

Excellence *in* SPORT



“Sport at Blundell’s is more than just showing up for games or practices – it’s about igniting a passion for athletic excellence and nurturing every young athlete’s full potential, both physically and mentally. We are driven by a commitment to supporting our athletes at every level, offering tailored sessions that push them to exceed their limits and truly excel.”

Megan Conabeare, **NATIONAL PREMIER LEAGUE PLAYER**


“BLUNDELL’S GREATEST STRENGTH IS ITS FOCUS ON THE INDIVIDUAL AND ITS COMMITMENT TO TAILORING DEDICATED PROGRAMMES TO HELP A PUPIL ACHIEVE TO THEIR FULL POTENTIAL.”

Introduction

At Blundell’s, we offer exceptional, tailored programmes designed to meet the unique needs of each athlete. Through expert coaching, personalised mentoring, and comprehensive support, we ensure that every scholar not only realises their full potential in sport but is also equipped with the resilience, character, and insight to excel across all aspects of school life and beyond.

Our Directors of Sport bring a wealth of personal experience and expertise to our programme. Through individualised coaching, bespoke strength and conditioning regimes, and thoughtful management of each scholar’s sporting and academic commitments, we provide a meticulously planned pathway for development. This approach empowers scholars to explore and pursue future opportunities both within and beyond Blundell’s. As a result, many of our athletes have gone on to achieve national and international success in their chosen sports, while others have embarked on fulfilling and exciting careers in various fields.

The journey undertaken by each of our scholars is inherently complex. We recognise that every athlete’s trajectory is distinct, and personal challenges – such as injuries, fluctuations in confidence, or external pressures affecting emotional well-being – can emerge at any time. This awareness informs the design of our programme, which is intentionally adaptable to ensure that each scholar receives the bespoke support necessary to navigate these challenges effectively. Whether they require specialised rehabilitation, mental health resources, or modifications to their training regimen, we collaborate closely with them to address their individual needs and to ensure that their journey pursuing excellence in their field is as positive, successful and rewarding as possible.



Mrs Adèle Worsley BSc Hons Maths Bristol, PGCE Oxford
DEPUTY HEAD CO-CURRICULAR



Profile

With over 25 years of dedicated experience in boarding education, Adèle’s enthusiasm lies in empowering students to fully realise their potential in pursuits that ignite their passion, align with their skills, and inspire their growth. Now a part of the Blundell’s community, she is deeply committed to building upon the remarkable foundation of excellence in sports, while thoughtfully and strategically enhancing the opportunities available to scholars. Her approach is rooted in both research and reflection, ensuring that the development of Blundell’s athletic programmes is not only organic but driven by a genuine desire to nurture the next generation of talent.

Elite support and coaching

Blundell's is distinguished by an exceptional coaching staff, many of whom have reached the pinnacle of success in their respective disciplines. Among our faculty are former international athletes in hockey, cricket, and rugby, as well as individuals who have represented their country in rowing and triathlon. This wealth of elite-level experience is directly reflected in the bespoke programmes designed for our scholars. Our athletes benefit not only from expert training but also from the invaluable first-hand insights their coaches are uniquely positioned to provide, ensuring a level of mentorship that fosters both athletic excellence and personal growth.

“Playing both hockey and rugby to a first team level, the school’s scholarship programme has allowed me to remain healthy and uninjured through the tailored Strength and Conditioning sessions. Support from coaches has meant my time and workload is able to be perfectly balanced between not only my sporting endeavours but my academic pursuits as well.”

ARCHIE JOYNER – GAINED 4A* AT A LEVEL
FORMER SPORTS SCHOLAR

“Blundell’s played a massive role in my development as a rugby player. Not just the coaching and programme in place but the school environment as a whole allowed me to thrive both academically and on the rugby pitch. I can’t praise the school highly enough for what that they did to support me over my time there.”

