



Downe House



CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

ASSISTANT
HOUSEMISTRESS/MASTER



Message from the Headmistress

Thank you for the interest you have shown in joining Downe House. I hope this information pack provides a clear overview of the position and of what it is like to work at our School. If you have any queries, please do get in touch - we are always happy to help. I would also recommend visiting our website, where you will find a wealth of information about us.

Downe House is a very special place, where we work together with a shared purpose: to support our pupils in reaching their full potential. There is a strong sense of community here, and every member of staff, whatever their role, plays an important part in our success.

We seek to recruit the very best staff at Downe House, and I could not be more proud of our dedicated team. Our expectations are high, but in return we offer a supportive and friendly working environment, generous benefits, extensive CPD opportunities, and the chance to make a real difference.

I hope you will feel encouraged to apply, and we look forward to hearing from you.

With all good wishes

EMMA MCKENDRICK

About Downe House

Downe House is a leading UK independent day and boarding school for girls aged 11 – 18. Downe has long enjoyed a reputation for delivering a world-class education, focused on outstanding academic and extracurricular provision, and pastoral excellence.

Downe House was founded in 1907 by Olive Willis, who held a strong belief that a school should meet the needs of young women by prizing the individual and creating a strong community. With over 550 pupils, today's Downe House lives out the message that "each individual matters", alongside its Christian foundation and core values of kindness and respect for others. A Downe education sets out to inspire our pupils to succeed – and to prepare them to become inspiring role models as citizens of a global community.

Our immersive education gives girls both the freedom and support to develop their talents and interests. Inspirational teaching, enriching co-curricular opportunities and personalised curricula bring out the best in each girl, with holistic pastoral support. The lifelong friendships formed here create an unrivalled network of talented alumnae helping each other succeed beyond Downe House.

The School has an established reputation for academic excellence as well as outstanding pastoral care. We offer a flexible approach to suit the individual needs of our families, and girls have the choice of joining us as full boarders, flexi boarders or day pupils. Many of the girls are boarders, and they live in one of the ten on-site boarding houses. The emphasis is very much on creating a 'home from home' environment, and each house is staffed by a committed and caring team – some of whom are residential. Our ethos is to put families at the heart of our education, from creating the right balance between family time, to working in partnership with parents to ensure every girl gets the most out of school life.

Our international focus reflects our commitment and ambition to share our education management expertise on a global scale and to provide opportunities for staff and young people all over the world. Academic staff have the opportunity to participate in a global teacher exchange programme with our partner school in Australia. Selected pupils can also participate in our Global Schools Exchange or Global Internships programmes. We are committed to creating a diverse and global community within our founding School in Berkshire, alongside our international Schools in Oman and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.



Working for us

Downe House employs over 450 staff across a wide range of roles, including teachers, administrators, accountants, technicians, school nurses, housekeepers, matrons, and chefs. Working here means joining a welcoming, ambitious, and forward-thinking community where every member of staff is valued for the part they play in shaping the lives of our pupils. As a leading UK independent school with a proud heritage and a modern outlook, we strive to create an environment where students and staff alike can thrive. Colleagues describe Downe House as a place of genuine collaboration, where professional expertise is respected, and development is encouraged at every stage of your career.

Staff benefit from exceptional facilities, a beautiful campus, and strong investment in wellbeing and training. Whether your role is in teaching, pastoral care, administration, or support services, you will be supported by a highly professional team and offered many opportunities to get involved in all aspects of school life. Our culture is shaped by kindness, inclusivity, and a shared belief in the value of holistic education.

At Downe House, you will make a meaningful difference each day, enjoy a vibrant workplace, and contribute to an institution that strives for excellence while remaining grounded in community. We welcome talented, caring, and enthusiastic individuals who want to grow with us and help our pupils flourish.

Inspiring people



The position

ASSISTANT HOUSEMISTRESS/MASTER

START DATE: September 2026

CONTRACT TYPE: Permanent - Full Time, term-time only (34 weeks per year plus a few additional days before the start of term for INSET and start of term preparations)

REPORTING TO: Housemistress

SALARY: Competitive salary dependent on experience + Assistant Housemistress/master Allowance

Due to the nature of the work, this is a residential post. You will be required to live in onsite self contained accommodation whilst on duty. All meals are provided during term time.

JOB PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

An Assistant Housemistress/master fulfils a vital role at Downe House. We are looking for someone with a genuine passion for excellence; unbounded energy to ensure the House is well run and an unyielding determination to support each girl in the House, as she navigates her own individual journey to be the very best version of herself (even at 7am, when she might rather be in bed!)

You will be immersed in the 24/7 nature of a busy school. The ideal candidate will be intelligent, patient, kind, fun and brave role models for our girls.

You'll inspire our girls to be trailblazers in all that they do. Attention to detail, a good understanding of cross-cultural issues and great likeability are important qualities. When it goes wrong, as it can on the teenage journey, you will need to be able to help your girls to navigate failure and manage parental expectations with diplomacy and wisdom. You will be supported in your role by your Housemistress and a wider House Team to ensure the happiness and safety of pupils in your care.

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Each boarding pupil becomes a member of one of our Boarding Houses and benefits from all the fun, competitions and activities that boarding life brings. We aim for our boarding houses to be a 'home away from home' for the girls, a nurturing environment where our staff provide the practical and pastoral support that they need to thrive within school and beyond.

