

ABINGDON

HEAD OF ENGLISH

FOR SEPTEMBER 2027

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Interviews: Wednesday 02 December 2026

Job Pack AS11



Contents

PAGE 03 Message From The Head, Michael Windsor

PAGE 04 The English Department

PAGE 06 Teaching at Abingdon

PAGE 09 Person Specific Criteria

PAGE 10 Benefits of Teaching at Abingdon

PAGE 12 Salary and Pension

PAGE 14 Further Information

PAGE 15 How to Apply

PAGE 16 Additional Staff Benefits

Message from the Head, Michael Windsor



I am delighted that you are considering working at Abingdon and hope that you will want to apply for this position once you have found out more about us.

We have approximately 1200 students and are part of the Abingdon Schools Group, created in August 2026 to bring together Abingdon, The Manor Prep and Abingdon Prep. Previously a boys' school, we welcomed the first girls to our First Year (Year 7) and Sixth Form (Year 12) in September 2026 and over the next few years we will make the transition to become a fully coeducational school. Boarding is available from the Third Year (Year 9) and we currently have around 150 boarders.

Abingdon occupies a large and beautiful campus in a town centre location and offers impressive facilities. Our extensive facilities on the school campus as well as at Tilsley Park offer some of the best sport resources in the area.

Admission is by selection and academic standards and outcomes are high with the majority of our students going on to competitive university courses. The wide selection of courses they choose is reflective of the breadth and depth of our curriculum and the quality of our teaching and learning. Our students also benefit from an extensive range of co-curricular opportunities available to them through the Other Half programme. All colleagues participate in the programme and Abingdon places considerable importance on its many benefits and the role it has in developing the whole person.

We are also committed to providing highly effective pastoral care, which is largely delivered through the House system. Pupils in Lower School (First and Second Year) are nurtured and looked after during their important transition to secondary school in their own House. Students from the Third Year to the Sixth Form belong to one of nine houses (three of which are day and boarding houses) under the care of their Head of House. Here, they mix with other students from across all age groups. Each student also belongs to a tutor group and their tutor acts as the key conduit between student, school and home. We believe that these structures enable us to provide comprehensive academic and pastoral support for our young people.

Ours is a happy school with a strong sense of purpose, where mutual respect, courtesy and consideration are valued. There is quiet pride amongst those who work here and our students who appreciate the calibre of their teachers. We may be over 760 years old but we are a forward-looking, dynamic school. Although one of the leading independent schools in the UK, we are not complacent and are continually looking to improve. Part of this drive is to recruit high calibre professionals, who want to join our strong staff and work with our wonderful pupils. We welcome therefore ambitious and energetic applicants who are keen to develop their career further.

I do hope that you might be tempted to apply. I recognise that much time and thought goes into preparing an application and we, in turn, will give your application serious consideration.

Michael Windsor

Michael Windsor
Head

The English Department

Highly experienced and successful, the Abingdon School English department is a forward-looking, reflective, collaborative and supportive team with impressive levels of dedication and enthusiasm for the subject area and for teaching.

Our examination results are comparable with other leading English departments. In the last three years, A Level results have been in the region of 40% A*, 70% A*/A and 100% A*-B. At GCSE a significant proportion of pupils typically achieve Grades 9 and 8, with around 90% at Grade 7 or above. We are very proud of these results and continue to seek ways to develop schemes of work and teaching and learning within the department so we can sustain and develop results in future years.

We follow the Edexcel IGCSE English Language and English Literature courses. At A Level we are teaching the OCR syllabus. We teach the linear A Level course and do not offer the decoupled AS qualification. There are a number of co-curricular activities taking place each week, including the particularly popular Words and That, our creative arts newspaper (published termly), The Martlet (the Shine Media Award-winning school newspaper), creative writing clubs, the debating society and the joint literary society. We also offer the AFA course in creative writing as a co-curricular activity for our 6th Form pupils, with all participating pupils achieving A*/A since we started offering the activity in 2018. A number of pupils proceed each year to university English courses (including Oxford and Cambridge) and regular extra classes for them are arranged.



The English Department cont.

