

ABINGDON

the other half



The term 'Other Half' represents the significance of extra-curricular activities within the ethos of the School. It also suggests the idea of a balance to be achieved, between academic focus and recreational enjoyment. Some of the elements of the 'Other Half' are compulsory – others are entirely voluntary.



This booklet gives a guide to the Other Half activities available. Please refer to the Other Half section on the school website for more details.

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Welcome

The 'Other Half' is a colloquialism used throughout Abingdon School. It represents a substantial part of the educational experience, involving activities that take place beyond the academic curriculum – and usually outside the classroom. It is to be seen as an essential part of the learning experience – offering boys the opportunity to learn about life in its broader context; its challenges and opportunities, successes and inevitable disappointments.

I hope boys will enjoy looking through this booklet and that during their time at Abingdon they will have the opportunity to experience a range of contrasting activities; hopefully one or two will become pursuits they follow and develop in their adult lives.

Henry Morgan,
Director of the Other Half

Alphabet Club

This club is for boys who are interested in design and typography, and who want to try out lots of ways of making and designing lettering. Each week we will try out a new way of making a letter, and so over the course of the two terms we will create a mix & match style alphabet.

Architecture Club

The club is for boys who have an interest in buildings of any kind from high-rise skyscrapers to tree houses and sheds! Each term we will look at architecture movements, architects and individual buildings. You will have the chance to design/make buildings in 2D and/or 3D. There will be some structure to each session and you will need to be prepared to contribute to discussions and prepare presentations for the rest of the group.

Art Skills Workshop

If you want to improve your skills. Then this club is for you. You will learn how to paint and draw better and you will discover new printing techniques.

Artwork Film and Special Effects Club

In this club students get to do imaginative artwork based around their favourite films. We have previously designed and built Tree Ent face masks from The Lord of the Rings. Students have also studied the work of Marvel cartoonists and action film posters and produced their own comic book front covers.

Ceramics Club

Come and explore the wondrous world of clay; experiment with a range of clay construction and decorating techniques and develop your creativity and innovation skills. Be inspired by traditional/functional ceramics alongside contemporary, more sculptural work.

Comic Book Illustrations

Looking at the world of Marvel and comic book illustrations we enable students to invent and design their own superhero character. Students will be using ICT and rendering their own work with professional marker pens. Over the weeks they will then produce a front cover to a new comic starring their hero.



Art Activities

This session is designed for those keen to extend their skills and to try something new. Boys will be free to set their own project briefs and work on collaborative ideas if they so wish. GCSE and A level students are able to develop coursework during these sessions.



Design and Technology Club

The workshop facilities are open to offer students the opportunity to develop their design and technology skills. They can either work through some existing project briefs or even develop their own to work on.

Digital Product Development

This activity provides boys with an opportunity to learn or improve their knowledge of the Computer Aided Design programme 'Fusion 360'. The industry standard piece of software is used by commercial designers and boys will learn to create objects and designs in 3D, working towards outputting their work using the Makerbot 3D printers.

Doodle Illustration Books

A doodle is a drawing made while a person's attention is otherwise occupied. This club offers a way to relax when drawing but also teaches students a lot more. Students will aim to produce detailed pen illustrations in a small handmade book. They will fill this book with images drawn around the school site. Work will include illustrations of architecture and natural forms. Students will then design an imaginary castle which will include their personal research. The castle will be built from card or foam board and it will be rendered in a doodle style.

Drawing Club

This club is for boys who are interested in drawing, and want to try out a variety of styles, from manga to Da Vinci. Practical help will be given so you can improve your skills.

Lower School Lego Architecture Club

This club encourages boys to realise their imaginative designs in 3D using the Lego Architecture kits. Boys will research existing examples of interesting architecture, develop their own designs and then work with 3D CAD software to generate virtual scale models of their creations.

Young Designers

The great thing about Young Designers is the creativity. In many other Other Half activities, lessons and even out of school activities one must follow a set of precise, linear instructions given by a teacher or guide who is constantly trying to assess you or grade you on something. And that is wonderful – assessment is a part of life and Abingdon is one of the best places to come if one wants to learn about how to become great in life – but everyone needs time to relax and unwind, away from the stress of everyday schoolwork and study time. That's why Young Designers is so wonderful. In Young Designers, you have the option to make whatever you want. A box? A bed? A table? A large wooden boat? Yep. Every Young Designers session, a group of lucky boys has access to the School's state of the art DT department – complete with sanding machines, laser cutters, and even a few 3D printers! If you can think it, you can make it – all it needs is for you to select Young Designers for an Other Half session.



Christian Life at Abingdon

Christian Forum

An opportunity for all year groups to explore the Christian faith through discussion, videos, guest speakers and Bible study, with games and food as an added incentive! We'll be looking at questions like, How does Christianity relate to contemporary issues? Can science and faith go together? Why should we bother with an ancient book like the Bible? What difference does faith make in everyday life?

Confirmation Preparation

For most people, becoming a Christian is like a journey. The journey involves faith but also doubt, lots of questions and some surprising and wonderful answers. The journey is unique to each one of us and yet it works best when we share it with others. The confirmation class is an important part of the journey of faith. It is designed for those considering the possibility of becoming an adult member of the Anglican Church and leads to a memorable confirmation service. The course will consist of three components: What Christians believe, How Christians grow and Living the Christian Life. Food will be provided.

Debating Society

Allegedly Abingdon's oldest non-sporting society, the Debating Society is the place to argue and form opinions about a variety of topics and motions. If you love an argument, or generally thrive on controversy, this is the society for you.

We have debated everything from the serious politics of the Falklands and the National Health Service to rather more abstract ideas such as whether we should follow our dreams in life, via the thorny issues of organ donation and torturing terrorists. In the open debates on Friday, volunteer speakers put their views across in speeches before the debate gets opened up to the floor, when all the other people who have opinions get their say, and lively disagreement inevitably ensues.

We also enter teams into a number of national competitions in debating and public speaking and run workshops to help you improve your debating skills. Throughout the year, we arrange popular dinner debates with girls' schools for the senior members of the society. Within the Debating Society there are opportunities for sixth form students to meet in smaller groups to hold debates – and there is a workshop aimed at middle school pupils to help them develop debating and public speaking skills.

For the Lower School, there is an opportunity for boys to hone their public speaking skills while debating topical issues. Joint debates with St Helen and St Katharine can be arranged over the course of the year.



Law Society

Law Society is for sixth form students who want to develop their understanding of the theory and practice of law. It is ideal for anyone considering a career in law or interested in the subject for its own sake.

Our activities include discussions of the mechanics of the UK and US legal systems, mock trials and debates on jurisprudence and points of law.

MFL Debating

Debating in a foreign language is one of the highest skills and is not only useful for exams or university preparation but for life. As many of you know, it is also a lot of fun to think laterally and outdo your opponents. Abingdon teams have been extremely successful in external competitions in recent years and we aim to prepare you for at least one if not two competitions.

Mindfulness Club

Mindfulness Club provides a quiet and focused space for students to learn about, and try out, some of the practices of mindfulness. We learn about the principles behind mindfulness, try out focused meditation (using the "Headspace" website as our guide), and talk about how to apply the principles throughout the rest of the week. Boys have said it has helped improve their focus, and helps them recognise the joy in the every day.

Model United Nations

Through the Model United Nations Society we take delegations along to conferences throughout the year at other schools. At these we represent a country's interest in debates. It's an excellent way of building legal, political

and debating experience as well as broadening knowledge of current and international affairs and socialising with other schools.

As an introduction to MUN, there is a Young MUN for third year boys.

Psychology Society

An opportunity to discuss psychological issues in the news media and films. An understanding of how people behave, along with the thought processes and emotions which govern their behaviour is both a life skill and beneficial to the study of a range of other subjects. Topics might include psychopaths, addiction, voting or spending behaviour, happiness, conformity and making choices. We explore news items or watch a film with a psychological theme. A good option for anyone who is interested in psychology or who is considering further study in social or health sciences.

Reading Groups

Reading Groups are for students who want to be adventurous in their reading and enjoy wide-ranging discussions of what they like and don't like in a book. Groups collectively decide which books to read together, typically getting through two or three in a term.

