



Downe House



CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK
SCIENCE TECHNICIAN - CHEMISTRY

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'.

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.



The Science Department

The Science department is made up of a team of nineteen highly qualified and committed members of staff. The department is housed within a purpose-built Science School, which includes eight fully equipped, modern laboratories designated for Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Lower School Science. We are also fortunate to have four prep rooms and four specialist technicians on hand to support our teachers with lesson and equipment preparation.

Our Chemistry Department is very well equipped, allowing teachers to deliver practicals that elsewhere are often delivered as demonstrations.

All students enrol onto the IGCSE Chemistry course (Edexcel). At A level, Chemistry remains a popular choice at Downe House with three A level classes per year group.

Our Science students are highly motivated with a strong work ethic and are curious and eager to learn. The Head of STEM leads The Science Club and student-led societies are run by STEM seniors. Additionally, students participate in a range of prestigious competitions to enrich their learning experience and extend their engagement with the subject beyond the classroom. These include the Chemistry Olympiad, Cambridge Chemistry Challenge, Chemistry Race, RSC Top of the Bench Competition, RSC Schools' Analyst Competition, and a variety of essay competitions.

Many of our pupils continue with Science-based courses at University, such as Medicine and Biochemistry. Each year pupils obtain places to read scientific subjects at top universities including Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial College and UCL.

“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

SCIENCE TECHNICIAN – CHEMISTRY

Start Date: January 2026 (with a few handover days in December)

Contract Type: Permanent Term Time Position

Salary: approx. £17,000 - £20,500 for actual hours worked across term time and dependant on qualifications / experience.

Hours: 35 hours per week - 8am to 4pm with 1 hour lunch break, during term time (34 weeks per year) plus a few additional days before the start of term for INSET.

Interview Process: An initial online screening call. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an on-site interview and an opportunity to meet the team.

Benefits:

- Generous employer pension contributions
- Delicious free meals daily
- Free onsite parking
- CPD opportunities
- A variety of social occasions through the year including a Christmas and Summer Party for employee + 1, held in the grounds, plus other termly events

Reporting to: Head of Chemistry and the Lead Technician

JOB PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

This is an exceptional opportunity to join a friendly team working in well-equipped laboratories in a pleasant environment.

This role has specific responsibility for providing a Chemistry Technician service to the Science Faculty by preparing for all lessons and practical experiments up to and including A' Level classes. Reporting to the Head of Chemistry, but working as part of a team of technicians, you'll be expected to work independently, managing your own prep room and supporting colleagues.

The department is located in a spacious and modern building which boasts four prep rooms and eight specialist science labs.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Contribute to assessment, monitoring and review of health and safety procedures in line with CLEAPSS.
- Provide technical advice and support on health and safety issues to teaching staff including use of hazards and risk assessments.
- Keep up to date with current procedures through continuing professional development.
- Safely dispose of waste materials.
- Organise, store and check the condition of chemicals and equipment.
- Support the General Science Technician when required in the preparation of apparatus for Chemistry lessons in other classes.
- Ensure the availability of suitable materials and equipment for all chemistry lessons.

- Keep detailed record of the Chemistry Department budget and stock lists and liaise with the Head of Chemistry regarding the sourcing and ordering of equipment, chemicals and materials.
- Keep an accurate record of textbooks issued and provide details of lost or damaged books.
- Contribute to the design, development and maintenance of specialist resources and/or long term projects.
- Under the guidance of the Lead Technician, ensure that both routine and non-routine checking, cleaning, maintenance, calibration, testing and repairing of equipment are carried out to the required standard.
- Participate in departmental meetings and Technicians' meetings, as required by the Head of Science / Head of Chemistry.
- Contribute to the preparation and implementation of the Departmental Development Plan.



Person specification

ESSENTIAL

- The postholder will be an experienced Chemistry Technician or an individual who has worked in a practical Chemistry environment and can demonstrate competence in reagent preparation, equipment set-up, safe systems of work (COSHH/CLEAPSS), and day-to-day lab support.
- Good working knowledge of Microsoft Office suite software and good levels of literacy and numeracy.
- Efficiency, reliability, and excellent organisational skills - methodical and systematic in organising all workloads and individual tasks.
- The ability to prioritise and meet deadlines, multi-task and recall information and facts with good attention to detail.
- Ability to be flexible and proactive to work within a dynamic and busy department.
- Resilient with good problem-solving skills.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, able to develop appropriate relationships when working with pupils and colleagues.
- Able to meet Health and Safety requirements and guidelines.
- A good team player, who can accept direction and perform to the highest standards.
- Ability to work unsupervised and on own initiative, quickly and calmly under pressure.
- Appropriate expertise/knowledge so as to ensure the standards at the school are maintained at the highest level.
- Highly professional work ethic and commitment to the role, the department and the school.
- Efficient time management skills, integrity and reliability.
- Good judgment, be able to show initiative/common sense with the ability to be self-critical.
- A strong commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and always adhere to the School's Child Protection Policies.
- A commitment to the Downe House ethos, aims and aspirations.
- A genuine interest and enthusiasm for working in a school environment.

