



WYCOMBE
ABBEY

Head of Modern Languages

September 2026

Information for Applicants



Consider Wycombe Abbey

Wycombe Abbey is an exceptional place; we operate as a modern full boarding school for around 650 girls, and we are committed to the development of each one. We have over 125 years of experience in educating young women and our vision remains to provide our pupils with a world class education. We are excited about encouraging curiosity, bold ideas, innovation, leadership and delight in learning - inside and outside the classroom.

We are a welcoming and vibrant community for all staff. Our school is set in 170 acres of parkland within a five-minute walk of the town of High Wycombe. We offer superb modern facilities, including a sports centre, a performing arts centre, a wide range of teaching facilities and 11 boarding houses. We are constantly improving our site and, through our new visionary masterplan, we will see the creation of a truly world-class campus over the next decade.

Wycombe Abbey's outstanding reputation for excellence is built on the dedication and skills of the people that work at the School. Every member of staff at Wycombe Abbey contributes towards the School's thriving community and works to continually strengthen our ambition for excellence. We seek to recruit well-qualified and enthusiastic staff who demonstrate knowledge of, and passion for, their area of expertise and contribute to the wider life of the School. In return, the School provides staff with a wide variety of opportunities to develop professionally within a supportive team and wonderful working environment. Please do watch the video to hear more from the staff themselves about working at the School.

Superb academic outcomes are the hallmark of a Wycombe Abbey education and girls regularly secure places at the most prestigious universities globally. However, we understand the importance of looking beyond the narrow confines of excellent examination results to define success. Our rich co-curricular programme includes an array of activities and opportunities, ensuring that every girl develops her passions and explores new possibilities. These experiences, in turn, help to build the skills, discipline and character that will support her future life.

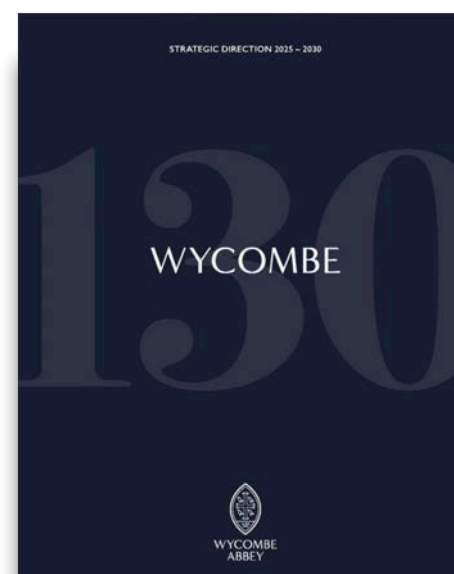
Ultimately, schools are about people and at the heart of Wycombe Abbey's success is our total commitment to pastoral care through boarding. The core values of trust, encouragement and mutual respect underpin everything we do; in this happy and close-knit community everyone is known as an individual, friendships flourish and girls enjoy each other's company.

Thank you for your interest in joining Wycombe Abbey. We hope that you will find the information in this pack useful, and we look forward to hearing from you if you feel that this post may suit your skills and experience.

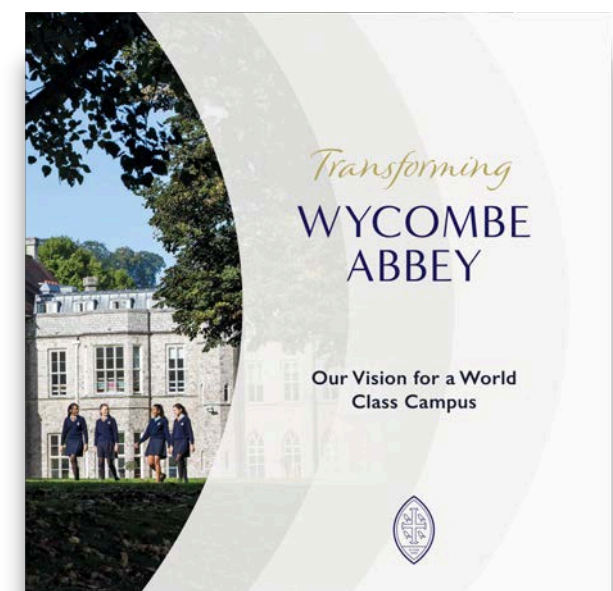
Mrs Jo Duncan
Headmistress



[Watch our film to hear why you should consider working at Wycombe Abbey](#)



[Read our Strategic Direction](#)



[Read about our Masterplan](#)



Our Values

Our values are the principles that guide the way we interact with other individuals and groups and are especially important in a boarding community like ours.