Books and Biscuits – Lower School

The Lower School group focuses on fiction. In the Summer term, we join with other local schools to shadow the annual Carnegie medal for the best children's book of the year.

Novels and Nibbles – Third Year Reading and Refreshments – Fourth Year

The Third and Fourth Year groups cover both fiction and non-fiction. Our discussions are wide-ranging and include the significance of literature and ideas in society.



100 Documentaries

Aimed primarily at the Lower School, this club watches and discusses recent and topical TV documentaries. No one particular genre of documentary is favoured but rather a wide variety – historical, cultural, geographical, economic, natural history and the topical. Hopefully awareness is increased about the world around us.

Abingdon Film Unit

The Abingdon Film Unit was formed in 2003. Since then its members have produced over 100 short films, a number of which have won awards and been screened at the National Film Theatre in London, and at festivals in France, Sweden, Hong Kong and throughout the UK. The Unit enables students to make their own films under the guidance of industry professionals. Please note: membership is offered to boys in the Third Year and above after a process of applications and interviews that take place during the Summer term for entry in September.

Once accepted, students become members of the Film Unit for the whole year. Films are researched and planned in the first part of the Michaelmas term; shooting usually begins around November; editing occupies much of the Lent term. The finished films are screened the following September.

Members of the Unit can also be invited to make films for others, whether within the school or the wider community. They can also undertake special film projects abroad. AFU members have made films in Cambodia, Moldova, China and Hong Kong, for example.

Trips may also be organised to cinemas, exhibitions or film studios.

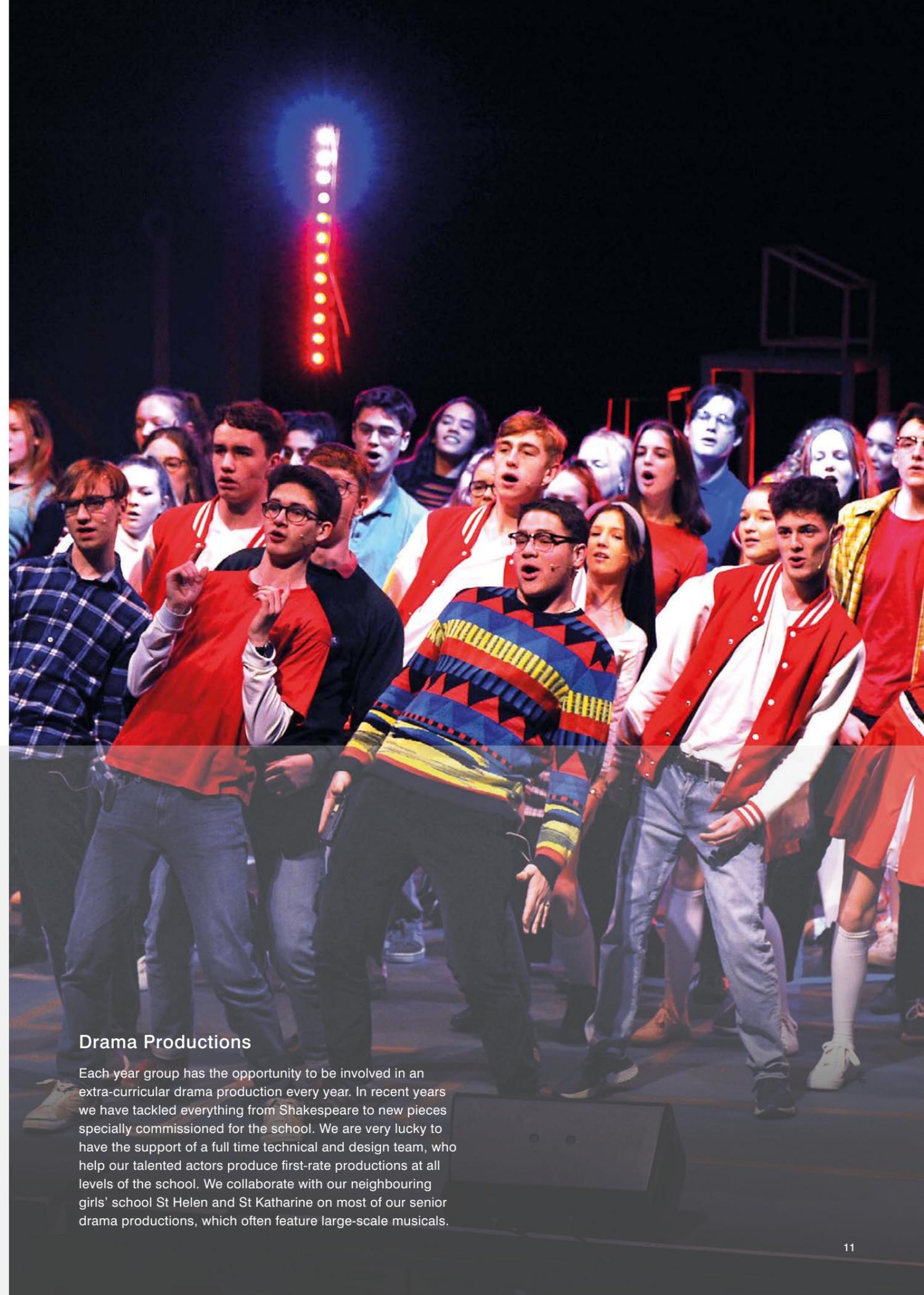
You can view material on the Abingdon Film Unit website.

Amey Theatre Technical Crew

Members gain experience of all aspects of technical theatre from the design stages to implementation. They are regularly involved in the preparation and running of drama productions, concerts, school events and external hires. Wednesday afternoons are put aside for the main bulk of the work but due to the large number of events, much of the work happens on other afternoons, evenings and weekends and therefore a high level of commitment is required.

Creative Smartphone Photography

In Creative Smartphone Photography Club boys get the opportunity to explore the capabilities of the camera and image processing apps on their smartphones. They are taught the basics of good compositional skills such as 'rule of thirds', leading lines and cropping before being set themes for their photographs like shadows, unusual viewpoints, structure and nature. Boys use apps to enhance their photos, adding a filter or high dynamic range and cropping their images for example.



Drama Productions

Each year group has the opportunity to be involved in an extra-curricular drama production every year. In recent years we have tackled everything from Shakespeare to new pieces specially commissioned for the school. We are very lucky to have the support of a full time technical and design team, who help our talented actors produce first-rate productions at all levels of the school. We collaborate with our neighbouring girls' school St Helen and St Katharine on most of our senior drama productions, which often feature large-scale musicals.



Digital Photography

We will investigate several aspects of digital SLR photography, including: technical settings (aperture, ISO, etc.) and the effect they have; technique (e.g. lighting, focus effects); post-processing on a computer. We will have a test camera to use, but students will get the most out of the activity if they are able to bring and use their own DSLRs.

IntoFilm

Join us to watch, discuss and review films. We will watch a rich variety of films in different genres – including classic and more modern films, documentary, foreign language, short and archive film. If watching, discussing and reviewing films appeals to you join us! You'll be able to enhance your knowledge and appreciation of film, and may even be inspired to write a script or make a film of your own.

MFL Claymation Club

Come and make a short film in German or French a la Wallace and Gromit using plasticine and your iMotion App. Get creative and develop your languages in a hands-on way. You don't need to be an artist or an expert in technology – just bring your ideas and enthusiasm and be a team player.

Podcasting Clubs

Podcasting at Abingdon is growing in popularity. The Lower School Podcasting Club explores the medium of radio programme production, the most popular format to date is quiz making. In the Third Year Podcasting Club we look at radio programme production, using news casting, sports reporting and possibly even making jingles.

Theatre Design Workshop

Members are involved in the creative side of technical theatre, focusing on the current term's production. The workshop's aim is to give participants an idea of the design aspects of technical theatre which is then applied in the Wednesday afternoon Amey Theatre Technical Crew activity.



Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme is a nationally recognised scheme and is the single most sought after non-academic qualification with UK employers. It consists of three levels: Bronze, Silver and Gold and within each level there are four component parts: Skill, Service, Physical recreation and Expeditions. At Gold there is a fifth section, Residential.

