WYCHWOOD
SCHOOL • OXFORD

JOB DESCRIPTION

ASSISTANT HOUSEPARENT

Full-time, Permanent | Live-in Residential Role

About Wychwood School

Wychwood is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged 11–18, located in the heart of Oxford. The school combines academic ambition with outstanding pastoral care, encouraging pupils to be creative, curious and confident.

Role Purpose

The Assistant Houseparent is a live-in member of the boarding team who supports the Boarding Houseparent in providing a safe, stable, welcoming and supportive home environment for pupils on full-time, weekly and flexible boarding arrangements.

Working closely with the Boarding Houseparent and other colleagues, the postholder will contribute to the pastoral care, supervision and wellbeing of boarding pupils and assist with the effective day-to-day running of the Boarding House.

The role requires flexibility, resilience, sound professional judgement, and a genuine commitment to supporting young people. The Assistant Houseparent will be expected to undertake boarding duties in accordance with the published rota and to provide appropriate cover when required.

Reporting to

Boarding Houseparent and SLT in charge of Boarding

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Pastoral Care and Pupil Wellbeing

- Help to maintain a safe, orderly, welcoming and friendly Boarding House.
- Support the Boarding Houseparent in acting in loco parentis and providing pupils with appropriate care, encouragement and guidance.
- Build positive and professional relationships with boarding pupils.
- Provide a listening ear and help pupils manage homesickness, friendships, peer conflict, stress and the challenges of living away from home.
- Promote pupils' confidence, independence, personal responsibility and consideration for others.
- Be alert to changes in pupils' presentation, behaviour or wellbeing and report concerns promptly to the Boarding Houseparent or an appropriate member of staff.
- Respond calmly and appropriately to incidents, emergencies and pastoral concerns.

- Support pupils with health concerns and provide appropriate first aid within the postholder's level of training.
- Escalate medical, pastoral or safeguarding concerns without delay and in accordance with School procedures.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries and respect pupils' privacy and confidentiality.
- Contribute to effective and professional communication with parents and guardians, as directed by the Boarding Houseparent.

Boarding Duties and Daily Routines

- Undertake boarding duties in accordance with the published staffing rota.
- Assist with daily routines, including wake-up, mealtimes, preparation time, leisure activities, bedtime and lights-out.
- Supervise pupils appropriately within the Boarding House and during boarding activities.
- Help to maintain fair and consistent standards of behaviour.
- Support pupils in following Boarding House and School rules and routines.
- Record and report concerns relating to behaviour, attendance, health or wellbeing.
- Assist with evening and weekend activities, trips and in-house social events.
- Help to create a varied, inclusive and enjoyable programme of activities for boarding pupils.
- Support the Boarding Houseparent with weekly boarders' meetings and encourage pupils to contribute positively to boarding life.
- Assist with preparing the Boarding House before pupils arrive at the beginning of term.
- Support arrangements for pupils' arrival and departure at the beginning and end of terms and half-terms.
- Provide additional boarding cover when reasonably required, including during staff absence or in an emergency.
- Respond appropriately if called upon during an emergency while resident on site.

Safety, Safeguarding and Compliance

- Follow all School policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, child protection, health and safety, first aid, medication, behaviour and confidentiality.
- Remain vigilant to safeguarding concerns and report these immediately through the School's established safeguarding procedures.
- Assist with the safe storage, administration and recording of prescribed pupil medication, where trained and authorised to do so.
- Support the Boarding Houseparent in ensuring that pupils understand and follow fire-safety and emergency procedures.
- Participate in fire drills, evacuation procedures and other safety checks.
- Carry out routine checks of the Boarding House as directed.
- Report maintenance, security, cleanliness or health and safety concerns promptly.
- Help to ensure that the Boarding House is secure and appropriately supervised.
- Maintain accurate, timely and confidential records.
- Support the secure handling and storage of pupils' personal documents, pocket money and other valuable items, in accordance with School procedures.
- Contribute to a culture in which pupils feel safe, listened to and able to raise concerns.