These are the values that shape our school.

Trust – we foster strong relationships built on trust through good communication, willingness to listen and honesty.

Encouragement – we promote a positive atmosphere where all members of the community are supported to develop and fulfil their potential.

Mutual Respect – we seek to understand and embrace differences in people, ideas and experiences with tolerance and understanding.

Dynamism – we are a forward-thinking school that nurtures the leaders of tomorrow for a global workplace.

Excellence – we believe in the importance of striving to be exceptional in whatever we do through the setting of ambitious goals and taking ownership of our decisions and actions.

Balance – we understand the importance of supporting staff and pupils to thrive by maintaining a healthy mind and body.

Innovation – we are excited about creating the future through being open-minded, curious and embracing change.

Service – we recognise the great rewards that individuals reap in helping, supporting and giving to others both within the School community and beyond it.



Teaching at Wycombe Abbey

The pupils at Wycombe Abbey are highly motivated with a strong work ethic. They are inquisitive, creative and eager to learn. Both pupils and teachers benefit from the small classes (typically no larger than 20 in Key Stages 3-4 and no larger than 12 in the Sixth Form), as well as well-resourced classrooms, libraries, laboratories and other facilities.

There is a wide range of ages and experience amongst the 121 teaching staff. Each year a number of newly qualified, and in some cases unqualified, recent graduates join the staff body. Wycombe Abbey offers statutory induction for Early Career Teachers and also offers teacher training/teaching apprenticeships to those without a PGCE.

There is proactive support for all new members of staff, who are guided through their first year at School by a variety of colleagues, with the line manager and an individually-appointed mentor taking the lead.

Professional development is highly valued at Wycombe Abbey and all staff are encouraged to participate in a vibrant and robust professional

development programme offering a range of opportunities including inspirational speakers, workshops, accredited courses, conferences, coaching and mentoring.

A Wycombe Abbey teacher typically teaches 30 35-minute periods per week. In addition, they are attached to a Boarding House and are responsible for a tutor group of around 10 pupils from the House. Teachers give freely of their time outside timetabled lessons, with all committing to co-curricular activities and helping individual pupils with their academic progress. Teachers are also expected to commit to other (supervisory) duties, such as accompanying House outings.

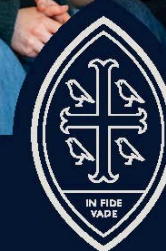
As a boarding school, Wycombe Abbey has lessons on Saturday mornings. There is time off during the week in lieu of Saturday teaching. Teachers are expected to be in School by 8:15am on weekdays and 8:45am on a Saturday. The teaching day finishes at 5:15pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 4:15pm on Wednesday and 11:50am on Saturday. Co-curricular and enrichment activities typically extend beyond these hours.

Benefits of Working at Wycombe Abbey

- Competitive salaries well above that of the maintained sector.
- A focus on staff wellbeing with a dedicated Wellbeing Committee chaired by the Headmistress. Events and activities include regular get togethers, a walking club and book-swap.
- Free parking provided on-site.
- Free use of the Sports Centre including swimming pool, gym and courts/pitches.
- Fee remission for daughter(s) who are eligible and meet the School's entrance criteria is available.
- Fee remission with selected preparatory schools for children who are eligible and meet that school's entrance criteria is available.
- All eligible staff enrolled automatically to the School's Defined Contribution Pension Scheme.
- Invitations to school productions and concerts throughout the year.
- Free eye tests.
- Easy access to London (24 minutes to Marylebone), the Chiltern Hills and attractive towns such as Marlow, Henley-on-Thames and Beaconsfield. Heathrow is also just 20 miles away plus good transport links to other London airports.
- Provision of meals and refreshments all year.
- Provision of laptop during tenure at the School.
- Generous training and development scheme with regular whole staff in-house and external training.
- Opportunities to visit Wycombe Abbey sister schools in Asia and Egypt.
- Use of the School Library to borrow books.
- Access to the Employee Assistance Programme.
- Cycle to work scheme.
- Salary sacrifice on electric vehicles.
- Free will writing.

