



Downe House



CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE COORDINATOR

Message from the Headmistress

Thank you for the interest that you have shown in joining us at Downe House. I hope that this information pack will give you a good overview of the position and working at our School, but if you have any queries then please do contact us, we are more than happy to help. I would recommend that you also take a look at our website where you will find a wealth of information about us.

Downe House is a very special place where we all work together with one common purpose of supporting our pupils to reach their full potential. There is a strong community spirit here, and all of our staff, whatever their role, play an important part in our success.

We seek to recruit the best staff at Downe House, and I could not be more proud of our committed team. We have high expectations, but in return we provide a supportive and friendly working environment, generous benefits, wide CPD opportunities and the chance to really make a difference.

I hope that you are interested in applying and we look forward to hearing from you.

With all good wishes

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'Emma Mckendrick' in a cursive script.

EMMA MCKENDRICK



About the School

Downe House is one of the UK's leading boarding and day schools for girls aged 11 to 18. With a charm and character of its own, the School is set on a beautiful 110-acre site in the village of Cold Ash situated 3 miles from the market town of Newbury. The School is passionate about creating a strong learning and inspirational environment and community, where every individual matters.

Downe House was founded by Olive Willis in 1907, 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, Downe House lives out the message that "each individual matters", an ethos as strong today as it was over 100 years ago, alongside the core values of kindness and respect for others. The aim is also to prepare girls to play a full and positive role as citizens of a global community and to become outstanding women of the future.

Our immersive education gives girls the freedom and space to nurture their talents at their own pace. 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 a strong reputation for academic excellence as well as outstanding pastoral care. We offer a flexible approach to suit the individual needs of our pupils and their parents, and girls have the choice of joining us as full boarders, flexi boarders or day girls. Many of the girls are boarders and they live in one of the twelve 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 of staff – some of whom are residential.

Our international focus reflects our commitment and ambition to share our education management expertise on a global scale and to provide genuine opportunities for staff and young people all over the world. Academic staff have the opportunity to participate in a global teacher exchange program, with our partner school in Australia. Selected pupils can also attend an international school for a short term or gain global internships for work experience. 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 as well as our pioneering online DH Academy.



Department Overview

The Finance Team at Downe House plays a pivotal role in supporting the smooth financial operation of the school and wider group activities. Responsible for managing all aspects of financial planning, account, reporting, and control, the team ensures the effective stewardship of Charity resources to support the school's strategic goals.

Key functions include Accounts payable, Accounts receivable, Planning & Control, payroll, and compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements. The team works closely with other departments, parents, and external stakeholders to deliver a professional and efficient service, upholding the school's commitment to excellence.

With a focus on accuracy, transparency, and collaboration, the Finance Team underpins the school's ability to provide an outstanding immersive education for all students.

“The School acknowledges the importance of nurturing its teachers by providing regular CPD opportunities throughout each term, in areas as diverse as neurodiversity and the integration of technology into classrooms.”



Employee benefits



ANNUAL LEAVE

25 days + Christmas shutdown + Bank Holidays



BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

practical, probate & emotional support



COMMUNITY & SOCIAL

regular social events for staff & family



CPD

weekly opportunities for learning & development



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

confidential advice & counselling service



EYE TEST

annual free eye test & contribution towards glasses for regular VDU users



FLU VACCINATIONS

annual on-site free vaccinations



FREE MEALS

daily nutritious & delicious meals



EMPLOYEE REFERRAL REWARD

£300 for successful referrals



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



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

The position

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE COORDINATOR

Hours: Full time position, 37.5 hours per week all year

Reporting To: Head of Financial Operations

Location: On site working, with some flexibility to work from home on occasions during school holidays

Key Relationships: Finance Team, Suppliers and other departments across the School

