

Reading Girls' School



Candidate Information

Address: Northumberland Ave, Reading RG2 7PY

Phone: 0118 986 1336

Email: admin@readinggirsschool.net





Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in this post at Reading Girls' School. Reading Girls' School is a dynamic, supportive and hardworking community, ambitious for all our students, providing the highest quality of education. We are committed to engaging, inspiring and motivating students in their learning. We place children at the heart of what we do. We are committed not only to their academic success but also to ensuring that they receive a holistic education, enabling them to pursue their talents, and develop as young adults, through the varied opportunities available to them.

I have the pleasure of leading a creative and committed staff body, both in the teaching and support staff, who are all very proud of the school and are driven by a moral sense of purpose. Staff are very supportive towards each other, and have a strong sense of collegiality, with a good sense of humour. As a result, Reading Girls' school is an exceptional place to work.

Our students are our unique selling point. Their enthusiasm for the school, and their support and participation in every aspect of school life, make them extraordinary. Our Senior Student Leadership Team works closely with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure the school continues to thrive and succeed. Our Ofsted Report (Nov 2021) judged the school to be Good with Outstanding features. Behaviour and Attitudes was deemed to be outstanding, notably as a result of the 'kindness and care' shown to each other, and as a result they are unreservedly very 'proud' of their school. The atmosphere both in and out of class is one of calm and a sense of purpose, and lessons proceed without disruption to learning.

While our students are at the centre of what we do, we are also heavily invested in our staff. If you are appointed here, you will find that we fully support your professional development and career aspirations.

As Principal of this exciting and forward-thinking school, I encourage you to come and visit and see for yourself what makes RGS such a unique place to work. Please also visit our website and peruse through our back editions of our Newsletter, which will give you a greater insight of our many achievements. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me via my Personal Assistant, Ms Ms Clacey (jclacey@readinggirlsschool.net) and I will be happy to answer any questions.

I look forward to meeting you and to receiving your application.

Ms Marika Farrugia

Principal



Ofsted, November 2021

A **GOOD** school with **OUTSTANDING** features

Reading Girls' School is an all girls secondary school that is **'performing in the top 1% of all schools nationally'** (Department for Education, November 2019) and was graded with an overall effectiveness of **'GOOD'** with **'OUTSTANDING'** features by Ofsted in November 2021.

The **quality of education** provided to all our pupils is **GOOD**, due to a curriculum that is **"carefully planned and sequenced across the school."** (Ofsted, November 2021)

The **behaviour and attitudes** of pupils is **OUTSTANDING**, due to a **"highly effective and consistently implemented behaviour policy."** (Ofsted, November 2021)

The **personal development** provided to our pupils is **GOOD**, where **"pupils are provided with many opportunities"** (Ofsted, November 2021)

The **leadership and management** of the school is **OUTSTANDING**, where **"school leaders and trustees are driven by a determination to create a school that inspires their pupils."** (Ofsted, November 2021)

Other key features include:

"Pupils are very proud of their school. They are keen to achieve academically and are exceptionally ambitious for their futures."

"Everyone recognises the school's very high expectations and the extensive improvements that have been made over recent years."

"Pupils appreciate the dedicated, specialist teaching they receive. Alongside this, pupils are confident to ask for any help and support they may need to achieve their very best."

"Bullying is very rare because pupils treat each other with kindness and care."

"Pupils are keen to come to school and learning is rarely disrupted."

"Staff and pupils value how much they can learn from their diverse school community. They respect each other's views and nurture everyone's differences."



Reading Girls' School

About our School

Reading Girls' School is a partially selective secondary girls' school for students aged between 11 and 16. Currently, we do not have a sixth form.

We have 696 students on roll. However, our new school building has the capacity for up to 1000 students. We are continuing to grow our student numbers, which consequently results in the demand for more teaching staff.

One of our greatest strengths is the multi—cultured society that permeates the school community. We welcome students from a range of ethnical backgrounds. Currently 25% of our cohort is White British and the other 75% a mixture of different ethnic backgrounds.