BEN COEN
FORMER SPORTS SCHOLAR

FACILITIES

Blundell's is renowned for its forward-thinking and innovative approach to progress, continuously enhancing and expanding its facilities to provide the very best for its athletes. Set within 100 acres of picturesque Devonshire countryside, the school offers an ideal environment for the ongoing development of its sporting amenities. In addition to numerous rugby and cricket pitches, Blundell's boasts two all-weather floodlit astroturf pitches, tennis and netball courts, and a state-of-the-art Sports Hall equipped with a fitness suite. Further facilities include an outdoor swimming pool, squash courts, fives courts, and outdoor cricket nets, all of which contribute to a comprehensive and enriching athletic experience for our students.

“AT BLUNDELL’S, WE PRIDE OURSELVES ON OFFERING A TRULY BESPOKE EXPERIENCE THAT EVOLVES WITH EACH ATHLETE, ENSURING THEY REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL BOTH ON AND OFF THE FIELD.”

Dean Headley, FORMER ENGLAND INTERNATIONAL TEST CRICKETER



Our coaches have excellent links to a variety of professional/semi-professional clubs and elite BUCS Universities. These valued connections include: Bath University RFC, Exeter University RFC, Hampshire CCC, Heathcoat Cricket Club, ISCA Hockey, Kent CCC, Leicestershire CCC, Somerset CCC, Taunton Titans, Team Bath, Titans Netball Club and Tiverton Swimming Club.

Our scholars are supported not just in their journey through school, but beyond into the world of university and elite level sport.



“Unlocking potential through coaching comes down to three essentials: belief, reflection, and understanding. My purpose is to inspire and nurture all three.”

Paddy Hunter, **ENGLAND LEVEL 2 HOCKEY COACH**
HOCKEY IRELAND LEVEL 1 COACH

Directors of Sport



Megan Conabeare
NETBALL

PLAYING CAREER:

- Captain Team Bath U21
- Team Bath Super League squad
- Severn Stars Super League squad
- Exeter
- National Premier League

COACHING:

- England Netball Level 2 Coach
- Team Bath Netball Franchise
- Athletic Development Centre Coach
- Team Bath pathway selector

KEY FOCUS OF DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE SCHOOL:

- Continue to develop the specialist netball programme
- Facilitate players pursuing franchise pathways



Dean Headley
CRICKET

PLAYING CAREER:

- Kent
- Middlesex
- England

COACHING:

- ECB Level 4 Coach

KEY FOCUS OF DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE SCHOOL:

- Develop the Blundell's cricket facilities and programme within the school for both boys and girls
- Mentoring
- Work with pathway coaches to ensure consistency of coaching



Tony Yapp
RUGBY

PLAYING CAREER:

- Bedford
- Worcester
- Exeter Chiefs
- England A
- England U21's
- Barbarians

COACHING:

- RFU Level 3 Coach
- Exeter University
- Head Coach Taunton
- Kicking Coach England Ladies U20's

KEY FOCUS OF DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE SCHOOL:

- Continue to provide playing opportunities for all Blundellian's so they can create lifelong memories
- Provide top level coaching and mentoring for our pathway players
- Continue to develop the provision of rugby for girls



Will Abell
HOCKEY

PLAYING CAREER:

- Wessex Leopards
- Taunton Vale

COACHING:

- England Hockey Level 2 Coach
- WA Coaching (Owner/Head Coach)
- ISCA

KEY FOCUS OF DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE SCHOOL:

- Build and create an environment for stretch and competition
- Continue to recruit quality and highly qualified coaching staff to develop our athletes

The Sports Scholars' Programme

PHILOSOPHY

Research reveals that many young athletes are narrowing their focus by specialising on one sport too early; they often push themselves to the brink in their training regimes, under the mistaken belief that this is the surest path to elite success. In reality, concentrated single-sport participation frequently leads to burnout, diminished motivation, and injury.

We champion diversity over specialisation, encouraging young athletes to immerse themselves in a variety of sports, activities, and playing positions throughout their formative years. Studies consistently show that multi-sport participation fosters superior motor development, extends athletic careers, and facilitates skill transfer across disciplines.

Core traits like grit, determination, and competitiveness transcend the boundaries of individual sports. By drawing on lessons from different athletic experiences, young athletes not only sharpen their versatility but also grow into more cohesive and effective teammates.