The department comprises ten teachers and is based in a recently refurbished building, Mercers' Court, which is shared with the MFL and EFL departments to form 'The Languages Centre'. All the English classrooms and the department office are accessible from the same corridor, and classrooms are all equipped with modern AV facilities, overhead data projectors and several whiteboards for teacher and pupil use.

Opportunities for INSET and professional development are actively encouraged and supported. There is a central office, the department is generously resourced and there is an excellent section of the school library dedicated to English texts. The library is located in Beech Court, a state-of-the-art learning space, and we have a very strong relationship with the librarian, Dr Graham Gardner.

The English Department has an extensive collection of shared lesson and teaching resources and also enjoys access to very good ICT resources and support. We liaise with the library to shadow the Carnegie Prize, enter a range of national competitions and organise visits by writers such as Philip Womack and Poet Laureate Simon Armitage. We often take trips to the theatre and to other places and events of interest such as The Globe and the T.S. Eliot Prize on London's South Bank. National Theatre productions are streamed live at the school's Amey Theatre.



Teaching at Abingdon

The following outlines the main, usual expectations of a teacher at Abingdon, though requirements may vary over time. Teachers of any subject may be asked to undertake such duties and responsibilities as are necessary for the effective running of the school.

- Teaching a subject or subjects as agreed at appointment throughout the range at the school (i.e. from Year 7 to Year 13).
- Commitment to formal assessment as required by the Head of Department and to writing formal reports on pupils and tutees five times a year.
- Contributing as appropriate to departmental activities and developments, such as trips, tours, additional classes, lectures and other events that contribute to the life of a busy and dynamic department.
- Being generally available in school throughout the Monday to Friday daytime academic timetable (c.08:30am - 5:20pm) in order to undertake such duties as may be required to support the academic, pastoral or Other Half activities of the school.
- Acting as part of the duty team to oversee elements of the daily supervision of the students outside of the classroom (both on weekdays and on Saturdays).
- Acting as a tutor to a group of students within a House, as directed by the Deputy Head Pastoral, with primary responsibility for their pastoral care, including supporting the management of safeguarding, wellbeing and attendance concerns.
- All tutors also contribute elements of the PSHCE programme as a tutor and this is supplemented with additional PSHCE teaching in years 9 and 10 within curriculum time.
- Being available to work on days that fall outside the Monday to Friday daytime, term time academic pattern, to support the provision of activity for the students, including on specified Saturdays and occasional evenings. Examples of this include:
    - Attending parents' evenings and events.
    - Accompanying students on trips out of school.
    - Welcoming visitors and prospective pupils on Open Days, Taster Days and Entrance Exam Days.
    - Meeting parents of tutees at House and/or relevant year group/section events (e.g. careers evenings).
- Contributing, as agreed with the Senior Deputy Head and the Director of the Other Half, to the School's Other Half programme. We welcome innovative proposals for the Other Half that utilise the skills and interests of our staff.

Teaching at Abingdon (cont.)

- Contributing to cover for absent colleagues and invigilation of internal and external examinations, as directed by the Cover Manager.
- Contributing to Private Study supervision of Sixth Formers, as required by the Head of Sixth Form.
- Staff members who are attached to one of the School's Boarding Houses have additional duties in the evenings and at weekends. **Please note that it is not a requirement of this particular post to be involved in boarding.**
- For part-time staff, allocations for teaching, tutoring, and the Other Half will be pro-rated based on their FTE.
- The standard teaching allocation for a full-time teacher is 34 – 39 periods per fortnight (each period being 50 minutes), depending on their non-teaching contributions.



Job Description

Head of English at Abingdon

The following may be taken to represent key features of a Head of Department's role at Abingdon but should not be seen to be exhaustive. Often specific HoD roles also have additional responsibilities attached to that role.

To act as a role model to others, visibly demonstrating high standards of professionalism in all aspects of leadership.

Vision

- Design, implement and monitor the delivery of an ambitious curriculum.
- Take a lead in setting and maintaining the School's advancement of scholarship and innovations in Teaching & Learning.
- Ensure the department plays a role in delivering the Group Development Plan.
- Maintain an interest in the broader subject development and incorporate suitable innovations into the curriculum.
- Cultivate a positive culture in the department.
- Promote the department both within the school and externally in conjunction with the marketing department.