Administration and Boarding Operations

- Support the Boarding Houseparent with the general administration and organisation of the Boarding House.
- Maintain accurate records relating to attendance, health, medication, behaviour, incidents and communications, as required.
- Assist with room preparation, bedroom allocations and boarding-house supplies.
- Help to monitor stock and report items that need replacing or replenishing.
- Support practical arrangements for activities, appointments, travel and pupil movements.
- Read and follow the Boarding Handbook and other relevant School policies.
- Contribute appropriately to the ongoing development of boarding routines and practice.
- Complete handovers clearly and ensure that relevant information is passed promptly to the Boarding Houseparent and other duty staff.

Collaboration and Professional Contribution

- Work closely and cooperatively with the Boarding Houseparent, other boarding staff, teaching staff, academic leaders and the wider pastoral team.
- Share relevant information about pupils' welfare, achievements or concerns through the appropriate channels.
- Communicate professionally and respectfully with pupils, parents, guardians, colleagues and external professionals.
- Attend boarding meetings, staff briefings and other relevant meetings as required.
- Attend INSET days and complete mandatory training.
- Undertake appropriate continuing professional development.
- Follow the Wychwood Staff Code of Conduct and maintain consistently high standards of professional conduct.
- Act as an appropriate role model for pupils.
- Support the Boarding Houseparent and wider team during busy periods, emergencies and unforeseen circumstances.
- Undertake other reasonable duties requested by the Boarding Houseparent, the member of Senior Leadership responsible for Boarding or the Head.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential

- Experience of working with children or young people in a pastoral, educational, residential, youth-work or care setting.
- A genuine interest in supporting the wellbeing and development of young people.
- A warm, approachable and professional manner.
- Excellent interpersonal, written and verbal communication skills.
- The ability to build positive relationships while maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.
- A cooperative, helpful and team-focused approach.
- The ability to follow instructions, policies and agreed procedures.
- Flexibility, resilience and the ability to remain calm under pressure.

- Sound judgement when dealing with sensitive, stressful or unexpected situations.
- The ability to manage competing priorities and maintain accurate records.
- A fair, consistent and educational approach to behaviour.
- The ability to work independently when required while recognising when matters should be escalated.
- A willingness to work evenings and weekends in accordance with the boarding rota.
- A willingness to live on site and contribute positively to the wider boarding community.
- A strong commitment to safeguarding, child protection and health and safety.
- An understanding of the importance of confidentiality and appropriate information sharing.
- Competence in using standard IT systems for communication and record-keeping.

Desirable

- Previous experience of working in a school or boarding environment.
- Familiarity with the ethos and expectations of an independent school.
- Experience of working in a residential setting.
- A relevant qualification in education, pastoral care, childcare, youth work or a related area.
- A current first-aid qualification.
- Experience of supervising activities, trips or groups of young people.
- An understanding of the particular pastoral needs of pupils living away from home.
- A full driving licence and willingness to drive a School vehicle, subject to the School's authorisation requirements.

Working Arrangements

This is a live-in residential role involving regular evening and weekend duties during term time. The postholder will work according to a published boarding rota and will be expected to be flexible in response to emergencies, staff absence and the operational needs of the Boarding House.

The precise working pattern, overnight responsibilities, time off, accommodation arrangements and any holiday-period duties will be confirmed in the contract of employment and boarding rota.

Remuneration and Benefits

The salary for this role is £22,500

- Company pension scheme.
- Generous fee remission for the children of staff members.
- Free meals during working hours in term time.
- Free parking.
- Free use of the sports gym.
- Invitations to School productions throughout the year.
- Residential accommodation, including council tax and utilities.
- School holidays in accordance with the published School calendar.

Equality, Diversity and Accessibility

Wychwood is committed to providing a diverse, inclusive and accessible workplace. The School is an equal-opportunity employer and welcomes requests for reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process.

Safeguarding

Wychwood School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Applicants must undergo appropriate child-protection screening, including checks with previous employers, the Disclosure and Barring Service and online and open social-media checks.

How to Apply

As part of our commitment to safer recruitment, we cannot accept CVs in isolation. To be considered for this role, candidates must complete the official application form attached to the advertisement.

This process helps the School maintain high standards of safeguarding and apply consistent and fair selection criteria to all applicants.

Please be aware that Wychwood School reserves the right to interview on receipt of applications and appoint before the published closing date. Early application is therefore recommended.