



ABINGDON

impossible

Seven years to
change a life

OUR VISION FOR BURSARIES

Our vision for bursaries



Since the launch of our seven years to change a life campaign in October 2021, I have been overwhelmed by the generosity of our community in responding to our call to action. There are currently 74 bursary award holders at Abingdon; each brings talents to our school community. When I arrived as Head in 2016, I was keenly aware of the vital place that free and assisted places had always had in the proud history of Abingdon School. The commitment to make an Abingdon education financially accessible to young people with the potential and desire to flourish here is embedded in our culture, perhaps most notably under the leadership of Sir James Cobban whilst a Direct Grant school, then during the years of the Assisted Places Scheme.

“Students journey through Abingdon experiencing and engaging with different perspectives, reflective of the world they will encounter beyond school and university.”



Our students benefit from a network of peers from many diverse backgrounds. They journey through Abingdon experiencing and engaging with different perspectives, reflective of the world they will encounter beyond school and university. It makes me very proud that we are extending the lifelong benefits of an Abingdon education to girls, when they start to join us in September 2026.

Our role as educators is to prepare young people to be adaptable and resilient in a rapidly changing world. Strong bursary provision will become more critical than ever before so that we can continue to ensure equitable access to the opportunities on offer at Abingdon.


I encourage you to consider joining us on our journey to make it possible for any child with the potential and determination, regardless of their financial circumstances, to accept a place at Abingdon.

Mike Windsor, Head



A photograph of three students in a classroom, looking intently at a book held by the student in the foreground. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent pink filter. The word "Unachievable" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font across the center of the image, with a horizontal black brushstroke effect over the letter 'U'.

Unachievable



Widening access and unlocking potential

Abingdon has always been, and continues to be, a school rooted in its community. We particularly recognise that there are children in the surrounding area who would benefit from all that an Abingdon education offers but whose family circumstances do not permit this without assistance from our bursary programme.

The average level of bursary support for a pupil at Abingdon is 55% of fees. For some families a lower level of bursary support makes it possible for their child to accept a place here, for others 80-100% of fee remission is required.

Our goal is to be in a position where Abingdon can support 110 bursary places – 10% of our students.

We are asking our community to support us.

A photograph of a male teacher wearing safety glasses and a lanyard, leaning over a workbench. He is holding a power drill. Several young boys, also wearing safety glasses and aprons, are gathered around the workbench, looking at the teacher. The scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent pink filter. The word "Potentially" is written in large, bold, white sans-serif font across the center of the image. A small black brushstroke is positioned at the end of the word.

Potentially

Inspiring the leaders and changemakers of tomorrow



Receiving a bursary to go to Abingdon School afforded me the opportunity to be part of a warm and enriching community which profoundly impacted both my academic and personal growth. This financial support not only allowed me to focus on my studies but gave me the chance to experience and fully immerse myself in a multitude of subjects and activities I would have never thought of pursuing or trying.

For me however it is sport that fostered a true sense of belonging in Abingdon School. I will always treasure the friendships and memories I made on various teams throughout Abingdon, but also the support of the teachers and coaches who really nurtured my development as an athlete through our passion for sport.

Alongside sport, Abingdon's Other Half co-curricular programmes allowed me to take up computing, a subject outside the scope of what I was studying at the time but an experience that has led me to pursue Computer Science at university.

I am thankful that through the kindness of benefactors, I have been able to go to Abingdon, it has shaped the person I am today.

Joshua Mensah (OA 2023)

Josh is currently studying Computer Science at Brunel University, where he is on a rugby scholarship supported by Ealing Trailfinders.

What a bursary meant to me



Coming from a low-income, single parent household, I never would have dreamed of a place like Abingdon, but it was my reality for seven wonderful years thanks to the bursary programme. This

school provided me with a world of opportunities as a boy, and looking back as an adult, the doors that were opened for me are more clear than ever.

The sheer number of options that Abingdon allows students to explore led me to hobbies like rock climbing, water polo, and theatre. My education gave me the tools to thrive at a liberal arts college in the USA, where I got my Bachelors' in English Literature, and was then able to adapt my skills to a job in accounting.

The confidence that the bursary programme gave me meant that I was able to focus wholeheartedly on making the most of my time at Abingdon without ever having doubts over my place in the school. Some favourite memories include my German exchange trip to Bielefeld, and leading the football 4th XI to a series of victories on pitches ranging from the immaculate Tilsley Park to Lower Field, affectionately known as 'The Swamp'. I am incredibly thankful, both for the teachers and staff at Abingdon, and for the community of donors who made this possible for me and other boys like me.