Our 12 Boarding Houses have been carefully planned to provide comfortable and practical bedroom facilities, homely kitchens and common room spaces for socialising. Each House also includes dedicated spaces for independent study and music practice. Garden play areas allow the girls freedom in a beautiful woodland setting. The Housemistress is supported by an Assistant Housemistress and a team of pastoral staff.

We offer a flexible approach to suit the individual needs of our pupils and their parents. Girls can choose to join us as full boarders, flexi boarders (stay up to 4 nights a week), or as day pupils. All pupils can access our broad extra-curricular activity programme during the evenings and weekends.



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

- Encourage a healthy and safe routine of life for each boarder ensuring a happy boarding community which enables the girls to thrive.
- Build positive relationships with pupils in your care to ensure their happiness, well-being and safety, liaising closely with the Housemistress, relevant Assistant Head and Tutors.
- Support the creation of a 'home from home' that fosters kindness, inclusion, enthusiasm for learning and participation in school life.
- Respond to the individual and changing needs of each boarder, including those from different cultural backgrounds.
- Assist with the planning and participation of a varied programme of House activities.
- Ensure that boarders participate in a variety of Co-Curricular activities to discover new skills and experience and develop their confidence.
- Maintain effective and timely communication with Parents and Guardians keeping them informed of all matters concerning the welfare of the girls.
- Deal with behaviour issues in a firm but caring manner, involving the Housemistress in any matter of serious concern.
- Administer medication and liaise with the Medical Centre staff in case of individual illness.
- Welcome day pupils and flexi boarders into the House, and integrate them as far as possible in all aspects of school life.
- Be available to welcome families and oversee departures and travel arrangements at the start and end of each half term.
- To teach between a third to a half of a teaching timetable, or carry out commensurate responsibilities in another department.
- In addition to teaching, you will cover study sessions and be in reserve.
- Responsible for a range of administrative tasks to support the department.
- On a weekly basis attend House Staff and Departmental meetings.
- Ensure that visitors to the House are welcomed and monitored, and that the bedroom accommodation is private to the students and to members of the House Team.
- Supervise the girls and be prepared to work at any reasonable time to provide care in times of emergency.
- Responsible for deputising for the Housemistress, including weekly cover for 1.5 days,
- Maintain accurate records of all personal information relevant to the care of individual pupils.
- Support admissions, open days, assessment days and promote the House and School.
- Be a role model for pupils and colleagues.
- Encourage high standards of respect for tidiness in the House and personal presentation.
- Contribute to creating an inspiring Boarding House Handbook.



Person specification

ESSENTIAL

- Degree level qualification.
- Previous experience of working in a boarding house / residential environment and pastoral care.
- An enthusiasm for providing pastoral care and supporting young people with their education.
- A warm and approachable personality, with a genuine interest in the wellbeing of young girls.
- A willingness to fully immerse yourself in the life of the House to enjoy the company of young people.
- A commitment to the provision of single-sex education for girls in a day and boarding environment.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, able to develop appropriate relationships when working with pupils, parents and colleagues.
- A patient, even-tempered and calm disposition.
- A flexible approach to working hours, resilience and adaptability.
- A willingness to participate fully in the school community.
- Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and adhere to the School's Child Protection Policy statement at all times.
- Ability to work both as part of a team and on your own initiative.
- Efficiency, with good organisational, time and budget management, IT and administrative skills.
- An abundance of energy and a good sense of humour!

DESIRABLE

- A qualified or experienced teacher, who can teach up to half a timetable in their specific field.
- BSA qualification.
- First Aid qualification.

Downe House is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and expects all staff to share this commitment and adhere to, and comply with, the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures at all times. Appointed candidates will be subject to an enhanced DBS check and an online social media check.

We promote equality of opportunity and support an environment that values and promotes diversity and inclusion.

“I benefitted hugely from the coaching and mentoring that was available to me. Whilst Downe prides itself on seeking the best possible route for each student, this is true of their approach to their staff as well.”

“Downe House is a very busy, vibrant and exciting place to be a part of. The expectations within my role are high, but I have felt very supported since I started, and there is a tangible culture of collaboration and kindness at the school.”

“I’m enjoying being part of such a supportive team and a community that empowers young women to succeed. Downe House’s reputation and beautiful setting make it a truly inspiring place to work.”



Employee Benefits



BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

practical, probate & emotional support



COMMUNITY & SOCIAL

regular social events for staff & family



CPD

weekly opportunities for learning & development



CYCLE TO WORK SCHEME

savings on bicycle purchases via salary sacrifice



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

confidential advice & counselling service



EYE TEST

free eye test & contribution towards glasses for regular VDU users



FLU VACCINATIONS

annual on-site free vaccinations



FREE MEALS

daily nutritious & delicious meals



FEE REMISSION

generous discounted fees



GROUP INCOME PROTECTION

75% salary



GYM

free access to on-site gym & discounts at local gyms



HEALTH & WELLBEING

a range of health benefits i.e. Virtual GP & Online Physiotherapy



LIFE INSURANCE

3 x salary



LINE MANAGER SUPPORT

in house workshops & Aspiring Middle Leaders programme



LOCATION

well connected, within easy reach of A34 & M4



PARKING

plenty of onsite parking



PENSION

generous employer contributory schemes (eligibility criteria apply)



SWIMMING POOL

access to heated on-site swimming pool



TECH

Microsoft showcase school using leading technologies



WORKING ENVIRONMENT

beautiful semi-rural campus on 104 acre estate



Inspiring girls

Downe House
Cold Ash, Thatcham
Berkshire, RG18 9JJ

www.downehouse.net



Downe
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