



Downe House



CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

HEAD OF MAINTENANCE AND
FACILITIES



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

HEAD OF MAINTENANCE AND FACILITIES

START DATE:	May 2026	REPORTS TO:	Director of Estates and Services
CONTRACT:	Permanent	HOURS:	40 hours p.w. 8am – 5pm Mon to Fri. Some evenings and weekends when required. Participation in the Duty Manager rota, working 1 weekend in 4 during term time.
SALARY:	Competitive and dependant on experience		

JOB PURPOSE

- Ensure that the school site, grounds and buildings are safe, compliant, well-maintained to support the School's educational and commercial activities.
- Lead the Estates Team (mainly Maintenance staff and Gardeners) and manage contractors to provide a professional and pupil-focused environment.
- Co-ordinate and oversee the operational delivery of Estate's activities across the School in line with the current SLA standards, targets and frequencies.
- Supervise all Estates activities ensuring information, systems and records are maintained and services are delivered to a consistent standard.
- The postholder will have line management responsibility for the Maintenance and Compliance Supervisor, Estates and Grounds Supervisor, and 4 x Caretakers.

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

As a leading independent boarding School, we take pride in everything that we do, including ensuring the safety and security of our pupils, staff, and school premises.

We are fortunate that our pupils can live and learn in modern, beautiful, and natural surroundings.

The Estates department plays a big role in maintaining our impressive site and grounds and ensuring that all the facilities are safe, compliant and in good working order. Our department consists of approximately 20 members in a range of roles such as Caretakers, Maintenance Operatives, Events staff, and Groundskeepers.

Our busy and committed team manage the maintenance and logistical needs of our large estate and a range of facilities including classrooms, boarding houses, staff residential accommodation, sports facilities, and indoor swimming pool. We are constantly improving our site, developing our sustainability strategy, and creating efficiencies in how we work and deliver services across the school.



MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- Manage all aspects of planned, reactive and preventative maintenance and repairs to buildings and facilities.
- Ensure all inspections, tests, servicing, surveys and assessments are completed to ensure statutory requirements and key actions and recommendations provided are actioned in a timely way to support full compliance.
- Co-ordinate third-party contractors to respond to emergencies, undertake planned maintenance and compliance activities, remedial repairs, and works.
- Be a key holder and first responder both in and out of hours, emergencies and call out issues.
- Assist with the management of minor building projects.
- Ensure Downe House is always fully compliant with regards to ISI, Health and Safety, and all elements of legislation relevant to the role.
- Ensure that the site is always maintained in a good, presentable, safe, and operational standard.
- Support, motivate and mentor the Estates Maintenance staff, ensuring they receive adequate training and direction.
- Oversee the management of repairs and maintenance works in house based on cost effectiveness and efficiency. Ensure management of all buildings-related maintenance service contracts.
- Oversee all Planned Preventive Maintenance including the preparation of planning schedules and cost and procuring contractors.
- Respond to all emergency reactive calls.
- Drive the productivity of the Estates Team ensuring that the Downe House 'best in class' is adhered to with regard to facilities and grounds.
- Attend quickly to defects, repairs and requests reported via the Maintenance Request system Smartlog.

Grounds, Sports Pitches and Gardens

- Regularly liaise with the Director of Sport and the Grounds Supervisor to ensure that the provision and quality of sports pitches is satisfactory.
- Lead and manage the development and improvement of the grounds and gardens on the site.
- Lead operations to ensure the safety of the site in the event of snow, ice, high winds or other weather-related events.
- Take responsibility for the management of the trees on the School site including obtaining biannual tree condition survey and ensuring recommendations are acted upon.
- Support the Maintenance Team in coordinating the movement of furniture as required by school staff.

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Repairs and Maintenance

- Develop and keep updated of the planned annual and five-year rolling maintenance programme.
- Be responsible for the maintenance of accurate records, plans, drawings and Operation and Maintenance Manuals relating to the buildings, plant, and services infrastructure.
- Undertake or commission condition surveys every five years on the School's buildings
- Provide advice and notify colleagues of the planned maintenance and refurbishment programme.

Compliance

- Ensure that the department and the School's obligations with regards to regulatory compliance and best practice are met through testing and certification of services installations and equipment.
- Keep up to date with knowledge compliance and disseminate information to all relevant staff.

- Maintain necessary records for inspection and insurance purposes.
- Ensure that repairs or maintenance works of a health and safety nature are dealt with as a matter of priority.
- Ensure the Grounds and Maintenance Teams are operating safely and that risk assessments are updated and adhered to.



Office Duties

- Schedule all legal compliance works, and review records throughout the year to ensure all compliances are up to date e.g. water, fire, gas, electrical and asbestos.
- Monitor and supervise the upkeep and maintenance of all plant, equipment, vehicles and stores.
- Monitor and supervise the upkeep of buildings, working with the rest of the Estates Team, to develop a planned programme of improvements produced as a result of regular defect inspections as set out by the Director of Estates.
- Positively promote Downe House internally and externally.
- Ensure that all planned school events receive the necessary and prompt support from the Estates team to ensure a smooth operation.
- Ensure there is a robust process for all contractors, whilst on site, to be compliant with the School's Contractors' Policy and Health and Safety requirements.
- Establish a procedure to maintain and account for stock and tools.



Person specification

Essential

- To be available 24/7 to deal with any on-site issues and a flexible approach to hours of work. Willing to work unsocial hours when required and Saturday mornings in term time to meet the business needs of the School. TOIL may apply.
- Significant Estates and/or Buildings management related experience, at least 5 years' experience of managing a large built estate.
- Experience of relevant legislation. e.g., Building/Planning Regulations, Asbestos and Legionella.
- Ability to deal with any on-site issues as required.
- Able to participate in the "on-call" rota throughout the School term.
- Strong working knowledge of Health and Safety procedures. Ideally hold a Health and Safety qualification (e.g. NEBOSH).
- Strong leadership and management skills with the ability to motivate and develop staff and co-ordinate the work of contractors.
- Capable in project planning, particularly of medium size refurbishment projects and able to grasp complex issues.
- An effective and meticulous planner, able to organise a task and deliver the work on time to a high standard.
- Cost management and budget setting experience with the ability to control and report on budget commitment and expenditure.
- Able to respond and take the lead in emergency situations.

- Highly effective communicator, with a customer focussed approach and an ability to bring together and negotiate with stakeholders.
- A professional, discreet, calm and approachable manner, with the ability to interact well with all staff across the School community.
- Strong IT skills and good working knowledge of Microsoft Office suite.
- Able to work under pressure, to tight deadlines, whilst maintaining a high quality of work.
- Ability to deal with unpredictable situations and having an innovative and creative approach to solving problems.
- To be available 24/7 to deal with any on-site issues and a flexible approach to hours of work. Willing to work unsocial hours when required and Saturday mornings in term time to meet the business needs of the School. TOIL may apply.
- Commitment to the aims and ethos of an Independent School.

Desirable

- To have a relevant professional qualification (e.g. BSc, BLE, BA Estates Management) or equivalent experience.
- Previous experience of managing and maintaining a college or school campus or an NHS/hospital estate.
- Experience in the construction industry.
- To be a member of a professional body such as RICS, APM, CIOB.

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

A woman with short grey hair, wearing a black top, is smiling and leaning over a table. She is surrounded by students who are writing in notebooks. The background is a wall covered in various colorful posters and artwork, including a large blue and white abstract piece, a red and white piece, and a large orange and white piece. There are also green plants on the table.

“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

