



Candidate brief for the position of

# Boarding Houseparent

for August 2017



**D'OVERBROECK'S**  
OXFORD



## The school

d'Overbroeck's is a co-educational independent day and boarding school in Oxford for students aged 11 – 18. The school roll currently stands at c 470, and this is set to grow in the coming years once the new sixth form site is completed.

The school was founded in 1977. Initially only a sixth form, d'Overbroeck's successfully pursued a policy of extending its age range, becoming an all-through 11 – 18 school in 2005.

In a city and a county which boast a good number of independent schools with resounding names and long histories, d'Overbroeck's has, in a comparatively short time, established itself as a thriving, forward-looking and highly successful school with a robustly distinctive ethos, an outstanding staff team, and a strong reputation for the quality of its educational and pastoral provision.

The school is now set for some very exciting new developments. Construction work is under way on a

substantial new Sixth Form site at 333 Banbury Road which is due to open in September 2017. At that point, all sixth form teaching will move to the new site and the school's International Section will move into the Swan Building, which is currently used for sixth form teaching.

Taken together, these changes will bring substantially more physical space and enable the school to take its facilities and its educational provision to a whole new level in a host of areas including the sciences, art, music and drama, as well as its library, social and dining provision. This is, therefore, an opportunity to join the school at an enormously exciting point in its development.





## Our ethos

Academic achievement and personal growth are at the heart of what we aim to achieve at d'Overbroeck's; and the school's success in achieving these goals is evident in students' achievements and in the enthusiastic endorsement we receive from current and former parents and students.

The dominant note at d'Overbroeck's is one of purposeful informality. The ethos is firmly built on personal relationships, on a relative lack of stuffiness and overly-formal hierarchies and on a strong conviction that the individual lies at the heart of the school.

The school believes in leading by example, in a healthy dose of flexibility and in the power of laughter and humanity. 'Enthusiasm', 'maturity' and 'courtesy' are words that very frequently feature in the observations of visitors to the school. This is an environment which

gives people – staff as much as students – the space to grow, to learn, to engage with complexity and to achieve their goals, while also making time for friendship, for laughter and for living life to the full.

The policy at d'Overbroeck's is for everyone, staff and students, to be on first-name terms throughout the school. The school's experience is that this fosters more mutual respect and truer, more motivating interactions between staff and students.

Students wear school uniform up to Year 11 (there is no uniform in the Sixth Form). This is a relatively light-touch uniform, designed to allow each student a sense of her or his own individual personality.

d'Overbroeck's does not have any particular religious affiliation and welcomes students and staff of all faiths and none.

**'A defining characteristic of d'Overbroeck's is its close-knit, informal atmosphere within which students grow in confidence, self-esteem, respect for themselves and for others. Students are very supportive of each other and behaviour throughout is excellent, exemplified in considerate, warm relationships.'**

ISI inspection report, October 2013

# Structure of the school

The school consists of three sections which are based on different sites in North Oxford: Years 7-11, the Sixth Form and the International Section. Due in part to its history and in part to the physical configuration of its buildings, d'Overbroeck's is a mushroom-shaped school. The Sixth Form is numerically the largest part of the school: in addition to students progressing from the lower years into the Sixth Form, we draw a large intake of students (around 90 or so at present) directly into the Lower Sixth each year – a combination of local and international students.

As the present time, the composition of the school is as follows:

**Years 7-11** – 180 students; all day students. Based on Leckford Road, OX2 6HX.

**The Sixth Form** – day and boarding; 270 students; currently in two sites, The Swan Building and Ewert Place, but due to be consolidated on a single, and much larger, site at 333 Banbury Road from September 2017.

**The International Section** – limited to a maximum of 40 students in the current building on St Giles but due to grow significantly from September 2017 when it moves into the Swan Building, which offers considerably more space and greatly improved facilities.

## 333 Banbury Road

From September 2017, when the new site at 333 Banbury Road is completed, the school will benefit from a very considerable upgrade in its facilities and in physical space. The new Sixth Form building will include five science laboratories and spacious suites for art, music and drama, as well as more library and common room space.

The new Hall will provide daily dining facilities for staff and students as well as a 180-seater auditorium for music, drama performances and all kinds of other school events, not only for the Sixth Form but for the whole school.







## Teaching and learning

d'Overbroeck's offers a broad academic curriculum with a wide choice of subjects at GCSE and A level. Students in the International Section are prepared for IGCSE examinations.

