WYCOMBE ABBEY

Apprentice Groundsman

Start Date: As soon as Possible

Information for Applicants

Consider Wycombe Abbey

Wycombe Abbey is an exceptional place; we operate as a modern full boarding school for around 650 girls, and we are committed to the development of each one. We have over 125 years of experience in educating young women and our vision remains to provide our pupils with a world class education. We are excited about encouraging curiosity, bold ideas, innovation, leadership and delight in learning - inside and outside the classroom.

We are a welcoming and vibrant community for all staff. Our school is set in 170 acres of parkland within a five-minute walk of the town of High Wycombe. We offer superb modern facilities, including a sports centre, a performing arts centre, a wide range of teaching facilities and 11 boarding houses. We are constantly improving our site and, through our new visionary masterplan, we will see the creation of a truly world-class campus over the next decade.

Wycombe Abbey's outstanding reputation for excellence is built on the dedication and skills of the people that work at the School. Every member of staff at Wycombe Abbey contributes towards the School's thriving community and works to continually strengthen our ambition for excellence. We seek to recruit well-qualified and enthusiastic staff who demonstrate knowledge of, and passion for, their area of expertise and contribute to the wider life of the School. In return, the School provides staff with a wide variety of opportunities to develop professionally within a supportive team and wonderful working environment. Please do watch the video to hear more from the staff themselves about working at the School.

Superb academic outcomes are the hallmark of a Wycombe Abbey education and girls regularly secure places at the most prestigious universities globally. However, we understand the importance of looking beyond the narrow confines of excellent examination results to define success. Our rich co-curricular programme includes an array of activities and opportunities, ensuring that every girl develops her passions and explores new possibilities. These experiences, in turn, help to build the skills, discipline and character that will support her future life.

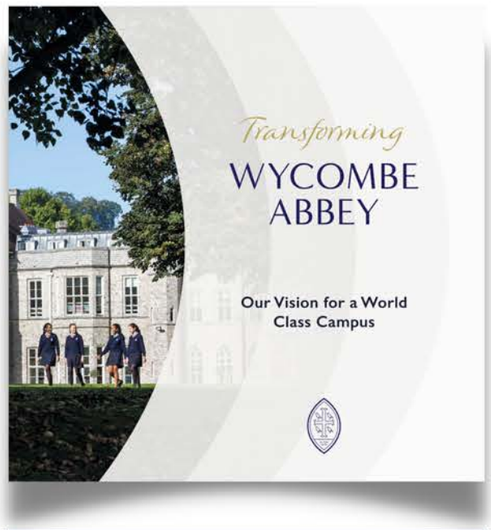
Ultimately, schools are about people and at the heart of Wycombe Abbey's success is our total commitment to pastoral care through boarding. The core values of trust, encouragement and mutual respect underpin everything we do; in this happy and close-knit community everyone is known as an individual, friendships flourish and girls enjoy each other's company.

Thank you for your interest in joining Wycombe Abbey. We hope that you will find the information in this pack useful, and we look forward to hearing from you if you feel that this post may suit your skills and experience.

Mrs Jo Duncan
Headmistress

Watch our film to hear why you should consider working at Wycombe Abbey

Read our Strategic Direction



Read about our Masterplan

Our Values

Our values are the principles that guide the way we interact with other individuals and groups and are especially important in a boarding community like ours.
These are the values that shape our school.

Trust – we foster strong relationships built on trust through good communication, willingness to listen and honesty.

Encouragement – we promote a positive atmosphere where all members of the community are supported to develop and fulfil their potential.

Mutual Respect – we seek to understand and embrace differences in people, ideas and experiences with tolerance and understanding.

Dynamism – we are a forward-thinking school that nurtures the leaders of tomorrow for a global workplace.

Excellence – we believe in the importance of striving to be exceptional in whatever we do through the setting of ambitious goals and taking ownership of our decisions and actions.

Balance – we understand the importance of supporting staff and pupils to thrive by maintaining a healthy mind and body.

Innovation – we are excited about creating the future through being open-minded, curious and embracing change.

Service – we recognise the great rewards that individuals reap in helping, supporting and giving to others both within the School community and beyond it.

Working at Wycombe Abbey

Wycombe Abbey is an exceptional place to work. Set in 170 acres of beautiful Buckinghamshire parkland, the School aims to encourage all staff to develop their talents within an inspiring, fulfilling and caring community.

