



**WOLFSON COLLEGE
HEAD GARDENER
FURTHER PARTICULARS**

Post	Head Gardener
Responsible To	Home Bursar
Responsible For	Deputy Head Gardener and Grounds Team
Liaising with	Other teams within the Home Bursary Department, other College departments, suppliers and subcontractors, Secretary to the Grounds Sub Committee.

Summary of post purpose

To lead, manage and develop the Grounds Department, ensuring the effective maintenance and enhancement of the College's gardens, grounds and sports facilities. The role combines strategic leadership, people management and operational responsibility with hands-on horticultural work, fostering a high-performing, motivated and professional team.

Key Responsibilities of the Post

Leadership of the Grounds Department:

- a) Manage, lead and develop the Grounds team, providing clear direction, coaching, performance management, regular supervision and annual performance reviews to ensure a high-performing and engaged team.
- b) Manage recruitment, induction, probation, attendance, performance and welfare matters for the Grounds team, working with HR and the Home Bursar where appropriate.
- c) Promote an inclusive, positive and collaborative team culture, encouraging professional development and continuous improvement.
- d) Develop and oversee a gardens strategy, with committee approval.
- e) Inform and collaborate with the Home Bursar to ensure that project work for the Grounds department is completed within time and budget goals.
- f) Create and maintain a positive working environment for the team and other College colleagues.

- g) Ensure that the Grounds team can operate efficiently and professionally, through establishing good information, maintaining accurate records, and ensuring the College Health and Safety Policy is followed.
- h) Attend and participate in relevant management meetings
- i) Attend and participate in the Grounds Sub Committee meetings
- j) Occasionally drive College vehicles as required.
- k) Become a College approved fire marshal and first aider.

Regular upkeep of Gardens, Grounds and Sportsfields:

- a) Lawns: mowing, irrigating, feeding, selective weed-killing, edging, scarification, topdressing, spiking, rolling, turf-lifting and laying, leaf-sweeping.
- b) Glasshouse: watering, shading, ventilations, glasshouse hygiene, propagation, and cultivation of ornamental and non-hardy plants to include pricking out, potting and preparation of composts.
- c) Nursery: propagation, vegetative (all methods) and seed, growing-on of stock, both containerised and on open ground, including cut flower production. Watering, feeding and management of cold frames and standing out beds. Pest and disease control, cutting and stacking turves for potting loam.
- d) Displays: arrangement and daily care of plants within College and container grown plants outdoors.
- e) Maintenance of plant collections: including division and replanting of herbaceous stock, transplanting, pruning, mulching, top dressing, irrigation, staking, tying, training disbudding and general care of plants within the collections.
- f) Litter control: all external hard surfaces, cycle stores and garages. This will include leaf sweeping.
- g) Sportsfield: basic surveying and laying out of facilities, seasonal turf operations as outlined in 1.1 and harrowing, marking construction of goal nets and sports equipment. Maintenance of drain outfalls and ditches. Keep track of the sport pitch bookings and manage the availability of the space for the College.
- h) Arboricultural equipment: use of hand tools to facilitate the pruning, felling and pollarding of trees, including the maintenance of hedges. Use of chainsaws as and when necessary.
- i) Storeroom maintenance: daily cleaning of hand tools and machinery after use, keeping records and logbooks associated with chemical stores and usage.

- j) *Security*: glasshouse, appropriate gates and ancillary stores including machinery and other garden equipment.

Intermittent upkeep of Gardens, Grounds and Sportsfields

- a) Machinery: minor running repairs as required, maintenance of air filters, periodic oil changes and general greasing as required, adjustment of cutting cylinders and blades.
- b) Garden features: construction of new garden features, hard landscaping including carpentry, bricklaying, construction of paved areas, concreting, laying drains, earth moving, stump extraction. Soft landscaping, mensuration, ground contour construction, planting of trees, shrubs and borders.
- c) Maintenance of garden furniture: repainting of seats, benches, goal posts, cold frames, glasshouses, trellis work, bridges and pergolas.

Equipment/machinery:

- a) Use motor cylinder mowers, rotary mowers, strimmers, fertilizer and herbicide distributors, power hedge cutters, mechanical water pumps, motor rollers, leaf sweepers, chainsaws, insecticide and fungicide sprayers, ride-on mowers and towed equipment, tractor and all appropriate equipment, sundry hand tools.
- b) Report faults and organize repairs where needed in consultation with Head Gardener.

Financial Knowledge and Understanding:

- a) Manage and maintain the budget for the Grounds department.
- b) Work with the Home Bursar to plan budget levels for each financial year, in line with operational and project-based expenditure needs.
- c) Keep track of and accurately record spending during any project management tasks; such as gardens redevelopments, etc.
- d) Ensure the Home Bursar is kept well informed of any unexpected or foreseen expenditure that could impact on the Gardens budget.