The school places an emphasis on fostering resilience and independent learning skills, and this starts as early as Year 7. In the Sixth Form, many students complete an EPQ alongside their A level programme, and students regularly take part in Maths and Science Olympiads. Special programmes are provided for Oxbridge and medical / veterinary applicants. A wide range of trips and visiting speakers enriches the taught curriculum.

A Personal Development (PSHE) programme is integrated into the curriculum from Year 7 through to Year 11 and students in the Lower Sixth have an Enrichment Programme which introduces them to information, views and debates on a wide range of issues. There is a focus on reflective teaching and on CPD and the school has repeatedly been complimented by ISTip on its work in supporting NQTs through their induction year.

The teaching approach at d'Overbroeck's has always been built around comparatively small classes. Classes are generally kept to a maximum of 15 students up to Year 11 and up to 10 students in the Sixth Form. Classes in the International Section are usually kept to a maximum of 10.

In the International Section, students follow a one-year programme which prepares them for IGCSE exams in up to 8 subjects alongside intensive teaching in English for academic purposes (EAP). The school plans to introduce a two-year IGCSE programme for younger students starting in September 2017. This will run alongside the current one-year programme.

Exam results are very strong. At A level, both raw results and value-added data show impressive achievement across the ability range, and progression to Oxbridge and other top Russell Group universities is consistently strong.

# Boarding

There are currently around 150 boarders at d'Overbroeck's, and this number is set to increase in the next few years as the school grows. We take day students only in Years 7-11 so our boarders are either in the Sixth Form (where a little under half the students are boarders) or in the International Section (where almost all the students board).

For some of our boarders home is just 30 or 40 miles away; for others it is another part of the world. Some will have boarded before while for others this may be the first experience of being away from home and family.

Whichever it is, our aim is to create a close-knit homely boarding environment where students are

physically comfortable and personally at ease; where they can live and work happily, enjoy freshly-cooked, well-balanced meals and make strong and lasting friendships.

Like our teaching space, our boarding provision is on the verge of a considerable development. A brand new sixth form boarding house, to be known as Islip House, is currently under construction and is set to open in September 2017. This will be in addition to our two current boarding houses, Hayfield House and Nash House (or '106' as it is currently known). Islip House and Hayfield House will house predominantly Sixth Form students and Nash House will house exclusively younger students from the International Section.





# Extra-curricular

Alongside the academic curriculum, a varied and vibrant programme of co-curricular activities opens up all sorts of opportunities for students throughout the age range. Sport is varied and wide-ranging, music and drama are very strong and concerts and school productions are always big events to look forward to.

Though it does not have its own playing fields or sporting facilities, the school is fortunate to have the use of an excellent range of venues and facilities nearby, and these are used on a daily basis.

**'It's hard to imagine a better school for nurturing and developing students....Without exception all staff are dedicated to the aspirations of the school, resulting in a lovely and thriving atmosphere that produces excellent results and well-rounded teenagers!'**

Parent survey, 2015







## Association membership

d'Overbroeck's is a member of the Independent Schools Council (ISC), the Society of Heads of independent schools and of the Boarding Schools Association. The school is also an associate member of AGBIS.

## Accreditation and inspection

d'Overbroeck's is an accredited member of the Independent Schools Council. The most recent ISI inspection took place in October 2013. This was a full integrated inspection, and the school was judged 'Excellent' in all aspects of its educational and boarding provision. Notably, the inspection team also noted the 'extremely high levels of satisfaction with the school overall' expressed in the parental responses in the pre-inspection survey. Informally, the school was told that these were exceptionally high, even by the high standards of most independent schools.

In addition, the school's International Section is regularly inspected by the British Council. The most recent inspection took place in September 2015, and this too resulted in a highly complimentary report which was fulsome in its recognition of the school's strengths. Copies of both the ISI and the British Council reports can be found at:  
[www.doverbroecks.com/inspection](http://www.doverbroecks.com/inspection)

## Safer recruitment

d'Overbroeck's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its students, and this is a responsibility that is shared by all members of staff. The successful candidate will be subject to an enhanced DBS disclosure. Please also see the section on Disclosure below.

## Disclosure

Please note that d'Overbroeck's school aims to promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talents, skills and potential, without respect to age, gender or race and welcomes applications from diverse candidates. As d'Overbroeck's meets the requirements in respect of exempted questions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, all applicants who are offered employment will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure of criminal background from the Disclosure and Barring Service before their appointment is confirmed. This will include details of cautions, reprimands and final warnings, as well as convictions. Criminal records will be taken into account for recruitment purposes only when the conviction is relevant. Further information about the disclosure scheme can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about).