John-Christian (JC) Davey (OA 2017)

JC is now enjoying life as an accountant based in New York



My bursary place gave me the opportunity to study at Abingdon for my entire secondary school period. Its history and character meant that the School always felt welcoming and friendly throughout my years. The sense of community, whether within the houses, the tutor

groups, classes, or in the many clubs available, created places where I made lasting friendships. I was taught by teachers who had a love for their subject and cared for their students.

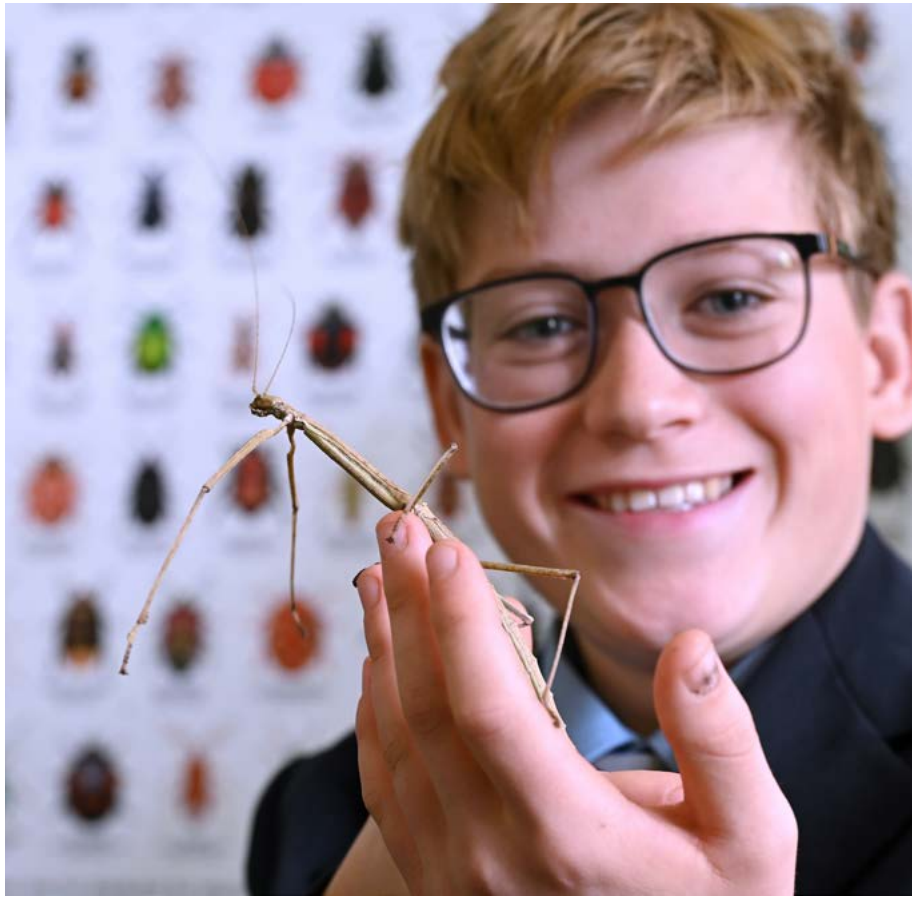
Abingdon's Other Half offered me the time and space to try almost anything, whether arts, sports or general interests, and has made me positive, well-rounded and excited to challenge myself in new ways as an adult. Most importantly, the school helped nurture my talents and passions into something that will last a lifetime – especially music.

Despite the financial background I had, the support and opportunities I was given by the Music Department were one of a kind and this is what I feel I am most thankful for in terms of what Abingdon provided. As a music scholar I was given free lessons to continue my violin studies and I performed in chamber groups and recitals as well as touring to the USA and Spain with the First Orchestra.

I found my interest in computing at A Level and, with the guidance of my teachers, I felt confident in pursuing it further at the University of Sheffield where I received an MEng in Digital Electronics. I'm truly grateful for the bursary I received and fully believe I wouldn't be the person I am today if not for Abingdon and the generosity of those who made it possible.

David Chung (OA 2016)

