



# Lower School

Simply extraordinary



ABINGDON

# What is the Lower School?



Headed up by Adam Jenkins, 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 children 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 pupil feels known and cared for, even before they arrive!

**“Pupils gain confidence in this encouraging and challenging environment, and develop resilience and independence.”**

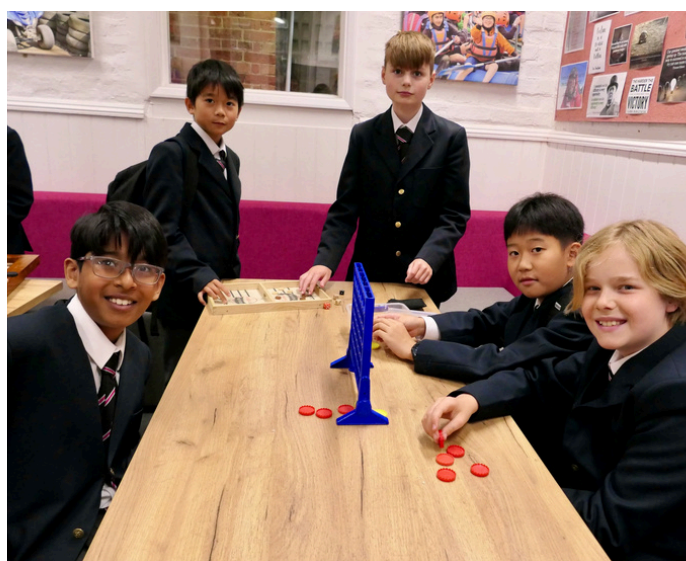
- ISI Inspection

# 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 Head of Lower School's office is part of the houseroom so he is never far away.

## Further information:

- [Lower School](#)



# 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 Head of Lower School. The Head of Lower School also writes to each pupil over the summer holiday with a Helpful Hints booklet which explains what to expect in a bit more detail. Pupils, and their parents, can also email the Head of Lower School 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 Lower School Assistants, made up of our Sixth Formers, who 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**.

# 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 Head of Lower School, they are the main link 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 will be 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, Product Design & Engineering, 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 across both years of the Lower School.

## Further Information:

- Details of [Lower School curriculum](#)

# Be More Griffen



Lower School pupils 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-focused: 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

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



# The Other Half



The Other Half refers to the co-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 themselves to just one thing - they 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 the Roman remains of Aquae Sulis in Bath. 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](#)

# A guide to the school day

**8.35am - 9am**

Morning tutor period

**9am - 4pm**

Academic lessons - five lessons of 50-55 minutes

Note: Only four lessons on a Wednesday as there is additional Other Half

**4pm - 5pm**

Other Half activities

**Homework**

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

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





# 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

To find out more about our available bus routes, costs and how to book, please visit the [Joint Bus Service website](#). Places can be booked on the bus service in the Summer term preceding a pupil starting 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. Second hand uniform is available from the [Second-hand Uniform Shop](#). Uniform requirements and the dress code for all pupils can be found [here](#).

## Help with fees

Abingdon is able to offer some free and subsidised places to local day pupils who would otherwise not be able to afford full school fees. These free and subsidised places can be worth up to 100% of day fees. Further information can be found [on the website](#).



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# ABINGDON

A leading independent day and boarding school  
for children aged 11 to 18

Simply **extraordinary**

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[admissions@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:admissions@abingdon.org.uk)

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

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