“The Sports Scholarship Programme has helped me as it has given me a sport specific programme to work from. There are gym sessions everyday that you can attend, the Strength and Conditioning coach is always there to help and has given me one-to-one sessions to help me achieve my goal of playing high level representative rugby. The Scholars' Programme has really helped me to thrive in all sports and given me opportunities like playing for Exeter Chiefs U18 Girls Academy and being selected for the U18 England Squad.”

DEMELZA SHORT
SPORTS SCHOLAR



“Blundells provides a balanced environment that fosters both athletic and academic growth. The support from my teachers and sports coaches encouraged me to set goals and push beyond my limits.”

MEG HAMILTON-STRONG
FORMER SPORTS SCHOLAR

“SUPPORTING SCHOLARS IS ABOUT GIVING THEM OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP THEIR SPORTING POTENTIAL TO ENABLE THEM TO BECOME THE BEST THEY CAN BE, WHILST ALSO HELPING THEM GROW THE SKILLS THEY NEED TO MANAGE THE DEMANDS OF A SPORTING AND ACADEMIC LIFE, BOTH NOW AND IN THE FUTURE.”

Vicki Gill, ENGLAND MASTERS HOCKEY

PERFORMANCE PROGRAMME (Y11-13*)

This programme is designed for our top athletes who demonstrate exceptional commitment to their training, exemplary conduct within the school environment, and outstanding dedication to their academic pursuits.

Performance athletes receive:

- An allocated Mentor
- Timetabled lessons with their Mentor
- Progress reports sent to parents/ guardians as part of the regular reporting cycle
- Half-termly reviews
- A bespoke Strength and Conditioning programme
- Regular testing
- Performance analysis
- Monitoring/ coaching app
- Nutrition templates

*Exceptional Year 10 pupils may be considered.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (Y9-13)

Development athletes receive:

- An allocated Mentor
- One-to-one termly meeting with their Mentor.
- A bespoke gym programme
- Regular testing
- Performance analysis
- Monitoring/coaching app
- Nutrition templates

BOTH PERFORMANCE & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES WILL BENEFIT FROM

- Expert Coaching
- Guest speakers
- Speed / agility training
- Advice regarding rehab / prehab
- Session variation

N.B. It is possible for athletes to move between the Performance and Development groups.

PROGRAMME DETAILS

We employ the 'Repair – Training – Match' framework, developed by High Performance Coach Dr. Dave Alred, to establish a robust foundation in our coaching methodology. For more information on the specific details of the programme please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Deputy Head Co-curricular, Mrs Adèle Worsley.

TEAM SUCCESSES

BOYS' RUGBY

1ST XV SEMI-FINALISTS 2022 & 2023
BRECON 7'S RUNNERS UP - 2023
U14 DEVON 7'S WINNERS - 2024

GIRLS' RUGBY

U18 GIRLS MILLFIELD 7'S WINNERS 2024

GIRLS' HOCKEY

1ST XI NATIONAL CUP QUARTER-FINALISTS 2021
U12 GIRLS DEVON RUNNERS UP

BOYS' HOCKEY

U13 ISHC ISHC NATIONAL FINALS RUNNERS UP
U13 NATIONAL CUP SEMI-FINALISTS 2023

BOYS' CRICKET

U15 NATIONAL CUP SEMI-FINALISTS 2022
U15 COUNTY CUP FINALISTS
U14 DEVON COUNTY CUP WINNERS
U13 COUNTY CUP FINALISTS

GIRLS' CRICKET

U13 RACHEL HEYHOE-FLINT COUNTY CUP
WINNERS AND WEST REGIONAL QUALIFIERS
U15 COUNTY CUP FINALISTS
U13 COUNTY CUP FINALISTS

"The Sports Scholarship Programme at Blundell's helped me to better understand high level sport and develop myself both physically and mentally. It has really supported my rugby and allowed me to get to the level I am playing at today."