Organisation and Administration

- Contribute to the formulation of school policies.
- Create and review schemes of work in the department.
- Review the public exam syllabuses offered in the department and liaise with the Exams Officer about syllabuses, examinations and results.
- Meet regularly with the Deputy Head Academic and Teaching and Learning team to review the strategic development of the department.
- Prepare department reviews, development plans and the department handbook.
- Oversee the production of school internal examination papers and their marking, including scholarship or other entrance papers, as and when these are required.
- Oversee arrangements for non-exam assessment (NEA) and ensure timely completion of deadlines.
- Coordinate setting and teaching arrangements, in collaboration with the Curriculum Director.
- Hold responsibility for the departmental budget.
- Ensure the department pages on the School's website are up to date and regular news of events is recorded and forwarded to the website officer.

Managing a team

- Support colleagues with professional development and provide information for their appraisals.
- Assist the Deputy Head Academic in the recruitment and induction of new members of the department.
- Oversee the teaching of all members of the department with the support of the 2i/c English.
- Monitor the assessment of pupils by members of the department, including reporting.
- Chair regular department meetings and ensure the agenda and minutes are appropriately coordinated.
- Line-manage the 2i/c English.

Enrichment

- Lead the extra-curricular life of the department, through extension programmes, pre-university seminars, competitions, trips, open days, prep school events etc.
- Be proactive in advising students and their parents on academic matters, including UCAS applications in consultation with the Director of Futures.

Person Specific Criteria

A Head of Department is expected to fulfil and actively model the criteria for any teaching position.

Essential Qualities

- A good degree in English or a closely related subject.
- A person who is, or has the potential to be, an outstanding classroom practitioner who can teach engaging, inspirational, active lessons across all age ranges.
- An excellent team member who is enthusiastic, well-organised and possesses a positive approach to the growth of English at Abingdon and to their own development as a teacher.
- Actively aware of the needs of SEN and EAL students, working in liason with the Academic Support (SEND) department over specific student difficulties and to implement relevant strategies.
- Willing to make a full contribution to the life of the English department, including taking part in developing shared resources and to the supra-curricular activities run by the department.
- Enthusiastic to contribute to the Other Half programme.
- A commitment to the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion.
- A commitment to the protection and safeguarding of children and young people.
- A commitment to valuing and respecting the views and needs of children and young people.

Desirable Qualities

- Ability to teach a second subject within Abingdon's curriculum.
- Holder of a teaching qualification and evidence of relevant continuing professional development.
- Experience in using innovative educational technology.
- Experience as an examiner at GCSE and/or A Level.
- Particular expertise in one or more areas of the Other Half Programme.



Benefits of Teaching at Abingdon

Professional Development

Abingdon prides itself on the commitment it makes to developing its teaching staff:

- We have a very strong track record in taking on unqualified teachers (or 'pre-qualified', as we call them) and training them to become outstanding practitioners. We are open to taking on teachers who have just finished their degrees and to receiving applications from people considering a career change into teaching. Following an Abingdon-based course for one or two years (dependent on experience) our PQTs will be considered for the Assessment Only Route to qualified teacher status (QTS).This would involve a 12 week programme overseen by ASTRA and funded by the School. If successful this would lead to QTS and the 2 year Early Career Teacher probation in line with national guidelines. This process is supported by a Professional Tutor.

- Our Director of Educational Development and the team of Directors of Teaching and Learning offer support that underpins all we do in teaching. Together they provide training and advice for teachers, whatever stage of their career they are at, acting as mentors and coaches for the whole teaching staff. There are opportunities to collaborate through Teaching & Learning newsletters and Teach/Meet conferences.

- There is a biennial cycle of professional development meetings based on a portfolio of evidence collected in the intervening time as well as many opportunities to reflect on professional practice through coaching conversations.

- We have a generous annual INSET budget and encourage teachers to subscribe to external CPD courses and undertake further qualifications. In addition to this, the School operates up to five INSET days itself, offering a range of further training, from highly practical First Aid qualifications to seminars on all aspects of Teaching and Learning.



Benefits of Teaching at Abingdon (cont.)

