



Director of Music
September 2018

Vacancy Information

Wycombe Abbey
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP11 1PE

Tel: 01494 520381



WELCOME TO WYCOMBE ABBEY

Wycombe Abbey is a world-class school. Founded in 1896 by pioneering Headmistress Dame Frances Dove, the School has been at the forefront of women's education for over 120 years. We are committed to providing girls with the knowledge, skills and confidence to excel in the ever expanding global workplace.

Set in magnificent grounds spanning more than 170 acres, our school has superb modern facilities, including a Sports Centre with a 25-metre indoor heated swimming pool, a dance studio, a fitness studio, a Courtyard Café and a Performing Arts Centre with a theatre and recital hall. Its teaching facilities are excellent.

Of the 610 pupils, ranging from 11 to 18, 560 are full boarders and 175 are in the Sixth Form. The majority of our girls come from within a one-hour radius of London; other boarders travel from further afield. More than 35 nationalities are represented within the School's full boarding community.

This year's GCSE and A level results were, as usual, outstanding with 97.4 per cent of all GCSE entries being graded A*-A. At A level, 85.6 per cent were A*-A. One third of last year's leavers went to Oxbridge and about twelve to US universities including Claremont McKenna, New York University, Stanford, UCLA and Yale.

Wycombe Abbey is committed to maintaining full boarding for the needs of modern families. Girls who enter the School at 11+ have their own Junior Boarding House. From the age of 12 to 17, pupils live in 9 mixed-age Senior Houses, and in the Upper Sixth girls move into Clarence House, a purpose-built study-bedroom complex which is akin to a university hall of residence.

Very many co-curricular and enrichment opportunities are on offer for girls across the age range. Last year, the sports teams reached a significant number of national finals and the sports department offers more than 30 sports on a regular basis. Our Music department teaches more than 600 individual lessons a week and nearly every pupil plays an instrument, if not two. The Drama provision is equally impressive with numerous productions happening annually and opportunities for all to take part.

The School is ideally located to be able to enjoy a wide variety of activities with other independent schools including Eton, Harrow, Radley and Winchester. The boys join the girls for dinners and dances. We also enjoy close relationships with the two boys' grammar schools in High Wycombe, with our pupils and theirs co-operating in choirs, an annual Management Conference and other social and academic events throughout the year.

No institution can afford to stand still if it wishes to remain at the top of its field and Wycombe Abbey is no exception. We keep all aspects of our work – academic, pastoral and co-curricular – under review and it is our intention to strengthen further our position as one of the world's leading boarding schools. In terms of site development, we have just opened two new state-of-the-art boarding houses. We are committed to refurbishing much of our boarding accommodation and we have plans to redevelop significant teaching and learning areas in the Abbey building.

We have introduced a new strategic plan to guide us through the next five years, 2017-2022. Our first sister school opened in Changzhou last year and we are working hard to foster excellence there, not only in academic terms, but also in the soft skills of creativity, emotional intelligence and leadership. There are a number of opportunities for staff to be involved in 'DNA transfer' discussions in our International 'Think Tank' group. We hope to open other Wycombe Abbey International Schools in Asia in the near future.

Exciting times are ahead!



Rhiannon J Wilkinson

Headmistress

TEACHING AT WYCOMBE

The pupils at Wycombe are highly motivated with a strong work ethic. They are inquisitive, creative and eager to learn. Both pupils and teachers benefit from the small classes (typically no larger than 20 in Key Stages 3-4 and no larger than 12 in the Sixth Form), as well as well-resourced classrooms, libraries, laboratories and other facilities.

There is a wide range of ages and experience amongst the 115 teaching staff. Each year a number of newly qualified, and in some cases unqualified recent graduates, join the Staff Room. Wycombe offers statutory induction for Newly Qualified Teachers and also offers the Graduate Teacher Programme to those without a PGCE. There is proactive support for all new members of staff, who are guided through their first year at Wycombe by a variety of people, with the line manager and an individually-appointed mentor taking the lead.

The School prides itself on the many opportunities for continuing professional development. We organise regular whole staff in-service training and have a generous budget for training outside of school. In addition, academic departments commit to sharing good practice. There are opportunities to take part in peer observation, peer coaching, learning reviews and working parties.

A Wycombe teacher typically teaches 30 35-minute periods per week. In addition, he/she is attached to a boarding house and is responsible for a tutor group of around 10 pupils from the house. Teachers give freely of their time outside timetabled lessons with many committing to co-curricular activities and helping individual pupils with their academic progress. Teachers are also expected to commit to other (supervisory) duties, such as accompanying house outings.

As a boarding school, Wycombe has lessons on Saturday mornings. There is time off during the week in lieu of Saturday teaching. Teachers are expected to be in school by 8.15am on weekdays and 8.45am on a Saturday. The teaching day finishes at 5.15pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 4.15pm on Wednesday and 11.50am on Saturday. Co-curricular and enrichment activities typically extend beyond these hours.