David is a hardware engineer living in Glasgow





Impossible

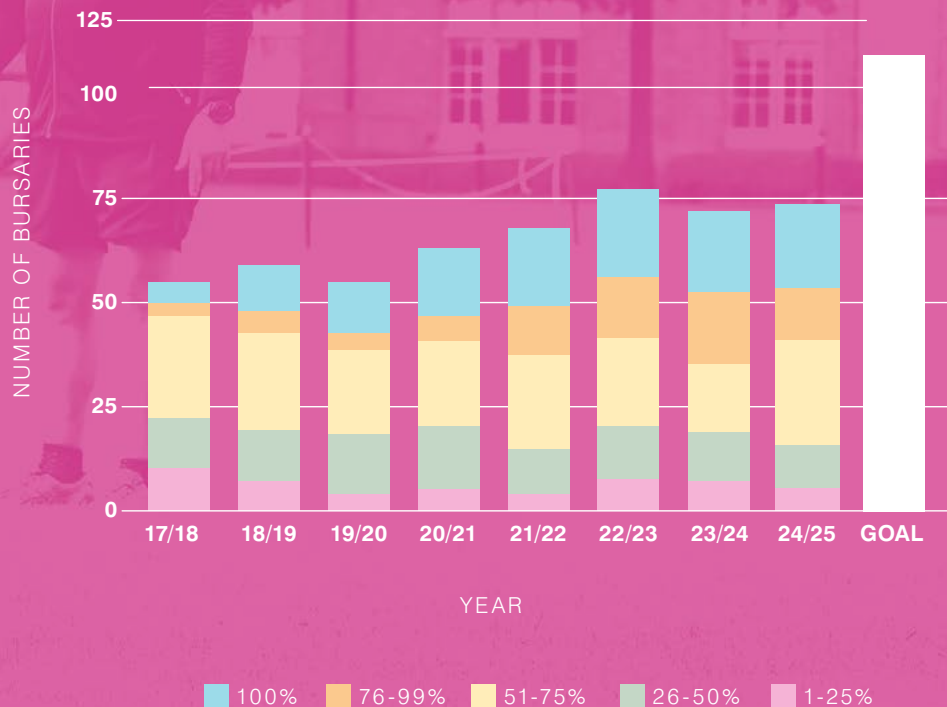
We feel very fortunate to be in a position to have been able to make decisions concerning our children's education. We didn't always believe that we would be in a situation to be able to make this choice. We continue to feel grateful and appreciative of the vast experiences and opportunities our children have by being part of the Abingdon community. It is for this reason that we feel it is hugely important to support the bursary programme, to give as many children as possible the opportunity to benefit from the wealth of resources, opportunities and support that Abingdon has to offer, regardless of their financial circumstance.

Alice Day, Lower Sixth parent

Making the impossible possible – Your role in changing lives

Our vision for bursaries

We are committed to widening access to an Abingdon education through the growth of our bursary programme; it is our ambition that 110 of our pupils will benefit. We receive an increasing number of bursary applications every year and the graph below shows the number of places supported at Abingdon since 2017. We want to enable every child to take up their offer of a place, irrespective of financial circumstances.



Help a future Abingdonian achieve their full potential...

Investing in society for the future



“Roysses” (as it was usually known then) was a Direct Grant school when I arrived as a ten-year-old boarder in 1954. Even then, I valued the inclusivity of that funding model: the fact that the great majority of my fellow pupils were from the local area and had got there on merit. I felt I was at a normal, non-elitist school, albeit an exceptionally good one. It is with this ethos in mind that I am delighted to be contributing towards a bursary at Abingdon to help a child achieve their full potential. From the School’s perspective, such bursary schemes are set to be vital in satisfying ever-growing demand for greater social inclusivity in the independent school sector.

Andrew King (OA 1962)



“Our son was offered a place at Abingdon and it seemed important, as we are in a position to afford to pay the fees, that we help in some way to open the opportunity to others. I benefited from similar generosity during my time at school in Yorkshire and it was life changing.

Gayle Bell, Fourth Year parent

“I decided to donate because since my son has been at the school I have been genuinely impressed by the quality of teaching and pastoral care. I feel that my son has been very lucky and would like to feel that someone else can benefit from the same opportunities.

Michelle Hobbs, former parent

“Education transformed my life chances. I am impressed by the opportunities available to my son at Abingdon. The bursary programme will mean that more children can take advantage of these excellent opportunities.

David Evans, Fifth Year parent

“The opportunities that Abingdon offers are transformative, and stay with you for life. I was incredibly fortunate to receive a bursary during my time at Abingdon, which allowed me to access an incredible range of extracurricular activities, as well as a first-class education. I am greatly impressed by the School’s commitment to growing the bursary programme, and it is a pleasure to feel that I can help future generations to benefit in the same way that I did.

Henry Carter (OA 2006)

“As a teacher, it is a pleasure to work with students from all backgrounds and witness them flourish as they move up the school. Inclusivity is a key aspect of school life and students who take up a place on the bursary programme develop into confident Abingdonians in the same manner as any other student in the school.

Ben Fleming, Deputy Head Academic

Your questions answered

Seven years to change a life

Why seven years?

Commitments of support for seven years will enable the School to offer more bursaries to students for the duration of their education at Abingdon. Any commitment you make will make a difference to those who would like to come to Abingdon but don't have the financial means to do so.

When will my funds be allocated to a pupil?

All pledges to our bursary fund will be committed to bursary awards offered for the following academic year.

Are bursaries allocated to local Abingdon children?

There are currently 19 bursary holders at Abingdon who live in the OX13 and OX14 postcodes. Due to our extensive school bus service students are able to attend Abingdon from up to an hour's drive from the School.

I want to donate £20 a month – how will this make an impact?