Leadership Opportunities

We believe strongly in distributed leadership and there are over 100 positions in the school that teachers take on beyond their teaching role in which they can show and develop their leadership skills. We have a healthy staff turnover and it is noteworthy that the majority of staff who move on to other schools are doing so because they have won major leadership posts, for example as Heads of Department, House, Deputy Head or Head.

Resources and Facilities

The school offers an excellent range of administrative and operational support services for teachers, including providing high quality ICT equipment to pupils and staff. Teaching staff are loaned a school device and all students either bring their own laptop or have a school owned device. The Director of Digital Innovation is available to support the development of ICT across the whole curriculum.

The school is very stable, currently enjoying high demand for places and is backed by strong financial planning that enables all departments to be well resourced. In recent years we have been investing heavily in a building programme to develop our facilities with major projects in the last few years including a new Sixth Form centre, Library and spaces for Art, Economics, Business Studies and Computer Science, major refurbishment/extension of all boarding houses and a second dining room and events space (The Pavilion). Given our move to co-education, we have been making changes to House rooms and Sports spaces and general facilities.



Terms and Conditions

Salary and Pension

Abingdon has its own **12-point salary scale, significantly above the national scale**. In 2026/27, the default teaching salary range will be **£35,154 to £64,649.**

In addition to this, the School allocates **Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs)** for a number of additional leadership responsibilities. This position attracts **15 SRA's** at **£723** per SRA (default scale), a total of **£10,845** per annum. This is indicative of the importance of this role at Abingdon.

Pension: Teachers joining the school are offered a choice between the 'default' and the' enhanced' salary spines. The default spine involves the teacher making a contribution of 10% of gross pensionable pay to the School's chosen Defined Contribution Pension Scheme with the School contributing 22% of gross pensionable pay.

The 'enhanced' spine is a means of taking a higher salary in return for lower pension contributions - 6.4% (teacher) and 14.1% (school). The Defined Contribution Pension Scheme also offers a salary exchange option. Further information is available on request from the HR Department (recruitment@abingdon.org.uk).



Further Information

Health and Safety at Work

All staff share responsibility for achieving safe working conditions. The postholder must take care of their own health and safety and that of others, observe applicable safety rules and follow instructions for the safe use of equipment.

All staff are required to confirm that they have read and understood the School's Health and Safety Policy.

As a Head of Department you have additional responsibilities relating to risk assessments, supervising training in your department and managing fire safety in your work area.

Training Requirements

Teaching staff are provided with mandatory training in areas including: Cyber Security, First Aid at Work, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, Fire Awareness, Health & Safety, Prevent, Safeguarding (triennial) and Sexual Harassment Awareness.

As a Head of Department you will also be provided with mandatory training in Fire Marshalling, Risk Assessment and Safer Recruitment.



Further Information cont.

- This is a **permanent, full-time** teaching appointment.
- In line with the School's Flexible Working Policy, we are open to the possibility of making an appointment to this role on a **job share** basis. We would warmly invite any applicants who would be interested in a further conversation about this to contact **Ben Whitworth, Acting Deputy Head Academic** via recruitment@abingdon.org.uk.
- This role is expected to start in **September 2027.**
- **Salary:** position on the relevant salary scale on appointment will be reflective of the successful candidate's previous experience.
- **Tenure:** In keeping with all leadership posts of this nature at Abingdon, the successful candidate will be offered a permanent teaching contract at Abingdon with the HoD role being offered on a ten year tenure basis. What this means in effect is that their performance as HoD will be formally reviewed before the tenth year anniversary and either the tenure will be extended for another agreed period of time or the incumbent will be expected to step down from the role and fulfil a full teaching expectation in the department. This formal review related to tenure will be alongside the regular biennial professional development review cycle that applies to all teaching staff. The post-holder may choose to step down after ten years, even if the school is willing to extend their tenure. Requests to step down from leadership prior to the completion of tenure will also be considered, though the school's agreement in such cases will be likely to be dependent on finding a suitable replacement.
- For an information discussion about the role, please contact **Ben Whitworth, Acting Deputy Head Academic.** Please make contact initially via email**:** recruitment@abingdon.org.uk. Please note this is not part of the selection process.
- We recognise the value of a diverse workplace and **welcome and encourage applications from everyone,** including groups that are currently underrepresented amongst our staff at this level.
- Visits to the school prior to submitting an application are regrettably not possible for us to arrange but we hope our website conveys a strong sense of what the school is like.
- Please note we are unable to accept applications by CV. All applicants must complete the **standard Abingdon application form with full employment history** which provides an opportunity for you to introduce yourself and your motivation in applying for this role.
- Closing date for applications is **Wednesday 25 November (Midday)**. Interviews are expected to be held on **Wednesday 02 December 2026.**
- Abingdon Schools Group is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. All appointments are subject to a satisfactory enhanced DBS check.

