



one community  
individual minds  
creating futures

LARKMEAD  
KEY INFORMATION  
BOOKLET



# WELCOME TO LARKMEAD SCHOOL

Our prospectus booklet and website share The Larkmead Promise, the experiences students and families can look forward to across their time at Larkmead. These are the headlines from The Larkmead Promise that we share with all students in their planner:

At Larkmead we will work together to help you to achieve your ambitions, hopes and dreams. Larkmead is a very special school and community, with wonderful students and staff. We believe that everyone can achieve great things.

- At Larkmead there is a whole world of exciting new knowledge and skills to learn, opportunities to embrace and challenges to meet.
- Larkmead staff really get to know you so that they can support and encourage you to achieve your very best.
- At Larkmead you will develop your character, the qualities that make you a good person, a good friend, and will set you up for the future.
- At Larkmead, everyone matters and makes a difference.
- At Larkmead you will be develop your self-confidence and do yourself proud.
- Larkmead is a happy, caring community with high expectations and ambitions for everyone.
- Larkmead is packed with wonderful opportunities and specialist facilities.
- At Larkmead you'll enjoy a wealth of enriching experiences.
- Larkmead's vibrant Sixth Form is an inspiring pathway to success.

At Larkmead you will know that you are part of something special and that you are special too. You will be able to push for personal excellence as you make your ambition your special mission. You will enjoy the sense of pride that comes with knowing you have achieved your best. You'll know that you are an important member of one community, where you can be yourself as an individual, and where you are creating a very bright future.

This booklet provides some key information on life at Larkmead and how we work together to fulfil The Larkmead Promise. To discover more and meet our fantastic students, please contact the school. We will be delighted to arrange a tour and share all that makes Larkmead such a special and positive community.





## Key information

Larkmead is a happy, successful school that nurtures character through our ethos of **“one community, individual minds, creating futures.”**

As **“one community”** we value each member of the Larkmead family. Our caring and supportive culture develops students and staff, with a focus on mutual respect, well-being and the power of working together. Our excellent pastoral care supports and encourages every student through compassion, security and confidence. Our positive and effective behaviour for learning enables all students to succeed and make good progress.

**‘Individual minds’** encourages personality, flair and diversity, the spark in our students and staff that makes Larkmead such a thriving and exciting school. Our students learn new skills and develop new passions through curiosity, challenge and celebration in a school where they can be themselves and flourish.

**‘Creating futures’** means inspiring ambition, resilience and ingenuity. High expectations provide the springboard for personal success every day, in examinations and on into the future. Careers education at Larkmead is award-winning and exemplary, just one strand of ensuring that students are well-equipped and confident. A Larkmead education is for life, giving each of our young people the opportunities, passion and confidence to head out into the world, ready for the exciting challenges ahead.

## Admissions

We follow the Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) policy on admissions. OCC administer the applications process on our behalf via [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/admissions). Applications for Year 7 are made in October for entry in the following September. In-year admissions require application through OCC. Please see the Join Us section on our website and contact the school to discover more and book a tour.

## Transition and induction

At Larkmead we know the importance of the personal touch to help successful transition. The Headteacher Mr Dennett and Ms Watkins (Head of Key Stage 3) visit each Primary School to meet every child, answer their questions and speak to staff in the school. This means that each child is known from the very beginning of their journey to Larkmead.

Sessions for children, parents and carers alongside visits to the school in the run up to joining Larkmead mean that families can look forward to the September start, knowing that students will have a warm welcome into the school community, happy, confident and able to focus on enjoying success at Larkmead.







## Travel and safe routes to school

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At the beginning and end of the school day Larkmead can be accessed through the main entrance on Faringdon Road or the rear gate on Copenhagen Drive, all supervised by school staff. This allows parents to drop off and collect from two convenient points. Both entrances are also well served by safe cycle routes from across Abingdon and surrounding villages.

Most students walk or cycle to school, with bikes and scooters secured in our cycle sheds. Some students may need school transport, which is accessed through the local authority.

The Larkmead Late Bus is a very special facility open to all students, taking them home at 5pm Tuesday – Thursday so that everyone has the opportunity to participate in the rich range of extra-curricular activities taking place after school across the year.

