

Independent Day School for girls 4 - 16 years  
Day Nursery & Pre-School for girls & boys from 6 months

**Abbot's Hill** 



**PA to the Head  
Required for August/September 2024**

## **Our Heritage**

We trace our roots back to 1912 when Abbot's Hill was founded on the present site by Alice, Katrine and Mary Baird, advocates of education for girls. The Baird sisters ran a school in the Malverns and in May 1912 they opened Abbot's Hill as an independent boarding school for 'young women of character'.

The School's Main Building was originally built in 1836 by the paper manufacturer, John Dickinson, as a home for him and his family and he named it Abbot's Hill. The Dickinson family founded one of the world's largest stationery firms of the 19th and 20th centuries.

On John Dickinson's death in 1869, Abbot's Hill passed to his only surviving son John and then in 1908 to Sir Arthur Evans. Arthur Evans, the Archaeologist and discoverer of Knossos, was John Dickinson's great-grandson and had spent part of his childhood at Abbot's Hill. He did not however return to live there but arranged for it to be sold to the Baird sisters.

Over the years, the school has developed and grown in a variety of ways, but the key milestones in its history were in 1969, when St Nicholas House School moved to the Abbot's Hill site to form the Junior Department and in 2003, when boarding ceased. However, Abbot's Hill retains its boarding feel, which is to be seen in the emphasis given to co-curricular pursuits, the intrinsic importance of pastoral care and the school's strong sense of community.

## **The School**

Founded over 100 years ago to educate young women of character, Abbot's Hill School places great value on the development of the individual.

We are ambitious for all our pupils and they excel here. We value their voices and embrace our diverse community. As we empower them, so they empower each other and, in so doing, develop a deep sense of responsibility for their community at school, locally and in the wider world.

Children and young people will thrive best where they have a strong connection to their school and more particularly the adults who teach them. We are so proud of the quality of relationships here. The experienced professionals at Abbot's Hill take seriously their responsibility to positively shape the lives of the young people in their care. Our aim is that each individual will discover their own brilliance.

So it is that pupils at Abbot's Hill embark on a series of journeys during their time with us. The first journey, the academic journey through our well-planned and sequenced curriculum, will enrich, excite and stimulate their minds. Knowledgeable, discerning and well-informed, our pupils will be inquisitive, enquiring learners who love to learn both now and throughout their lives.

The second journey through school is the development of the values and attributes that will stand them in good stead as adults both personally and professionally. A clear set of values therefore shapes our interactions as a community and underpins our code of conduct. This unequivocal moral guidance prepares pupils to positively challenge bias and navigate with confidence the world we live in.

The third journey, the journey where we work most closely with parents, is the development of character. The attributes of collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and communication are consciously developed and embedded through rich and varied curricular and co-curricular opportunities and so the pupils become self-aware and self-confident.

In the modern world today where the pace of change is rapid an Abbot's Hill education has tremendous relevance. Kindness, humanity and resilience will be the defining characteristics of this generation and these qualities resonate through our school.

**Mrs Sharon Schanschieff**

**Head**



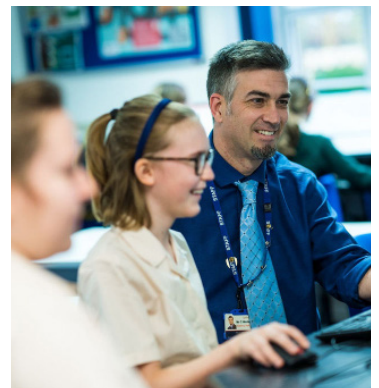
## Looking to the Future

### Our Mission

To foster a community in which all individuals are happy and inspired to live purposeful and fulfilling lives, while remaining true to our founding values of strength and character.

### Our Vision

A first choice school with outstanding environments in which to work, learn and play. We embrace diversity and provide an education fit for the modern world by challenging everyone in our community to be confident in who they are, develop strength of character and to become active, compassionate citizens who make significant and lasting contributions to others throughout their lives.