Each year approximately 225 boys sign up for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award at Abingdon School. The school run all their expeditions in house using teachers as supervisors to give the boys the extra support and mentoring that adds value to the experience. By completing the Duke of Edinburgh's Award boys demonstrate their team work, commitment and organisational skills; and as a package it gives them the life experiences that develop them into well-rounded young men.

Bronze Award

There are four Sections in the Award: Service, Physical, Skills and Expedition. Participants will need to show commitment and determination to organise their activities, and will need to do two of the first three Sections for at least three months and one for at least six months. However, with the wealth of Other Half activities on offer it is usually possible to complete these requirements in school.

For the Expedition section, initial training takes place in the Fourth Year during the Lent term. Planning sessions and

the expeditions themselves follow in the Lent and Summer terms. It is vital that participants attend all these commitments, which are advertised well in advance. The skills covered on expeditions will be learned in real situations and should remain of use throughout life. Boys may also complete their expedition phase by canoe or by sailing. Numbers for this activity are limited.

The Bronze level of the award usually takes about a year, but is not time-bound and can extend for longer if needed.

Silver and Gold Awards

The Silver and Gold levels of the award allow participants to build on the skills and abilities they have gained from the Bronze level and apply them in more challenging situations. At Gold the assessed expeditions are normally run in remote areas of the Scottish Highlands.

At Gold we offer boys three methods to complete their expedition: walking, canoeing or sailing. Numbers for the latter two activities are limited.

Participants will also need to commit to a skill, physical, volunteering and expedition sections. They also will need to complete a residential section where they will take part in a worthy activity for 5 days and 4 nights with other young people they have never met before.



Lower School Adventure Trips

The aim of the first year trip is to allow the boys the opportunity to experience a wide range of outdoor activities and team building exercises within a purpose-built centre. The activities include abseiling, archery, climbing, a high ropes course and quad-biking.

The second year trip provides the opportunity to take things a stage further and includes similar activities to the first year trip, plus canoeing, gorge-walking and hill-walking – all in their natural environment within the Brecon Beacons. Both trips are residential and are organised with fully-qualified instruction.



Worldwide Expeditions

The School has a strong tradition of embarking on challenging and adventurous trips and expeditions to various parts of the globe. They are for anyone interested in trekking and experiencing new cultures and climates. Trips have included: expeditions to Nicaragua and Costa Rica, Madagascar and throughout Europe. Boys have also experienced dog sledging and cross-country skiing in the Arctic and cosmonaut training in Russia.

In a recent trip to Madagascar boys spent one week in the jungle working with research scientists to study jungle species and record ecology data. The second week was spent learning about coral reef ecology and studying the species that make up the coral reef while scuba diving.

The trips are designed to be challenging, both mentally and physically, with boys taking responsibility for much of the organisation themselves (both before and during the trip). It is hoped the boys will develop their leadership skills and ability to work as a team during the expeditions. With many trips boys are asked to raise a substantial portion of the cost of the trip themselves.



Economics Society

The Economics Society gathers, together with pupils from St Helen and St Katharine, once a fortnight to discuss and engage with the world of economics through a variety of activities. These activities include, for example, pupil presentations, writing for essay competitions, watching and discussing online lectures, and playing some economics-related games. Approximately once a term, the society listens to a talk from an individual either from the world of business or academia. This gives pupils a chance to understand the practical application of some of the ideas they have learnt about in class. The talks are normally 40 minutes long and there is a chance for pupils to pose questions at the end of the lecture.

The Student Investor Challenge

What does the challenge involve?

The Student Investor Challenge is designed for teams of four students and has three rounds. The competition is open to teams from anywhere in the world, however teams from schools based outside the UK are only able to take part in the first round of the challenge and are only eligible for some of the prizes on offer.

How do teams register?

Each team must consist of four students who will be aged 14-19 in the school year of the competition. Each school/college can register as many teams as they like, but each student can only belong to one team. All members of a team must be from the same school/college and each team must have the support of a teacher.

Young Enterprise

Young Enterprise provides the opportunity to set up and run your own company. You will sell shares to raise capital and elect directors to manage the day-to-day running of your business. You will be part of a national competition and you will need to sell your goods or service in the real world to customers who demand quality and competitive prices. This is an activity for highly motivated individuals with entrepreneurial instincts.



Investment and Trading Club

The course will give you an introduction to the World of Finance, and provide you with an understanding of the markets that is crucial in the highly connected world we live in.

You will learn how to trade and build financial models, applying your knowledge in a trading room simulation to real-life situations in a competitive environment, with each trader managing a mixed portfolio of \$1m from Day 1.

Perks include boosting your CV / Personal Statement through membership, unparalleled access to financial analysis information, learning about work experience/careers in the sector, gaining edge to be employable in the highly competitive job market of today, all while having the opportunity to link in with professionals in the industry.

The Abingdonian

The Abingdonian is an annual publication that provides a review of a year's events at Abingdon. Those joining the editorial team will be responsible for commissioning and editing articles and designing the magazine layout with the aim of publication at the end of the Michaelmas term.

The Axiom

The Axiom is the philosophy publication for Abingdon School with contributions from the pupils themselves. We meet once per week to critically discuss articles, works of philosophers and explore philosophy through Film, Art, Music, Science Fiction and any other genre where philosophy is present. *The Axiom* gives the boys the opportunity to write their own articles, submit creative contribution, edit the publication and design the layout. *The Axiom* is published at the end of each term. We aim to spark interest in the popular subject of philosophy and develop the creative juices of those already inspired.

The Martlet

The Martlet is Abingdon's student newspaper, covering both school news and features, as well as national and international stories. If you are interested in journalism, creative writing, photography or working on the design side of the newspaper, please contact the team.

The Polyglot

The Polyglot is a termly, student-led Modern Foreign Languages journal, which will cover the large and popular areas of languages, linguistics and foreign affairs. It comprises a variety of essays, reviews and interviews written in French, Spanish and German – in addition to a number of more meaty articles in English incorporating politics, opinion and history. The magazine is open to article proposals from all boys and staff interested in languages and foreign cultures, and is looking for 4th/5th/6th formers to join the production and design team.

The Postmen

Take a trip into the unknown; as a wise man once said, 'writing is exploration; and most of the time, I'm surprised where the journey takes me.' Visit aspects of character, genre, setting, mystery and metafiction as we create our own pieces and publish our work. In the steps of Brin's postman we walk through the harsh landscapes of reality and deliver the impossible.

Scribble

Scribble is a weekly creative writing club for the Third Year run in collaboration with St Helen and St Katharine. Whether you have ambitions to be the next Charles Dickens or whether you simply want to improve your creative writing and have the chance to share it with others in a constructive and congenial way, then you should seriously think about joining *Scribble*. The sessions cover a wide range of exciting and stimulating writing tasks in a range of forms and genres. The two terms culminate in the production of a publication which anthologises the work of the group.

Timeline

Timeline is a history magazine which is written and edited by students. It comes out twice a year. Articles are on subjects the students are interested in and anyone can submit work.

Words and That

Words and That is a collaborative, student-led literary publication. It combines the best of Abingdon's talent and showcases all forms of art, music, cultural debate and creative writing. Boys work together to produce an innovative and dynamic publication each term. It's a great opportunity for those of you with imaginative flair, an interest in design, art, poetry, fiction writing and current affairs.



The Blazer

The Blazer, launched in 2011, is a magazine designed by lower school boys for lower school boys. Members of the editorial team write articles and conduct interviews with the aim of producing four issues a year.





Abingdon Academicals

This close harmony group exists for keen senior singers to develop their choral, sight-singing and solo skills, prior to applying for Choral Awards to Oxford and Cambridge Universities, in particular. Throughout the year we sing at a number of concerts and high-profile events within the School as well as in the local community. The music performed ranges from home-grown arrangements of well-known and well-loved 'pop/rock/easy listening' songs through professional King's Singers' arrangements to intimate church music settings.

Big Band

Ever popular, Big Band performs at the Christmas Concerts, the New Year Concert, the Spring/Summer Concert and often at its own "Jazz on a Summer Evening". Regular tours abroad include a highly successful visit to Tuscany and a tour to the USA playing in Boston, New York City and Washington DC. Big Band has also made two CDs and joined the Orchestra on the Japan/Hong Kong tour in 2019.