# Appointment of a new Houseparent

We are seeking to make a new Houseparent appointment for Islip House, our brand new boarding house. There will be two Houseparents working together in Islip House, with effect from August 2017.

## The House

**Islip House** is currently under construction and will open in September 2017. The House is situated directly opposite our brand new Sixth Form building on Banbury Road. It will accommodate up to 60 students, aged 16-18 years. The House consists of a boys' side and a girls' side with communal space connecting the two. Bedrooms are shared twin-bedded, each with its own en suite bathroom.

The students will be predominantly sixth formers with a few students studying IGCSEs from our International Section. Students will have most of their meals in the school buildings.

There will be two resident Houseparents, each with his/her own two-bedroom flat on the ground floor of the House. In addition, there will be two residential part-time Boarding Assistants (who are also PE Teaching Assistants).

## Overview of the role

Houseparents are responsible, in a pastoral and practical sense, for all aspects of the running of their House. They are responsible for its smooth and orderly running and for the welfare and wellbeing of the students within it.

In conjunction with the colleagues in the Boarding Office, Houseparents are also responsible for overseeing the domestic and health & safety arrangements in the House and for ensuring that students are supervised effectively and appropriately and that the House rules are observed by everyone in the House.

While this role is primarily based within the boarding house, we are keen for Houseparents to be involved in the wider life of the school. Houseparents are therefore expected to be actively involved in one or more aspects of school life outside the boarding house. The exact nature of such involvement will depend in part on the skills and experience that each Houseparent brings. This aspect of the role is, therefore, not covered specifically in the notes below.

The same ethos and approach prevail in the boarding context as do in all other aspects of life at d'Overbroeck's. Our boarding environment is marked with the same relative informality, boundaries that are clear but not overbearing, and an atmosphere which is homely, welcoming, flexible and supportive. Houseparents clearly have a critical part to play in creating and maintaining such an atmosphere in the boarding houses. They are, therefore, an integral part of the school's pastoral team.

Houseparents (and other house staff) report to the Head of Boarding.

## Houseparents' principal duties and responsibilities

Houseparents' responsibilities are by their nature fairly open-ended. Please note, therefore, that this job description can only give an indicative outline of the main duties and responsibilities of the role. It should not be read as an exhaustive statement.

Houseparents at d'Overbroeck's are responsible for the following aspects:

### Running the House

- Create and maintain a happy, safe, warm and homely environment which is conducive to the students feeling at ease and being able to live and work happily in the House;
- Lead in the creation of suitable standards of behaviour for the students in their care;
- Be responsible for the smooth, orderly and effective running of the House and for the welfare, safety and wellbeing of the boarders in it;
- Make sure that students (boarders and visitors) are appropriately and effectively supervised.
- Foster a sense of House identity and spirit by encouraging students to participate actively in House activities and by supporting such events as a figurehead for the House;
- Ensure that the House rules are being followed at all times and address any infringements that may occur. Also ensure that students are always back in the House by the prescribed time in the evening;
- Ensure that students treat the belongings of others and the fabric and furnishings of the House appropriately and with respect;
- Foster a positive atmosphere in the House and aim always to be fair and consistent in daily interactions with students, not least in the way that school and House rules are applied and any infringements dealt with;

- Be open to sensible requests and suggestions from students for ways in which the running of, and the provision in, the House may be improved, and discuss these with the Head of Boarding;
- Meet prospective students and parents and show them around the House as and when asked to do so by the Head of Boarding or another senior member of staff.
- Maintain regular contact with the colleagues in the Boarding Office and with other teaching and admin colleagues as appropriate.
- Attend House meetings along with the Head of Boarding. These usually take place once every half term though additional meetings may be called if and when the need arises;
- Organise and run weekend activities for students in the House that complement the school programme;
- Build and maintain open, cordial and constructive relationships with the parents and guardians of boarders and respond promptly and helpfully to any communications and requests from them;
- Be sensitive to, and promote good relations with, neighbours and other members of the local community;
- Be responsible for mentoring the Boarding Assistants (where relevant) and overseeing the boarding-related aspects of their work;
- Respond promptly and deal with any emergencies or unexpected situations that may occur at any time.

