



ABINGDON



GROUNDS MAINTENANCE OPERATIVE

Closing Date: Wednesday 26 August 2026 (Midday)
Interviews: Thursday 03 September 2026

Early applications are encouraged. We may make an appointment prior to the advertised closing or interview dates.

Job Pack AS01



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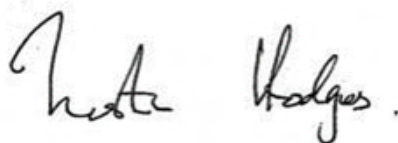
Message from the Director of Finance & Operations, Justin Hodges

Thank you for your interest in the Abingdon Schools Group. I am delighted that you are considering working here. As a member of the support staff you would play a pivotal role in supporting the school to deliver the very best academic, pastoral and Other Half opportunities to our students.

Please take some time to look at our website, abingdon.org.uk, as this will tell you a lot about us and give you a taste of the atmosphere. The Abingdon Schools Group is a community of some 1700 students across Abingdon Prep, Abingdon School and the Manor Prep. Boarding is available from 13+ and boarding houses are full with around 150 boarders. Our sixth form has around 360 students and we employ around 500 teachers and support staff across the Group. The Board of Governors oversees the whole Group.

Our Schools occupy large and beautiful campuses. The facilities are excellent with recent significant developments including newly renovated and extended boarding accommodation and a state of the art dining pavilion. Other recent developments include a dedicated Sixth Form Centre, library, Art department and Science Centre. New facilities for Economics and Business Studies; and Computer Science opened in 2020, alongside two additional houserooms for the students. We have also recently added to our extensive sports facilities - both at Tilsley Park and on the senior school campus - these offer some of the best sports resources in the area. The Group benefits from a continuous refurbishment and development plan, adding further impressive facilities to a very well-resourced organisation that also prioritises sustainable development. In May 2024, the Group announced its decision to move to co-education. Girls have already joined our our Prep School up to Year 6. From September 2026, our Senior School will welcome girls to our First Year (11+) and Sixth Form (16+) entry points; and to our Third Year (13+) from September 2028.

We may be over 760 years old but we are a forward-looking, dynamic school. There is pride and commitment amongst those who work here and we always look for high calibre professionals to join us. I hope that you might see yourself joining this happy and purposeful community.



Justin Hodges
Director of Finance & Operations



About the Department

The Abingdon Schools Groups employs around 500 staff across its three schools, Abingdon School, Abingdon Preparatory School and the Manor Preparatory School, as well as Abingdon School Enterprises, which manages commercial activities at the Sports Centre, Tilsley Park and the Amey Theatre. The Group also engages with around 300 other staff including casual workers, self-employed coaches, visiting music teachers, volunteers and governors, meaning that the HR Department supports a workforce of over 800 staff in total.

The Abingdon Schools Group is supported by an award-nominated grounds and gardens team of nine skilled professionals. Together, they oversee the full breadth of the Groups external environments, from landscaped grounds to high-performance sports surfaces, ensuring that every outdoor area is maintained to exceptional standards. Their expertise keeps the facilities safe, attractive, and competition-ready throughout the year.



Job Description

The Role

Location: Abingdon School, Tilsley Park and Abingdon Prep School

Department: Grounds

Reports to: Head of Grounds

We are looking for an exceptional Grounds Maintenance Operative to assist in maintaining and upkeeping the general gardens/grounds.

The School has extensive sports fields in 3 separate locations. The sites consist of cricket pitches, rugby/soccer pitches, an athletics track, tennis courts, and synthetic turf pitches. There are also areas of formal and private gardens, woodland and undeveloped ground including public rights of way which need to be managed and maintained.

The primary location is split between Tilsley Park and Abingdon School, but there will be a requirement to work at other sites within the Abingdon Schools Group when needed.



Job Description (cont.)