Our girls are dedicated to their academic achievement. As a result, behaviour for learning within the classroom is exemplary. This is also evident in the continued improvement in examination grades and being '***the best performing school in Reading LA.***'

Our vision is that Reading Girls' School is regarded by our local community as their secondary school of choice. Our GCSE examination results have improved again in 2019 (the most recent GCSEs that took place) with a progress 8 figure of +0.96 (well above national average) and 7% of our students are in the top 2% nationally for English and maths gaining Grade 9s.

At Reading Girls' School, we have a strong commitment to high standards for students and staff. We are a diverse and dynamic school with a reputation for providing a caring environment where students can succeed; our girls have a real enthusiasm for learning and take pride in their school. As a teaching team we are highly qualified and all share a passionate belief that every student in our school matters.

Reading Girls' School is an Academy which is part of the successful Thames Learning Trust. In October 2016 we moved into our new school building which has provided us with a 21st century learning environment.



Our students, staff and parents recognise that the provision provided to our pupils is **exceptional**. 92% of students enjoy learning at Reading Girls' School. 96% of parents would recommend Reading Girls' School to another parent and 100% of teachers confirmed that behaviour in lessons and around the school is **good or better**. Therefore, we encourage you to look at our most recent Ofsted report, which can be found on our website.

The school came under new leadership in 2017, and since then the number of students, requesting to come to Reading Girls' School has **tripled** due to our outstanding outcomes for students in year 11. In September 2019 and 2020, we welcomed an additional 210 students into year 7. This September we anticipate being at full capacity with 210 students joining year 7.

August 2019, saw the schools best ever exam results:

- **Progress 8 Score of 1.0 (IDSR, 2019)**
- **15% of students gained 8 grades 7-9**
- **22% of students gained 5 or more grades 7-9**
- **51% of students gained 8 or more grades 9-4 including English and Maths**
- **74% of students gained 5 or more grades 9-4 including English and Maths**
- **78% of students gained 5 or more grades 9 – 4**
- **Every student gained at least 7 grades 9-1**

The **Guardian school guide 2019** positioned us **second** best school in Reading, sandwiched between the two Grammar Schools.

Reading Girls' School was the only school in the UK to be shortlisted as finalist for the **Learning Awards "2021 COVID Champion"** alongside national and internal organisations for our provision during the pandemic in 2020. In addition Reading Girls' School was shortlisted as a finalist for the **2021 School of the Year Award**.

Unique features of the school are:

- The **pupils** - 95% report that **behaviour is very good** (student survey, December 2021) and 95% **feel safe** at school (student survey, December 2021)
- Our **new school day** – by the time they leave year 11, our pupils will have had the equivalent of six years education in five without reducing school holidays
- **Deeper applied learning** – we have longer blocks of learning time that allows us to visit industry or host industry guest to co-deliver lessons
- **Small year 11 class sizes** – we reduce year 11 class sizes to 12-15 pupils.
- **STEM** – students in year 7 and 8 have fortnightly STEM days built into their curriculum.
- **Personal development and RE days** – we have 3 personal development and 5 RE days throughout the academic year during which students receive PSHE education delivered by external professionals.



Living and working in Reading

Reading has been named as one of the best places to live, work and play in the UK.

Reading's location and good transport network make it an excellent place to live and explore our local area. **We are only 25 minutes from London and benefit from a cheaper cost of living**

Reading has good road links with easy access to the M3 and M4 motorways, two railway stations (25 minute journey to London) and easy access to London Gatwick and Heathrow airports.

Reading Girls' School is situated in South Reading, very close to the town centre, railway and bus stations. Whilst many staff live in Reading, others are from surrounding areas.



Early Careers Teachers at Reading Girls' School

Our school provides excellent support for new teachers starting out on their careers.

