

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

**Abbot's Hill** 



**Head of Modern Foreign Languages  
Required for January or April 2025**

## 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

Abbot's Hill School is a leading Independent day school for girls, offering a comprehensive and enriching educational experience from Nursery through to Year 11. Nestled in 76 acres of stunning Hertfordshire countryside, the school provides a beautiful and tranquil setting that inspires learning and personal growth. With a proud history dating back over a century, Abbot's Hill combines traditional values with a forward-thinking approach to education, ensuring that every girl is empowered to reach her full potential.

The school's ethos is centred on fostering confidence, creativity and a love of learning. Abbot's Hill is committed to nurturing well-rounded individuals who are not only academically accomplished but also socially aware, emotionally resilient and equipped with the skill needed for the future. The curriculum is broad and balanced, enriched by a wide range of co-curricular activities, from the arts and sports to leadership and community service, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to explore her passions and develop her talents.

At Abbot's Hill we pride ourselves on our strong sense of community and the supportive relationships between students, staff and parents. Our dedicated team of educators is passionate about creating a positive and stimulating environment where every girl feels valued and encouraged to achieve her best. We are looking for dynamic and enthusiastic professionals to join us in our mission to provide an outstanding education that prepares girls for the challenges and opportunities of the modern world. If you are committed to making a difference and want to be part of a school that truly values its staff and students we would love to hear from you.

**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.



## The Role

We are looking to appoint an outstanding Head of Modern Foreign Languages to lead our languages programme.

This is the ideal opportunity for a well-qualified, inspirational teacher of Spanish and/or French to join a successful and lively department in its delivery of outstanding teaching and learning both through its curricular and co-curricular activities. A second language (ideally French or Spanish) is highly desirable to facilitate maximum timetable flexibility.

The post holder will be responsible for teaching Years 7-11. We are a Rec – Y11 school and the Head of Modern Foreign Languages will liaise closely with the Prep language teachers to ensure a seamless transition from Prep to Senior.

## Personal Specification

We invite well-qualified classroom practitioners with excellent knowledge and a passion for languages and European culture. They will be a dedicated classroom practitioner, committed in their approach and very well able to develop and contribute to excellence in their team. They should be able to enthuse and encourage their students to take risks with language and promote effective oral and written communication. A friendly, approachable and can-do attitude as well as adaptability and resourcefulness are essential qualities, as well as a high degree of personal motivation, creativity and drive.

The applicant will have excellent organisation and time management skills and be willing to contribute to the wider life of the school. They will have strong communication and IT skills.

The ideal candidate will have experience of:

- Planning for progress using available schemes of work
- Leading the delivery of a broad and exciting co-curricular programme, including trips and visits
- Preparing students for applications to competitive post-16 destinations
- Experience of leading trips and visits

## Key Responsibilities:

- To demonstrate a love of languages and to encourage all students to achieve excellence in their work in accordance with their ability and potential.
- Collaborate with other teaching staff beyond the MFL department in order to contribute to the school community.
- Develop and maintain professional networks with other teachers of languages, exploring collaboration opportunities with other like-minded language leaders.
- Devise new initiatives and co-curricular activities to promote languages.
- Monitor systematically the quality of teaching and learning in the department and give feedback that enables further improvement.
- Keep abreast of national trends and developments in education that are relevant to language subjects, sharing these with departmental and other colleagues and using these to inform the wider school policy as appropriate.
- Produce a Departmental Handbook according to school guidelines, review this annually and amend when required; make a copy available to departmental members and to SLT, governors and inspectors as required.
- Appraise department members in a constructive manner when required and complete the relevant documentation.
- Lead weekly department meetings and scheduled academic meetings.
- Track and report on student progress through departmental assessments, in line with school policies.
- Review baseline and value-added data for all students and add subject data to maintain an up-to-date department record of student attainment and progress.
- Liaise with the Exams Office regarding all matters relating to Modern Foreign Languages GCSEs and entering

students for exams.