Duties & Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this job description are indicative and may vary over time. The postholder will be expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and extent of the post. Duties will include, but not be limited to:

- Setting up sports pitches and amenity surfaces including the maintenance of 2G & 3G synthetic surfaces.
- The use of mechanical equipment e.g. mowers and tractors including basic maintenance.
- Line marking of sports surfaces.
- The correct cutting and care of hedges and trees using mechanical equipment.
- The care and maintenance of drives and hard surfaces within the defined areas of responsibility.
- Keep all areas under responsibility clean and tidy, and to a high standard of presentation at all times, including sweeping, edging, weed control and litter picking.
- To assist site staff during inclement weather with the gritting and clearance of ice and snow from roads and paths.
- Ensuring the safe use, storage, calibration and disposal of pesticides and other similar substances.
- Attending meetings, seminars and courses as required by the Head of Grounds.
- The cutting and maintenance of lawns.
- Maintenance, repair and erection of fencing.
- Any other duties which may reasonably fall within the general scope of the role.



Person Specific Criteria

Essential Qualities

- A minimum of two years' experience in grounds maintenance.
- Conscientious, reliable, flexible and self-motivated.
- Good communication skills.
- Full driving licence (maximum of 3 penalty points).

Desirable Qualities

- Recognised qualification in Groundskeeping e.g. NVQ.
- Experience of maintaining 3G and 2G would be an advantage although training can be given.
- Spraying Certificates PA1 and PA2 would be an advantage.
- Experience in soft and hard landscaping.



Further Information

Hours and weeks of work

This is a permanent, full-time position working 40 hours per week all year round. The standard hours of work are 08.30 to 17.00, Monday-Friday (with a 30 minutes unpaid lunch). There may be a need for the postholder to support on a Saturday by prior arrangement with the Head of Grounds.

The role is entitled to 25 days' paid annual leave plus the 8 public holidays. All year round staff also benefit from 4 additional non-contractual days off between Christmas Eve and New Year during the School's Christmas closure period.

Salary

The annual salary for this role will be **£28,328** per annum (dependent on skills and experience).



Further Information

NOTES

- This role is to start as soon as possible.
- Annual leave is generally expected to be taken during published Abingdon School holidays rather than during term time.
- After successful completion of a 6 month probationary period, the **notice period** for this role is 1 month.
- For an informal discussion about the role please contact Richard Hagar, Head of Grounds initially via email to: recruitment@abingdon.org.uk. Please note this is not part of the selection process.
- Early applications are encouraged and we may make an appointment prior to the published closing or interview date.
- All applicants should apply via our recruitment portal.
- For safeguarding reasons, please note we are unable to accept applications by CV. All applicants must complete the standard Abingdon application form.
- Closing date is **Wednesday 26 August 2026 (midday)**.
- Interviews are expected to be held on **Thursday 03 September 2026**.



Further Information

Training Requirements

The following mandatory training will be provided: Cyber Security, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion , Fire Awareness, Health & Safety, Prevent, Sexual Harassment Awareness and Safeguarding (Triennial).

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 Group's Health and Safety Policy.



Benefits of working at Abingdon

Annual Leave:

You'll get 25 days paid time off each year, plus bank holidays (pro rata if part time). Depending on your role, we usually expect you to take your holidays during school breaks, but there can be some flexibility if needed.



92% of our staff say the facilities and resources for staff are good (2026 staff survey)



Working from Home (WFH):

We may be able to offer flexible working from home options, depending on the nature of your role. If this applies, during term time, you may be able to work remotely for up to 20% of your hours (usually about one day a week). Outside of term time, this increases to 40% (around two days a week). Unfortunately, not all roles can be carried out from home.



Christmas Closure:

Our all year round staff can enjoy extra time off over the festive period. We offer up to 4 closure days around Christmas/New Year, dates depend on where the bank holidays fall.

Outstanding Pension Scheme:

We're serious about your future. We offer staff pension choices, including the option to join an enhanced pension scheme with a 6.4% contribution from you and a competitive contribution of 14.1% from us. Staff can also opt for salary exchange for additional benefits.

Death in Service Benefit:

For your peace of mind, all support 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.



Financial Planning Appointments:

Staff have access to professional financial planning appointment, subject to terms and conditions.

Financial & Family Support



Super Camps Discount:

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



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.



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 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.



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 staff panto.

Private Healthcare:

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



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.



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.



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 for free 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.

“ 99% of our staff say they have good working relationships with their immediate colleagues (2026 staff survey) ”

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 will be taken up before interview unless you have specifically asked us not to.

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 (e.g a written exercise) 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 checks with HR, including:

- 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 10 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 (if applicable) 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 HR Department 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.



ABINGDON

**Co-educational independent day and boarding
school for pupils aged 11 to 18 years**