How to Apply

To apply, please go to **MyNewTerm**, our recruitment portal and submit an **application**. Please note we are unable to accept CVs, testimonials or examples of work.

References:
We require at least two satisfactory references, including one from your current/most recent employer. If you've previously worked in a school or with children, one reference must be from the most recent relevant employer where you last worked. **If you've been employed by a school, the reference must be from the school's Head.** References cannot be from a relative or someone known to you solely as a friend. For safeguarding reasons, references for shortlisted candidates will be taken up before interview.

Online Checks:
We conduct online searches for all shortlisted candidates to assess their suitability to work with children. Any public information found may be discussed with you at your interview.

Interviews:
If shortlisted, you'll be invited to attend an in-person interview/selection day which will include one or more interviews and will also include one or more tasks (including teaching an observed lesson) and a tour of the School. If you are invited for interview, further information will be sent to you with your invitation.
These stages will also assess your suitability for working with children. Your employment history, including any gaps in employment, will be explored at interview.

Pre-Employment Checks:
If you're invited for an interview, you'll undergo essential document checks with HR, including:

- documents for DBS enhanced criminal records check and checks of relevant prohibitions and barring;
- Verification of identity, address, right to work in the UK, and
- Qualifications check.

If you've lived or worked overseas for 3+ months in the last 5 years, please bring original copies of any overseas police checks

Conditional Offer & Safeguarding
Any job offer is conditional on successful completion of all required pre-appointment checks, including ID check, DBS check, any required overseas checks, barred list checks, prohibitions from teaching and/or management checks (if applicable), satisfactory references, medical fitness, EYFS declaration and verification of qualifications and right to work in the UK. Staff are also required to read and sign to say they have understood key policies including safeguarding and health and safety.

Warning!
It is an offence to apply for the role if you are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children. Providing false information is also an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal (if appointed), and possible referral to the police and/or DBS, and/or the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

Questions?
Contact our Recruitment Team at **01235 849136** or **recruitment@abingdon.org.uk**

We recognise the value of a diverse and inclusive workplace and are committed to equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants. We aim to ensure that our staffing at all levels and in all roles is diverse and we welcome applications from all backgrounds and all sections of the community.

Additional Staff Benefits

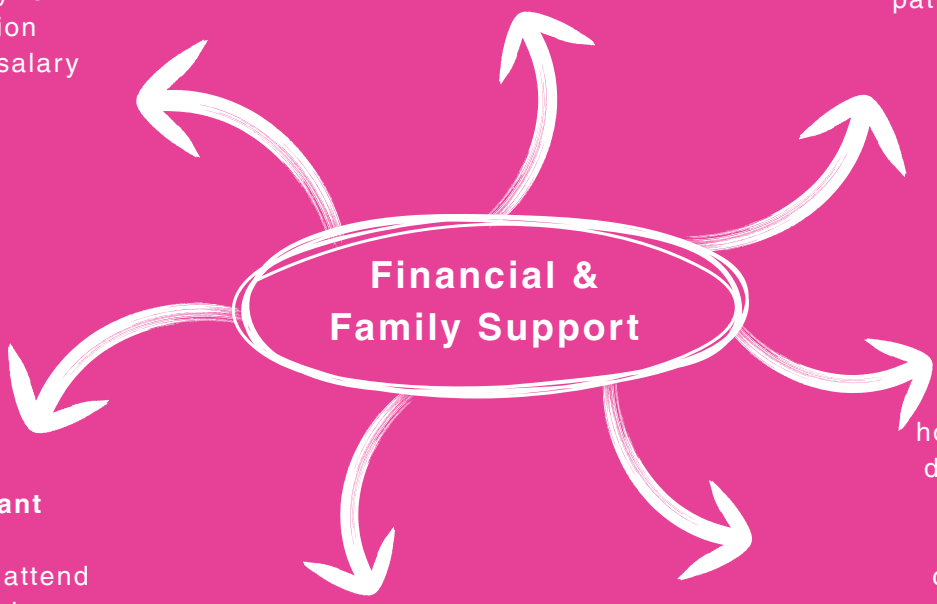
Pension:
Flexible choice of generous pension schemes (defined contribution): the default scheme with contribution of 10% of gross pensionable pay (teacher) and 22% of gross pensionable pay (school); or teachers have the flexibility to opt into an 'enhanced' pay scale and received a higher salary in return for lower pension contributions of 6.4% (teacher) and 14.1% (School). Staff can also exchange salary for increased pension contributions ("salary sacrifice").