- Ensure that students are prepared for internal and external examinations, that all internal exam papers are prepared to deadline and are appropriately differentiated, and that analysis of all results are submitted within the published deadlines.
- Work closely with the Learning Support department to ensure access to the curriculum for all students.
- To make effective use of digital media to enhance students' learning.
- Promote INSET/CPD opportunities for the department and give or arrange for other support that may be necessary to ensure core teaching standards are met and the career aspirations of departmental colleagues are supported.
- To be up-to-date in all matters pertaining to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) and the school's safeguarding policy.
- Communicate the curriculum content, value and ideals of the language department to staff and to parents.

## The Department

This is a dynamic department; students' academic ability and enthusiasm is stimulated by lively approaches to teaching, innovative approaches to GCSE specification content and the curriculum regularly being reviewed and updated.

French and Spanish are taught to all students in their tutor groups upon entering the Senior School and are placed in sets from Year 8. Towards the end of Year 9, students are able to choose which of the two languages they will study at GCSE. They can, and are encouraged to, study both if they want to. All classes are taught by specialist teachers, some of whom are native speakers of the language they teach.

The French and Spanish rooms are all equipped with the latest technology, including interactive white boards. All students have their own devices; they are used to work collaboratively on creative projects, access and interact with online media or work independently on online grammar and vocabulary activities.

The department provides an enjoyable, stimulating and effective learning experience in French and Spanish, and provides a sound base of the skills, language and attitudes required for further study, work and leisure. We offer additional tutorials where appropriate and work closely with students and parents alike to support learning.

As part of the co-curriculum program, the MFL department offers a cultural club where students explore different languages and cultures through fun and engaging activities. The languages offered are the ones taught in schools with French and Spanish as well as others such as Italian and Japanese. Students also get opportunities to work with students from other schools through workshops and visiting external plays in either French or Spanish.

We firmly believe that educational visits to France and Spain form an essential part of learning about foreign language and culture. We therefore offer trips and actively encourage students to participate. These currently include short residential trips Spain and France as well as day trips to the BFI London, French institute or Spanish cultural day in London. Trips are offered at an appropriate stage of the students' learning in order to gain maximum benefit.

The department attracts many high achieving students who go on to ably study languages at A Level and beyond.

## The 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
- Tuition fee remission\*
- 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: 17th September 2024 @ midday**

**Interviews will be held shortly afterwards**

**Early application is advised as applications will be reviewed as they are received and we reserve the right to appoint at any stage in the process.**

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.

4. For a candidate to be employed as a teacher, a check that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State;
5. Teaching candidates who have lived or worked outside the UK will be required to provide proof of their past conduct as a teacher;
6. Verification of professional qualifications;
7. Verification of successful completion of a statutory induction period (for teaching posts - applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999) where relevant;
8. Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas within the last ten years, such checks and confirmations as the school may consider appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered;
9. Satisfactory medical fitness;
10. Receipt of a signed Staff Suitability Declaration form showing that you are not disqualified from providing childcare under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009;
11. If you are undertaking a leadership role, evidence that you have not been prohibited from participating in the management of independent schools.

It is the school's practice that a successful candidate must complete a pre-employment health questionnaire. The information contained in the questionnaire will then be held by the school in strictest confidence. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description and the Person Specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role i.e. proposed workload, co-curricular activities, layout of the school.

Abbot's Hill School is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, considering medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments.

## References

We will seek the references referred to above for shortlisted candidates and may approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications, before interview.

If you do not wish us to take up references in advance of the interview, please notify us at the time of submitting your application.

All referees will be asked if the candidate is suitable to work with children.

The school will compare any information provided by the referee with that provided by the candidate on the application form. Any inconsistencies will be discussed with the candidate.