JAMIE STEWART - CURRENT SCOTTISH FLY-HALF
FORMER SPORTS SCHOLAR

"OUR PHILOSOPHY AT BLUNDELL'S IS THAT EXCELLENCE IS NOT A SOMETIME THING; IT'S AN ALL THE TIME THING. YOU DON'T DO THINGS RIGHT ONCE IN A WHILE... YOU DO THEM RIGHT ALL THE TIME. EXCELLENCE IS A HABIT."

Michael Worsley, FORMER ENGLAND INTERNATIONAL PROP

Old Blundellians

ALICE LAMB

After joining the school in Year 12 as a Sports Scholar, Alice combined a conscientious approach to her studies alongside a very demanding hockey training programme for school and ISCA. After representing the 1st XI for 2 years, she achieved 4 A*s at A-Level and is studying at Central Michigan University, where she was awarded the prestigious President’s Scholarship Award for Hockey.

MEG HAMILTON-STRONG

Meg is studying at Alabama University where she gained a full Scholarship for Athletics. Meg is an immense sporting talent and whilst being at Blundell’s she was a true ambassador for sport at the school, whether it be at an elite level in netball or athletics, or in other sports that she enjoys and has been equally competitive. Meg’s most recent accolades include success in the English Schools Combined Events Championships in Bedford in 2021 (Meg finished 4th in the U20 age group). In addition she has been part of the Team Bath Netball Academy Development Centre and was selected for the U18 National Performance League team. She accomplished this while maintaining excellent academic standards.

SASKIA LAWRENCE

Saskia’s hockey journey continues with a Full Scholarship to Wake Forest University, North Carolina, a Division One University in the United States. Saskia joined Blundell’s in Year 12 from Redmaid’s High School and showed great skill and commitment to hockey along with her academic abilities right from the start, playing for the 1st Team throughout her time at Blundell’s and was a wonderful leader as Co-Captain in Year 13. Saskia is a member of the 1st Team ISCA squad and England Under 16 and Under 18 Squads, playing National League Division One for last 3 years. Saskia also completed her Diploma in Sporting Excellence for Hockey. An able sportswoman, Saskia also excelled at netball and was awarded Full Colours for hockey and for netball.

LUCY WALLIKER

Lucy joined Blundell’s in Year 9 and completed her A levels in 2017. Whilst at school she represented Devon at 5 English Schools Athletics Championships in the High Jump, having been South West and County Champion. In addition, Lucy played 1st

VII netball for 4 years, 2nd team hockey and girls’ cricket. Following a gap year, she took up an Athletics Scholarship at Queens University of Charlotte in North Carolina. She has completed her Bachelor’s degree and returned to Queens for a Master’s degree. Her athletics has gone from strength to strength – she has improved her HJ PB, attained All-American Honours and finished 5th at the 2023 UK Indoor Championships.

MILLIE EATON-JONES

Millie joined Blundell’s in Year 9, becoming the youngest ever player to represent the school’s 1st XI. She captained the Under 16 team who finished 3rd at the National Finals and was part of the England Hockey Performance Pathway, also playing for ISCA at Under 16 and Under 18 level. In addition, she played 3 years of 1st VII netball. On completing her A levels in 2018, Millie took up a Hockey Scholarship to Queens University of Charlotte in North Carolina. She held a starting position in their Field Hockey team throughout her degree and was elected to the 2021 NFHCA Division II Senior Team for elite performers, as well as being a Southern Athletic Conference nomination for four consecutive years.

BEN COEN

Ben led the school 1st XV in 2022. He joined Exeter University in 2023, and was fast tracked into their 1st XV BUCS squad. He has also represented their Saturday league side, which compete in National League Two level. Ben was on the Exeter Chiefs Academy while at Blundell’s, and is currently playing in the England U20 squad.

NOAH FENTON

Noah Fenton was Blundell’s 1st XV record try scorer during his two years in the team, which earned him a place on the Exeter Chiefs Academy. Following such a successful school career, it was no surprise that he was recruited by Tony Yapp for Taunton Titans. He has continued his try scoring form and is currently the National League One top try scorer, which is particularly impressive as the team unfortunately find themselves near the bottom of the table. His performances have been noted by Exeter Chiefs, and he is currently training with their senior side on a weekly basis. He will be heading to Exeter University in 2023/2024, to continue his rugby development, with the aim of getting a professional contract.