# PA to the Head

## Term time plus 6 weeks (40 weeks)

We have an exciting opportunity for a highly skilled Personal Assistant to provide outstanding professional administrative, secretarial, and organisational support to the Head.

This role is vital to ensuring the smooth running of the school and involves engaging with the entire school community.

This is a role that requires a highly organised, trustworthy individual with a can-do attitude and a calm disposition. The successful applicant will have experience in a busy PA role and be a pro-active solution-finder. They will possess excellent communication skills, be proficient in various software applications, have a strong ability to multitask and handle confidential information with discretion and professionalism.

### Main Purpose

To provide professional and comprehensive PA support to the Head .

### Main Responsibilities

#### Correspondence / Diary Management

- Receive and screen incoming communications (in person, by phone, email, mail) for the Head; transfer, redirect, escalate or respond to these as appropriate.
- Manage the Head's inbox and successfully deal with any appropriate correspondence.
- Compose and prepare outgoing correspondence including fees in lieu of notice, notice acceptance, resignation acceptance, parent communication, references.
- Regularly update the Head on diary appointments, "to do" lists, key issues and communications as required.
- Successfully manage the Head's diary, making appointments, and making adjustments where necessary. You will be expected to be able to predict when schedules are likely to change and manage their diary accordingly.
- Ensure the Head's diary can accommodate recruitment activity i.e. 11+ pupil and parent interviews.
- Organise various meetings (both internally with staff, and with external visitors).
- Arrange pupil meetings with the Head throughout the year in collaboration with the HoY Team.
- Ensure all relevant communication regarding pupils is uploaded to CPOMS and the pupil file.

#### Admin Support

- Be responsible for confidential secretarial, administrative and clerical duties relating to all aspects of Head's work.
- Be responsible for all the Head's administrative filing.
- Prepare agendas, take minutes and prepare packs for meetings
- Ensure the Head is briefed for all meetings and equipped with all necessary materials.
- Liaise between the Head/Bursar and Marketing to ensure that information regarding the school roll is shared effectively.
- Dependent on location, minute the GSA East Region meetings.
- Organise travel and accommodation arrangements for the Head as required.
- Minute termly Health and Safety meetings.
- Keep a log of the Head's income/expenditure vs budget.
- Record all Year 11 reference requests and any other reference requests for pupils leaving at other points Y7-Y10 eg for relocation purposes.
- Maintain complaints and formal complaints folder and ensuring these are up to date.

#### Other

- Look after visitors for the Head.

- Build and maintain co-operative relationships with parents and colleagues at every level.
- Prudently handle confidential and highly sensitive information on a regular basis and act as a discreet sounding board.
- Be proactive in identifying ways in which you can take on matters in order to make the Head's time more efficiently spent.
- Exercise considerable initiative in performing delegated duties, seeking advice when appropriate.
- Support the Head through handling their ad hoc requests, both professional and domestic .
- Be the first point of contact between the Head and relevant professional associations.
- Undertake any other reasonable duties as requested by the Head.
- Key role in Fire and Emergency Procedure
- Key role in Critical Incident Management Team including Lockdown.
- Taxi bookings and recording these on a log
- On occasions support HR with recruitment.

### **Governor Support**

- Support the Head with administrative duties for Governor/MHEG meetings as required, including preparing and distributing documentation.

### **Compliance**

- Maintain and update the Policy on Policies with MHEG.
- Manage the policy review cycle ensuring policies go for review in a punctual manner to the appropriate personnel, and provide them with administrative support as necessary
- Ensure all policies are accessible to all staff on the Intranet
- Ensure policies that need to be publicly available are on the website in a timely fashion
- Ensure policies that need to be provided to ISI are done so in a timely fashion.
- Maintain the Complaints Log according to regulatory guidance, ensuring communications meet the deadline stipulated in the Complaints Policy.
- Hold the Serious Sanctions Log and associated paperwork.
- Update other AHS details and diary information to ISI as necessary
- Co-ordinate and liaise with inspectors when necessary

