussed the next day at school. 20% of teenagers said that they wake up to check their social network accounts on their devices. Even by having a device switched off in their bedroom, they may be tempted to check for notifications.

## LESS TIME MEANS LESS EXPOSURE

There are many risks associated with devices, such as cyberbullying, grooming, sexting, viewing inappropriate content etc. Less time spent on a screen means that a child will be less exposed to these risks.

## MOBILE-FREE MEAL TIMES

Have you tried to settle your child by giving them a tablet at the dinner table or restaurant? This may seem like a quick fix to calm them down but in reality, it is encouraging them to use their device as a distraction from conversation and dealing with their emotions. We suggest removing all technology from the dinner table and having conversations with your family about how their day has been.

## ENCOURAGE ALTERNATE ACTIVITIES



It may seem like an obvious solution, but encouraging children to play with their friends, read a book, or playing outdoors will help them realise they can have fun without their device. Playing football, trampolining, camping, going for a walk or swimming are all healthy replacements for screen time. Try to join them in their Outdoor activities to show your support.

## STATISTICS

**52%** of children aged 3-4 go online for nearly **9hrs** a week

**82%** of children aged 5-7 go online for nearly **9.5hrs** a week

**93%** of children aged 8-11 go online for nearly **13.5hrs** a week

**99%** of children aged 12-15 go online for nearly **20.5hrs** a week

Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report 2018