University Destinations and Results

Wycombe Abbey has a long tradition of academic success. The learning environment is supportive, yet challenging, and our teaching specialists communicate a genuine love of their subject, encouraging all our pupils to pursue an intellectual curiosity beyond the curriculum.



Examination Results
and University Destinations

2025

[Click to see results and destinations](#)



Teaching at Wycombe Abbey

All teachers at Wycombe Abbey are expected to work towards and support the School's vision through active engagement with the life of a full boarding school.

Core Competencies

Academic

- Excellent subject knowledge in your specialist area.
- Plan and deliver high-quality lessons across all key stages, which include stretch and challenge and take into account a broad range of learning styles.
- Stimulate and foster enthusiasm for learning, whilst encouraging all pupils to achieve their very best.
- Monitor, assess and report on pupil progress, including the use of assessment for learning as a means of encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their learning.
- Contribute to the relevant subject curriculum and departmental resources.
- Encourage links with other subjects across the curriculum.
- Contribute to the wider life of your academic department.

Pastoral

- Provide effective pastoral care that contributes to the overall wellbeing of pupils through the tutoring programme.
- Have a good understanding of adolescent development with an ability to differentiate expectations and tasks appropriately at the individual level.
- Actively value and contribute to a robust safeguarding culture, ensuring the effective implementation of our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.
- Proactively build collaborative and caring relationships that are respectful of diversity, and initiate and sustain strong relationships with sensitivity, openness and respect for all in the community.

Wider Contribution

- Embody the values of the School and contribute to a culture where others are encouraged to do the same.
- Positively embrace change and drive strategic priorities, promoting a positive outlook in all areas of school life.
- Respect colleagues and contribute to a constructive, kind, professional working environment, working effectively and collaboratively with both your own team and other teams around the school.
- Support commercial activities and external programmes that take place on School grounds, as required.

Leadership

- Model behaviour expected from the team and build trust through clear communication and expectations.
- Develop capacity and build confidence in colleagues, celebrating the success of others.
- Drive change initiatives through effective strategic planning.

Boarding

- Actively contribute to the wider community through links with a specific boarding House.
- Assist with pupil induction and settling in.
- Display a willingness to be flexible and to adapt where necessary.
- Understand the holistic nature of the education offered by Wycombe Abbey and support and reflect this in your approach within the classroom.

Co-curriculum and Enrichment

- Engage in the co-curricular programme throughout the academic year, supporting or running inspiring activities which enhance the pupil experience.
- Engage with pupils individually to help them identify areas of interest and to achieve their personal best.
- Make a willing contribution to events, ensuring that your activity fits harmoniously within the overall co-curricular landscape and work collaboratively with colleagues.

Technology

- Proactively develop and innovate classroom practice to strengthen the teaching and learning environment.
- Use technology effectively to improve processes and communication and to support pastoral processes.

Develop Self

- Prioritise professional and personal growth, modelling life-long learning.
- Be self-reflective, learning from peers as well as engaging in more formal professional development.
- Model a healthy lifestyle and achieve a sustainable work-life balance.



Modern Languages at Wycombe Abbey

The Modern Languages department at Wycombe Abbey is an exciting place to be! With the vibrant mélange of native, bilingual, trilingual and fluent speakers of a vast array of languages, multiculturalism defines this eclectic department, and a stroll through the Modern Languages department corridors will treat your ear to snippets of conversations in a whole range of languages from Arabic, to Italian, Urdu and Russian.

Within the Modern Languages department we aim to foster a love for the countries where the languages are spoken, to develop an appreciation for the different cultures and generate an enthusiasm for learning the languages.

