



Downe House



CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

CARETAKER





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

Caretaker – Afternoons and Evenings

START DATE: Immediate

CONTRACT TYPE: Permanent

SALARY: £26,000 to £27,500 FTE

REPORTING TO: Head of Maintenance and Facilities

HOURS: Alternative options available - please state on your application the preferred option that you are applying for.

Option 1. 35 hours per week - 1.30pm - 9.00pm

Option 2. 35 hours alternating from:
Week one 1.30pm - 9.00pm
Week two 10.30am - 6.00pm

Option 3. Weekend only
From 8.00am - 4.30pm including residential holiday cover of 25 days per annum

Option 4. Weekend only - 48 hours
From 8.00am Saturday to 8.00am Monday, with no holiday cover

JOB PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

We are looking to appoint a caretaker to provide a responsive maintenance and caretaker service, as part of a team. In the event of a fire, the caretaker will lead on onsite safety procedures and prioritise the wellbeing, safety and security of the pupils, staff and premises.

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

We are fortunate that our pupils can live and learn in modern, beautiful and natural surroundings. The Estates Department play a big role in maintaining our impressive site and ensuring that all the facilities are safe, compliant and in good working order.

Our Estates Team, comprise of 20 staff, including 2 residential and 2 afternoon / evening caretakers, maintenance operatives and groundskeepers. The team carry out the maintenance across our large estate and a range of facilities including classrooms, boarding houses, staff residential accommodation, sports facilities and indoor swimming pool.



MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Carry out any minor repairs and maintenance jobs as directed either by the line manager or as logged on the school system, Merlin.
- Act as the out-of-hours security and emergency maintenance operative, responding to security alarms and liaising with appropriate internal colleagues or external bodies.
- Open and close the school as operationally required, monitor the security of the premises and report any suspicious activity.
- During the course of the school 'lock up', to liaise with duty house staff to resolve maintenance issues in the boarding houses.
- Ensure house maintenance day books are up to date.
- Support event set ups whilst on duty in anticipation of the following day's events.
- Carry out the operational testing of the swimming pool on a daily basis.
- Respond to emergency out-of-hours calls, ensuring pupil safety at all times, rectify or make safe the problem as necessary.
- Act as a School Fire Officer, attend and assume the lead in fire evacuations when appropriate.
- Conduct site security inspections out-of-hours, to include perimeter walks.
- Address any hazards or potential risks that may arise during daily inspections.
- Lock all windows and doors and keep windows covered at the end of the day.
- Monitor the School's CCTV system and act in the best interests of the school as necessary.
- Examine the School's electronic door system and action any operational anomalies.
- Ensure that health and safety standards are maintained.
- Provide a smooth and professional handover between shifts, ensuring that all paperwork, including job sheets are completed in a timely manner.
- Help with moving of furniture and organising spaces for event set ups (both on and off-site) making sure that venues are clean and presentable.
- Assist with parking control for events as directed by the HoMF.
- Assist in trunking for pupils at the beginning and end of terms as directed by the HoMF.
- Be available in the event of an emergency to assist with the operation of the school.
- Drive company vehicles as required.
- Assist with any other operational duties as directed by HoMF, to include but not limited to: changing of clocks, gritting during bad weather, rubbish collection, monthly emergency lighting test of non-residential buildings.



Person specification

- Must hold a current driving licence.
- Demonstrate good general maintenance experience and knowledge of maintenance techniques.
- Experience in maintenance or caretaking environment e.g. schools, hotels.
- Awareness of fire safety procedures.
- Ability to act calmly and professionally in a crisis and lead confidently in the event of fire evacuation.
- Physically fit to undertake duties within the job description (with reasonable adjustment for disability as required).
- Strong commitment to health and safety promoting health and safety across the site.
- Ability to work as part of a team and communicate with a range of people tactfully and diplomatically.
- Comfortable working unsupervised and on own initiative, during the weekends / evenings.
- Have a good eye for detail and take pride in the presentation of the school grounds and buildings.
- Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- Must be able to cover for the Residential Caretaker (up to 25 days a year).
- A flexible approach, able to adapt to changing circumstances.



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.

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

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



CYCLE TO WORK SCHEME

savings on purchasing a bicycle & accessories for commuting purposes



“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.”



Inspiring girls

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www.downehouse.net



Downe
House