Archer Recital Hall

MUSIC AT WYCOMBE

Music has the power to enrich all our lives and it is the aim of the Music Department to provide opportunities for pupils to be involved in music-making at every stage of their education. We foster in them an appreciation and love of music, and help them to build upon the skills they have when they arrive at the School. The Music Department is a busy, lively department with a friendly and supportive atmosphere, in which pupils can be found working with energy, focus, curiosity and passion, embracing the opportunities to be creatively expressive, develop independence and revel in collaboration.

The Music department is staffed by five full-time teachers (including an Assistant Director of Music, a Head of Strings and a Head of Woodwind and Brass), one part-time teacher, a full-time Music Administrator and a team of 35 visiting staff, all of whom contribute to a full, varied and exciting extra-curricular programme. Nearly 600 individual music lessons take place each week and many pupils study two or even three instruments/voice. The calibre of both pupils and staff is incredibly high. Music scholarships and exhibitions are awarded to external applicants at 11+, and both external and internal applicants at 13+ and 16+, and the School currently has over 30 Music Scholars/Exhibitioners across all years, including several exceptionally talented individuals.

Academic Music is a curriculum subject in Years 7 to 9, with a strong emphasis on singing in Year 7 and a varied programme in the next two, including the development of Listening skills as well as the study of important movements/periods in music history, theory (including use of Musition software), individual and group practical work, and composing (using Sibelius software).

Music is offered as an option at GCSE (CIE IGCSE) and A Level (Edexcel). There are currently 24 girls studying GCSE Music and 3 studying A-level. Results are consistently excellent and a number of students have gone on to read Music at top universities, including Oxbridge, or to study at conservatoires in the UK and further afield. A growing number of girls apply for and receive university Choral Awards each year. Teaching is shared between staff at all levels, giving variety and specialist skills to each age group. Girls preparing for Grade 5 Theory are taught in small groups and extra aural support is given to girls taking higher grade exams.

Music facilities and resources are modern and spacious. The department is housed in a beautiful building (pictured below), which includes the Archer Recital Hall (200 seats), well-equipped teaching rooms, a dedicated music technology room with 20 networked computers running Sibelius and Musition software, a library with CD collection, numerous practice rooms, offices for staff, and a staff room. The building is well-stocked with good quality (largely Yamaha) pianos and there is a Giori harpsichord as well as Yamaha and Bösendorfer grand pianos in the Recital Hall. The main Abbey building has its own Steinway grand piano and flexible seating for up to 80 for more intimate performances. There are practice facilities in every House and a three manual Copeman Hart Organ in Chapel. An instrumental hire scheme is available to pupils.



The Performing Arts Centre (PAC)

comprises of:

The Lancaster Arts Centre (LAC)
Theatre and Drama

Archer Recital Hall
and Goodland Music School



Extra-curricular Music is very strong and there are opportunities for girls to be involved at every stage of their education, whatever their level and area of interest. These include taking part in orchestras, choirs and chamber groups, rock bands, learning recording skills and developing popular song-writing skills. There is an annual House Music Competition, Competitive Composition Concert, major concerts in all three terms, rock concerts, informal lunchtime concerts, Music Scholar and Exhibitioner concerts, as well as engagements in local venues. Large numbers of entries for ABRSM practical examinations take place at school in all three terms. A number of girls play with the National Youth and Children's Orchestras and sing in the National Youth and Children's Choirs.

The school has three orchestras (Sinfonia training orchestra, Symphony Orchestra, and string Chamber Orchestra), in which nearly 100 girls take part, performing regularly, including at external venues such as the Royal College of Music in London. Full symphonic works are performed, as well as concerto movements with pupil soloists. Recent highlights include the 1st movements of Brahms *Symphony No. 4*, Sibelius *Violin Concerto* and Márquez *Danzón No. 2*. There are many opportunities for choral singing, including a senior Chapel Choir providing music for Sunday Chapel and other key services, a training Chancel Choir, a Chamber Choir, a joint Choral Society with Eton College, as well as pupil-led vocal ensembles including a Gospel Choir and an a cappella group. There is a popular Jazz Quintet, a large Concert Band, Saxophone Choir and Brass Ensemble. Chamber music is a strong feature of the department, with over 15 groups receive weekly coaching. Selected chamber groups compete in the South East Schools' Chamber Music Festival, founded jointly by staff from Wycombe Abbey, Harrow and North London Collegiate School and many have progressed to the Finals and performed at St John's Smith Square in London.

Chapel Choir, Chamber Orchestra and, latterly, the Jazz Quintet, undertake extremely popular biennial international concert tours. Recent destinations include Northern Italy (50 girls), Spain (55 girls), and Rome (71 girls). In 2015, the department held a concert at St John's Cathedral in Hong Kong.