DAN HAMILTON-STRONG

Throughout his time at Blundell’s, Dan was on the Exeter Chiefs radar, and was selected for their Academy in his Lower Sixth year. His performance for school and Exeter Chiefs, earned him a place at Loughborough University. He has been ever present in their fresher’s team and their BUCS 2nd XV, and hopes to push for a place in the 1st team next year. He has recently been selected for the Germany 7’s national team.

YLVA VON BLANQUET

Ylva coupled her exceptional academic achievements with her immense sporting talent. An outstanding hockey player, Ylva co-captained the 1st XI and was awarded Full Colours for hockey. In addition to this, she represented Sweden’s U21 teams at both indoor and outdoor hockey. A Russell winner in 2022, Ylva was an excellent all-round sportswoman, twice competing at Rosslyn Park for rugby 7s and playing 1st team tennis. Ylva flourished into a driven, highly organised and extremely motivated student, with a desire to question and forge her own path. Head Girl, she achieved 4A*s in her A levels and is now studying medicine in Germany.

SAM MAUNDER

Sam Maunder was a key member of the Blundell’s 1st XV in 2018, who enjoyed success winning the Rosslyn Park Vase and narrowly losing in the Champions Cup final at Allianz Park. Sam was a member of the Exeter Chiefs Academy during his school days, and followed in his brother’s footsteps by signing a professional contract. He is currently playing scrum half for Exeter Chiefs .

JACK MAUNDER

Like his younger brother Sam, Jack was a multi-talented sports scholar, having represented Blundell’s at 1st team level for both cricket and rugby. Jack decided to go down the path of professional rugby player, and has enjoyed huge success. In 2020, Jack won the European and Domestic Double with Exeter Chiefs. He also earned a call up to the England men’s team, on their tour of Argentina. He is currently playing for Melbourne Rebels in Australia.

DOM BESS

Dom played for both the school 1st XI and 1st XV with great success. Unlike his close friend Jack Maunder, Dom chose the cricketing route into professional sport. He was on the Somerset Academy while at school. Following a winter in Australia, Dom broke into the Somerset 1st XI, and has not looked back. His form at Somerset earned him a call up to the England men’s test team in 2018. He is currently playing for Yorkshire.

MILLIE ATWELL

Millie joined Blundell’s in Year 7, being part of school Hockey teams who finished in the Top 4 at the National Finals for 5 years in a row. She played National League Hockey for ISCA from the age of 15 and was selected for England U16, U18 and U21. In addition, she helped the school’s first girls’ rugby 7s team finish as runners-up at Rosslyn Park and was a key part of the school’s successful cricket team. On completing her A levels in 2019, Millie attended Birmingham University, playing Premier National League Hockey and securing a place on the Great Britain Elite Development Programme. She is currently playing hockey in Australia.

“I really can’t express enough how amazing Blundell’s was, allowing me to balance my academic studies with my rugby aspirations. We were exposed to Academies and county set-ups as well as representing our country at various age levels. I am so grateful for the incredible coaching I received at Blundell’s and this played a huge part in me succeeding in becoming a professional rugby player.”

JACK MAUNDER - PROFESSIONAL RUGBY PLAYER
FORMER SPORTS SCHOLAR

Blundell’s Scholars programme

“The Sports Scholarship Programme has massively helped me with my goal of playing high level representative rugby, by providing a better insight into Strength and Conditioning, and giving me a better understanding of the sport. The high-quality coaching has also given me unlimited support both on and off the field and has enabled me to balance both work and sport efficiently.”