We offer a range of benefits to new teachers, including:

- an outstanding induction programme for ECTs with an experienced supportive mentor for each ECT
- outstanding results, from our well-motivated students
- an IT rich learning environment
- high quality facilities in our newly built school
- your own classroom and on-site parking
- an Open Door policy from an approachable Senior Leadership Team for guidance and advice

With the introduction of the Early Years Careers Framework, from September 2021, all ECTs at Reading Girls' School will receive:

- **Length of support** – 2 years
- **Timetable reduction** – 10% reduction in year one and 5% reduction in year two
- **Content** – Induction will be based on the Early Career Framework (ECF)
- **Mentor** – A mentor for two years of support and weekly mentor meetings
- **Assessments** - Marked against the teacher standards. Two form assessments supported by regular progress reviews
- **Pay** – Still be able to progress on the pay scale as current arrangements allow, both during and after induction
- **An appropriate body** – ensuring you receive statutory entitlement, are fairly and consistently assess, and receive a programme of support and training based on the ECF

Some of our NQT's described the benefit of the support they have received in their first year at Reading Girls' School:

"Reading Girls School has been an incredibly supportive school for my NQT year, particularly given that the pandemic interrupted my PGCE. The NQT team along with my department have provided consistent aid and support when required. We have had regular group insets to provide direction and additional information and staff are exceedingly friendly and always happy to provide assistance whenever I have asked for it." **Miss Connolly, English NQT**

"As an NQT, it can be a daunting time when trying to find a school that suits you, whilst also searching for one that you know will give you the support you need, to help you become a better practitioner. At RGS, not only have I had regular meetings with my mentor, but also as an NQT cohort we have had focused CPD sessions to help us improve certain teaching techniques (e.g. questioning strategies). The support that has been offered has enabled me to focus on improving my practice and has allowed me to make the most of the additional PPA time given during my NQT year. One of the key attributes of working at RGS has been being supported by a stringent whole school behaviour policy which the pupils know and respect – without a doubt this has enabled me to concentrate on my teaching and ensure my pupils are progressing in their learning." **Miss Tierney, History NQT**

"I completed my teacher training at Reading Girls School and am currently completing my NQT here. Reading Girls School has a well-developed CPD series specifically for NQTs that runs throughout the year. The school also has a record of accomplishment for supporting teachers through their NQT

year. This support and guidance is available from the other NQTs on the course, teacher who previously completed the course, experienced supervisors within departments and on the Senior Leadership Team. Reading Girls School is a great school to train at and also to continue your career."

Mr Routledge, Science NQT

"I have had an extremely positive experience as NQT at Reading Girls' School. As someone from outside the UK, I did not know what to expect. I have to say, the level of support I have received has been excellent. Even before lessons started in September, the school was in contact to make the transition from studying to teaching as smooth as possible. The CPD programme, along with a dedicated mentor, has meant that I have had the opportunity to further develop my teaching practice in a nurturing environment. To top it all off, the pupils are fantastic. I truly believe that if you can teach anywhere, it's here." **Mr Delaney, Science NQT**

If you require any further information about being an ECT at Reading Girls' School please do not hesitate to contact either Mr Alex Smith (Assistant Principal, asmith@readinggirlsschool.net) and / or Mrs Nicola Ockberby (Head of Geography and ITTCO, nockerby@readinggirlsschool.net).



Professional development

We are committed to staff continuous professional development (CPD). Ofsted highlighted that *“Leaders consistently prioritise the professional development of their staff. This includes a focus on making sure teachers have the most up-to-date and relevant specialist knowledge in their subject areas.”*

All teaching staff are encouraged to attend **subject knowledge external CPD** throughout the academic year. We also have a bespoke internal **CPD twilight programme**, focusing on curriculum implementation and pedagogy. ECT's also receive a separate **ECT CPD programme** supporting them throughout their ECT year.

Staff are also strongly encouraged and supported to complete the national professional qualifications which include:

- **Leading Teacher Development** - for teachers who have, or are aspiring to have, responsibilities for leading the development of other teachers in their school
- **Leading Teaching** - for teachers who have, or are aspiring to have, responsibilities for leading teaching in a subject, year group, key stage or phase
- **Leading Behaviour and Culture** - for teachers who have, or are aspiring to have, responsibilities for leading behaviour or supporting pupil wellbeing in their school

The reformed leadership NPQs are:

- **Senior Leadership** - for school leaders who are, or are aspiring to be, a senior leader with cross-school responsibilities
- **Headship** - for school leaders who are, or are aspiring to be, a headteacher or head of school with responsibility for leading a school
- **Executive Leadership** - for school leaders who are, or are aspiring to be, an executive headteacher or have a school trust CEO role with responsibility for leading several schools

Staff Wellbeing

We are committed to ensure that we have effective teaching taking place in the classroom. Therefore, we value the importance of staff wellbeing. High quality teaching in the classroom will lead to good outcomes.