### **Additional requirements:**

- Will be required to attend Open Days and other specified functions outside normal working hours eg. Carol Service and Commemoration Day.
- May be required on occasion to attend and take minutes of school meetings in the evenings.
- May be required to escort prospective parents and pupils around the school.
- On occasions may have to carry out receptionist duties and man the school's telephone system

### **General requirements**

- To carry out all duties in accordance with Abbot's Hill School's Health and Safety Policy and Procedures and in accordance with Health and Safety Legislation as appropriate.
- To comply with Abbot's Hill School's operating policies and procedures as issued from time to time
- To positively contribute to the performance management process and to the job holder's own personal development
- To carry out any other duties that might reasonably be required from time to time according to the needs of the school

## **Knowledge and Experience**

- Proven experience as a PA to a senior executive in a similar or corporate environment
- Minute and note-taking experience
- Experienced in dealing with confidential work sensitively
- Graduate or graduate calibre.
- The postholder will have had extensive experience of working in an office and be proficient with IT and the internet.
- Please note that previous experience in the independent education sector is preferred but not essential.

## **Skills Required**

- A high level of proficiency in the use of ICT, including Word, Excel, Power Point, Zoom, Google, databases, email and Internet
- Excellent communication skills, both written and oral and be able to represent themselves and the School favourably.
- Excellent time management.
- Attention to detail.
- Quick and accurate at entering data into databases.
- A team player who can work well with others, sometimes to tight deadlines.

## **Qualities Required**

- Outstanding interpersonal skills including excellent spoken and written English
- Professional, calm and pleasant to work with, even when under pressure
- Completely discreet and respects confidentiality
- Diplomatic & tactful
- Loyal
- Flexible
- Intelligent
- Highly organised and tidy
- A team player
- A high standard of personal presentation
- Enthusiastic, with a positive “can do” attitude, even for routine tasks
- Meticulously detail focused
- Able to work on own initiative, proactive and hard working
- Confident and friendly when communicating with people of all levels
- Interested in education and schools
- Able to prioritise, multi-task and work quickly and efficiently, ensuring deadlines are met

## **Hours of work**

- 8.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday, (40 hours per week with 1 hour unpaid for lunch) plus occasional evenings for school meetings
- The postholder will also be required to attend school for school events such as Open Days, and special sporting events, Commem and the Carol Service.

## Benefits

Abbot's Hill is a caring employer and is fully committed to the development of its staff. The school prides itself on the welcoming and inclusive staff community. The gross annual salary will be competitive and will be commensurate with the experience of the successful candidate.

### Benefits:

- Comprehensive professional development opportunities
- An employee discount platform and EAP
- Pension Scheme
- A private health cash plan scheme, after a qualifying period
- Breakfast, lunch and beverages provided during term time
- Free staff social events
- Free parking

## Application and Recruitment Process

Abbot's Hill is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Applicants will be required to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Abbot's Hill recruits staff that understand and share our commitment to safeguarding and the provision of a happy, nurturing and supportive environment for all members of our community. We act to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly by reason of a protected characteristic as defined within the Equalities Act 2010.

All questions regarding the Abbot's Hill School Application Form and recruitment process must be directed to the school's Human Resources Department at [recruitment@abbotshill.herts.sch.uk](mailto:recruitment@abbotshill.herts.sch.uk).

## Application Form

Applications will only be accepted from candidates completing the Abbot's Hill School Application Form in full. CVs will not be accepted in substitution for completed Application Forms.

Application Forms can be completed electronically or in hard copy. Completed application forms should be returned to the HR Department by email: [recruitment@abbotshill.herts.sch.uk](mailto:recruitment@abbotshill.herts.sch.uk).

As jobs within the school involve substantial opportunity for access to children, it is important that you provide true and accurate information on the Application Form. Upfront

disclosure of a criminal record may not debar you from appointment as we will consider the nature of the offence, how long ago and at what age it was committed, as well as any other relevant factors.

Please submit information in confidence enclosing details in a separate sealed envelope which will be seen and then destroyed by the Head or the Bursar. If you would like to discuss this beforehand, please telephone in confidence to the Head or the Bursar for advice. Please disclose any unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings.