Children entitled to school transport will receive a bus pass via Oxfordshire County Council. For information on school transport policy, eligibility for free transport, most current routes & timetables, or how to apply for a concessionary place, please consult their website:

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/travelling-school](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/travelling-school)

## Learning at Larkmead

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Teachers at Larkmead are specialists in their subjects, teaching in specialist facilities across the school. Larkmead staff get to know each student so that they can support and encourage them to achieve their very best. We aim to ensure that students develop their curiosity, confidence and creativity, discovering new talents and passions as they move through their Larkmead journey.

Teaching at Larkmead thrives on research, collaboration and sharing good practice from in and out of school. Professional development is supported by the National College of Education and other professional organisations.

## Our Curriculum – fulfilling the Larkmead Promise

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The Larkmead curriculum encompasses learning within lessons as well as our school ethos, our social, moral, spiritual and cultural provision and each student's wider experiences. Larkmead's curriculum includes our tutorial programme building cultural capital, and our rewards and awards programme nurturing character and leadership. With work experience in Years 10 and 12, Larkmead's award-winning careers provision runs through Years 8-13, inspiring aspiration and supporting students to achieve their ambitions.



## Key Stage 3 Years 7-9

Our 3-year KS3 means all students experience a breadth and depth of learning across a wide range of subjects. Special events, extra-curricular enrichment and the Larkmead Extended and Academic Programme (LEAP) add to students' learning in Year 7-9.

Students in KS3 enjoy lessons in art, dance, design & technology subjects, drama, English, French, geography, history, ICT, mathematics, music, PDC (Personal Development Curriculum), physical education, philosophy & religion, science and Spanish. These courses meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and build upon students' prior knowledge, understanding and skills.

At the start of Year 7 students are largely taught in mixed prior-attainment groups, often tutor groups. As the year develops and students move into Year 8, some subjects are taught in sets. Whatever the grouping, Larkmead staff ensure all learners are supported and challenged to achieve ambitious progress.

## Key Stage 4 Years 10-11

During KS4 students study the core subjects of English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Triple or Combined Science, PDC, Philosophy & Religion and core PE. Students will apply for options subjects that currently include art & design, business studies, computer science or I-Media, dance, drama, film studies, French, food & nutrition, geography, history, music, philosophy & religion, photography, physical education (sports studies),

product design (electronics & mechanisms, graphic products, resistant materials, textiles), sociology, Spanish and Triple Science.

Opportunities for learning outside of the classroom ensure students can access the arts, sport, technology and other disciplines.

## Key Stage 5 Years 12-13

Larkmead Sixth Form consistently achieves outstanding value-added results, with our ethos, expectations and support enabling students to succeed across a wide range of A Levels and access to vocational subjects. Students may also follow the Extended Project Qualification alongside Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award and a wider range of enrichment and career events.

Collaborations with other schools in the OX14 Partnership and the Vale Academy Trust expand opportunities for students.

## Homework

Work outside of the classroom supports students in their learning. A programme of homework is published, increasing as students move through the school. Our supervised Key Stage 3 homework club and Power Hour for Key Stage 4 provide support for everyone.

The ethos and detail of the Larkmead curriculum can be found on the school website.







## **Larkmead Learning Support Department**

Larkmead's SEND provision is recognised as being inclusive, compassionate and highly effective. Our team of Teaching Assistants have a rich range of specialisms, supporting students with a rich variety of learning differences. The department provides a welcoming base during lesson and social time, leading targeted interventions and helping students have a calm, enjoyable and productive day.

The Learning Support department plays a key role in the successful transition from primary school, with staff going to and from Larkmead and students and parents visiting to help build confidence and security in advance of their September start. Parents are very welcome to book a meeting with our SENCo and a tour of the school.

## **Pastoral care and wellbeing**

### **Communication with parents and carers**

Communication and connection are key as children move to secondary school. The tutor is the prime point of contact for parents, supported by the Director of Learning (Head of Year).

Teachers will make direct contact with parents to share successes and discuss how best to help students overcome any issues.

As well as praise information, parents receive progress checks over the course of each year, with feedback on progress, achievement and attitude to learning in and out of the classroom.

In addition to regular parent/teacher evenings, we hold a Year 7 information evening early in the first half term to support the important partnership between school and home. There is also a Year 7 meet the tutor evening, supporting that key connection. We hold additional events at key points throughout students' time at Larkmead. Parent Mail, newsletter and social media help to keep parents informed about school life in general.