Blues Society

The Blues Society is now an established opportunity for musicians playing contemporary instruments (guitars, keyboards, horns, drums) to learn to play together, with opportunities for performance. We tend to focus on songs from soul and blues genres; enthusiasm, rather than great skill, is the main requirement.

Chamber Music

A full range of ensembles, numbering between 30 and 40, are rehearsed weekly by members of the visiting music staff. They include a comprehensive range of ensembles for strings, woodwind and brass, and they meet at different times of the week. Any boys wishing to be involved in this work should ask for further details from the music staff.

String Trios, Quartets and Quintets; Saxophone Quartet; Bassoon Quartet; Flute Choirs; Double Reed Ensemble; Clarinet Ensemble; Wind Quintet; Jazz Ensembles; Brass Quintets; Piano Trios; String Quartets; Abingdon Academicals – close harmony and many more miscellaneous ensembles.

The ensembles perform in two special chamber music concerts after a day of ensemble workshops with coaching from distinguished musicians, prior to competing in the Pro Corda Chamber Music Competition, in which Abingdon groups have won places in the finals concerts for many years.

Chamber Orchestra

Chamber Orchestra consists of excellent string players who perform on Open Day and at Christmas, New Year and Spring/Summer Concerts. This Orchestra supports candidates for their A-level exams and gives concerto opportunities to chosen soloists. Chamber Orchestra regularly takes part in international tours including Japan 2019.

Chapel Choir

The Chapel Choir sings for the School Carol, Commemoration and Leavers' services, and makes termly visits to sing Choral Evensong in college chapels and cathedrals in a wide area. The Choir tours both at home and abroad and has released a CD.

Composers' Workshop

Led by Abingdon Music Teacher and Composer, Dr Jason Preece, this is a session for budding composers – or anyone interested in the craft of composition – to expand their composing experience and learn about the mechanics of how music works. The sessions will include some 'taught' elements where composers' techniques are introduced and some more improvisatory and exploratory sessions in which boys will learn about the essentials of different vocal, instrumental and choral forces and how to write for them.



Brass Band

Performs at the Christmas Concerts or New Year Concert and the Spring/ Summer Concert. Also plays at special assemblies and other services, including every Christmas at the Community Service Tea Party.



Joint Choral Society

Open to all boys and compulsory for GCSE/A-level musicians. JCS performs a full choral concert each November alongside singers and instrumentalists from St Helen and St Katharine.

Gospel Choir

Gospel Choir embraces a more popular style of choral singing which is both accessible and life-affirming. You don't need to be able to read music to join this choir as you will be taught the music by rote. There are some traditional Gospel songs and arrangements of popular songs in a Gospel style!

Joint Chamber Choir

This select group of advanced singers from Abingdon and St Helen and St Katharine exists to explore the most challenging and rewarding pieces in the choral repertoire. This mixed voice ensemble allows nine Abindonian Tenors and Basses to experience singing alongside nine female Altos and Sopranos from St Helen's. It performs at concerts for both schools and serves as an important platform for potential Oxbridge choral scholarship candidates.

Junior Strings

Performs during the year but especially for the Lower School Gala Concert. For all string players from beginner to about Grade 5 standard. The atmosphere is relaxed and the ensemble progress significantly throughout the year

Lower School Music

Our lower school musicians have a number of lunchtime ensembles which they can join, including Junior Strings, Lower School Band and Junior Blues. These musical groups play at the Lower School Carol Service, the Gala Concert in the Summer term and at occasional Lower School Assemblies.

Music Technology

This activity enables a small group of selected students to learn about studio techniques and the history of audio recording, under the guidance of a Music Technologist. Lessons are also offered to students on a one-to-one basis and several boys have gone on to forge careers in sound recording.

Orchestra

First Orchestra

First Orchestra plays at both Autumn/Christmas Concerts and the Summer Orchestral Concert.

It is one of the Music department's flagship ensembles. It has achieved a considerable reputation in recent years for producing quality performances of mainstream symphonic repertoire. Its success can be accounted for by the now well-established tradition of proactive recruitment across the full range of orchestral instruments among the younger boys (including French horn, bassoon and double bass) and offering instrumental tuition from a particularly distinguished team of some 35 instrumental teachers. The Orchestra performs at prestigious venues at home and abroad including Oxford's Sheldonian Theatre. The Orchestra tours frequently to Europe, the USA and the Far East. The most recent tour was to Japan and Hong Kong.

Second Orchestra

Second Orchestra is a full symphonic orchestra which reaches a high standard. It performs at least twice a year at the Christmas or New Year Concert and in the Spring/Summer Concert.

Symphonic Wind Band

Performs twice a year at the Autumn/Christmas Concerts and the School Bands Concert. There is plenty of opportunity to play some of the great scores of music from the shows.





Entomology Society

As part of the Entomology Club boys have the opportunity to learn about and study insects. Boys are able to follow their own interests within the club with some rearing preying mantises while others breed moths and butterflies. Boys take charge of their insects and are responsible for feeding them and maintaining their environment.

Astronomy GCSE

This is an opportunity for anyone from the Third Year upwards to learn about Astronomy in more detail and to enter for the GCSE exam in the subject if they wish. It is being run through the Abingdon Science Partnership and a number of pupils from other, local schools also follow the course. New pupils should discuss the practical details of taking the GCSE qualification before joining.

Biology Society

Lectures are organised to support work being done in the biology specification, to extend knowledge of the specification and to give boys an up to date account of current advances in modern biology. Some lectures may also have a more general "Natural History" theme and be open to middle school pupils as well.

Some pupils can also be given the opportunity to carry out more open-ended practical investigations, workshops or other experiments. Dissections and moth trapping are some of the activities that have happened recently. Subject extension sessions also take place to expand on the content of the course.

Codebreaking Club

XFMDPNF UP DPEFCSFBLJOH DMVC – Codebreaking Club takes place weekly and teams will be preparing for and taking part in the National Cipher Challenge. This is an annual competition for students across the country to crack ever more complicated ciphers, including simple Caesar Shift Ciphers, Vignere Ciphers and beyond. If you like solving puzzles and reading secret messages then come along – programming and IT skills are a bonus but not necessary.

Computer Programming

The Computer Programming activity is intended to provide hands-on experience of the nitty-gritty of computer programming. We use a range of modern programming languages, and develop projects using hardware on which they run. Practical tasks will be undertaken in a dedicated programming environment using the latest interpreted object-oriented languages and application development frameworks.

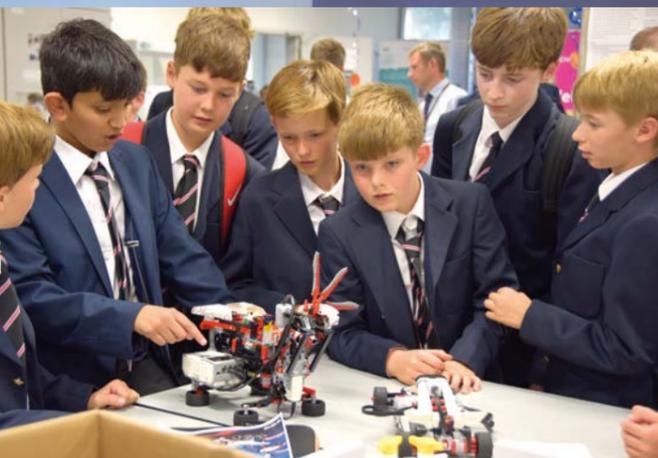
We support a mixture of students' own projects and guided investigations into areas covering software, computer science/ algorithms and electronics interfacing using Raspberry Pi and Arduino platforms. Examples include smartphone games/ apps, real time image capture and processing and even an automatic sudoku solver.

No previous experience is necessary, but an aptitude for logical and analytical thought will be essential. Projects typically run over half a term and are aimed to support the most enthusiastic coders down to those just starting. There is a particular focus on showing students techniques that will help them after Abingdon, be that at university or in the workplace.