Note that the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers, and cannot be taken into account.

Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found at the Disclosure and Barring Service website.

The successful applicant will be required to complete a Disclosure Form from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for the post. Additionally, successful applicants should be aware that they are required to notify the school immediately if there are any reasons why they should not be working with children. This includes any staff who are disqualified from childcare or registration.

The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 apply to those providing early years childcare or later years childcare, including before school and after school clubs, to children who have not attained the age of 8 and to those who are directly concerned in the management of that childcare.

Abbot's Hill School takes its responsibility to safeguard children very seriously and any staff member and/or successful candidate who is aware of anything that may affect their suitability to work with children must notify the school immediately. This will include notification of any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings they may receive. They must also notify the school immediately if they are living in a household where anyone lives or works who has been disqualified from working with children or from registration for the provision of childcare.

Staff and/or successful candidates who are disqualified from childcare or registration may apply to Ofsted for a waiver of disqualification. Such individuals may not be employed in the areas from which they are disqualified, or involved in the management of those settings, unless and until such waiver is confirmed. Please speak to the Head or the Bursar for more details.

Failure to declare any convictions (that are not subject to DBS filtering) may disqualify you for appointment or result in summary dismissal if the discrepancy comes to light subsequently.

Abbot's Hill has a legal duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have 'due

regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This is known as the Prevent duty. Schools are required to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. Accordingly, as part of the recruitment process, when an offer is made the offer will be subject to a Prevent duty risk assessment.

If you are currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, your current employer will be asked about disciplinary offences, including disciplinary offences relating to children or young persons (whether the disciplinary sanction is current or time expired), and whether you have been the subject of any child protection allegations or concerns and if so the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure.

If you are not currently working with children but have done so in the past, that previous employer will be asked about those issues.

Where neither your current nor previous employment has involved working with children, your current employer will still be asked about your suitability to work with children. Where you have no previous employment history, we may request character references which may include references from your school or university.

You should be aware that provision of false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if you have been appointed, and a possible referral to the police and/or DBS.

### **Closing Date: Tuesday 16th July 2024@ midday Interviews will be held shortly thereafter**

Applicants will be short-listed according to the relevance and applicability of their professional attributes and personal qualities to the role. Short-listed applicants will then be invited to attend a formal interview at which their relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail.

All formal interviews will have a panel of at least two people chaired by a member of Senior Staff. The interviewers involved will be required to state any prior personal relationship or knowledge of any of the candidates and a judgement will be made by the Head or Bursar as to whether or not an interviewer should therefore withdraw from the panel.

Should the Head or Bursar have a conflict of interest, the non-conflicted party shall decide whether the conflicted party should withdraw from the panel.

All candidates invited to interview must bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post (e.g. the original or certified copy of certificates, diplomas etc.)

Where originals or certified copies are not available for the successful candidate, written confirmation of the relevant qualifications must be obtained by you from the awarding body.

All candidates invited to interview must also bring with them:

- A passport, current driving licence including a photograph or a full birth certificate;
- A utility bill or financial statement issued within the last three months showing the candidate's current name and address;
- Where appropriate any documentation evidencing a change of name;
- Overseas candidates must provide evidence of their right to work and reside in the UK in line with current government guidelines.

