

ABINGDON



boarding



## Why board?

### Boarders have more fun!

- Be part of a vibrant and energetic community.
- Enjoy the huge opportunities on offer – the facilities, activities and social life are far greater than those available at home!
- Experience academic and Other Half activities as part of everyday life.
- Build relationships – the multi-cultural environment is often the making of lifelong friendships.
- Develop independence – taking responsibility for yourself and learning to plan and prioritise your time are important life skills; ideal preparation for university and further education.

Click on any of the pink links on the following pages for further information.

Weekly and full boarding is available from the Third Year. Boarders are aged from 13 to 18.

“The quality of boarding is excellent and parents are highly appreciative of the outcomes for boarders, the provision and care, and the leadership of boarding.”

*ISI Inspection*





Weekly boarding has provided a really good balance... the space for our son to grow from boy to man but still seeing him regularly to feel like we can keep the close family contact."

A parent

## Why board at Abingdon?

Boarding has been at the heart of Abingdon for 750 years; we have a strong boarding ethos and it is an integral part of our school. Every boarding school promises a 'home-from-home' experience but rarely is it quite as comprehensive as the one offered by Abingdon. We promote a co-parenting partnership where boys are not living completely different home and school lives, the two being very much combined.

We understand the needs of a modern family, where time together is precious. We fit around our families' busy lives. Parents are encouraged to have as much communication with their sons as they wish. There are no exeat or home weekends – boys can go home as and when they choose (outside of lesson time and other school commitments).



I thought settling into boarding would be very hard, but I was wrong. I've been here for almost 3 years, and I wake up at home every day."

A boarder



“

Through boarding I have been able to get to know people of many different nationalities; my understanding of varied cultures has risen and my grasp of different languages has grown.”

*A boarder*



### Our boarding houses

There are three boarding houses: School House, Austin House and Crescent House. Roughly three-quarters of our boarders are full boarders with the remainder weekly boarders.

Our boarders come from the local area, London and much further afield with a wealth of nationalities represented, providing a truly global environment. All boarding houses also have a significant number of day boys belonging to the house. Day boys and boarders are fully integrated within the houses and are indistinguishable within the school.

All boarding houses have study bedrooms, a kitchen and a games room. They have a distinctive ‘family home’ feel to them and offer a range of entertainments, including table football, pool and table tennis.

Boarders also have full access to the School’s stunning **facilities** including outdoor five-a-side pitches, tennis courts and the **sports centre** with its 8-lane 25m swimming pool, gym, ergo suite, multi-activity sports hall and studio. There is Sky TV and Wi-Fi available in all the boarding houses.

Take a virtual tour of a **study bedroom** and a boarding **houseroom**.

“

Symbolic of the importance placed on the connection between boarding and home life are the clocks on the wall in School House. Each clock shows the time from the capital city closest to a boarder’s home, from Sydney to Beijing, Moscow to Nairobi.”

*A parent*

“The support and care the boys receive from all those connected to the house is reflected by the kindness and respect the boys show each other.”

*A parent*



### Activities and enrichment

We recognise the balance between having enough to do and the importance of ‘down time’ and so we offer a mix of compulsory and optional activities through our **boarding programme** and the **enrichment programme**. These activities take place at weekends and at the end of the school day.

There is also plenty of time to study. Younger boys have a more structured activity and study programme than the older boys. We encourage responsibility, allowing increasing independence as boys move up the school but we do set boundaries, which the boys respect.

“The boarding staff are great at providing diverse entertainment. Each duty tutor is unique which gives us a different activity every evening – from pizza and movies to pancakes and cards.”

*A boarder*



## Example activities

### Weekdays:

- School facilities are available for boarders to use after school every day of the week. Activities include: basketball, five-a-side football, badminton, canoe polo, use of the fitness suite, music practice and use of the school library for personal study.
- Activities are run by tutors and senior boys in each house after prep. These can include quizzes, table-tennis competitions and cooking.

### Weekends:

**Saturday morning** – The Saturday Morning Programme runs from 10.00am to 11.30am and includes sporting activities, private study, music practice, as well as a choice of clubs. These vary from term to term, but include cooking, card games, computing, community service and many more.

**Saturday afternoon** – Many boarders are involved in school sports fixtures.

**Friday and Saturday evenings and Sundays** – There are usually two organised activities each weekend. These can include:

- Socials with neighbouring schools.
- Trips to famous and interesting British sites and cities, including Oxford, London, Bath, Portsmouth and Warwick.
- Movie and quiz nights.
- Go-karting, paintballing, bowling, dragon boat racing.



“Boarding is an enjoyable experience I will never forget, spent with a diverse group of people you hope to know for the rest of your life.”

*A boarder*

“

We have always been reassured by an approach that treats all the boys as though they are part of an extended family and that encourages the older boys to take care of the younger ones – in contrast to the historical picture of British public schools!”

*A parent*



### Looking after our boarders

The School's excellent **pastoral care** is the backbone of our boarding. Our aim above all is to ensure boys are happy within our community. Boys' tutors, their housemasters and the house matrons form strong relationships with families.