Exceptional or emergency duties:

- a) Occasional extra duties due to special circumstances, including possible needs for overtime outside of normal working hours.
- b) Deal with emergencies, such as failure of glasshouse heating systems, storm damage, or tree breakages.
- c) As a member of the College team, assist the department in other relevant tasks.

Weekend Duties:

- a) Maintenance of glasshouse, cold frames, standing out beds and displays within the College as needed.
- b) Watering of critical planting areas.
- c) Maintain the Grounds weekend watering duty rota.

Other Duties:

- a) Identify areas for development and continuous improvement through future projects for the Grounds department
- b) Maintain accurate records, compliant with the data protection legislation and College data protection policy
- c) Support external contractors on site, and see that Health and Safety aspects are followed and help to maintain a safe working environment
- d) Ensure that the Grounds team can operate efficiently and professionally, through establishing good information, maintaining accurate records, and ensuring the College Health and Safety Policy is followed.
- e) Carry out various administration activities to ensure the smooth running of the Grounds department; ordering supplies, liaising with contractors, keeping and updating COSHH and Risk Assessment records for the Grounds department.
- f) Help ensure compliance with all the relevant legislation and regulations effecting the Grounds department
- g) Complete appropriate risk assessments for the Grounds Team activities.
- h) Exercise reasonable care to keep safe all documentary or other material containing confidential information, and return to the College any such material in the post holder's possession at the time of termination of employment with the College, or at any other time upon demand.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications, knowledge, skills, experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Diploma in Amenity Horticulture or equivalent qualification. • excellent knowledge of the trade • excellent plant knowledge • substantial management experience and excellent people management and leadership skills • good IT skills and the willingness to learn new systems. • working knowledge of related regulations, especially H&S • driving licence, ability to drive a variety of gardening machinery • methodical way of working and good organizational skills • ability to work effectively under pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisory/managerial qualification • PA1 and PA6 spraying certification • Chainsaw competency • Full and clean driving license
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Qualities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrity and trustworthiness • Excellent organizational skills • Excellent communication skills • Ability to work effectively under stress • Good physical stamina / fitness • Disciplined, motivated focus on what needs to be done • Reliable and conscientious • Ability to delegate effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being a role model for staff

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

Appointment:	The post is full time and permanent, with a 3 months' probation.
Hours:	<p>Working hours are 39.5 hours per week excluding 30 minutes unpaid lunch break, normally worked from 08:00 am to 16:30 Monday to Thursday and from 08:00am to 16:00 on Friday. Flexibility will be considered for suitable candidates.</p> <p>Some overtime work will be required, for which time off in lieu or payment will be given, in line with the College overtime policy.</p>

Training:	On the job training will be given when necessary. If required, the post holder will be expected to attend training courses, which normally are arranged during working hours.
Annual Leave Entitlement:	39 days per annum including 8 Bank Holidays some of which you may have to work.
Grade and salary	The salary range is £40,058 to £44,693 annum. The salary includes the Oxford Weighting, currently at £1,730. The Oxford Weighting element is not subject to any general increases to base salaries implemented on 1 August each year. Instead, the Oxford Weighting is reviewed regularly through an internal process. Following a review, the Oxford Weighting may be increased, reduced, cancelled, or may remain unchanged.
Benefits:	Benefits include, but are not limited to: an attractive pension scheme, free lunch (within allowance), free parking subject to availability, Staff Travel Allowance, (currently £1,105 net per annum), interest free loans to purchase a bicycle, annual bus tickets, and healthcare insurance offered via the College,
Notice period:	1 week during probation, 3 months thereafter
Other conditions	The post is subject a providing evidence of the right to work in the UK, satisfactory references, completion of the health questionnaire and signing a contract of employment.

Equality of opportunity

The Equal Opportunities policy of the College requires that all staff are offered equal opportunities within employment. Entry into employment will be determined only by personal merit and the application of criteria related to the post. Subject to statutory provisions, no applicant will be treated less favourably than another because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Data Protection

All data supplied by candidates will be used only for the purposes of determining their suitability for the post and will be held in accordance with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the College Data Protection Policy (available on the website at <https://www.wolfson.ox.ac.uk/data-protection>)

APPLICATION:

Applications should include an application form, a full *curriculum vitae* and a covering letter explaining your interest in the role, why you are leaving your current employment and how you meet the selection criteria. The application should be sent by email to recruitment@wolfson.ox.ac.uk .

The closing date for applications is noon on Wednesday, 15 July 2026. Interviews will take place on Monday, 27 July 2026.

Wolfson College is and equal opportunities employer