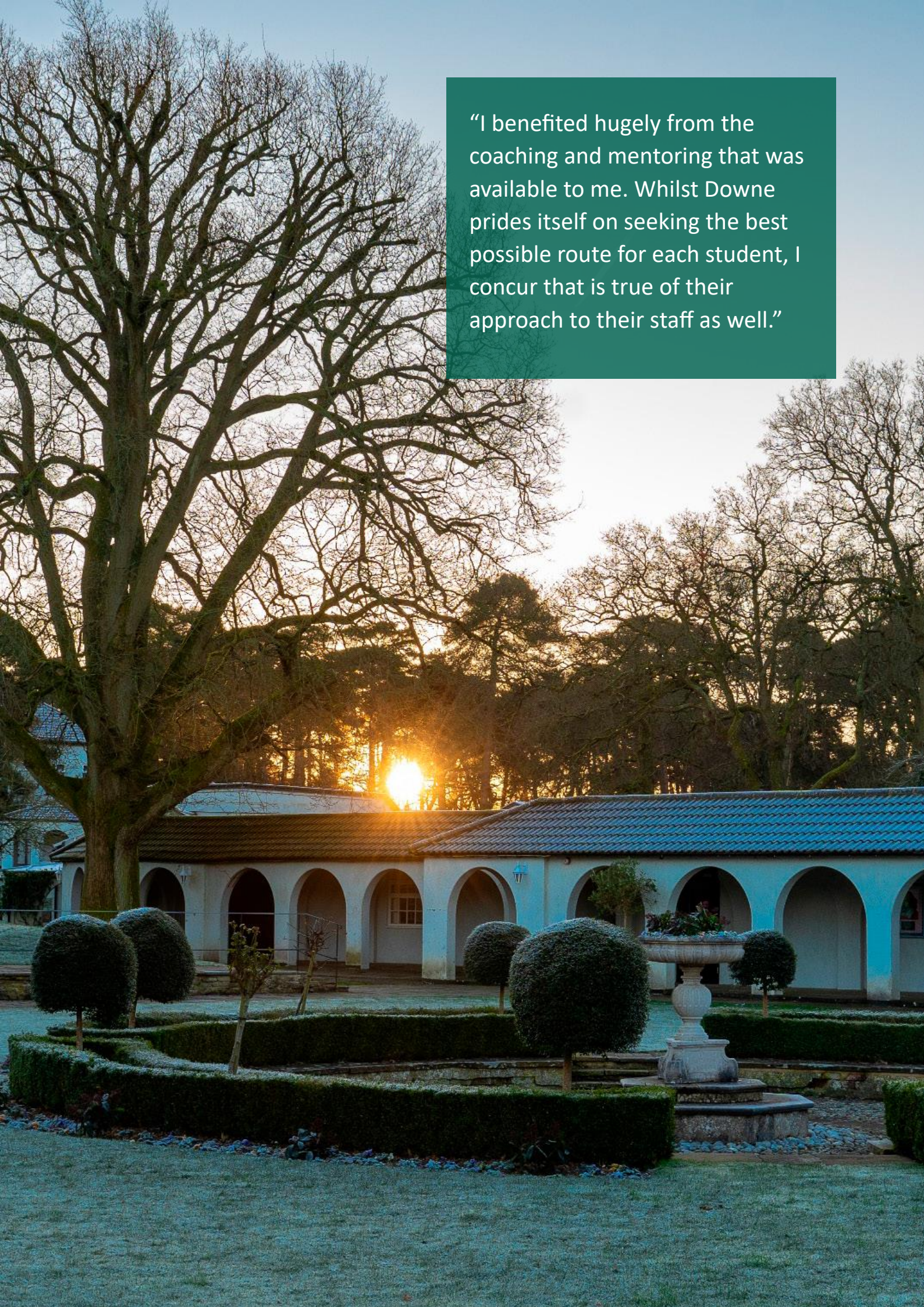
DESIRABLE

- Chemistry A' Level or Higher Studies in Chemistry would be advantageous.
- Demonstrable experience or interest in working in a school setting or with young people.
- A desire to learn and participate in professional development.
- A willingness to be fully involved with school events, and to engage with the wider school community.
- Confident and a good sense of humour!

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.





“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.”

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



CYCLE TO WORK SCHEME

savings on purchasing a bicycle & accessories for commuting purposes



Inspiring girls



Downe House

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The Downe House Podcast is available
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