



Downe House



CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK
GRADUATE BOARDING ASSISTANT

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



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 proving educational excellence in a framework which was relaxed but structured. With over 550 pupils, approximately 30% of whom are international students, Downe House lives out the message that “each individual matters”, 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 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 the Global Teacher Exchange program, with our partner school in Australia. Selected pupils can also attend international schools 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.



Working for us

If you join us, you will be working for one of the leading independent schools in the country. We have a strong reputation both in the UK and overseas, with a significant international presence as well as global links. Under the leadership of the Headmistress and Leadership Team, we believe in never standing still and encourage everyone to be innovative and to have a forward-thinking approach.

We employ over 400 staff in a wide range of positions ranging from teachers, school nurses, housekeepers, matrons, administrators, accountants, and chefs to

name just a few. Whatever your role you will be joining a supportive community, and you will have an important part to play in the success of our School. We encourage everyone to get involved in the life of the School, and there will be plenty of opportunities for joining in with School events and activities, and mixing with other colleagues.

In a School setting every day is different and there is no doubt that you will be kept busy, but all our jobs are worthwhile and really do make a difference.

“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.”



The position

GRADUATE BOARDING ASSISTANT

Start Date: September 2026

Contract Type: 1st September 2026 – 31st July 2028

Salary: £18,912 per annum, plus free on-site accommodation and meals
(salary review due September 2026)

Hours: Full time position, 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 (Lower School)

JOB PURPOSE

- **Be a member of the team of House Staff in the Lower School Boarding House** (Remove and Lower 4 – Years 7 and 8) and to make a positive contribution in all areas concerning the welfare of the boarders.
- **Reside within the House during term time** (34 weeks per year), apart from agreed time off, and be on duty in the House to provide support for the girls at key times during the day, evening and weekends.
- **Organise and deliver a range of activities** for the girls, assist with morning and bedtime routines and help keep the Boarding House looking its best at all times.
- **Due to the nature of the role and the working hours required, this is a residential post**, and the Graduate Assistant will be required to live in one of our Boarding Houses, or in a self-contained flat with other Graduate Assistants during term time.

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Each girl in the Lower School becomes a member of one of our Boarding Houses and benefits from all the fun, competitions, challenges and activities that House membership brings.

Our Lower School Boarding Houses are situated on the edge of the woodland in an attractive setting, bringing our Lower School pupils and staff together in a dedicated area which has been specifically designed to meet the pastoral and educational needs of this important age group. The Boarding Houses have been carefully planned to provide comfortable and practical bedroom facilities, homely kitchens and common room spaces. Each House also includes dedicated space for independent study and music practice. Garden play areas allow the girls freedom in a beautiful woodland setting.

We are privileged to have excellent sports facilities which staff and pupils can take advantage of including tennis and squash courts, newly renovated gym, dance studio, indoor heated swimming pool, netball courts and 110-acre estate with ample woodland for nature walks or running.