Wycombe Abbey's 'Five Academic Qualities' (Determination, Development, Resourcefulness, Risk-Taking, Reflection) are central to our planning and our schemes of work; the methods and decisions of the Modern Languages department are underpinned by our support of the School's aims which have remained constant since its foundation. They are the pursuit of academic excellence, the development of each individual's talents in creative, physical and social skills and to be at the forefront of girl's boarding education and recognised as a world class school.

We strive to create a secure learning environment within the language classroom so that each pupil, whatever her level of ability, feels comfortable participating fully and expressing herself. Our aim is not just to broaden horizons, but to open up the possibilities, so that the pupil who thinks that STEM is her future pathway, realises that the physicist who speaks German fluently is someone to whom suddenly far more doors are opened. Language shapes the way we think, and determines what we can think about, so it is no wonder that Wittgenstein famously said, 'the limits of my language are the limits of my world'. Fellini claims that 'a different language is a different vision of life', and this is what we aim to do in the Modern Languages department, offering a vision of the possibilities brought about by multilingualism.

In our day to day, we endeavour to enable all pupils to achieve their potential, thus embracing not only the idea of communicative competence, but also that of academic excellence. Learning languages not only improves memory, critical-thinking skills, concentration, and the ability to multi-task, but it promotes greater tolerance and empathy, and understanding of cultures, societies, and politics around the globe.

With the national decline in uptake of Modern Languages, it is our challenge to remind pupils of their importance, to excite, enthuse and inspire, and above all, to share our own passion and enthusiasm for our language-learning journey which has taken each member of the department on their own fascinating, unexpected and hugely rewarding trajectory.

The Modern Languages department includes an exceptionally rich, varied and eclectic mix of nationalities, cultures and experiences. From the youngest ECT to the most seasoned practitioner, the wealth of knowledge and experience to be found within the department is impressively broad and fascinating, and this includes a large number of part-time Visiting Teachers. The Head of Modern Languages line manages the individual Heads of Chinese, Spanish, German and French, as well as the Co-ordinator of Visiting Teachers and Administrative Assistant. All work hard to promote an inclusive and mutually supportive environment.



The Role: Head of Modern Languages

Reports to:

Deputy Head (Academic).

Contract:

Full-time, permanent contract. The first six months will be a probationary period.

Salary:

Wycombe Abbey has its own pay scale which compares favourably with other independent schools and is well above that of the maintained sector.

Aim:

- Have overall responsibility for leading and managing the Modern Languages department.
 - Ensure that languages are taught in an interesting and challenging manner.
 - Ensure that each pupil realises her potential.
 - Stimulate and foster enthusiasm for Modern Languages within the School.
 - Support the School's core values of Trust, Encouragement and Mutual Respect, and promote the good name of the School.
-

Key Responsibilities

Pupils and Teaching

- Be an outstanding practitioner and demonstrate a clear passion for Modern Languages.
- Lead the department in effective teaching and learning, assessment and reporting.
- Teach pupils across the age range; prepare girls for university courses (including Oxbridge).
- Monitor the work of all members of the department, in conjunction with the Heads of each separate language to ensure that Modern Languages are taught to the highest standard.
- Keep abreast of all educational developments in Modern Languages and of all changes to examination specifications, as well as developments in higher education.
- Differentiate appropriately for pupils of all ability, including challenging the most able and assisting those who require additional support.
- Share in the responsibility for maintaining high standards of discipline, courtesy and appearance among the pupils, while promoting their welfare, safety and happiness.
- Ensure that the department is appropriately equipped and staffed to enable effective teaching and learning.
- Take responsibility for ensuring that co-curricular activities and trips are organised and run by the department as appropriate.

Staff

- Line manage the Heads of Department for each language and the Modern Languages Administrator.
- Lead, motivate, support, develop, monitor and appraise staff within the department in all aspects of their teaching.
- Lead capability, disciplinary and grievance procedures where necessary.



The Role: Head of Modern Languages

Administration

- Assist with the development and implementation of the School's development plans through the devising and implementation of appropriate departmental development plans.
- Carry out all necessary departmental administration as recorded in the Heads of Department Handbook and as requested by the Headmistress and ELT.
- Support School policies and activities.
- Take responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of colleagues and pupils in the relevant departmental area.
- Attend all relevant meetings.