Nine people contributing £20 a month for seven years equates to a 10% bursary place. All donations count. The more people who get involved, the more bursaries we can offer.

Is Abingdon raising funds for an endowment to guarantee long-term bursary support?

Whilst an endowment in the future will enable us to fund bursaries in the long-term, we want to change lives now. Individual major gifts and legacies will help us to build an endowment.



What does a seven-year pledge look like?

The table below is indicative of what a seven-year commitment to support one pupil for their Abingdon education is expected to be; this is subject to actual annual fee increases. Gift Aid illustrations are shown based on current HMRC rules and could change during the seven year period should the basic level of income tax or Gift Aid regulations change.

The Abingdon Foundation takes the financial management of the School's resources extremely seriously and we work with *Rathbones* to invest gifts over £100,000.

Any donor who pledges to support pupil on a 10% bursary place or above automatically becomes a member of the 110 Club. All of our benefactors are recognised by name in our impact report and other Abingdon literature unless anonymity is requested.

Level of fee support	Monthly donation over seven years before Gift Aid	Monthly donation if Gift Aid n/a	Annual donation before Gift Aid	Net donor contribution before Gift Aid	Gift Aid claimed by Abingdon	Total value of donation
10%	£174	£218	£2,088	£14,616	£3,654	£18,270
25%	£435	£544	£5,220	£36,540	£9,135	£45,675
50%	£870	£1,088	£10,440	£73,080	£18,270	£91,350
75%	£1,304	£1,630	£15,648	£109,536	£27,384	£136,920
100%	£1,739	£2,174	£20,868	£146,076	£36,519	£182,595

My gift was a little appreciation for all the joy I had while at Abingdon. I hope those receiving a bursary will get as much pleasure as I did.

Stewart Womar (OA 1959)

110 Club

The 110 Club has been created to recognise anyone who commits to support a pupil for a period of seven years at a level that provides at least 10% of the cost of a bursary place. We would be pleased to discuss with you how you would prefer to make your gift. This could, for example, be a single gift of £14,616 (£18,270 including Gift Aid) or a monthly donation of £174 plus Gift Aid.

110 Club members receive an anonymised annual update on the progress of the pupils they support, which provides an insight into the impact of their gift. All members are invited to an annual reception hosted by the Chair of Governors.



110 CLUB

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I believe that an education at Abingdon should be more widely available to young people who could benefit from all it has to offer. The start Abingdon gave me during the Direct Grant era allows me to support bursaries as a member of the 110 Club; would you consider making the same commitment if your financial circumstances permit?

**Mike Stevens (OA 1968),
Chair of Governors**



Other ways you can support bursaries

Remember Abingdon in your will

The 1563 Society recognises and thanks all those in our community who have pledged a legacy to Abingdon. Legacies are fundamental to our future and enable us to expand the opportunities and excellence we have to offer. An annual 1563 Society lunch is held at Abingdon for members with their partners or guests. Invitations are offered to members for other School events over the year.

Members of the 1563 Society enjoy the chance to reconnect with old friends and make new connections with others who share the desire to make a difference to future generations of Abingdonians. We are truly grateful to all those who make this commitment and actively welcome new members.

For more information on the 1563 Society please contact the Development Office or visit connect.abingdon.org.uk/pages/legacies

Endowment

If you would like to discuss making an individual donation towards an endowment at Abingdon please contact the Development Office for a confidential discussion.

Help us to spread the word

You can help us in achieving our ambition to grow our bursary programme to support 110 students just by sharing what you've read and experienced with others. We always welcome more ambassadors to help inspire others to support the work we do. We'd love to hear from you if you'd like to become involved in supporting our bursary work in any way.





Someone

“
Our own sons have really enjoyed, and benefited from, their years at Abingdon and we wanted to do something to help someone else have the same opportunity.

Catherine Gathani, former parent

Will you join us in unlocking another child's potential by supporting a bursary?

If you would like to donate to our bursary fund you can do this in several ways.



Single gift or regular donation

Scan the QR code or visit our website
connect.abingdon.org.uk/supportus

1563

Join the 1563 Society by pledging a legacy gift

connect.abingdon.org.uk/pages/legacies



Endowment

Our Development team will be pleased to arrange a private discussion with you, just get in touch with us.

For more information about our bursary programme and how you can support us please contact:

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They all had a first class education at the School but it is the affection with which they recall their schooldays and how they love to meet up at OA events to meet their teachers and exchange news that I find particularly moving. It proves to me that Abingdon is a very special place where achievement is properly applauded but most importantly everyone is given ample opportunity to excel in a wide range of after school activities and build strong friendships that stay with them after they leave. If only everyone in this country had the same opportunity. That would be wonderful.

Linda Forrester, former parent



independent day and boarding school
for children aged 11 to 18

abingdon.org.uk

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