Electronics

Electronics Club provides an opportunity to learn how to design and build simple electronic devices. The emphasis is on experimenting and learning rather than copying existing designs. Past projects range from reaction games to light sensitive musical instruments. Programmable microcontrollers are also available for more adventurous tasks such as robotics. No experience is necessary but eagerness to learn is essential.





Geology Club

Think geology is the study of rocks? You're right. The good news is, rocks are fascinating! This club is for anyone in the school from First Year up who wants to learn more about our planet in a fun way. Geology is a very practical subject and we do lots of experiments and investigations. For those who are dead keen there is the option of pursuing it as an additional GCSE.

Lower School Computer Programming

A fun introduction to computer programming. Hands on sessions: writing your own programs; using different programming languages and packages; making graphical pictures, games and animations.

Lower School Lego Mindstorms Club

Lower School Lego Mindstorms Club combines programming and engineering/design techniques. Using the Lego Mindstorms technical lego pieces different robots are created and brought to life by using a programmable brick which takes control of its movements. A variety of tasks are set through the year, to stretch and challenge builders to develop their ability to program and problem solve within the Lego Mindstorms environment.

Lower School Science Club

This is an opportunity for boys to partake in science projects and experiments outside of the curriculum. The boys will have a chance to extend their science knowledge in a fun, hands-on environment.

Primary School Science Club

An opportunity for fifth year and lower sixth Science Ambassadors to help run a weekly science club for children from local primary schools.

Robotics Club

Working with Lego Mindstorms robots, Robotics Club combines programming and engineering techniques. Building different models and machines using technical Lego, they are brought to life by using a programmable brick which takes control of its movements. A variety of tasks are set through the year to stretch and challenge builders to develop their ability to program within the Lego Mindstorms environment.

Science Communication Club

For students who want to explore and share their enthusiasm for science by learning skills to inform, inspire and raise awareness of science-related topics. Opportunities range from science busking and being involved in the ATOM Festival of Science and Technology, to science journalism and developing a publication to celebrate science at Abingdon, as well as regular talks and workshops from inspiring science communication professionals.

Science Factor

If you expect excitement, explosions and sound-byte science then these are not the clubs for you! However, if you want to learn real research skills; develop deeper understanding and see what it really takes to be a research scientist, then join Science Factor. Research projects may be part of external programmes organised through the Abingdon Science Partnership and the Institute for Research in Schools, or they may be based on your own, individual ideas and interests. Examples of ongoing projects include the CERN@School energy to matter photonics project in physics; 'Ionic Liquids' in chemistry and 'Genome Decoders' in biology, but if you have your own ideas, discuss them with us and we'll try to help.

Science Partnerships

There are many opportunities to volunteer as a Science Ambassador for the Abingdon Science Partnership, including primary school science workshops; Science Oxford Saturday Science Clubs; Scout and Guide Science Badge evenings and the Abingdon ATOM Festival of Science and Technology.

Virtual Reality

We have the HTC Vive Pro Virtual Reality available for boys to use. In the First Half of Michaelmas term we encourage boys to try the kit and experience VR. Boys can then contribute to the future direction of our study of this important technology at school.

Wildlife Club

Members of the wildlife club will take part in outdoor conservation projects for OPAL, RSPB and other organisations. Indoor meetings include presentations and discussions about conservation and wildlife-related topics. Whilst learning about wildlife and habitats, students will have the opportunity to practise their creative writing, public speaking and GIS skills.

Young Scientists Journal

This is an opportunity for pupils from any year to learn some science writing skills and to pursue a writing project on a topic of their own choice. Abingdon Science Partnership is affiliated to the Young Scientists Journal, which gives the opportunity for finished articles to be published online and possibly in the hard copy edition.





Combined Cadet Force

CCF membership is voluntary and begins in the Third Year. Recruit training takes two terms and boys are expected to parade every week in uniform. Pupils are expected to commit to attending for a whole year at a time – and to keep their hair cut short and smart. The CCF is a disciplined organisation, which emphasises qualities of leadership and teamwork, common sense and responsibility. It involves a variety of activities on Tuesday afternoon, parades and camps, exercises and field days throughout the year. At least one camp must be attended in each year, and in the first year this will be the Easter recruit camp.

Cadet training continues throughout the student's time with the CCF, in either the RAF or Army sections; it involves academic work, adventurous and military training. There are opportunities to fly, shoot, take part in joint exercises, to train alongside the regular armed forces in the field, and to develop an understanding of why these forces are needed and how they operate. We are well supported and Abingdon's CCF is highly regarded outside the School for its excellent standards. A number of cadets go on to join the armed forces as commissioned officers.

Abingdon Hospital

This is invaluable work experience for aspiring medics.

After School Clubs and Activities at Primary Schools

There is scope for initiative and leadership. Tell us your special skills and interests: football, computers, music, art, etc. The usual commitment is for the whole school year, though this may be for a shorter time through prior arrangement if other activities clash in one term.

Afternoon Tea

Tea party and entertainment for the elderly once a term. Musicians particularly welcome.

Baker Award

"The Baker Award" (named after retired teacher, Mr Roger Baker) represents an Abingdon School junior version of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, designed to run over the course of a boy's time in Lower School. All lower school boys are automatically entered for the award. There are four sections: Skill, Service, Expedition and Sport. Boys are strongly encouraged to become involved in all sections, keeping track of their participation by using a record book. Satisfactory completion leads to a certificate, presented at the end of the second year.

Biology Department Volunteers

A small number of lower school pupils can get involved in the Biology department, helping out with a variety of tasks. Primarily they will be involved with the routine care of the animals in the department and maintenance of the fish tanks. At certain times of year work will need to be carried out in the departmental pond and we would also be looking to set up a wildlife area somewhere on the school grounds.

Boarders Community Service

A chance for upper school boarders to visit the elderly.

Bridge House Quiz Team

An opportunity for a team to run a weekly quiz for lively residents at Bridge House, on subjects ranging from Literature to History and Geography, Nature and Science, Famous People, General Knowledge, Sport, Music and Entertainment.

Charities Committee

The Charities Committee organises and co-ordinates the key charity events within the school and is responsible for fundraising. The pupils involved help with the selection of charities to support as well as the planning, organising and promoting of events. Pupils find the work very rewarding and enjoyable.

Eco Committee

Eco Committee is open to any student with an interest in sustainability and the environment. We have worked on making Abingdon School more environmentally aware, both in its actions and through raising discussion with the rest of the students.

Students look into waste, recycling, plastic, wildlife, carbon emissions and Global Citizenship, and work with different groups within the school to try and help improve our environmental impact.



Environmental Service

By virtue of school membership everyone should consider themselves a part of the Environmental Service scheme. Our Environmental Service scheme seeks to increase awareness of waste recycling and energy conservation within the School and the broader community.

The third year programme is a compulsory element of the Service scheme: the aim of the 5/6 week course is to heighten awareness of our school policies and mechanisms for waste recycling and energy efficiency within the school plant.

This is suitable for any age group within the school as part of a service activity contributing towards for example the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Timing and levels of commitment are negotiable.

This is an excellent opportunity for boys with an interest in environmental issues and architecture to make a real difference at the School. In addition, there is a pupil sub-committee of the School's Environment Committee. The aim of this committee is to coordinate specific campaigns during the year to raise the profile of environmental issues within the school. In addition, this sub-committee will aim to monitor and audit our overall programme of activity and to drive new initiatives as and when appropriate. It is an important conduit for pupils to suggest and coordinate new initiatives that could become part of school policy.

Language Leader

In the weekly sessions, third and fourth year boys learn how to prepare a language lesson (French, German, Spanish or any other native language), giving each other feedback and working together. They then go to a primary school at the end of each term to teach it to a group of pupils.

At the end of a full year boys gain a Language Leader Award, which can count towards the volunteering or skills section of the DoE award.

This activity will develop both leadership skills and linguistic skills.

Library Team

The Library Team is open to students interested in supporting the running of the school library, increasing their understanding of how libraries work and developing skills in library administration. Regular activities include helping prepare books for the shelves, re-shelving books, tidying the library and discussing ways of improving the library service.

Students commit for a year at a time, at the beginning of their second or third year. For fourth years, fifth years and sixth formers, the Library Team is limited to boys who have previously committed.