Teaching

- The successful candidate will teach a reduced timetable to reflect the Head of Department responsibilities.
- Fulfil all the requirements of the job specification for a member of the teaching staff.

Person Specification

Leadership

- Ability to co-ordinate the activities of others and to motivate and empower others.
- Ability to chair meetings.
- Ability to remain calm and self-controlled under pressure.
- Oversight of a broad range of enrichment activities within the department and in conjunction with other departments.

Pupil Focus

- Excellent knowledge of the needs of the pupils.
- Proactive in supporting pupils and enabling their progress.

Team Working

- Ability to develop effective and supportive relationships with colleagues, and to fully induct new members to the team.

Organisation

- Oversight of the organisation of trips abroad, eg Sixth Form study trips to France and Spain, whole year group Lower School trips to France and many day trips as part of the co-curricular provision of the School.
- Ability to organise time effectively, prioritising workloads and meeting deadlines.

Communication

- Effective communicator, both verbally and in writing. Able to keep written records and convey information accurately.
- Ability to maintain strict confidentiality.
- Confident interaction with colleagues, members of the extended School community, parents, pupils and visitors.



The Role: Head of Modern Languages

Using Initiative

- Ability to analyse need and enable strategies.
- Proactive in seeking solutions to enable conclusion of tasks.

Flexibility

- Ability to successfully adapt to changing demands and conditions.
- Willingness to support School events including occasional weekends or evenings.

Reliability

- Commitment to the organisation, constantly reviewing and reflecting upon own performance.

[Find out more about Modern Languages at Wycombe Abbey](#)



Safeguarding

Wycombe Abbey is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring check.



Terms of Appointment

A formal contract of employment will be drawn up on appointment.

- Contract
 - This is a full-time, permanent contract. The first six months will be a probationary period. The successful candidate will teach a significantly reduced timetable.
- Appointment Date
 - September 2026.
- Salary
 - Wycombe Abbey has its own pay scale which compares favourably with other independent schools and is well above that of the maintained sector.
- School Fee Remission
 - Fee remission for daughter(s) who are eligible and meet the School's entrance criteria is available.
- Prep School Fee Remission
 - Fee remission with selected preparatory schools for children who are eligible and meet the relevant entrance criteria is available.
- Pension Scheme
 - The School offers membership of the School's Defined Contribution Pension Scheme.
- Death in Service Cover
 - Life cover at 4 x annual salary, subject to contributing to the Pension Scheme.
- Equal Opportunities
 - It is the policy of Wycombe Abbey to ensure equality of opportunity for all members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching.
- Safeguarding
 - All staff share responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of pupils and must adhere to, and comply with, the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at all times.
- Pre-Employment Checks
 - The appointment is subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring check.



Wycombe Abbey Community

Wycombe Abbey is a welcoming and vibrant community of 420 staff.

Our School is set in 170 acres of parkland within a five-minute walk of the town of High Wycombe. There is easy access to London, the Chiltern Hills and attractive towns such as Marlow, Beaconsfield and Henley-on-Thames nearby.

There are many National Trust properties within five miles such as Hughenden Manor, Disraeli's home for many years, West Wycombe Park and Cliveden.

There are outstanding primary, prep and secondary (including grammar) schools in High Wycombe itself and also in surrounding towns. London is within easy reach, with the fast train from High Wycombe to London Marylebone taking just 24 minutes. Oxford and Bicester Village are within 30 miles, with a direct train link. Wembley Stadium and Heathrow are just 20 miles away and there are good transport links to other London airports.

There is a range of committees that staff can join including Staff Wellbeing, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, CPD and others. The Staff Wellbeing Committee organises staff wellbeing and social events on a regular basis, which are well attended.



Follow us on social media:
@WycombeAbbey



Closing date: 1 March 2026

Interviews: 9 March 2026

To apply, please fill in an online application
by clicking Apply Now.

We are an equal opportunities employer.
Registered Charity No. 310638

We are a Disability Confident Committed Employer.

[Apply Now](#)



If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact
the HR Team on 01494 895575
or hr@wycombeabbey.com.