In our most recent staff survey;

- 91% of staff reported that they are proud to be a member of staff at Reading Girls' School.
- 94% of staff reported that leaders support staff well in managing behaviour at Reading Girls' School.
- 91% of staff reported that leaders have created a climate in which teachers are trusted to take risks and innovate in ways that are right for the pupils.
- 92% of staff reported that leaders and managers take workload into account when developing and implementing policies and procedures so as to avoid placing unnecessary burdens on staff

Our workload charter and staff working party focus on work load and support for all staff.

Staff Benefits

As a staff member of the Thames Learning Trust you can enjoy the following benefits:



**Employee Assistance
Programme**



**Medical Cash
Plan Scheme**



**Eyecare
Vouchers**

Reading Girls' School - Workload Charter and Staff Wellbeing

- ✓ Our core aim is to help pupils achieve the best possible outcomes, so they can access university, higher education, employment or an apprenticeship
- ✓ We take a firm view that the teacher is a professional and the expert in the classroom; therefore we provide training in accordance with this stance.
- ✓ We ensure that staff workload is taken seriously.

TIME Matters	CPD Matters	School Priorities Matter	Culture and Ethos Matters
<p>Email embargos: No emails are sent from 6pm until 6am each day and no emails are sent during the holiday.</p> <p>Rational approach to data: We have 2 data drops per year group within the academic year. All the data is analysed by SLT and Subject Leaders during data drop meetings.</p> <p>A rational approach to marking: Staff are not expected to mark pupil exercise books. Purple marking tasks are completed by pupils which assess a block of learning in the subject SOW. Students are then provided with a yellow feedback sheet, highlighting their strengths and areas for development.</p> <p>Centralised detentions: All detentions are centralised, issued the same day, take place afterschool. Staffs are not expected to run afterschool detentions.</p> <p>PPAX: Teaching staff receive 3 PPAX's on their timetable. These are placed during either period 1 or 6. Allowing the member of staff to go home early or come in later. Completing their PPA offsite at home.</p> <p>Break and Lunch Duties: Staff are not required to supervise break or lunch duties.</p>	<p>Increased faulty time: Departments are provided with 2 departmental meetings per half term. It is very much for the middle leader in charge of the department to dictate the agenda, with a view that the meeting focus should be on sharing subject expertise and enhancing subject knowledge.</p> <p>Sensible use of Twilight Time: We operate a training model whereby we work a set number of twilights and trade this time in to gain 3 days off in lieu. During the twilight training there is a focus on Teaching and Learning, our Deeper Applied Learning strategy, providing staff with the development of their pedagogy</p> <p>Subject Knowledge: Staff are encouraged to attend subject specific CPD provided by external specialist.</p>	<p>Agreed SLT messaged: These seek to prevent ill communication and repetitive emails.</p> <p>Effective use of briefing: Briefing occurs once a week, on Wednesday and focus on sharing key important information.</p> <p>D.E.A.R Daily: Centralised system to share message daily.</p>	<p>Pedagogical Approach: We emphasise that there is no preferred learning style, but traditional teaching methods; memory retrieval practice, the use of workbooks, knowledge organisers, RAG sheets, co – planning and direct instruction are to be embraced, where applicable. Learning is a dynamic experience for pupils and research demonstrate that the more pupils are actively involved in their learning, the higher the probability that learning will go into Long Term Memory.</p> <p>Rationalising Revision: We hold a firm line that afterschool revision sessions are NOT expected by any member of staff.</p> <p>Birthdays: We celebrate staff birthday by issuing them birthday cards and a gift.</p>

