



Downe House

CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE
CO-ORDINATOR



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

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE CO-ORDINATOR

START DATE: Immediate

CONTRACT: Permanent

SALARY: £32,000 - £38,000 per annum dependant on experience

LOCATION: On site working, with some flexibility

REPORTING TO: Head of Financial Operations

HOURS: 37.5 hours per week

JOB PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

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.



DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Finance team 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, accounting, 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.



MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Manage the full Accounts Payable cycle across the group of school entities, including PO cycle management, 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 providers 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 with suppliers to resolve queries, build and 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.



Person specification

Essential

- Financial qualification such as AAT desirable, or equivalent previous work 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 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