Salary: Range of £32-38k, depending on experience / qualifications

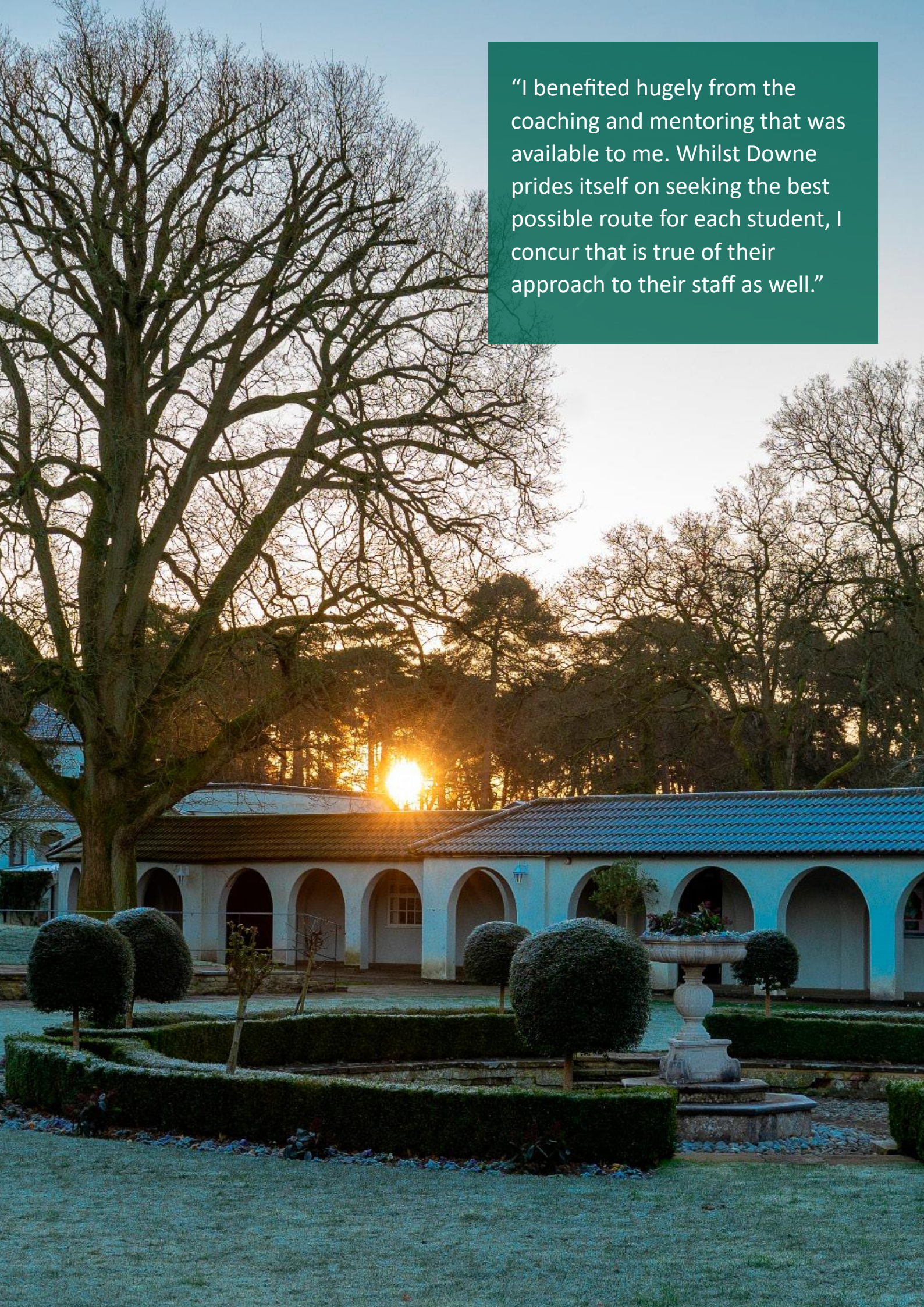
JOB PURPOSE

To manage and administer the processing, approval, and payment of supplier invoices, and oversee the employee expenses process in a busy and varied role within a large independent school group. This position requires a high level of accuracy, organisation, and adaptability to support the smooth financial operations of a dynamic Finance department within a glorious education environment.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

SUPPORT TO THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

- Manage the full Accounts Payable cycle across the group of school entities, including PO creation, invoice processing, supplier statement reconciliation, and preparation of BACS payment files.
- Maintain accurate and timely accounting records across both the Purchase Ledger and Nominal Ledger, ensuring compliance with internal controls and financial procedures.
- Deliver a high-quality, service-oriented approach to both internal colleagues and external stakeholders, including suppliers, ensuring professionalism and responsiveness at all times.
- Management of utility provider and other supplier invoicing through 3rd party portals
- Play a proactive, collaborative, and professional role within a busy and dynamic finance department, contributing to continuous improvement and team success.
- Communicate regularly and effectively (mostly via email) with suppliers to resolve queries, maintain strong relationships, and ensure timely payments.
- Support month-end and year-end processes, including ledger close, reconciliations, and journal entries, to ensure accurate financial reporting.
- Liaise with academic and support departments to facilitate purchasing, ensuring all documentation is correctly authorised and submitted in line with school policies.
- Prepare and upload financial data to the finance system, ensuring accuracy and completeness.
- Lead or support training and INSET sessions for staff on purchasing procedures, finance systems, and card usage, promoting financial awareness and compliance.
- Perform bank reconciliations and ensure all transactions are accurately recorded and investigated where necessary.
- Manage petty cash processes (for multi-currency), maintaining secure handling and accurate records.
- Correct application of VAT across various types of supplies, interpreting VAT legislation and ensuring compliance with HMRC requirements.
- Oversee the administration of school payment cards (Barclaycards and Caxton currency cards), including regular communication with cardholders and reconciliation of transactions.
- Assist with internal and external audits by preparing documentation and responding to auditor queries in a timely and professional manner.
- Produce financial reports and information requests needed for statutory returns as required by the Financial controller, Head of Financial Operations and Director of Finance and Operations.
- Supporting the Accounts Receivable role during periods of high volume and critical deadlines. Providing holiday cover across the finance team as needed.
- Undertake any other reasonable duties as directed, including providing cover for colleagues across finance functions and contributing to wider departmental initiatives.



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

Person specification

ESSENTIAL

- Financial qualifications such as AAT, (ACA or ACCA qualified) or qualified to this level by experience.
- Highly computer literate, with a strong working knowledge of Excel, SharePoint, Outlook and Teams and the ability to manipulate data easily.
- Open to exploring new digital tools to drive process efficiencies.
- Demonstrating an excellent service culture, with a friendly, professional manner.
- Diplomacy, patience and clear written and spoken communication.
- Experience of working within accounting functions and strong numeracy skills.
- Good working knowledge of VAT.
- Ability to balance working effectively in a small team with working alone on key delegated responsibilities.
- Good time management skills and the ability to work to set deadlines and priorities.
- Able to work calmly and think clearly under pressure.
- Strong attention to accuracy.
- High levels of confidentiality and professionalism.
- Focussed and driven with a positive and proactive approach.
- 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.

DESIRABLE

- An interest in education and a commitment to the ethos of the School.
- Working with WCBS, School base, Lightyear systems.
- Experience of having worked in a school environment.

Downe House is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people 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.

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





Inspiring girls



Downe House

Downe House
Cold Ash, Thatcham
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www.downehouse.net



The Downe House Podcast is available
on all major podcast platforms