Most students who join the Library Team remain with it as they move up the school, taking on increasing responsibility for training and managing younger members of the team and developing valuable skills in ICT, information management, marketing and problem-solving.

Moldova Project

Since 2000, Abingdon has been supporting the work of AGAPE, a charity working with young people in Moldova, the poorest country in Europe. There is an annual sixth form visit to Moldova to run a summer camp for disadvantaged Moldovan children. The project represents an excellent chance to learn about a culture very different from our own – and to provide support and friendship to those in real need of it.

Older and Bolder

Help make tea and chat to Abingdon ladies who attend an exercise class.

Sensory Garden at Abingdon Hospital

Help tend the Sensory Garden at Abingdon Hospital. The garden is maintained by volunteers and is used by patients to speed their recovery and relax.

Third Year Service and Citizenship Scheme

The Third Year Service and Citizenship Scheme was set up to help pupils to develop a broader understanding of their place in the wider community (local, national and global) and to encourage them to make an active contribution to the society in which they live. All pupils in the Third Year who are not involved in CCF participate in the scheme.

A range of different activities is available for which boys are invited to express their preferences at the beginning of the school year. They are then put into groups, which will change on a termly or half-termly basis.

In some cases boys will go out into the local community to undertake activities ranging from visiting residential homes and entertaining the residents, to offering ICT help in the Abingdon town library. In other groups boys will be acquiring life skills such as managing personal finance or touch-typing. Contemporary global issues will be covered by activities such as Environmental Service, Leadership and Politics and Citizenship.

Within the scheme, pupils will have the opportunity to do a basic First Aid course or some expedition training that will be particularly useful if they are thinking of participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme in the Fourth Year.

With such a wide range of activities on offer, boys are able to gain experience of different aspects of service and citizenship and many choose to continue serving the community higher up the School.



Gardening Club

The School has a fruit and vegetable garden at the back of Whitefield. There are opportunities to maintain this and develop it as a source of vegetables and summer fruits.



Bellringing Club

The traditional English art of bell-ringing requires a combination of skill, musicianship and strength. The club is open to complete beginners and those with prior experience. The club rings in various local churches.

Boardgaming

A chance for lower school boys to play a wide range of fantasy role play games, strategic wargames and boardgames.

Bridge Club

The game of Bridge is one of the world's most popular card games. This trick-taking game is played by four people in two competing partnerships. Bridge is an excellent way to stretch your brain, sharpen your maths skills and make new friends. Beginners are welcome and will be taught the basics of contract bridge. Experienced players will be able to enjoy opportunities to play with other players of a similar level.

Cooking for Students

Learn to cook essential and economical student meals. Try your hand at making dishes like spicy risotto, spinach and feta frittata and chocolate pudding – not forgetting spaghetti bolognese. Learn the basics of menu planning and budgeting to make a tight student budget stretch. No prior knowledge or skill necessary.

eSports@Abingdon

eSports have been termed "rugby without the pitch". In both cases, teams are playing in a defined arena, with agreed rules, for a specified amount of time, employing distinct tactics, trying to score points in order for their team to win.

eSports@Abingdon offers students the opportunity to participate in multi-player online games within a monitored and controlled environment. Players work both competitively and collaboratively to build alliances, construct strategy and deploy AI-controlled players.

Students will develop experience in team-working, effective communication and remaining calm-under-pressure along with specialist skills and knowledge relevant to the growing career opportunities represented by the global eSports sector.

Flight Simulator

6-week basic skills and exercises course to enable you to operate the simulators safely and sensibly. Understand the basic principles of flight and learn to fly a visual circuit at an airfield culminating in a safe landing.

Improve your awareness of the aviation environment and learn some of the checks and procedures required in aviation. Test your handling skills with advanced manoeuvres like aerobatics.

There is no requirement to be in CCF to join this club.

Chess Club

Come along, practise and improve. Pupils of all standards attend, from novice to England squad players. We are happy to teach you to play from scratch and help you to develop your game. We enter county and national tournaments, and we run knockout tournaments for individuals and for house teams. Grandmaster Peter Wells coaches on Wednesday afternoons.





Athletics

The aim of the club is to produce excellent athletes, providing an opportunity for all those with an interest to learn and to develop new skills. The club achieves this through a structured programme of coaching by a committed staff team and through regular competition. Competition takes place in the Summer term against a large number of schools, at a local, regional and national level.

Coaching is provided in the full range of events on the track and field.

Training takes place at Tilsley Park with superb athletic facilities including an eight lane, floodlit track with steeplechase, pole vault, high jump and long jump facilities, a throws area for javelin, shot put and discus as well as a 300 seat covered grandstand.

Badminton

Middle and Upper School Badminton operates within the Sports Options programme. Both match players and learners are accepted, although often there is a trial because more boys opt to play than we have space for. Our record against other schools is enviable

Basketball

We are looking to build on our existing squad for the future so any aspiring Kobe Bryants or Michael Jordans are welcome. Spaces are limited to squad players only although if you are a keen basketball player and would like to trial for the squad do come along to practise.

Boat Club

The Boat Club has been in existence at Abingdon School for 184 years and goes from strength to strength and never has it been more successful. Boys can row from the Third to Fifth Year, in the Lent and Summer terms, and all three terms by invitation in Sixth Form. Boys are expected to commit themselves for both terms since most of the regattas are in the summer. We have around 170 boys in the Club. Training takes place both in the school gym and at the Boathouse, on Wilsham Road – about a mile from the School. In the Lent term there would be 2/3 rowing sessions and 2 gym sessions per week. Boys are expected to participate on Saturdays.

We have a number of aims for the Club, at different levels. The Third Year (J14) is an introductory year where we try to give everybody a fair chance to improve

and to see if they like it. We compete in a number of 'friendlies' against other schools and later on in the year we compete at some regattas, including The National Schools Championships. The next few years through J15 and J16 are spent developing 1st and 2nd Vllls, which will compete at external regattas and National Schools championships. The 1st VIII competes at Henley Royal Regatta. The School also participates in the Junior International scheme and boys have represented Great Britain most years since 1992.

We try to accommodate all abilities and levels of commitment to foster enjoyment of a great team sport. We have an excellent timber boathouse, initiated and driven by parental support. We hope to maintain, and build on, our reputation as one of the most successful school boat clubs in the UK. There is a very active parents/friends supporters club, FASBC.

Canoeing

The club aims to introduce boys to various paddlesports and currently allows them to specialise in whitewater kayaking, open canoeing and racing. Although most paddlesport sessions take place from the boathouse on the River Thames we also run sessions in the school swimming pool where we can develop key skills, such as rolling, or play canoe polo. We are affiliated to the British Canoe Union and boys can obtain various qualifications during training sessions.

Boys can also complete their Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions at all levels in open canoes. In the past this has involved expeditions to various parts of the UK as well as overseas expeditions.



Cricket

The Cricket Club continues to grow at Abingdon. We currently play block fixtures against a wide range of top cricket schools including Radley, St Edward's, Berkhamsted, Bloxham, Haberdashers' and Winchester College as well as entering local county tournaments. Our squads tour regularly at home and abroad. A large number of boys are selected for county or regional representation every year.

Croquet

Following its re-introduction the Club has gone from strength to strength. Boys throughout the school tackle the application of the tactics of chess and the physics of snooker. Senior boys organise the external fixtures combining the social and competitive elements of the game.



Hockey

Hockey is a major sport in the Lent term. The Hockey Club fields teams throughout the age groups, with every team from U14D to 1st XI competing in the Independent Schools Hockey League. Abingdon competes against Radley, Bradfield, Wellington, Cheltenham, Marlborough, Eton and St Edward's and Abingdon teams will play against all the seven other schools over the course of the season.

The Club has enjoyed a great deal of success in recent years, with a large number of boys representing the county and regional squads and some selected to play at a national level.

Cross-Country

Cross-country running is open to all. Training assumes a motivation for good health and commitment to the values and competition schedule of the club. Competition takes place in both Michaelmas and Lent terms in many prestigious and long standing events.

We start our training in September with very short distances and build gradually and carefully to longer distances of 20k. The season ends in March. Training is a mixture of long slow distances, threshold and speed workouts as well as the introduction of strength and conditioning sessions to help avoid injury.