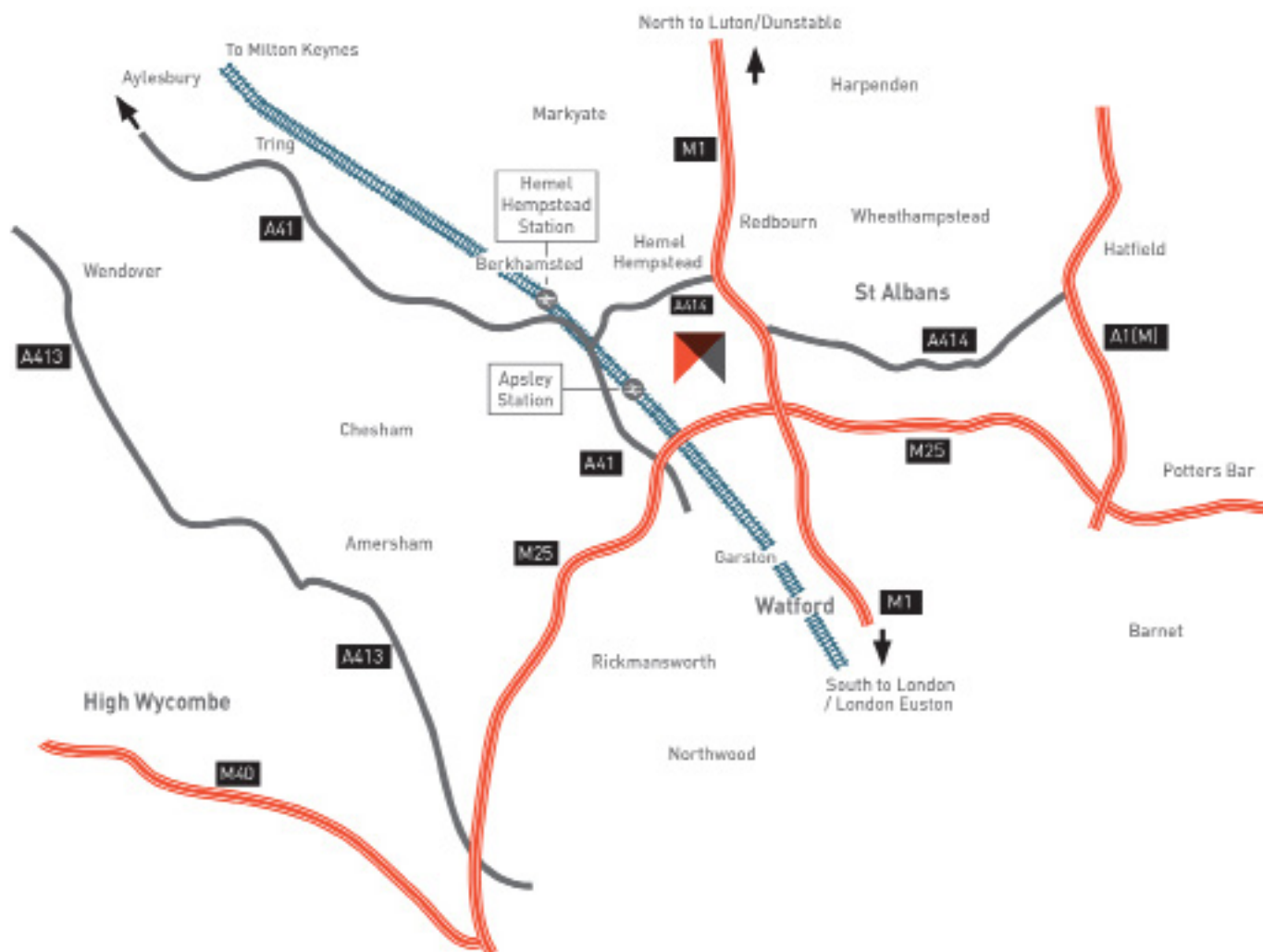
Please note that originals of the above are necessary. Photocopies or certified copies are not sufficient. Candidates with a disability who are invited to interview should inform the school of any necessary reasonable adjustments or arrangements to assist them in attending the interview.

### **Conditional Offer of Appointment: Pre-Appointment Checks**

Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon:

1. Receipt of at least two satisfactory references;
2. Verification of identity and qualifications including, where appropriate, evidence of the right to work in the UK;
3. A satisfactory enhanced DBS check and if appropriate, a check of the Barred List maintained by the DBS.





*Abbot's Hill School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The post is subject to pre-employment checks including an enhanced DBS and satisfactory references.*

*Registered Charity 311053.*

*The school's Privacy Notice can be viewed online at:  
<http://bit.ly/AHSPrivacyNotice>  
or via our website.*

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**[www.abbotshill.herts.sch.uk](http://www.abbotshill.herts.sch.uk)**