### **Tutor groups and Houses**

Students and parents tell us that pastoral care is at the heart of Larkmead, demonstrated in The Larkmead Promise and by the ethos that 'everyone matters and makes a difference'.

We have a specialist, dedicated Director of Learning for Year 7, and students will have a consistent tutor throughout their first 5 years. This relationship and connection is important, with the tutor acting as champion and first point of call for parents.

Students from Year 7 to 13 are grouped into five Houses. Houses develop community through collaboration and competition, with a wide range of House events and activities encouraging everyone to engage and shine.



## Rewards and celebration

epraise is an online system/app that enables students and parents to see when House points have been awarded and for what reason. These regular rewards are recognition for students' participation, contribution and leadership across a range of values. Three achievement assemblies a year for each year group are a wonderful celebration of students' engagement and progress in all areas of school life.

## Good behaviour

Larkmead's simple mantra of 'Ready, Respectful, Safe' is easily understood by all students. Positive behaviour for learning and consistency support everyone to follow our simple, sensible rules, supporting everyone in their learning. Working from a foundation of 'unconditional positive regard', praise and a calm manner, there are clear consequences when students impact on the learning and happiness of other students, supporting them to make good choices in the future.

## Pastoral Support Department

Also known as 'Stepping Stones', Larkmead's Pastoral Support Department is an invaluable resource for students who are feeling vulnerable and benefit from additional support, with experienced adults able to offer therapeutic approaches to building confidence and self-esteem.

## School Health Nurse

All Larkmead students can access advice and support from our dedicated in-school health nurse who operates both through drop-ins and by referral. Our School Health Nurse supports our Personal Development Curriculum.

## School dogs

Stepping Stones regularly hosts some members of the 'Larkmead dog squad' as part of the therapeutic approach to student wellbeing. Whether out and about on the playground or field, students enjoy the sense of calm as well as excitement staff dogs bring to life at Larkmead.

## The school day

Each morning and afternoon begins with tutorial time, featuring a range of activities to build confidence and cultural capital. Weekly assemblies encourage reflection and ambition as part of one community at school, local and global level.

Larkmead operates a two-week timetable:

08.45-8.55	Registration
8.55-9.50	Period 1
9.50-10.45	Period 2
10.45-11.05	Break
11.05-12.05	Period 3
12.05 – 13.05	Period 4
13.05-13.55	Lunch
13.55-14.10	Registration/assembly
14.10-15.10	Period 5

## Break and lunchtime

The school canteen serves a varied menu at break and lunchtime, with information shared on the school website. Catering is cashless using biometrics and ParentPay. Parents are able to monitor students'







expenditure and what they are buying at break and lunch. Free School Meals operate with the same biometric system.

Students are welcome to bring their own packed lunch or snacks. Year 7 have their own area to eat indoors and outdoors, with other year groups designated their own spaces.

The Learning Resource Centre (LRC) is a popular location for students at break and lunchtime, with access to computers, study facilities and an extensive range of fiction and non-fiction. The school field is open whenever the weather allows, for students to relax or play games. Year 7 have their own area and goal posts on the field. The field, playground and school site are patrolled by teachers and lunchtime supervisors.

Students can enjoy a wide range of activities and clubs at break and lunchtime, with the list of clubs and events updated each half term.

## Uniform

Uniform helps to create a sense of community and equality and there is a compulsory uniform for students in Years 7-11 at Larkmead. School uniform items marked \* can be bought through the link on our school website.

### Standard school uniform

- School tie\*
- School v-neck jumper\* or cardigan\*
- Plain white school shirt, long or short sleeved
- Black smart tailored trousers without decoration
- Black knee-length skirt without decoration
- Plain black sturdy shoes. Trainers are not permitted.

### Optional summer uniform

- Knee length black tailored shorts can be worn as part of the summer uniform.
- White polo shirt with school logo may be worn instead of shirt and tie

### Additional information

- Piercings and jewellery: Students are permitted to wear a pair of simple stud earrings. Nothing else is permitted.
- Discreet make up is allowed. The arbiter of decisions is the student's Director of Learning & tutor

### P.E Kit:

- Shorts – black with gold side panels\*
- Skort – black with gold side panels\*
- Sports polo shirt – black with gold side panels\*
- Rugby shirt – black with gold side panels\*
- Hockey or Football socks – long plain black
- Sports leggings \*
- Tracksuit bottoms – plain black with no logos
- Sports trainers – plain
- Hockey or Football boots – students will be advised when football boots will be required.
- Shin pads (hockey or football)



## Pencil case/equipment list

- Pencil case
- 2 blue or black pens
- Purple pen
- Pencil
- Pencil sharpener
- Rubber
- Ruler
- Pair of compasses
- 4 x highlighters
- Pencil crayons (including red, orange and green)
- Calculator

## Mobile phones etc

Parents and carers may wish their child to carry a mobile phone to enable contact on the way to and home from school, and for reasons of personal safety.