### Pastoral

- Build and maintain positive and constructive relationships with the students, get to know each of them individually and be aware of their particular circumstances, needs, strengths and possible vulnerabilities, and provide them with the best possible care and support at all times;



- Be alert to any signs of unhappiness or indications that a student may be experiencing difficulties; be available to listen, talk and support students with any emotional or social issues they may have; and liaise with other relevant staff (such as the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead, the student's DoS or Form Teacher, the School Counsellor, the Head of Boarding, the Deputy Principal, Pastoral) as appropriate;
- Be alert to any tensions or signs of bullying, including cyberbullying, and, in the event that these issues should arise, deal with them promptly in line with the school's anti-bullying and behaviour policies;
- Facilitate contact between students and their parents/guardian where requested, including allowing privacy where requested;
- As a member of staff with pastoral responsibilities, attend meetings with other staff and as necessary also with parents / guardians as well as attending training events, both in and out of school, as appropriate.

### Administration and record-keeping

- Keep accurate and up-to-date records of the students' welfare, health, emotional wellbeing, achievements and behaviour, as well as any concerns and/or disciplinary issues and sanctions;
- Report issues or concerns of any kind that may arise to the appropriate colleague(s) as quickly as possible;
- Be responsible for general administration of the House and liaise with the appropriate staff in matters concerning maintenance, services, including IT, health & safety, the upkeep and improvement of the fabric of the House and of its equipment, furniture and fittings, budgets and expenditure, etc.

### Daily routines and supervision of students

- Be familiar with and, where necessary, assist students in meeting their daily schedules;
- Oversee and ensure the effectiveness of arrangements for students getting up in the mornings and going to bed at night, including make sure that the House is quiet when it needs to be.

### Regulations, safeguarding and compliance

- Be aware of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS) and fulfil obligations to ensure they are met, reporting to the Head of Boarding in respect of any areas of concern;
- Be aware of all relevant school policies, including in particular the school's policy for Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of students;
- Be aware of, and familiar with, the provisions of the most up to date version of the DfE document *Keeping Children Safe in Education*;
- Keep abreast of periodic updates in these policies and regulations, undertake training as necessary and ensure compliance with them at all times in the way that the House is run.

### H&S and medical issues

- Take responsibility for Health & Safety within the House including running routine fire drills (some to be run during the hours of darkness), health & safety in the kitchen, etc;
- Ensure the safety of students and staff by maintaining accurate records, dealing appropriately with hazards and reporting any issues or problems promptly;
- Comply with school policies and procedures in respect of security of the House and its occupants;

- Look after students who are unwell, including responding to emergencies by, for instance, contacting the Head of Boarding immediately and being prepared to accompany a student to hospital where necessary. In such instances, the Houseparent must make sure that the House is adequately supervised in their absence;
- Ensure that any medical or dietary requirements that students may have are well understood and properly catered for in the House;
- Where necessary, store securely and dispense medication to students in strict adherence to instructions contained in a written plan that has been put in place by senior staff and agreed with parents and the student concerned in advance, and retain records of such administration.

### Domestic arrangements

- Oversee the cleaners, and ensure that the House is kept clean, tidy and in good order at all times;
- Maintain all necessary records such as daily fridge temperatures, food probing temperatures where appropriate, records of any medication dispensed to students as per the previous section, etc;
- Ensure the House is prepared before the start of term and to ensure that it is left in order after the end of term;
- Help with catering arrangements – see below.

### Meal arrangements

Breakfast will be served in the boarding houses 7 days a week. On weekdays, lunches and evening meals are served in the teaching building.

At weekends, a late brunch is served in the boarding houses and snacks are available for students to help themselves. Dinner will either be served in school or in the boarding house depending on numbers. When meals are in the boarding houses, pre-prepared meals and other ingredients are delivered to the House in advance.

### Houseparents' duties with regard to meal arrangements

- Lay out self-service breakfast every evening when on duty;
- Ensure breakfast is cleared away when on morning duty;
- Order food supplies as required for breakfasts and, where necessary, weekend evening meals;
- Some basic food preparation and heating up of weekend dinners may be required;
- Ensure weekend dinners when eaten in the boarding house are cleared away and the kitchen / dining areas are left clean and tidy.

### School policy and procedures

- Comply at all time with school policies as set out in the non-contractual Staff Handbook.
- Attend all team and other staff meetings as required.

### Other

- While the role is based primarily within the boarding house, Houseparents are expected to be actively involved in the wider life of the school. The exact nature of such involvement will depend to a large extent on the skills and experience that each Houseparent brings.
- Other duties as may be reasonably requested from time to time by the Head of Boarding, the Principal or the Deputy Principal (Pastoral).
- Houseparents are effectively *in loco parentis* and so must at all times while on the premises be ready to deal with any significant distress, difficulty or emergency whether or not they are technically on duty.