All of our boarding housemasters and tutors also teach and run **Other Half** activities, ensuring important continuity between the boys' day-time and boarding experience.

Should they need it, boys have access to a health professional 24/7. We also have a **Health Centre** on site and a team of school counsellors.

### Making the most of time to study

Set homework times help boarders to keep on top of their academic performance and the seamless integration between academic and boarding staff ensures that each boy's work is carefully monitored. All boarding houses have their own workrooms in addition to the School's and many of the boarders find the boarding routine, its environment and the help of staff and their peers beneficial to their studies, particularly in the Sixth Form.

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Boarding in the Sixth Form is great academically. You don't have to spend any time travelling and there is plenty of support available from teachers and other students.”

*A boarder*

## Food, Glorious Food!

We fully appreciate that most of our boys have insatiable appetites and so we provide breakfast, lunch, after-school tea and dinner and there are further snacks available at any time of day. Our award-winning **caterers** provide a wide variety of food cooked on the premises and ensure a healthy, balanced diet. Boys are also able to cook in our boarding house kitchens at the weekends.

“**Relationships between staff and boarders, and amongst boarders themselves, are warm and friendly.”**

*ISI Inspection*



“Wonderful and most importantly enjoyable activities fill our spare time. There isn't a single dull moment over the weekends. The amount of effort the teachers put in to make boarding life as interesting as possible is simply amazing.”

*A boarder*



## A day in the life of a boarder

**7.00am** – My alarm goes off and I have around half an hour to shower and get dressed.

**Breakfast** – I think breakfast is by far the best meal of the day, simply because it's 'full English' everyday! It is also a great time to discuss last night's Love Island episode or football results with other houses. After stashing myself with bacon, sausages, hash browns, eggs and sometimes hot chocolate, I walk back to my house for morning registration at 8.30.

**The School Day** – School lasts from 8.30am until 5pm, with many breaks in between. The first session is either tutor period, assembly or chapel. I then go straight to my first lesson, which lasts 50 minutes. The first two lessons are followed by break when many boarders come back to the house and make themselves some toast. I sometimes walk to the school cafe because they have amazing cookies there! However, the most anticipated break time is Friday because it's 'Bacon Sandwich Day'. My friends and I race back to the house as our matron cooks bacon sandwiches for both day boys and boarders.

Morning break is followed by one lesson for Sixth Form or two lessons for Middle School. Then comes lunch time. There are various activities throughout the day, and the period after lunch is usually sport.

There are various clubs at the end of last lesson, which ends at 4.00pm. On Wednesday, I choose to do community service. We go to the community centre in Abingdon and help organise exercise sessions for the elderly. When school finishes at 5.00pm, we go back to our houses to register, and also for the boarders' teas. I normally rush back quickly to reserve my 'All Day Breakfast' sandwich, which is always the most popular.

**6.15pm** – Dinner

**7.00-8.30** – Prep/Homework

After prep there is an activity put on by the tutor - particularly for the younger boarders, sometimes cooking, sometimes a quiz or table tennis tournament, while in the spring and summer there are also activities outside. Squads happens at 9.15pm, which involves teams of boarders doing a quick tidy-up. The younger boys head to bed from 9.45pm, while one of the privileges of being in the Sixth Form is we can stay up until 11.00pm.

Continues overleaf



## A day in the life of a boarder continued

**Weekends** – Weekends are a time of freedom for boarders. There is plenty of free-time, and also many exciting trips and activities organised by boarding tutors. As a footballer, I would normally have a match on Saturday morning. If there is no match, I usually go to the sports centre to play badminton, or do some running in the gym. I love the fact that nearly all the facilities in the sports centre from the swimming pool to the squash courts are open to us pretty much all the time.

Going out to town is another relaxing way to spend your weekend. Abingdon town is less than a 5-minute-walk, while Oxford is a half-an-hour bus ride. Whenever I miss Thai food, my friends and I go out to eat Thai food buffet which is just a 10 minute walk from the school. In just Abingdon and Oxford alone, I think you can find pretty much all types of cuisine, from Chinese to Mexican.

There are various weekend trips. For the younger ones, the trips are more frequent, but as a whole house, we normally have one trip a term. I remember when I was in Third Year, the trips helped me bond with my friends, especially when we were trying to survive together in a paintball game! The trips also widened my perspective as I get to visit many English cities and towns that I have never been to before.

My favourite trip is 'London Monopoly'. Teams are dropped off in London and have to find their way around taking as many pictures with the required street signs as possible. For example, Mayfair was worth the most points. My legs were hurting at the end of the day after getting on and off all kinds of transportation, but it was worth it as we won the prize of a free meal to Pizza Express!

*Jate Jaturanpinyo*



“

For my boys, boarding at Abingdon has been a life-changing experience. They have made many new friends, learnt to be independent and organised and become part of a unique community.”

*A parent*



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ABINGDON

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

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