During the school day, mobile phones and other devices can only be used during lesson time with the teacher's permission. This can be to research or record work and support homework. Mobile phones may not be used at break or lunchtime, when students can enjoy a range of activities and social time. If seen or heard, phones will be confiscated and collected at the end of the school day, with escalating additional consequences. If parents or carers wish to contact their child during the school day we ask that you do this via the school office.

## Lockers

Students can rent a personal locker for £10.00 an academic year.

## Larkmead Extended & Academic Programme

The Larkmead Extended and Academic Programme (LEAP) provides special opportunities and events for all students, with the ambition, support and challenge to create the springboard to even greater success. The Larkmead late bus means that all students can stay after school to enjoy the wide range of clubs, teams and events. LEAP is a core part of the Larkmead Promise. Here are some of the opportunities available:

## Step Up Partnership with New College at Oxford University

This special partnership with New College provides enrichment opportunities for Larkmead students, raising ambitions and supporting access and applications to Oxbridge and Russell Group Universities.







## **OX14 Partnership with Abingdon School, St Helens and Radley College**

Building on our long-term relationships with partner independent schools, Larkmead is a founding member of the OX14 Partnership, with students, staff and school leaders working together to enhance opportunities for all.

- Academic mentoring and supporting positive mental health
- Students develop reflective and coaching skills
- Science Partnership, special events to promote girls' engagement with physics, lectures and masterclasses
- Links across D&T, English, Humanities, Maths, MFL, PE, Science and VPA
- Working with Abingdon School Film Making Unit and Abingdon Film Festival
- Development of rowing and competing in regattas
- Journalism, broadcasting and creative writing
- Careers events, supporting university applications and CV writing

## **Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths**

- STEM Club every week brings that extra awe and wonder
- Oxfordshire Young Scientist of the Year
- Institution of Engineering & Technology Faraday Challenges
- Links with Rutherford laboratories and research institutes

- GCSE Astronomy with Abingdon School
- Larkmead hosts events as part of ATOM Science festival
- Trip to CERN in Switzerland
- Maths Challenge
- Technology club
- Cycle repair workshop

## **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Well established Arts Mark Gold school
- Partnership with Will Gompertz to develop arts provision at Larkmead
- Art Club, masterclasses, school and national competitions
- Creative Partnerships competition winners
- Dance Studio unique in Abingdon state schools
- Drama club, theatre trips, productions and showcases
- The Music block is a great resource with studios and full band practice and a great variety of instruments
- Instrumental and singing lessons in school
- Larkmead Band, Choir and Orchestra
- Theatre trip to Broadway in New York
- Photography and creative media courses allow students to develop new skills



## Stretch and challenge in every subject area, including:

- Author visits
- Battlefields trip
- Book clubs and book quiz
- Carnegie Awards Shadowing
- French film club
- Geography expeditions
- Homework club
- Power Hour after school study
- Rotary Debate competition
- Rotary Interact Club
- Work Experience
- Young Enterprise

## Enrichment days

- Deep dives and immersive experiences develop confidence & cultural capital

## Sport

- As a Sports Mark Silver school, students enjoy a diverse range of clubs, teams and competitions
- Links with clubs, teams and Tilsley Park facilities
- Larkmead Sports Leaders working with Primary partners
- Annual ski trip

## Growing leadership and responsibility

- House leaders, House captains and form representatives
- Duke of Edinburgh - Bronze, Silver and Gold
- PGL for everyone in Year 7
- Larkmead Leaders programme develops confidence and character

- Larkmead Awards programme recognises achievement and builds challenge
- Student Voice, House Parliament, Model United Nations, Vale Academy Trust Parliament and charity campaigning grow leadership and engagement

