



Downe House



CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

CHEMISTRY TEACHER
(FULL OR PART TIME)



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

JOB PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

From September 2026, we are seeking to appoint a high-quality classroom practitioner with the ability to teach Chemistry up to A Level standard. The role is available on a full-time or part-time basis (minimum of 0.7 FTE).

We welcome applications from both experienced and newly qualified teachers who are keen to develop their practice within a leading independent boarding and day school for girls. It is expected that applicants will be able to stimulate and encourage the pupils' curiosity, interest and enjoyment in the sciences both through the curricula delivered in the classroom and beyond it. The successful applicant will also be required to tutor a small number of students (up to 8), reporting to the Housemistress for this.

Applicants must specify their preference for full time or part time hours in their application.

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Science Faculty is made up of a team of 19 highly qualified and committed members of staff. The department is housed within a purpose-built building, which includes 8 fully equipped, modern laboratories designated for Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Lower School Science. We are also fortunate to have 4 prep rooms and 4 specialist technicians on hand to support our teachers with lesson and equipment preparation. Each department is very well equipped, allowing teachers to deliver practical work that elsewhere might only be delivered as a demonstration, as well as allowing teachers to approach a given topic in a variety of ways.

Throughout their education at Downe, students are taught Science as 3 distinct subjects. In Years 7 and 8, students follow a bespoke curriculum for each science which has a focus on developing both the content and the skills necessary for them to thrive at GCSE level. In Years 9 – 11, students complete the International GCSE courses for each science.



Chemistry is a particularly popular choice at both GCSE and A level. Reflecting this demand, we currently run three A-level Chemistry classes in each Sixth Form year group, taught over eight double periods per week and shared between two teachers. The department has a strong track record of excellent outcomes and positive value added, and places great emphasis on developing students' wider understanding of the subject alongside examination success.

Students are encouraged to engage with science beyond the classroom through a wide range of enrichment opportunities, including talks, competitions and trips. We actively support participation in national events such as the British Science Olympiads, the UK Space Design Competition and the Royal Society of Chemistry's Top of the Bench competition. As a Faculty, we are committed to broadening pupils' scientific experience, and work closely with the Head of STEM to explore and deliver a varied programme of initiatives and events throughout the year.

Many of our pupils continue with science-based courses at University, such as Medicine, Engineering, Natural Sciences, Veterinary Medicine and Biochemistry. Each year pupils obtain places to read scientific subjects at top UK universities, such as Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial College London and UCL.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Stimulate and encourage pupils to a high standard of interest and work in the subject, ensuring that the needs of each individual are met.
- Prepare and deliver lessons in line with the agreed syllabus and schemes of work.
- Mark and assess pupils' work and record assessments in accordance with the Department's policy.
- Play a full role in the Science Faculty enrichment programme, including teaching within the Elective programme if required.
- Participate in the preparation and implementation of the Departmental Development Plan.
- Contribute to the development of appropriate resources and schemes of work and accept advice and instruction from the Head of Department.
- Keep the Head of Department informed of any pupil who may be experiencing difficulties of any kind.
- Attend recommended internal INSET and external CPD courses and continue to develop professional skills.
- Accompany pupils to relevant conferences, and university visits as necessary.
- Be prepared to teach other Science subjects within the Lower School if necessary.
- Be an Oxbridge mentor, supporting a small number of girls applying for courses relating to your subject specialism, within the Oxbridge programme if required.
- Promote self-discipline among the students and deal with any infringements of discipline promptly or refer them to the appropriate members of staff.
- Complete pupil reports as and when required by the deadlines set.
- Participate in the supervisory duties shared by all members of staff.
- Take part in the rota of cover for absent colleagues.
- Engage in cross-curricular activities as arranged within the School.
- Attend all Parent/Staff meetings and other meetings about students as required.
- Ensure that any planned events or trips adhere to the School's Policy and procedures.
- Maintain a regular flow of information to, the Head of Department and the Housemistress on all matters concerning the welfare and progress of individual girls.



Person specification

- Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and/ or previous teaching experience.
- A good honours degree in a relevant subject.
- Previous experience of teaching Chemistry to GCSE and A level standards.
- Ability to demonstrate excellent subject knowledge.
- Strong classroom management skills.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills.
- Up-to-date with current thinking and teaching practices.
- Previous experience in being a Tutor to a small group of pupils is desirable.
- A willingness to participate in the School community and contribute to the extra-curricular programme.
- A commitment to ongoing training and CPD.
- Ability to build excellent and appropriate working relationships with staff and pupils.
- Sound organisational skills, and able to prioritise workload.
- Efficient time management skills with a proven ability to meet deadlines.
- A positive and proactive approach to work, using initiative to work independently and as part of a team.
- A genuine interest and enthusiasm for working in a girls boarding and day school environment.
- A strong commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and compliance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).
- A flexible approach to working hours on occasions.



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



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

“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