In total, approximately 420 teaching and support staff are employed at the School on either a full or part-time basis. Each year a number of newly qualified, and in some cases unqualified, recent graduates join the staff body. There is proactive support for all new members of staff, who are guided through their first year at School by a variety of colleagues, with the line manager and an individually-appointed mentor taking the lead.

Staff wellbeing is a key focus for the School with the Headmistress taking a lead role in this area. Our core values of trust, encouragement and mutual respect shape our interactions with each other and those outside the School.

Professional development is highly valued at Wycombe Abbey and all staff are encouraged to participate in a vibrant and robust professional development programme offering a range of opportunities including inspirational speakers, workshops, accredited courses, conferences, coaching and mentoring.

All staff at Wycombe Abbey are encouraged to embrace and be part of boarding school life and are linked to a boarding house when they join. Staff are welcome to participate in House activities, such as trips and events and all are invited to school events throughout the year.

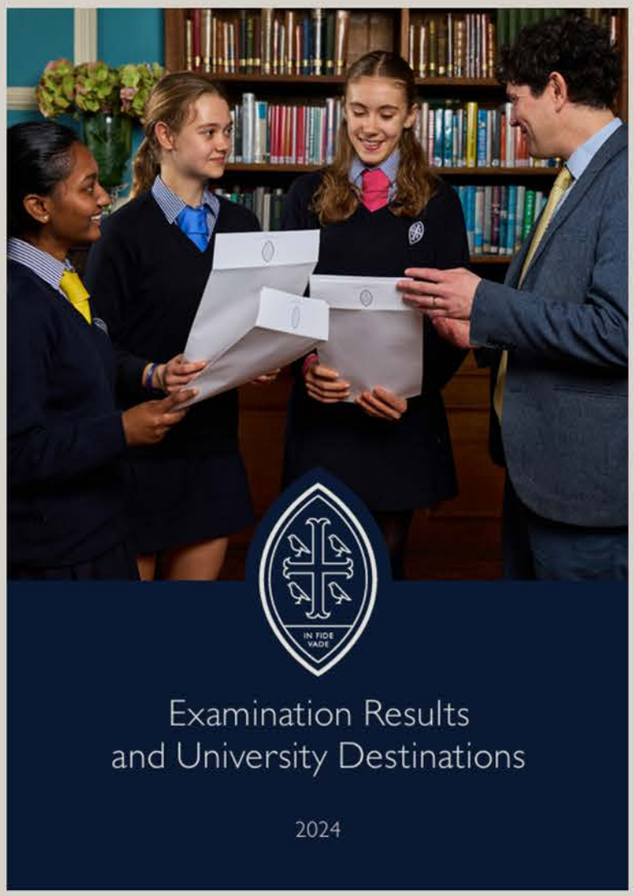
We provide a variety of employee benefits which we are continually adding to, some of which are listed below.

Benefits of Working at Wycombe Abbey

- A focus on staff wellbeing with a dedicated Wellbeing Committee chaired by the Headmistress. Events and activities include regular get togethers, a walking club and book-swap.
- Free parking provided on-site.
- Free use of the Sports Centre including swimming pool, gym and courts/pitches.
- Fee remission for daughter(s) who are eligible and meet the School's entrance criteria is applicable.
- Prep School Fee Remission is available with selected preparatory schools for children who are eligible and meet the relevant entrance criteria is available.
- All eligible staff enrolled automatically to the School's Defined Contribution pension scheme.
- Invitations to school productions and concerts throughout the year.
- Salary sacrifice on electric vehicles.
- Easy access to London (24 minutes to Marylebone), the Chiltern Hills and attractive towns such as Marlow, Henley-on-Thames and Beaconsfield. Heathrow is also just 20 miles away plus good transport links to other London airports.
- Provision of meals and refreshments all year.
- Provision of laptop during tenure at the School.
- Generous training and development scheme with regular whole staff in-house and external training.
- Free eye tests.
- Use of the School Library to borrow books.
- Access to the Employee Assistance Programme.
- Cycle to work scheme.
- Free will writing.

University Destinations and Results

Wycombe Abbey has a long tradition of academic success. The learning environment is supportive, yet challenging, and our teaching specialists communicate a genuine love of their subject, encouraging all our pupils to pursue an intellectual curiosity beyond the curriculum.



Click to see results and destinations

The Role: Apprentice Groundsman

Wycombe Abbey seeks to appoint an Apprentice Groundsman to undertake the upkeep and maintenance of the School's grounds and gardens.

Reports to:
Grounds Manager.

Contract:
This is a full-time, fixed-term contract, for one to four years.