Runs take in most of rural Oxfordshire and beyond. Past pupils have captained their own club at university and some have competed on the international stage. One of the aims of the club is to build a life-long affinity for running and competition.

Fencing

Fencing is available throughout the year. All year groups are welcome to come and try this Olympic sport, from beginners to experienced fencers. Full coaching will be given and the School provides fencing kit and weapons for students. A minimum commitment of one session per week for one full term is required, although in practice many boys enjoy doing much more fencing than this. Matches are arranged with other schools throughout the calendar year, and keen fencers from our club have competed in and won many national and international competitions in the recent past. There has never a better time to try this popular Olympic sport. En garde!

Football

The club is now well established at Abingdon, with over 19 teams representing the School. The club plays regular fixtures during the Lent term against St John's Leatherhead, Berkhamsted, St Edward's, Bedford Modern, Oratory and Radley in addition to other local schools. The 1st, 2nd, 3rd XI, U15A and U14A all compete in the Thames Valley League that comprises schools in the Oxfordshire and Berkshire area. Players have also gone on to represent the ISFA side, as well as county and academy squads.

Futsal Club

A recent addition to the Abingdon School Football Club is the Futsal Club. This form of the game, originating in South America, aids the developments of the player's close control, dribbling and game awareness, utilising a smaller weighted ball whilst playing in 5-a-side environment.

Golf

The golf team meets for coaching from a PGA professional at Drayton Golf Club. The team consists of players with, or aspiring to have, single-figure handicaps. During these sessions we work on all aspects of the game including course management, shot shaping and the short game, and there is the opportunity to computer-analyse players' swings.

The golf team plays in competitions including the Oxfordshire County Championships and the Independent Schools' Golf Association knock-out, as well as various friendly fixtures against other school sides. There is a House Golf competition in the Summer term.

There are also opportunities for a broader range of players to play and to receive expert coaching. Golf lessons take place as a group on the driving range, but there are opportunities for specialised putting practice as well as visits to the 'par 3' course (weather permitting). Places are limited, and are allocated term by term, depending on boys' sports options.

Introduction to Weightlifting

This other half activity allows students to develop and practice key movements associated with Olympic weightlifting in a fun and challenging environment. The aim is to transfer a barbell from a static position on the ground, into an overhead position using technical mastery, coordination and full body strength. This method of training is adopted by several sports teams as a means for developing these specific physical qualities as well as being its own sport in the Olympics dating back to 1896 in Athens.

Judo

Judo is a popular activity which takes place during regular weekly sessions; these are taken by a qualified external coach. Boys are instructed in the various principles and techniques and there are opportunities for sparring in a competitive context.



Karate

Karate is an excellent way to improve fitness, co-ordination, stability and suppleness – skills useful in other sports. It also has the added benefits of teaching self-defence, discipline and thus increases self-confidence. Sessions are timed to allow you to participate in another sport as well. No experience is necessary. Gradings are up to four times a year; a Black belt takes a number of years to achieve, based on aptitude, application and consistency over time.

Our karate coach Sensei Patience Kakatie is looking forward to sharing some of the secrets of her success with our pupils.

Pilates

It is recognised that there is growing evidence to suggest that a strong core and improved flexibility is key to sporting success. The classes focus on delivering a programme which seeks to improve pupils' core strength in order to assist in keeping them injury free and stronger through their core.

Rifle Club

Pupils may sign up for Rifle Club at the start of the year and are expected to commit themselves to one afternoon weekly. No experience is necessary since training is provided. Those who wear glasses are at no disadvantage (some of our best shots do). There is a trophy for the best beginner. Once at a reasonable standard, pupils are formed into teams and entered for postal competitions against other schools. We now have the opportunity to shoot in international matches against European schools. There is also an opportunity to participate in our annual exchange with the Stade team in Germany during the Easter holidays.

Lower school boys may sign up for the eight-week Air Rifle Youth Proficiency Scheme. Successful completion of this course allows lower school boys to move on to .22 rifle shooting. Recently, members of the Rifle Club have won County titles, and some have taken part in GB development training.

Rugby Sevens

Rugby Sevens is run as a Lent term Other Half activity from U12 to U16 age groups. At Sixth Form pupils can select Rugby Sevens as their core sport as well as in Wednesday Other Half sessions.

The objective of Rugby Sevens is to offer all pupils an opportunity to further develop their individual rugby skills through regular training sessions and competing in nationally recognised competitions. It is a true development pathway for our pupils with emphasis in training on core skill development combined with tactical decision-making and growing their understanding of Rugby Sevens. The training and competition also helps to assist any elite players in their preparation and participation for county, academy or national representation.

Sailing

We mainly sail at Farmoor Reservoir, with beginners using boats owned by the Oxford Sail Training Trust and more advanced sailors making use of our extensive school fleet, which includes eight Standard Lasers, four RS500s, two 29ers and two SB20 keelboats.

Opportunities for sailors at Abingdon are varied and include learning to sail from scratch, developing racing skills in single handed, double handed and multi-crew boats and working towards RYA qualifications.

Abingdon's Sailing Club has an active DofE program with expeditions offered under sail at Bronze, Silver and Gold Level. As an RYA recognised training centre we supplement the yachting side by offering and delivering RYA theory courses up to and including yachtmaster theory as well as the Diesel Engine course and RYA VHF radio course.

Highlights for the Sailing Club over the past few years include competing at Cowes week, competing in the SB20 World Championships and students passing their Day Skipper, Dinghy Instructor and Yachtmaster Qualifications (run in association with partner organisations).

Rugby Union

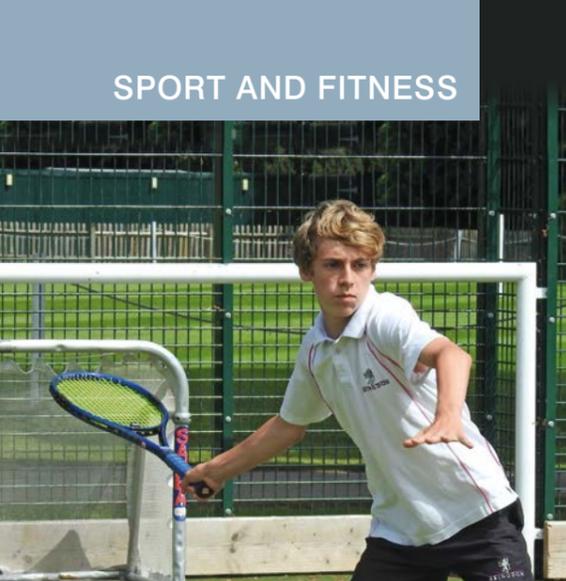
We pride ourselves on offering enough rugby teams per age group to boys of all ability levels. We play competitive fixtures each weekend throughout the Michaelmas term.

Some of the schools on our circuit include: Radley College, Sherborne, Eton College, Cranleigh School and Bedford School. Abingdon also enters into the National Natwest Cup competition at both U18 and U15 age groups.

Being part of the Rugby Club enables boys to experience various trips and tours. Our Lower School has a parent / son day to Twickenham in November to watch an England international, organised by our parent group Touchliners. The Middle School has an opportunity to go to Twickenham Stadium to watch the Varsity Match each year. Our U14s go on tour every October half term. Our U15s enter the Langley School national 15-a-side festival each year. Our Seniors tour internationally every two years most recently in 2017 to Japan and in 2019 to Chile and Argentina.

All parents are encouraged to join our Abingdon School 'Touchliners'. This parental committee support our rugby club programme through organising major events throughout the year that help support and add to the provision offered to all boys in the club.





Squash

The superb courts in the sports centre provide a focus for home matches and training. We have a highly promising squad of talented players throughout the school, trained by a Squash England coach.

Squash is available as a sports option to selected squad players in the Third Year and above, but other boys will have opportunities to play at various times as an activity. Senior boys and boarders are also able to play in their free time when the courts are not being used.

Amongst the school that we have fixtures against are Radley, St Edward's and Stowe.