## Person specification

Relevant experience of working in a comparable role or of having held comparable responsibilities in a different context would be highly desirable.

In addition, and given the nature and responsibilities associated with the role, candidates will need to demonstrate the following:

- A caring and cheerful personality and a manifest interest in young people and in being in their company;
- A demonstrable ability to relate to students, parents and colleagues with empathy and sensitivity;
- Well-developed EQ (emotional intelligence) and a mature, responsible, patient and resilient attitude to life and work;
- A commitment to promoting safeguarding of children and to continued professional development in this respect;
- The ability to work as a member of a team with a commitment to high standards of pastoral care;
- An ability to be firm while doing so in a friendly, engaging and respectful manner;
- Very well developed communication skills, both in person and in writing;
- Good, reliable and balanced judgement;
- The ability to handle pressure where necessary;
- The ability to think clearly and rationally in an emergency;
- The ability to work effectively both independently and as part of a team;
- Fluent and confident IT skills;
- Good practical and administrative skills;  
... and, not least
- A sense of humour.

## Accommodation

For the proper performance of their duties, it is essential that Houseparents occupy the self-contained accommodation, in the form of a flat within the boarding house ('The Flat'). The successful candidate will be required to sign a Licence to Occupy before taking up residence. This reflects the position that occupation is granted by way of licence, and that the Houseparent does not gain any tenancy rights.

Please note that:

- At **Islip House** there is a two-bedroom flat which the Houseparent may occupy as a single person or as part of a couple or small family.

In any case, no adults or other children may live in the accommodation without the prior written consent of the school Principal and this would be only be given subject to child protection considerations and checks. Please note that any adult or child over the age of 16 who is living in the accommodation must enter into a written agreement with the School and undergo an enhanced DBS and barred list check.

## Hours of work

The hours of work will vary according to a weekly rota to ensure there is sufficient staff cover when students are in the house. The Houseparent will be required to work such hours as are necessary to fulfil all their duties and responsibilities, including pastoral commitments commensurate with their position and role. Please note that the successful candidate will be asked to opt out of the 48-hour working week.

## Notice

The notice period for this post is a full school term, to end at the end of a term.

## Holidays

Houseparents are entitled to the statutory minimum holiday entitlement under the Working Time Regulations 1998, to be taken during the School's holidays. In addition, and subject always to the requirement to fulfil the obligations of the role, Houseparents will not normally be required to work during the majority of our normal school holidays. However, please note that Houseparents need to be available for work for two days after the end of each term (including half-terms) and before the start of the next (including half-terms). The school may also require Houseparents to undertake some duties and to be in residence in other periods in school holidays where necessary.

## Non-smoking policy

As a school, we have a strict no-smoking and no-vaping policy (this is intended to cover all forms of e-cigarettes) in all parts of the school, including gardens and grounds. It is part of the Houseparent's role to ensure that this policy is enforced. It is therefore a requirement that Houseparents be non-smokers.

## Remuneration

### (i) Salary

The starting salary is likely to be in the region of £23,000 p.a. Staff salaries at d'Overbroeck's are reviewed annually.

### (ii) Pension

Auto-enrolment has been in place at d'Overbroeck's since April 2014. Please note, however, that the school runs a stakeholder pension scheme operated by Scottish Widows which is more generous than the minimum levels currently required under Auto-enrolment. The scheme is open to all staff. Any member of staff who elects to contribute at least 5% of their annual salary to the scheme will benefit from an employer contribution which will exactly equal the employee contribution between a minimum of 5% and a maximum of 7% of annual salary.

## Further information

If you would like any further information at this stage, please feel free to telephone the Head of Boarding, Felisa Deas, on 07909 971077.

## Applications

Applicants should complete the Form entitled Application for a Non-Teaching Post which can be downloaded from the web-site [www.doverbroecks.com/posts](http://www.doverbroecks.com/posts).

The Application Form, full Curriculum Vitae and a covering letter should be emailed to [HR@doverbroecks.com](mailto:HR@doverbroecks.com) and a signed copy sent to:

Helena Barron  
d'Overbroeck's  
333 Banbury Road  
Oxford  
OX2 7PL

There is no fixed closing date for this post and applications will be considered upon receipt. Please apply as soon as possible.

June 2017





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