Hours of Work:
7.30am – 3.45pm, Monday to Friday, plus every third Saturday from 7.30am – 12.30pm, 52 weeks per year. Each shift includes a 1-hour unpaid lunch break per day.

Flexible hours will be required from time-to-time to meet demand eg Dove Day, start and end of term, severe weather etc. This will include weekend work as well as the above.

These weekly hours include one-day release per week to attend Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA) during college term time.

Holiday:
30 days per annum, plus bank holidays.

Salary:
National minimum wage, dependent on age: £14,722.50 per annum (£7.55 per hour - 16-17 years), £19,500 per annum (£10.00 per hour - 18-20 years), £23,809.50 (£12.21 per hour - National Living Wage for those aged 21 and over).

Key Responsibilities

- Assist in the maintenance of all School grounds including sports pitches, parkland, woodland and/or garden beds and hedges.
- Gain knowledge and understanding of this role through on-the-job learning and use of day release to Berkshire College of Agriculture (training provider).
- Assist in keeping roads and paths clear and safe in severe weather conditions as outlined in the School's Severe Weather policy.
- Assist colleagues within the grounds and gardens team where required.
- Assist with car parking or other duties, particularly at the beginning and ends of terms or for School events as requested.
- Any other duties required to help with the smooth running of the School.

The Role: Apprentice Groundsman

Person Specification

Specialist Knowledge and Experience

- There is a genuine occupational requirement for all applicants to be physically fit and capable of carrying out a range of individual and team outdoor tasks.

Qualifications

- Good general secondary school education.
- Maths and English GCSE, or equivalent, will be part of the day-release college course if these qualifications have not been achieved prior to starting the apprenticeship.

Communication

- Communicate effectively with colleagues and other members of the School community.

Problem Solving

- Good practical outdoor skills and the capacity to identify and discuss potential solutions for problem areas within the grounds and gardens as the training progresses.

Reliability

- Follow directions from management and respect policies and procedures.
- Show commitment to the organisation and task completion.
- Good timekeeping.

Flexibility, Resilience and the Working Unsupervised

- Willing to adapt to changing demands and working schedules to accommodate the completion of tasks according to the School timetable.
- Ability to undertake outside work in all weather conditions.
- Whilst the apprentice will have the support and backup of the Grounds Team during their apprenticeship training, eventually they will be encouraged to work on their own during periods of peak workload to enable them to develop their independent skills and undertake a Grounds Staff/Gardener role on completion of the apprenticeship, if available.

Personal Qualities

- A genuine interest in working outdoors and a demonstrable enthusiasm for groundsmanship/ gardening.
- Mature, reliable, hardworking, safety conscious and task oriented.
- Self-motivated.

Desirable

- Any experience in groundsmanship/ gardening would be advantageous.

Safeguarding

Wycombe Abbey is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring check.

Terms of Appointment

A formal contract of employment will be drawn up on appointment.

- Contract
  - This is a full-time, fixed-term contract. The first six months will be a probationary period.
- Appointment Date
  - As soon as possible.
- Salary
  - National minimum wage, dependent on age: £14,722.50 per annum (£7.55 per hour - 16-17 years), £19,500 per annum (£10.00 per hour - 18-20 years), £23,809.50 (£12.21 per hour - National Living Wage for those aged 21 and over).
- Pension Scheme
  - The School offers membership of the School's Defined Contribution Pension Scheme.
- Death in Service Cover
  - Life cover at 4 x annual salary.
- 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 pupils and must adhere to, and comply with, the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at all times.
- Pre-Employment Checks
  - The appointment is subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring check.

Wycombe Abbey Community

Wycombe Abbey is a welcoming and vibrant community of 420 teaching and support staff.

Our School is set in 170 acres of parkland within a five-minute walk of the town of High Wycombe. There is easy access to London, 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 primary, prep, and secondary (including grammar) schools 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 and Bicester Village are within 30 miles, with a direct train link. Wembley Stadium and Heathrow are just 20 miles away and there are good transport links to other London airports..

There is a range of committees that staff can join including Staff Wellbeing, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, CPD and others. The Staff Wellbeing Committee organises staff wellbeing and social events on a regular basis, which are well attended.

Follow us on social media:
@WycombeAbbey

Closing date: 26 June 2025
Interviews: Week commencing 7 Jul 2025

To apply, please fill in an online application by clicking Apply Now.

Apply Now

We are an equal opportunities employer.
Registered Charity No. 310638

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the HR Team on 01494 895575 or hr@wycombeabbey.com.