Swimming

Our 8 lane 25m swimming pool provides the ideal environment to develop swimming technique throughout the year. The squad train at allocated times and cover up to 10,000m a week, with the possibility of dry land training during the Wednesday session. The majority of the galas are held in the Lent term, but we also enter swimmers for the English Schools National Championships in both the individual and relay events. It is recommended that the serious swimmers join the local club which uses the Abingdon School pool. For those that wish to swim recreationally there is space to swim within the allocated sessions and a programme to improve fitness is provided.

Tennis

The Tennis Club runs teams across the age groups, with coaching sessions and matches being held on the newly re-surfaced school courts, the MUSA, the clay courts at the Vale of White Horse and at Abingdon Lawn Tennis Club. Each age group has three coaching sessions per week and all teams compete in inter school matches on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

The Club takes part in the Independent Schools League, Oxfordshire Independent Schools Competition, the Aegon Cup and the Independent Schools Tennis Association Tournaments held at Eton at the end of the Summer term. There have been a number of unbeaten teams over the last few years and many players go on to gain county and even national honours.

The Club runs internal box leagues and ladder competitions, with every match being played as a British Tennis rating match.

All players are eligible to sign up for a free British Tennis Membership, offering them a rating, free entry to the Wimbledon ticket ballot and other LTA membership offers.

Touch Rugby

Touch Rugby is a fast paced and energetic game that removes the physical nature of the 15-a-side game, focusing on skills and game awareness. Four small sided games are played on Upper Field, each team being led by an older boy from either the U16A XV or one of the Senior XVs. With between 7 and 10 on a team there is much more time on the ball and the removal of the contact allows a more level playing field. It provides an excellent opportunity for boys of all years to mix and for younger boys to learn vital skills from more experienced players.

Volleyball

Volleyball is played on outside courts during the Summer term. Students are encouraged to practise their serve, volley, set, dig, block and smash with games played either 2 or 6 per side.

Water Polo

Water Polo is a fast-paced and physically demanding hybrid of swimming, basketball and rugby. The boys train together on Fridays. The teams compete against Eton and Stowe (for example) and often as part of a 'double-bill' with swimming competitions. Matches and training with the Oxford University Men's team takes place on an ad hoc basis. New players are always welcome to come along for a trial, especially boys in the First and Fourth Years. No previous experience is necessary but being a confident swimmer is essential.

Yoga for Mindfulness and Wellbeing

Come and join a very new and exciting addition to the Other Half programme focused on physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Mindfulness is all about being in the present to give you "brain space" and time to get away from and take control of the stresses and strains of everyday life. With practice it can also help you to cope with challenges to your health and wellbeing in a positive, active way allowing you to take back control in the face of stress or conflict.

Yoga teaches this by focusing your mind and body on the practice itself, holding poses, recognising the physical stresses and strains on the body as you strengthen and increase flexibility along the way too. Through gentle yoga poses and relaxation you can explore threads of practice to focus your mind and learn a new way to escape from harmful, damaging stresses and emotions. We use mindfulness techniques to bring skills into practice for coping with everyday situations.

The Other Half activity looks at four main yoga focus threads throughout the term:

- The breath
- The poses/asanas
- The transition between poses/asanas
- The whole Yoga process, breath, postures and transition...
- Yoga flow

Table Tennis

Limited to about 20, so places are based on a first-come-first-served basis. At the top end the standard is very high and this year we aim to further develop our limited fixture list. To qualify for this sport you must be prepared to play every week.





AFA Creative Writing

Abingdon is one of only nine schools nationally to offer the new AFA in Creative Writing, an exciting, two-year A level style course, which is officially recognised by UCAS. The course, which is offered exclusively to the Sixth Form, is aimed at students who have loved writing throughout their time at school and want to continue and develop into the Sixth Form. In the first year, students are encouraged to write in a range of styles and genres, and in the second, there is the opportunity to specialise in their chosen form, be it poetry, drama, prose fiction or non-fiction. There is one taught lesson per fortnight, and a weekly workshop, which, as a dedicated one-hour session, forms a central part of the course, where students give feedback on each other's work, under the supervision of a teacher.

Cartwright Group

Open to all middle school pupils who wish to explore mathematical patterns, investigate new areas of maths and develop their mathematical thinking skills. The group has solved live problems on NRICH and have had solutions published. Many weeks the group work through the UKMT Maths follow on rounds and mentoring problem sheets. We have a relaxed atmosphere, enjoy good company and would welcome new members!

Classics Society

The Society offers a range of events throughout the year to enable boys to pursue their interest in the Ancient World beyond the confines of the various syllabi. Speakers are invited from universities and other schools on a variety of historical and literary topics, but there are also trips to plays, various museums and classical sites in Britain, as well as further afield. Those not studying classical subjects are welcome to attend.

Edmund Society

The Edmund Society is a club for members of the school with a passion for philosophical discourse and discussion. It is an activity aimed predominantly at sixth formers where a variety

of material is covered, including, but by no means limited to, epistemology, symbolic logic and the philosophy of science. On top of regular meetings the Society looks to put on one lecture per term, and guests have included Peter Hitchens, Prof. Michael Lacewing and Prof. Stephen Mulhall, with talks on the political situation of the Ukraine, epistemology and Ludwig Wittgenstein respectively.

Geography GIS Club

An exciting opportunity to explore Geography through digital mapping software called GIS (Geographical Information Systems).

Navigate the globe, create your own datasets and maps, and explore the world through this virtual software.

History & Politics Society

Come along to History and Politics Society to discuss the key issues of the day, watch relevant documentaries, take part in heated discussions and debate, watch films and write the occasional article for our online publication! Politics is current and exciting – whether it is Brexit, Trump, Saudi Arabia, the European Union, Venezuela, terrorism or global warming... we discuss it, watch it, write about it and more!

Joint Literary Society

Do you want to broaden your mind, read more widely, become more interesting, cultured, imaginative, and generally well-versed in intellectual discussion? The Joint Literary Society is a chance to read and discuss literature from around, above, beyond, below, and indeed nowhere near the syllabus. Here you can encounter writing and ideas from the most classic to the most contemporary of writers and become a literary critic and connoisseur in the company of Abingdon's and St Helen's finest minds.

Rumour has it that the eating of cake may also be a central feature of this society.

If you are in Lower Sixth and interested in reading, literature, culture, discussion and cake, or indeed you are considering applying to read English at university, then please do come along.

Archaeology & Classics Club

The Club offers the opportunity to learn about life in the Ancient World in many different civilisations, including the Egyptians, Persians, Vikings, and of course the Greeks and Romans. The Club also learns how archaeologists piece together information about past societies – and most excitingly there is the opportunity to excavate. Activities include watching films and documentaries, making models and posters, learning to use archaeological techniques, and how to dig.

Joint Modern Languages Society

The Modern Languages Department runs a series of events throughout the year in conjunction with St Helen and St Katharine. The Society is co-organised by a committee of sixth form linguists at both schools. The Society is not only for boys studying modern languages (French, German, Spanish, Chinese, Italian, Russian...) but any sixth formers interested in languages, language learning and other cultures. Events include social evenings, dinners, film showings, visits to the theatre/cinema and talk by visiting speakers. Details published on an ad hoc basis.

Lower School History Club

This club is designed for those interested in fun activities related to history. Past activities have included the making of helmets and swords, constructing models of castles and battlefield scenes and big screen viewing of history-based movies and favourites such as 'Blackadder'.

Lower School Maths Puzzle Club

We meet to explore interesting and quirky areas of maths, play mathematical and logic-based games, and pit our wits against puzzling challenges. Everyone is welcome, even if you don't feel that you're a maths whizz!

Poetry by Heart

Open to anyone from Third Year to Upper Sixth with a love of poetry and an interest in exploring the art of verse speaking. Students learn poems by heart and enter a national competition if they wish. This group also takes part in National Poetry Day activities and helps to promote a love of poetry across the school.

Sixth Form History Society

An opportunity to listen to talks from distinguished visiting historians – and to discuss historical topics, informally. A range of topics will be addressed, often tied to the A level syllabus – but also designed to broaden historical perspectives. The society also stages a Christmas Quiz and end of term social gatherings.





ABINGDON

independent day and boarding school
for boys aged 4 to 18 years

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The School's Aims and Ethos, Policies and Inspection reports are available on the school website.

Abingdon School is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.

Abingdon School

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