



ABINGDON



THE LOWER SCHOOL









## What is the Lower School?

Lower School is very much a 'school within a school' at Abingdon. It is made up of the First Year and Second Year, (equivalent to Years 7 and 8 in the state sector). Most of the boys join us from much smaller primary schools and we know that they can be apprehensive about the move to senior school, so we have made sure that the Lower School is small and friendly and that every boy feels known and cared for, even before he arrives!

Heading up the Lower School is Adam Jenkins, the Lower School Housemaster. Adam was a pupil at Abingdon himself, and he came from a local primary school, so he knows all about moving on to Abingdon.



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





## The Lower School Houseroom

All pupils at Abingdon have their own houseroom, a place where they can relax with friends, read, play games or just sit and talk. The Lower School pupils have arguably the best houseroom in the School! It's made up of three areas, a quiet reading corner, games room, and a social space and then there's a locker room for pupils' belongings. The Lower School Housemaster's office is part of the houseroom so he is never far away. Our first years are very proud of their houseroom and are very pleased to be able to **show you around**.

### Further information:

- **Lower School**



Dedicated houseroom  
for Lower School pupils



***"Just don't worry! No matter who you are you will fit in."***

- A pupil

“

There is a caring  
atmosphere  
throughout the  
school.

ISI INSPECTION

”





## Settling in

We recognise that the move to senior school can be slightly daunting so we have a range of induction days and activities to help our new first years get to know each other, even before term starts. By bringing the pupils together, helping them to find friends and their way around the school campus, they are reassured about starting at Abingdon and they settle quickly.

There are two induction days before the start of term, where, besides getting to know each other, pupils will have the opportunity to spend time with their tutor and housemaster. The Lower School Housemaster also writes to each boy over the summer holiday with a Helpful Hints booklet which explains in a bit more detail about what to expect. Pupils, and their parents, can also email the Lower School Housemaster if they have any queries. Soon after the beginning of term, first years take part in team building activities where they develop their communication and listening skills and have a go at problem solving.

Each first year pupil is paired with a 'mentor' from the Second Year who they will meet with on a regular basis. There is also a group of sixth form students who are Lower School Assistants and organise weekly activities for the first years and provide help for our newest pupils to get to know the school.

### Further information:

- As their first year at Abingdon drew to a close we asked three pupils for **advice they would give** to pupils starting in the First Year.
- Watch some **video snippets** to get to know the School.
- Details of our **pastoral care**.



Our focus is on wellbeing









1:9 teacher student ratio

## Teaching

There are around 65 pupils in each of the First and Second Years in the Lower School. Each year group is divided into small groups called tutor groups and tutors get to know every child in their care very quickly and are always there for advice and support during the pupils' time in Lower School. First year pupils are split into three tutor groups and will see their tutor every day. Tutors will usually teach their tutor group for one of their subjects and, together with the Lower School Housemaster, they are the main links between school and home.

The curriculum in Lower School is very broad so pupils have the opportunity to experience a wide variety of subjects before they need to make any choices in the Middle School. Many of the subjects are new to first years, such as Latin and foreign languages and many pupils have not covered subjects such as Science, Geography or History in any depth. This is absolutely fine as the vast majority of pupils are in the same boat and we find that everyone enjoys learning about the new topics.

First year pupils are taught in their tutor groups for all of their subjects except the practical arts (Art, D&T, Drama and Music) which are taught in smaller groups. As pupils move into the Second Year, they will continue to be in their tutor groups for lessons with the exception of being set for Maths. Many of their teachers will teach them for both years of the Lower School.

### Further Information:

- Details of **Lower School curriculum**.
- Details of **homework, setting and class sizes**.
- Lower School pupils do not need to bring a laptop to school - find out more about **pupil laptops**.



Each pupil is known and cared for





## Be More Griffen

Lower School boys follow the Be More Griffen course during their two years in Lower School. The course is designed to encourage the pupils to be:

- G**rowth-focussed: Believing in themselves and reflecting carefully on how to improve
- R**esponsible: Thinking about their own actions, putting their values into practice, and being a good team player
- I**ndependent: Being able to set their own goals and coach themselves effectively
- F**earless: Prepared to take on new challenges and push themselves out of their comfort zone
- F**lexible: Ready to adapt to new situations and show resilience when things don't go as planned
- E**mpathetic: Able to listen to and understand the ideas and views of other people
- N**urturing: Supportive of others, both in school and in the wider community

“ Our son has thoroughly enjoyed his time in Lower School. He's been nurtured and encouraged by kind and supportive staff and is now ready for the next step.

A PARENT

”

Find out more about the **Be More Griffen** programme.







## The Other Half

The Other Half refers to the extra-curricular side of school life. At Abingdon this is given equal importance to academic studies and is an integrated part of the school timetable. With a vast range of over 150 activities, Abingdon's **Other Half programme** has something for everyone to enjoy. Whether interests lie in Lego robotics, ceramics, board games, sport, journalism, electronics or fencing, pupils are bound to find new and exciting activities to try. The vast majority of Other Half activities are included in the school fees, and pupils sign up for their activities at the start of each term.

One really distinctive feature of life at Abingdon is that a pupil does not have to dedicate himself to one thing: he can enjoy a wide range of interests.

Pupils also have the opportunity to go on a variety of trips during their time in the Lower School. Recent trips have included Hampton Court, the Roman remains of Aquae Sulis in Bath, and Modern Languages trip to France and Germany. There are separate residential adventure camps for both the First and Second Years in the Easter holiday.

### Further information:

- **What is the Other Half?**
- **Other Half activities table**
- See **video snippets** of the activities



31 chamber  
ensemble groups



7 major drama  
productions a year



31 sports to try







## A guide to the School day

8.35am - 9am Morning tutor period.

9am - 4pm Academic lessons - five lessons of 50-55 minutes. (Only four lessons on a Wednesday as there is additional Other Half.)

4pm - 5pm Other Half activities.

Each day includes lunch and mid-morning breaks. Some Other Half activities take place at lunchtime and on Wednesday afternoons.

Homework Lower School pupils should expect around an hour's homework per week day.

“

Both our sons have successively loved every minute of their lower school life, and we could not be more delighted with the care and devotion given by all teachers.

A PARENT

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## Help with fees

Free and subsidised places are available at Abingdon for those families who cannot afford the fees. Further information can be found [on the website](#).





A culture of consideration  
and kindness

## Useful information

Admissions - If you would like to know more about how to join the Lower School, please see the First Year [admissions information](#) or email [admissions@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:admissions@abingdon.org.uk).

Bus service - Abingdon School and St Helen and St Katharine School operate a Joint Bus Service. Please consult the [Joint Bus Service website](#) for bus routes, costs and booking. Places can be booked on the bus service in the Summer term preceding a pupil starting school at Abingdon.

School uniform - Uniform and sports kit can be purchased from our uniform supplier, Stevensons, who operate either [online](#), or from their shop in Summertown, Oxford or from the [Second-hand Uniform Shop](#). Uniform requirements and the dress code for all pupils can be found [here](#).

If you have any questions and would like to ask our Lower School Housemaster, please email: [adam.jenkins@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:adam.jenkins@abingdon.org.uk).

**“Our son has absolutely flourished in his first year at Abingdon. Having joined from a village primary school, the wealth of new experiences offered, both academically and through the Other Half activities, has seen his confidence shoot through the roof.”**

- A parent





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ABINGDON

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

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admissions@abingdon.org.uk**

**[abingdon.org.uk](http://abingdon.org.uk)**