



Teacher of  
Religious Studies  
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% of all GCSE entries being graded A\*-A. At A level, 85.6% were A\*-A. A third of last year's leavers went to Oxbridge and about a dozen 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.

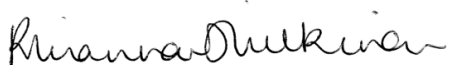
The School is ideally located to be able to enjoy a wide variety of activities with other independent schools including Eton, Harrow, Radley and Winchester. The boys join the girls for dinners and dances. We also enjoy close relationships with the two boys' grammar schools in High Wycombe, with our pupils 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 re-develop 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!

Best wishes,



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 a small number of hours per term to other (supervisory) duties, such as accompanying house outings.

As a boarding school, Wycombe has lessons on a Saturday morning. 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.



## RELIGIOUS STUDIES DEPARTMENT

Religious Studies is a popular and highly regarded subject within the school, combining aspects of religion, theology, philosophy and ethics to provide a demanding and engaging curriculum across all key stages. Well-resourced with textbooks, artefacts, journals and the excellent support of the School's library and ICT department, the department is also able to offer a range of enrichment opportunities including day trips, discussion groups with visiting speakers, university essay competitions and a pupil led Philosophy Society open to both senior and junior girls. Exploring creative teaching and learning strategies and extending enrichment opportunities will be areas for continuing development as the department moves forward.

In Years 7-9 all pupils are taught in 2 single periods of 35 minutes and the course covers the central tenets of six major world religions alongside an introduction to ethics and an exploration of critiques of religious belief.

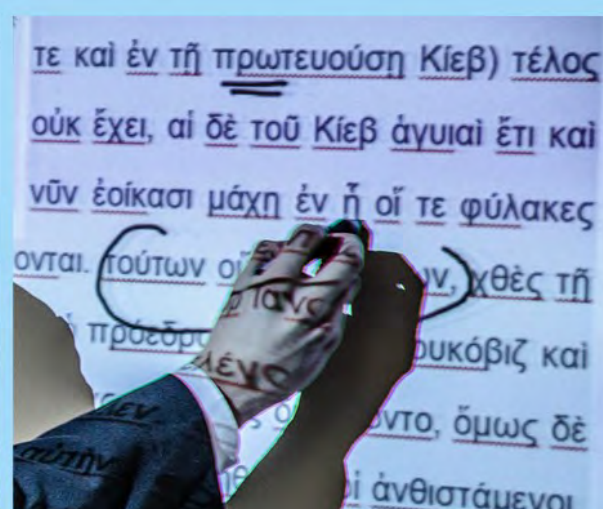
In Year 10 and 11 there is an optional GCSE course which regularly attracts over half the year group. We teach OCR Religious Studies (9-1), offering Christianity, Islam and Philosophy and Ethics and pupils are taught for two periods of 70 minutes each week.

In the Sixth Form there is an optional A level course; two teaching groups in each year take the OCR Religious Studies A level with papers in Philosophy of Religion, Religious Ethics and Developments in Christian Thought. Each year a small number of students apply successfully for Theology and Philosophy courses at university and we would like to see this trend continue and increase.

### Aims and Objectives

The Religious Studies Department aims to:

- Foster pupils' curiosity, interest and enjoyment of Religious Studies and its value and relevance in the modern world.
- Encourage reflection upon religious teaching and practice in the light of pupils' own beliefs and experience;
- Enable pupils to identify and respond to questions of ultimate meaning and to reflect upon and empathise with the feelings and experience of others.
- Promote the investigation, interpretation and expression of religious, ethical and philosophical questions and concepts through a variety of media.
- Develop pupil skills of evaluation, analysis and synthesis of issues of religious and philosophical significance.



## PERSON SPECIFICATION

Wycombe Abbey provides a modern and innovative education within a traditional boarding setting, and we therefore seek to employ teachers who will bring outstanding talent, intellect, enthusiasm and innovation to our classrooms.

The successful applicant is likely to possess:

- A good degree in Theology, Philosophy or a related subject.
- Excellent subject knowledge of the major religious traditions in the UK and the ability to teach philosophy of religion, ethics and theology to A level and Oxbridge entry.
- A teaching qualification (e.g. PGCE) is desirable although we are happy to consider good graduates who are committed to teaching and boarding life.
- The motivation to enhance teaching and learning at Wycombe Abbey by sharing good practice and active participation in continuing professional development.
- The ability to inspire and promote Religious Studies as a demanding, respected and relevant academic discipline, whilst encouraging all pupils to achieve their very best.
- A willingness to contribute to the wider objectives of the department (e.g. through sharing resources, contributing to schemes of work and organise and attending department events).
- The highest level of communication skills for dealing with pupils, parents and staff.
- A proven ability to build a positive and collaborative rapport with pupils and staff alike.
- A willingness to be involved in the wider life of the school through commitment to the co-curricular programme and/or boarding.
- 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.

### APPOINTMENT DATE

September 2018. This post is a full-time, non-residential teaching post (although rental accommodation may be available) or alternatively an Assistant Housemistress/Master post with a reduced timetable.

### SALARY

Wycombe Abbey has its own pay scale which compared 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 29th January and interviews will take place on 5th February.

Please submit a completed application form, which you will find on our website ([click here](#)), 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](mailto:wetenhallj@wycombeabbey.com)



[www.wycombeabbey.com](http://www.wycombeabbey.com)