



## GROUNDS MANAGER

### Background

Eton College was founded by King Henry VI in 1440 for 70 King's Scholars. In addition to the King's Scholars housed in 'College', there are now 1,240 'Oppidan' boys at the school in 24 other boarding houses.

There are 155 full time academic staff and 600 other permanent staff including domestic staff (in the boarding houses and in the central dining hall), technicians, grounds-men, administrative staff, security, cleaners and a large buildings department. There are also 100 part-time and visiting teachers, including visiting music teachers. The school and its immediate grounds and playing fields extend over 400 acres from the north end of Eton High Street to the M4 by Slough, bounded to the east by the Thames and to the west by a railway. There are some 400 school buildings, including staff accommodation and a 2,000m rowing lake at Dorney. There is non-stop maintenance of buildings and grounds.

### JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job:** Grounds Manager

**Department:** Buildings Department

**Reporting to:** Buildings and Facilities Director

**Main purpose of the job:** Management of the grounds of Eton College, including playing fields, gardens, arboretums and open areas generally. The majority of work is within the College itself but also includes the grounds of Dorney Rowing Lake and College owned estates within an approximate 2 mile radius.

The Grounds Department employs approximately 25 staff with a total expenditure per annum in the order of £900k (at 2015 price levels). The department is subdivided into three teams managed by the Head Gardener, Playing Fields Supervisor and Rowing Lake Grounds Supervisor, all of whom report directly to the Grounds Manager.

## Principal Accountabilities:

- Care and maintenance of the sports pitches including liaising with masters in charge of games so as to ensure that, wherever possible, the surfaces are available to meet the requirements of the fixtures programme. These include all-weather tennis and sports pitches.
- Care and maintenance of garden areas, including Boarding House gardens. From time to time, this will include managing the creation of new garden planting schemes.
- Care and maintenance of the general environs of Eton College. This will particularly include ensuring that the many trees and hedges within the grounds are kept in a safe and healthy condition. Cutting of long grass, maintenance of field tracks and fences also fall within the Ground Manager's remit. Most of Eton is a Conservation Area and so planning consent is usually needed for work to trees.
- Maintaining the grounds of Eton's Rowing Lake at Dorney including the arboretum.
- Liaison with the staff of the Thames Valley Athletics Club facility which is jointly managed by Eton College.
- Eton owns much of the land surrounding the College and, in particular, the land stretching to the West to Dorney. The Grounds Manager forms part of the management team that ensures that Eton meets statutory and other requirements. This often involves liaison with statutory bodies e.g. with the Environment Agency in respect of drainage channels or Natural England in respect of areas of Special Scientific Interest. It also involves the setting up of small licences such as those for fishing rights.
- Responsible for the management of all staff employed in the Grounds Department. This includes, through the supervisors, an effective allocation of tasks to staff; monitoring the performance of staff including sickness levels; ensure compliance with employment policies including any grievance or disciplinary procedures; ensure that all staff is properly trained; undertake annual appraisals. The Grounds Manager chairs and minutes monthly progress meetings for departmental matters.
- Responsible for the day to day health and safety needs of the department and compliance with relevant legislation. Prepare departmental risk assessments, COSHH documents and machinery maintenance records. Ensure the occupational health of staff.
- Ensure that materials, plant and equipment are procured effectively and that good value is obtained. This includes purchasing sports equipment on behalf of academic departments.
- Responsible for the tendering and management of contractors undertaking grounds services. This includes specifying work and ensuring compliance with health and safety or other statutory requirements.

- The Grounds Manager sits on, and prepares many of the papers for, the Landscape Committee which dictates the longer term development of the College's grounds.
- The sports facilities are often let out during the school holidays and the Grounds Manager will be involved in the management of this process.