## Sixth Form

- Award winning careers service, work experience and support with applications
- All students can undertake the Extended Project Qualification to explore a passion or interest in further detail
- University visits and Masterclasses to support subject applications
- Leadership roles in school as part of the Senior Team and House leaders
- Duke of Edinburgh Gold
- Key role in OX14 Partnership
- Outstanding Value Added results and progress

## Careers

- Award winning careers education and opportunities
- Work experience weeks
- Make A Difference week, working with charities and community organisations to learn new skills and make a positive impact.
- Larkmead has earned the 100% Gatsby careers benchmark
- Larkmead students progress to their next steps, ready to achieve their ambitions, hopes and dreams







# Larkmead Sixth Form

Larkmead’s vibrant Sixth Form has a well-established track record of success. Students benefit from the pastoral care, high expectations, wider enrichment and dedicated teaching that achieves outstanding value-added results

All Sixth Form facilities have been recently renovated, including air-conditioned common room, study area and dedicated IT room. Students take a lead in school and in collaboration with our wider partnerships. They move on from Larkmead to university, apprenticeship or employment with great qualifications, great friends and great memories, ready to meet their next challenges and enjoy the opportunities ahead of them.

Please see our website for further details of why Larkmead Sixth Form is the right choice for your future.



# Our Shared expectations For Success

Our three simple rules for everyone at Larkmead are to be **Ready, Respectful and Safe**. This supports everyone's happiness, learning and success. These values will develop your character, the qualities that make you a good person, a good

friend and will set you up for the future. They run through Larkmead Leaders and our House Point Awards. Ready, respectful and safe embodies our shared ethos of '**one community, individual minds, creating futures**'.

	As a successful Larkmead student I...	Why this is important How I can achieve this
<b>READY</b> individual minds creating futures	try my best and develop my learning capacity	You will enjoy the sense of pride that you have tried your best and worked hard in and out of class. Your learning capacity is your ability to learn, and you can develop this all the time. Nothing is 'fixed'.
	have the right equipment	You will make the most of every experience by arriving at school with everything you need for the day: your pencil case, books, reading book, sports kit etc.
	take pride in my presentation	Wearing the correct uniform is an expression of self-respect and shows that you are ready to work and learn. It's a great habit for later life.
	attend school	Attendance is a key part of participation, which leads to progress. Aim for attendance of above 95%.
	am punctual	Being on time for school and lessons shows respect for yourself and others. You will make the most of each day and experience.
	have a positive attitude	Trying new things helps us to learn and develop. It's ok to make mistakes, because that's how you develop the resilience and grit to turn 'yet' into 'yes!'.
	complete homework	Give the task set your best shot and hand it in on time. Speak to your teacher if you are finding things hard or if you need more of a challenge.
	embrace opportunities	At Larkmead there is a whole world of exciting new knowledge and skills to learn, opportunities to embrace and challenges to meet. Taking part in and out of class and trying something new will help you to make your ambition your special mission.
<b>RESPECTFUL</b> one community	respect myself	At Larkmead everyone matters and makes a difference. You can be proud that you are part of something special and you are special too. Make sure you can answer the question 'What have you done today to be a better you?'.
	respect our school community	Meeting our shared standards respects everyone and our school environment. Valuing individuality, diversity and differences makes us a happy, inclusive and vibrant school.
	respect the wider community	Doing the right thing and playing an active, positive part in our local and global community shows your own pride and self-respect. It gives the community pride in Larkmead School.
<b>SAFE</b> one community	demonstrate good behaviour	Being responsible for your own actions means you will develop self-confidence, do yourself proud and achieve your potential. Your example contributes to a positive culture for everyone.
	make good behaviour choices	Staying safe during the school day, off the school site and on social media depends on making sensible, informed choices and doing the right thing. Treat other people as you would wish to be treated, with care, respect and dignity.
	will be secure and successful in later life	You are an important member of one community, where you can be yourself as an individual and you are creating a very bright future.

**Everyone matters and makes a difference**

**LARKMEAD**  
**School** 



# Larkmead Leaders

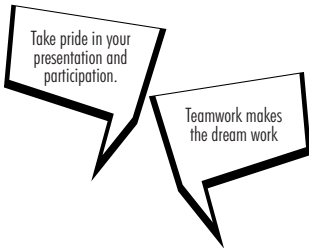
Growing character & confidence through participation, contribution & leadership.



