

Deputy Head Groundsperson

Responsible to: Head Groundsman

Purpose

The Facilities Team at Cokethorpe have responsibility for the upkeep of the School site (150 acres) to a high standard and is made up of both maintenance and grounds team specialists.

The award-winning grounds team are responsible for the management, maintenance, and development of our nine grass Rugby/Football pitches, two artificial sports/hockey pitches, three cricket squares, six golf greens, tennis courts and all amenity areas to a very high standard.

Duties

- Care for and maintain sports pitches, ensuring they are consistently prepared and available to meet the demands of the fixtures programme.
- Deputise for the Head of Grounds when required, taking responsibility for leading the grounds team and ensuring works are delivered effectively in line with agreed plans and schedules.
- Safely set up and operate cutting and rolling machinery, maintaining high standards of pitch preparation.
- Maintain and care for equipment and tools, helping to reduce breakdowns and ensure reliable performance.
- Carry out basic servicing of grounds machinery to support operational efficiency.
- Apply chemicals when required, under the direction of the Head Groundsman and in accordance with appropriate qualifications and safety procedures.
- Maintain trees and hedging across the school grounds to ensure a well-presented environment.
- Support the development and improvement of sports facilities, assisting with the creation or enhancement of pitches, tracks, and other surfaces as required.

- Assist the Head Groundsman in preparing departmental documentation, including risk assessments, COSHH records, and machinery maintenance logs.
- Attend weekly team and coordination meetings with key stakeholders when required.
- Support the wider team with snow and ice clearance, helping to keep pathways and roads safe during winter conditions.
- Deliver friendly, knowledgeable, and responsive communication, in line with the expectations of a member of the wider team.
- Work closely with the Head Groundsman to maintain a safe working environment, fostering a strong team ethic and commitment to high standards.
- Report any damage, defects, or Health & Safety concerns relating to pitches, machinery, or equipment to the Head Groundsman.
- Maintain cleanliness, tidiness, and a litter-free environment across the school grounds.
- Ensure Health & Safety responsibilities are consistently met, including assessing risks when operating machinery and equipment.
- Assist with school events, occasionally supporting activities during or outside normal working hours as required by the Facilities Manager.
- Undertake occasional ad hoc duties as directed by the Facilities Manager as part of the wider team.
- Carry out additional duties as directed by the Head Groundsman in support of the department.

Person Specification

- Candidates should hold a minimum NVQ Level 2 Sports Turf qualification (or equivalent), have working knowledge in at least one of the following: natural sports pitches, cricket or golf maintenance, and the ability to operate a variety of grounds maintenance equipment. *
- Applicants should be enthusiastic, willing to work outdoors in all weathers and able to work unsupervised. A PA1/PA2/PA6 chemical spraying, and CS30 Chainsaw qualification would be advantageous.
- We believe it's all about attitude, great skills and a fantastic work ethic being key. If you're aligned to our values, excited about the opportunity, and you're really good at what you do (even if you don't tick all the boxes) apply anyway!

*The stated experience and background is a guide and does not preclude applications from candidates with more or less experience, provided the requisite skills can be demonstrated.

Appointment of Staff

To apply

Interested candidates should submit electronically (as separate PDF documents in one email) the following to Mrs Sophie Crossley, Head of Human Resources on recruitment@cokethorpe.org before the closing date.

- A covering letter explaining your suitability for the role addressed to Mrs Harriet Stapleton, Bursar
- A completed Cokethorpe School support staff application form.

Deadline for applications: Midday on Thursday 30 April 2026. Early applications are encouraged.

Interviews will take place in the week commencing Monday 4 May 2026. Interviews may take place before the closing date for suitable candidates.

Appointment Date: As soon as possible.

Application forms can be sent to applicants by post on request or can be downloaded from the School website, www.cokethorpe.org. Please email recruitment@cokethorpe.org with your name and address and the position you are interested in or call Mrs Sophie Crossley, Head of Human Resources, on 01993 892359.

Benefits

- Generous pay scale
- Fee discount for children of permanent staff subject to Cokethorpe's admissions criteria and means testing
- Personal Accident Insurance
- Cycle to work Scheme
- Free use of the School's sporting facilities (including the Gym, Tennis Courts and Golf Course) Free Meals and Common Room Refreshments during term time
- Free use of the School's Coffee Shop in association with UE Coffee Roasters
- Free parking on site
- A number of subsidised social events organised by the Common Room Committee
- Annual Flu Vaccination.

Terms of Appointment

Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed and written documentation recorded. Any gaps in employment history will be fully investigated. Safer recruitment procedures are followed and members of the Senior Management Team are accredited by the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership/NSPCC for recruitment. Child protection awareness is an integral part of the induction programme for new members of staff. Following acceptance of an offer of appointment, a formal contract of employment will be drawn up. The following notes provide guidance, without prejudice, on the likely main provisions of the agreement.

Hours: Full time, 41.25 working hours per week (7.30am-4.45pm Monday-Friday) with occasion weekend and evening work, for school Open Mornings (3 Saturday mornings a year) and community events (approx. 4 each year).

Salary: £34,000 - £38,000 depending on experience.

Holiday: Annual leave of 6.6 weeks per year, inclusive of bank/public holidays and Christmas closure. The Christmas closure consists of the five working days between Christmas and New Year, during which the School site is closed and you are not required to work. All other leave outside of this period must be agreed in advance with the Head Groundsperson.

Recruitment Checks

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It is a condition of employment that the employee should not have been convicted of a criminal offence against children, nor have been dismissed from or resigned from a previous employer for misconduct of a similar nature. Having a criminal record is not necessarily a bar to employment; it will depend on the nature, circumstances and background of the offence. Our policy on the employment of ex-offenders is available on the vacancies section of the School's website.

All employees are expected to undergo child protection screening and appointments are subject to a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check and other pre-employment screening. This includes receipt of at least two references satisfactory to the School, medical fitness, qualifications check where relevant for the post, the right to work in the UK, an identity check, online searches and an overseas police check if the applicant has worked abroad within ten years from the date of appointment.