### **Knowledge and skills:**

- A number of years' experience of running a similar department is essential.
- It is not expected that the postholder will have an expert knowledge of all of the areas covered by the department. However, the post holder will be required to have qualifications and significant experience in the management of sports playing surfaces and will, in particular, need to know how properly to maintain cricket, football and rugby pitches.
- The postholder will be assisted by the Head Gardener and so a horticultural background is not necessary but a demonstrable interest in gardening is required. Similarly, only a basic knowledge of arboriculture is necessary but the postholder must be willing to undergo any further training that might be required in this respect.
- The postholder should have excellent interpersonal and communications skills. He or she will need to consult and liaise with a wide variety of people; this includes the two resident Fellows of the College, Provost and Vice Provost, academic staff, finance, HR, local authority officers and members of the public as well as their own workforce.
- The post will require good literacy and numeracy skills. The postholder will need to monitor and control the significant budget for the department and so will need to be financially aware. The postholder will need to be able to prepare short reports for committees from time to time.
- A knowledge and practical application of the Health and Safety at Work Act and its subordinate legislation is required. In particular, the postholder will need to be competent in the handling of chemicals or fuels and the safe operation of various types of machinery and plant.
- An interest in conservation management is required together with some knowledge of statutory compliance in this respect.
- The postholder should hold a full UK driving licence.
- The postholder should be a member of the Institute of Groundsmanship or equivalent body.

**Start date:** December 2015 or soon thereafter subject to satisfactory recruitment checks.

**Terms and Conditions:**

**Salary:** £ 50,000 per annum. Accommodation may be available within the College grounds.

**Hours of work:** Hours are not fixed but will depend upon the needs of the school programme in term time and in the holidays. The post is managerial and as such the postholder will be expected to arrange his or her own hours to meet the requirements of the post. It would be expected that Mondays to Saturdays in term time would normally be full working days (half day on Saturday) and Mondays to Fridays in the school holidays. Particular flexibility will need to be exercised in respect of weekends to ensure that the facilities under the postholder's control are presented to meet the commitments.

**Holidays:** 25 paid days' holiday per annum plus Bank Holidays.

**Benefits**

- Pension scheme: Employees who wish to be enrolled into the College's Group Personal Pension Plan can choose either to contribute 4.9% of their salary and the College will contribute 11% or to join the auto-enrolment category where employees currently pay 1% and the College pays 1%. These amounts will increase gradually over the next few years in line with Government requirements.
- Life Assurance: Life Assurance benefits commence upon employment and cease 31 days after leaving.
- Private Medical Insurance: The postholder will be eligible for private medical cover through AXA PPP.
- Provision of meals: You will be entitled to a subsidised lunch from Monday to Friday during term time in Bekynton, the College's central dining facility.
- Childcare Vouchers: The College's Childcare Voucher Scheme is supplied by Edenred. More details are available from the HR Department.
- Sports Facilities: Employees at the College enjoy free use of the College Gym, swimming pool and tennis courts with subsidised use of other sport facilities.
- Leisure Facilities: Free use of the School Library, free entry to College theatre and concert productions.

- Employee Assistance Programme: All employees have access to counselling services provided by Health Assured. More information is available from the HR Department.
- Give as You Earn: The College is registered with Give as You Earn. This payroll deduction scheme enables employees to make regular deductions directly from their salary in support of their chosen charity or good cause.
- Eyesight test: Free bi-annual eye test and £50 towards glasses for VDU use.

## **Application Process**

To apply for this position please visit the College website:

<http://www.etoncollege.com/SupportStaffVacancies.aspx> .

By clicking on the vacancy title, you can download a copy of the job description and access the online application form by clicking on 'apply now'. Please complete the application in full. If you are unable to complete an online application or have any questions about the recruitment process, please email [recruitment@etoncollege.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@etoncollege.org.uk) or contact Sue Douglas, Human Resources Department on 01753 370562.

Candidates invited for interview will be required to provide the College with original documents that verify identity and all qualifications stated on the application form.

**Close Date: Monday 21st September 2015**

The School 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 (DBS).

All appointments with the College will be subject to references, a medical report and an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service, all of which must be satisfactory to the College. In addition the College is required to contact the most recent employer or organisation where the applicant has worked or volunteered with children.