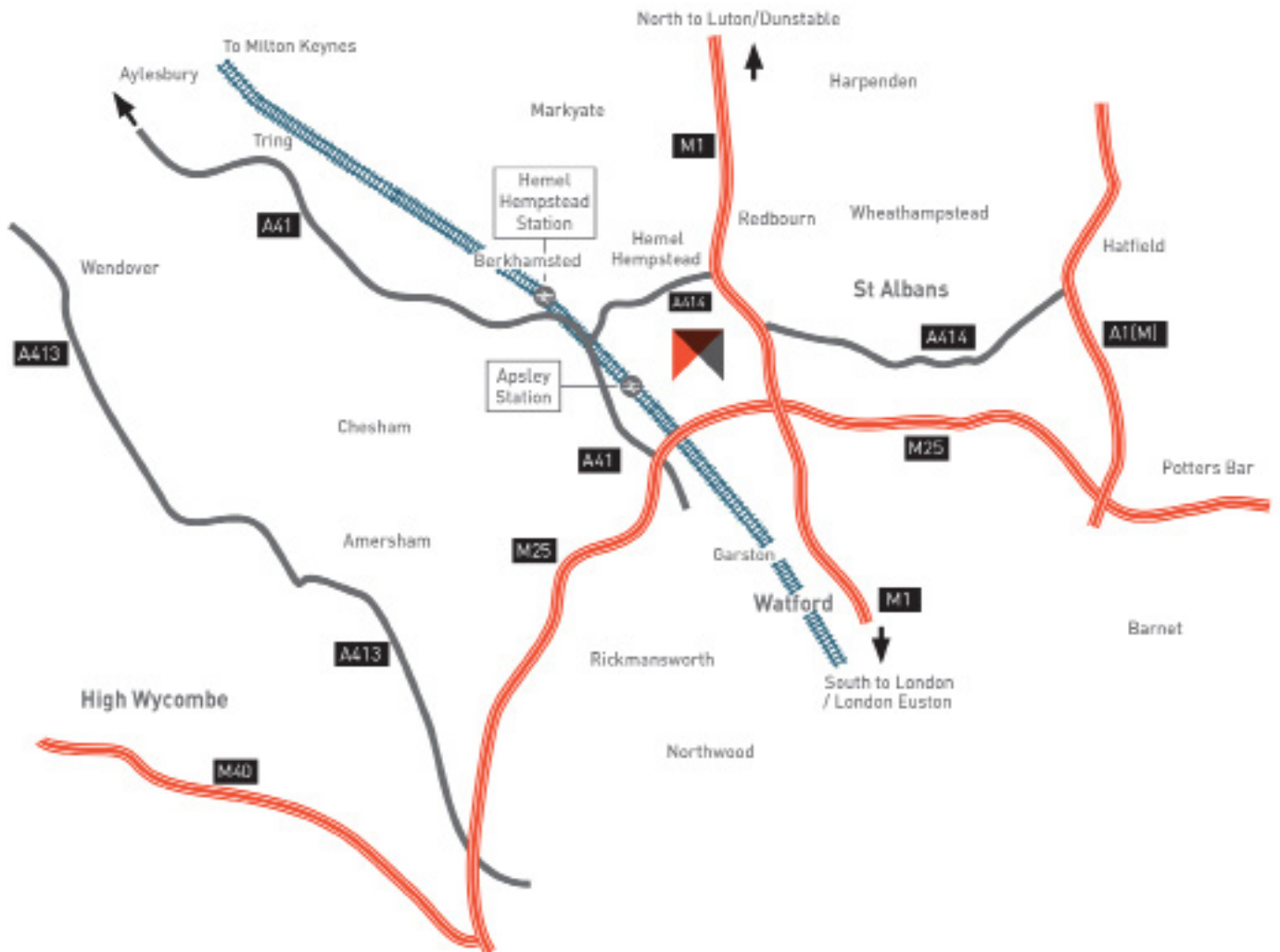
The school will refer to the Department for Education document, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and any amended version in carrying out the necessary required DBS checks. The school complies with the provisions of the DBS Code of Practice, a copy of which may be obtained on request.

## Criminal Records Policy

The school will comply with its obligations regarding the retention and security of records in accordance with the DBS Code of Practice and its obligations under its Data Protection Policy.







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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