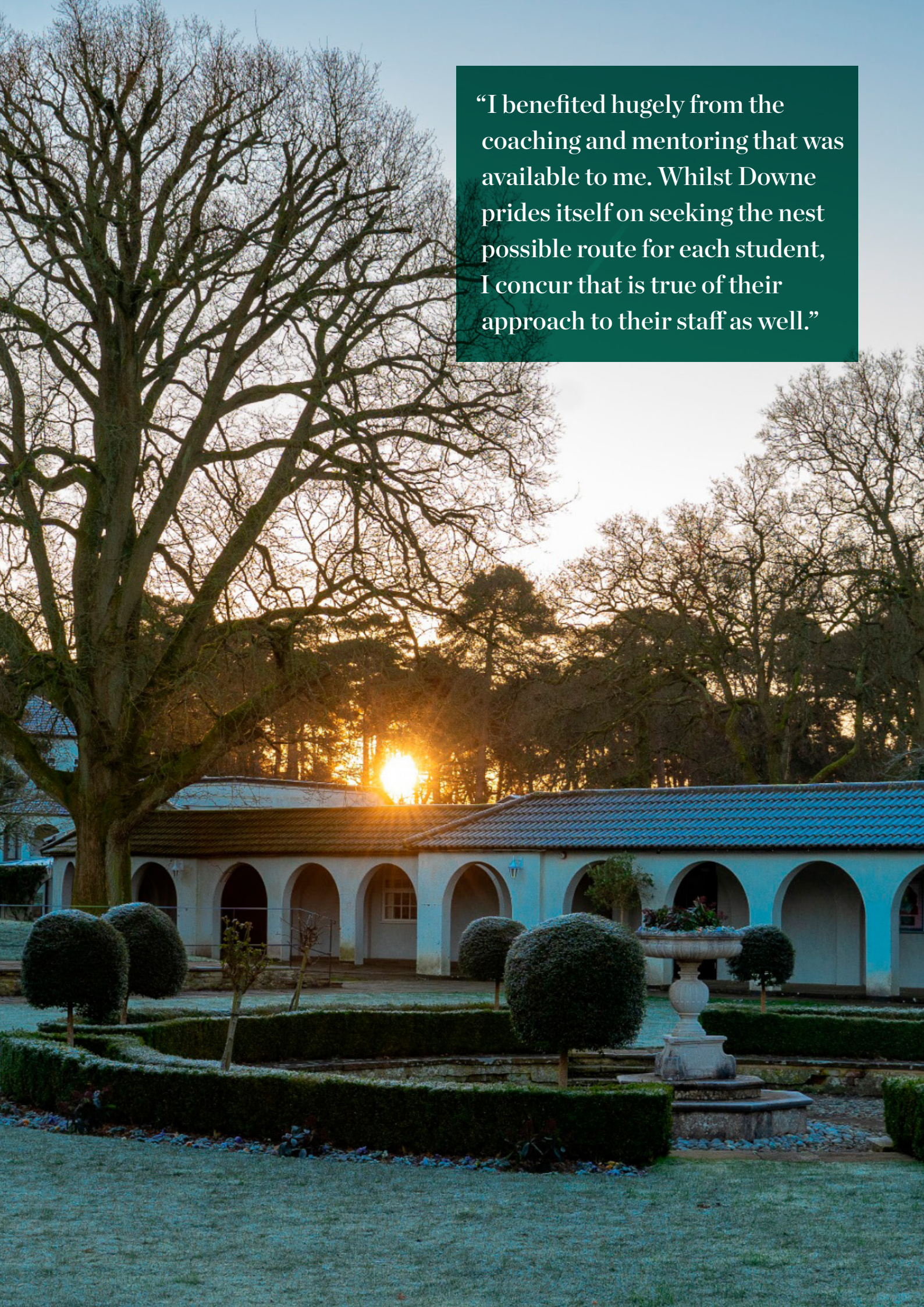
MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Be responsible to the Housemistress for the general welfare and personal development of all the boarders in the House and to build appropriate supportive relationships with the girls helping their academic and pastoral sides of School life.
- Encourage involvement and provide the girls with interesting and fun Co-Curricular weekend and evening activities e.g. creative, fitness, musical, sport, or similar depending on your skills and experience.
- Work closely with the House Team and girls to ensure that the House is clean, tidy and well presented at all times.
- Assist with the bedtime and wake-up routines in the House and support girls with their prep.
- Assist any pupils studying Music to ensure that adequate time is given to Music practice.
- Supervise the girls in preparing for games and sports activities.
- Respond to the needs of parents as directed by the Housemistress.
- Carry out administrative and IT tasks for the benefit of the House Team.
- Promote high standards of behaviour amongst the pupils in the House and inform the Housemistress of any matter of serious concern.
- Liaise with the Housemistress regarding the general health and lifestyle of the boarders, assist with administering medication, as per training given and inform the Medical Centre in case of individual illness.
- Respond to the needs of parents as directed by the Housemistress.
- Support another Department for approximately 10 hours pw, this is likely to involve administration and IT duties.
- Maintain high personal standards of timekeeping and an appropriate professional appearance acting as a role model for pupils.
- Attend all relevant staff meetings and INSET days, and any major School events as required



ETHOS

Throughout their time at Downe House, students are encouraged to be aspirational, inter-dependent and compassionate learners through taking part in a variety of activities including Art, DT, Music, Dance, Drama and Sport to build confidence and develop lifelong skills for their overall wellbeing and enjoyment. In our supportive and inclusive environment, students are encouraged to problem solve, embrace challenges and learn to work collaboratively with others. Our goal is to empower our girls to be world-ready young women who will contribute positively to the global community, embodying these values through a lifelong engagement in learning through diverse means.



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

Person specification

ESSENTIAL

- ✓ **Degree level qualification.**
- ✓ An enthusiasm for **pastoral care** and supporting young people with their education.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ A willingness to fully **immerse yourself** in the life of the House and 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 sense of **fun** and enthusiasm for organising Co-Curricular activities with the girls.
- ✓ A **flexible** approach to working hours and be prepared to live in the residential accommodation provided during term time and provide House cover at agreed times including evenings and weekends.
- ✓ A **proactive** approach to work, particularly in learning new skills or when facing challenges.
- ✓ A willingness to **participate** in the full boarding life of the School and contribute to the extracurricular activity programme.
- ✓ Ability to work both as **part of a team**, accept direction and work on your **own initiative**.
- ✓ **Efficiency**, with good organisational, time management, IT and administrative skills.
- ✓ Prepared to '**roll your sleeves up**' and help with cleaning and tidying.
- ✓ An abundance of **energy** and a good sense of **humour**!

DESIRABLE

- ✓ Previous experience in working with or coaching **young people**.

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.





Inspiring girls

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



Downe House

Downe House
Cold Ash, Thatcham
Berkshire, RG18 9JJ

www.downehouse.net



The Downe House Podcast is available
on all major podcast platforms