Outreach is a key element of Music here. We believe in using musical gifts and our wonderful resources to make a positive contribution to the wider world. Our concerts in the local area are a great opportunity for our pupils to share their talents and help churches to raise much-needed funds. Our first Music Marathon Weekend and Sponsored Practice in 2017 raised over £7,000 for charity. The Music Department has links with the New Mozart Orchestra, which holds annual workshop days at Wycombe Abbey for local primary and secondary school pupils. We also have links with the Chiltern Music Academy, which holds teacher training events in our recital hall, and with the newly-launched Chiltern Arts Festival. There is much potential for these links to be strengthened, and new ones formed.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Wycombe Abbey seeks a Director of Music with a strong and ambitious vision, excellent academic and practical musical ability, who has the inter-personal skills and emotional intelligence to support and inspire all pupils and staff.

The successful applicant is likely to possess:

- A good degree in Music. A teaching qualification (e.g. PGCE) is desirable.
- The ability to teach throughout the school, up to A Level and Oxbridge entry.
- A willingness to be involved in the wider life of the school through commitment to the co-curricular programme and/or boarding. The post is residential.
- Outstanding choral direction and orchestral conducting skills, high-level keyboard skills to accompany pupils. The ability to play the organ for Chapel services.
- The ability to make music attractive to pupils of all abilities and to provide a wide range of exciting opportunities.
- A proven ability to manage, lead and motivate a large and diverse team.
- A proven ability to plan, organise and budget for large-scale events and international tours.
- An enthusiasm for fostering links with other departments and external partners to encourage collaboration and joint projects.
- The motivation to develop excellent teaching and learning at Wycombe Abbey by sharing good practice and participating actively in continuing professional development.
- A clear and innovative vision with the ability to bring the subject alive both in and outside the classroom.
- A willingness to contribute to the wider objectives of the department (e.g. through the sharing of teaching materials, the writing of schemes of work, organizing and attending departmental enrichment events).
- The highest level of communication skills for dealing with pupils, parents and staff.
- An appreciation of the aims and ethos of Wycombe Abbey.





BENEFITS OF LIVING IN HIGH WYCOMBE

Wycombe Abbey is set in 170 acres of parkland. It is a beautiful countryside setting, within a 5-minute walk of the town of High Wycombe where there are many cultural amenities such as the Swan Theatre, with touring West End productions, a multiplex cinema, a range of restaurants and shops including a John Lewis and a House of Fraser. A Waitrose has opened nearby, and there is easy access to the Chiltern Hills and attractive towns such as Marlow, Beaconsfield and Henley-on-Thames nearby. There are many National Trust properties within five miles such as Hughenden Manor, Disraeli's home for many years, West Wycombe Park and Cliveden.

There are outstanding Grammar Schools for boys and girls in High Wycombe itself and also in surrounding towns. London is within easy reach, with the fast train from High Wycombe to London Marylebone taking just 24 minutes. Oxford is within 30 miles, Wembley Stadium and Heathrow are just 20 miles away and there are good transport links to the other London airports.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

A formal contract of employment will be drawn up on appointment. The following notes provide guidance, without prejudice, on the main provisions of the agreement.

CONTRACT

This is a permanent, full-time contract over 52 weeks. Rent-free family accommodation is available.

APPOINTMENT DATE

September 2018.

SALARY

Wycombe Abbey has its own pay scale which compares favourably with other independent schools.

PENSION SCHEME

The school offers membership of the Teachers' Pension Scheme.

DEATH IN SERVICE COVER

Members of the Teachers' Pension Scheme have life cover at x 3 annual salary.

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

There is an extensive induction programme for new colleagues and ongoing professional development and training of all staff.

PROVISION OF MEALS

Meals and refreshments are provided free of charge during the working day.

SPORTS CENTRE

The facilities in the Davies Sports Centre (swimming pool, squash courts, fitness suite, etc.) are available for staff use.

FEE REMISSION

Fee remission is available for daughters attending the School, subject to the usual entry requirements and space being available.

PARKING

Free parking is provided.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

It is the policy of Wycombe Abbey to ensure equality of opportunity for all members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching.

SAFEGUARDING

All staff share responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of the pupils and must adhere to, and comply with, the school's Child Protection Policy at all times.

PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

The appointment is subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring check.

APPLICATIONS

The closing date for applications is 12 noon on 12th February. Interviews will take place on 21st and 22nd February.

Please submit a completed application form, which you will find on our website, as soon as possible, together with a covering letter addressed to the Headmistress, Mrs Rhiannon Wilkinson, outlining the experience and personal qualities which you believe qualify you for this position. The application form and letter should be emailed to Mrs J Wetenhall, HR Manager:
wetenhallj@wycombeabbey.com



www.wycombeabbey.com