JACK CLOVER
CURRENT SPORTS SCHOLAR

Scholars will be expected to be dedicated to, and to provide leadership in their sport(s). They will have regular Sports Award holders’ meetings, Strength and Conditioning sessions and appraisals, as well as exposure to sports professionals from outside the school. Scholars are expected to attend all training sessions for their sport as well as these Strength and Conditioning sessions, mentor meetings and any other support they are provided. They are expected to represent the school as much as is possible, although we will support them in gaining representative honours or playing high level sport around their school commitments.

It is expected that all Sports Scholars take an active interest in the wider sporting community, and the school as a whole. Scholars can benefit from one-to-one mentoring and the Head of Sport ensures they are managing their sporting and academic commitments. Workloads regarding school commitments and external pathway sessions are managed appropriately to ensure that the pupil’s mental and physical health are at the forefront of decision making.

Sports Scholars are expected to work hard in their academic studies and be role models to younger pupils both on and off the “field”, and they will make an active contribution to the sporting life of the school. A Sport Scholar is expected to set the standard for their peers to meet, with regard to attitude, preparation and performance.

SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

Successful candidates will demonstrate exceptional sporting ability and potential. They will show a commitment to improving their physical fitness and working on their sport specific skills.

They will have achieved, or be of a standard to achieve, representative honours at County, Regional or National level in one or more sports. In addition to their specialist discipline, they will be able to contribute to other school sports.

PETER BLUNDELL FOUNDATION BURSARIES

We are fortunate to be able to offer means tested Foundation Bursaries to successful Scholarship applicants, whose parents need financial assistance to send their son or daughter to Blundell’s. With these bursaries, the Governors wish to reflect the spirit of Peter Blundell’s vision. These applications will require an online bursary application form to be submitted prior to the scholarship process, which will be made available on application.

13+ Sport Scholarships

Sport and exercise are integral to everyone’s life at Blundell’s. The School has an excellent reputation not only for its sporting prowess but also for the spirit in which it is played. Over the past five years, more than a hundred Blundellians have competed at County level or above. Blundell’s teams compete on the strongest circuit in the South West with regular fixtures against Bryanston, Clifton, Millfield and Sherborne, for example. Coaching standards are extremely high across all sports.

Sports Awards are considered for expertise in any sport, but greater consideration is given to rugby, cricket, hockey, tennis, netball and athletics.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

Candidates will be assessed on their overall performance on the selection day in addition to their sporting CV and references. The selection process is an arduous one, which will test the candidates’ suitability for a sport award. This will include testing the fitness components of speed, agility and endurance. Candidates will also be assessed in small-sided ball games e.g. football, basketball, hockey, netball and tag rugby. Candidates will then demonstrate to the selectors their ability in their major sport(s).

External candidates will be interviewed by our Head. Internal and External candidates will discuss their sporting achievements to date with a senior member of our sports department or a member of the selection panel. External candidates who are not entered for the academic scholarships must also satisfy the entry requirements by sitting either the Common Entrance at their Preparatory School, or the Blundell’s Entry Test (Mathematics and English).

16+ Sport Scholarships

Blundell’s has an excellent reputation for sport. Over the past five years more than a hundred Blundellians have competed at county level or above. Blundell’s teams compete on the strongest of fixture circuits in the region and enter a number of national competitions, achieving some magnificent results. Coaching standards are extremely high across all sports.

Sport Awards are considered for expertise in any sport, but greater consideration is given to the major sports of rugby, cricket, hockey, netball, athletics and tennis.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

Candidates will be assessed on their overall performance on the selection day in addition to their sporting CV and references. The selection process is an arduous one, which will test the candidates’ suitability for a sport award. Candidates will demonstrate to the selectors their ability in their main sport(s) in a coaching and trial session with other candidates and Blundell’s pupils. This will include testing the fitness components of speed, agility and endurance. Candidates may also be assessed in small-sided ball games e.g. football, basketball and handball. Candidates will be watched throughout the day to view their coach-ability and attitude. All candidates will discuss their sporting achievements to date with one of the selectors on the scholarship panel.

External candidates will also be interviewed by the Head and will be expected to satisfy the normal Sixth Form entry requirements of a minimum of 5 GCSE’s at grade 6 or above.

Excellence

“the quality of being excellent”

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