## ONE COMMUNITY

Taking responsibility

Working together



## INDIVIDUAL MINDS

Embracing opportunities

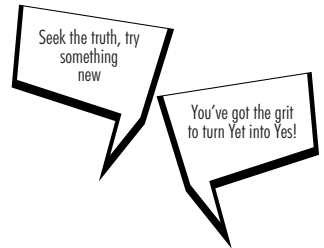
Meeting challenges



## CREATING FUTURES

Developing curiosity

Building independence



I meet our shared expectations of success and standards in behaviour, uniform, equipment and attendance (RRS)

I play my role respectfully in any team or group by cooperating, listening, reflecting and making my point.

I take part in experiences and events organised through school

I consistently achieve my personal targets and goals

I am open minded and seek to discover things

I am happy to try something new, knowing that getting it wrong helps me to get it right next time.

I volunteer for additional responsibilities and events

I collaborate and actively help others to get involved and improve

I regularly take part in extra-curricular activities in and out of school

I seek additional challenges, aiming higher to raise the game

I research and discover more and make connections with what I already know

I'm developing the strategies to help me get 'unstuck'

I initiate projects and change that will make a positive difference to the school or wider community

I support other people, coaching and building their confidence

I put myself forward in class, play or perform for a crowd or an audience

I set my own challenges, approaching things with an open mind

I use my new knowledge to keep learning, making links and turning knowledge into action

I am confident to use my use initiative, showing resilience and flexibility

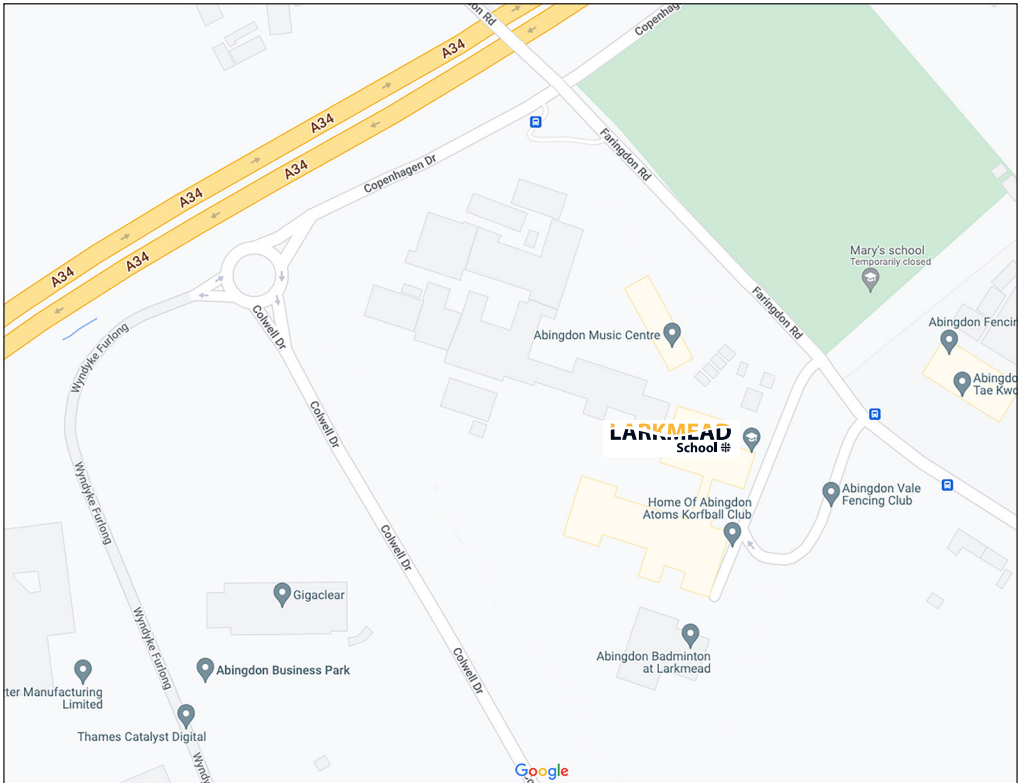


Everyone at Larkmead has the opportunity to develop their leadership skills across all aspects of their life and work.

Larkmead Leaders show how you can grow through **participation** (taking part), making a **contribution** (getting more involved to make a difference) and by showing **leadership** and initiative. You will be rewarded for putting these values into action, and the Larkmead Leaders model will support you in your next steps.

**LARKMEAD**  
School





## **LARKMEAD** School

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