Death in Service Benefit:
For your peace of mind, all staff aged 18-70 are covered by a scheme that pays out three times your annual salary to your loved ones in the event of your death whilst employed.



Income Protection:
The School's Group Income Protection provides teaching staff who are members of the Defined Contribution Pension Scheme with a regular income if they cannot work because of a long-term sickness or injury. This includes rehabilitation services which can help employees during periods of long term absence, with personalised treatment, where appropriate providing them with a structured pathway back to work.





Foundation Grant (School Fees):
If your children attend Abingdon School or Abingdon Prep, you could receive a significant discount of up to 25% on their tuition fees (pro-rata for part-time staff). Admission to the School is subject to availability of places and meeting admission requirements. Ask us for more details if this applies to you.

Financial Planning Appointments:
Staff have access to professional financial planning appointment, subject to terms and conditions.



Super Camps Discount:

Need childcare during school holidays? Staff get a discount on courses with Super Camps, and you can use childcare vouchers.



Accommodation:
The school has limited accommodation but aims to assist where possible. Different arrangement for tax and utilities will apply depending on circumstances. Staff in non-residential roles but who assist in supervising boarders in the evenings and weekends may receive rent-free housing as a benefit in kind but contribute monthly toward council tax and utilities (water, gas, electricity etc), deducted from their salary.



Private Healthcare:
Permaent employees can benefit from free private health insurance, giving access to excellent medical care (this is a taxable benefit).

School Counsellors and Physios:
Staff can also access the services provided by the School Counsellors and the Physios (terms and conditions apply).

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP):
Life can be tricky, so we provide an Employee Assistance Programme. This offers confidential support and resources for anything from mental health to financial advice, plus a Health Risk Assessment tool to help you stay on top of your well-being.



Sports Centre Membership and Theatre discounts:
Stay active and healthy with free access to the gym and swimming pool at agreed times.

You'll also get a discounted membership to the Abingdon Sports and Leisure Club, allowing you to attend exercise classes for free. Staff can also benefit from access to discounted or complementary tickets to a wide range of events at the Amey Theatre.

Health & Wellbeing



Cycle to Work Scheme:
Save money and get fit! We offer a Cycle to Work scheme for eligible staff, helping you buy a bike. Contact us for more information.

Other Health and Wellbeing Benefits:
Include access to an occupational health provider, free staff 'flu jabs, eye test reimbursement, menopause support and mental health first aiders.



Social:
There are regular staff social events and opportunities to join other staff in a range of activities from singing in the choir to playing cricket or football, running in the road relay or even joining in with the staff rock band or the staff panto.



Free Lunch:
Most staff can enjoy a delicious free lunch and refreshments during term time.



Everyday Perks



Free Parking:
We offer free on-site parking and bike storage for all staff (on a first-come, first-served basis).



Staff Development

We offer a range of online and in-person courses to staff including first aid, mental health first aid and health and safety courses. Staff completing higher level professional qualifications or CPD may have their courses fully or partly funded.



ABINGDON

A leading independent co-educational day and boarding school in Oxfordshire for pupils aged 11 to 18 years.

abingdon.org.uk