St Swithun's
WINCHESTER

Boarding Housemistress

Required from January or April 2027

Role available as a teaching or non-teaching position



St Swithun's
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Welcome from the Headmistress

Thank you for your interest in St Swithun's!

We are proud to be a High-Performance Learning School and a member of the Fellowship of World Class Schools.

The High-Performance Learning philosophy is that:

- **High achievement** is an attainable target for everyone;
- **Intelligence** is not fixed, we can all become cleverer;
- **High performers** are made, not born, they work for it.

HPL involves the systematic and explicit encouragement and empowerment of students to develop the ways of thinking and ways of behaving that will equip them for success both in school and beyond. It is the cornerstone of our philosophy.





Jane Gandee, Headmistress

As a girls' school we expect and support all our students to **enjoy and excel** in a range of subjects and activities according to their interests and not their gender. We seek to be free from unhelpful stereotyping and to offer genuinely limitless education.

Further, we are a high trust community, and we try always to behave with a seriousness of intention and a lightness of touch. We believe the best of staff and students and often see our expectations exceeded and a joke cracked along the way.

If this short introduction resonates with you, we will very much welcome an application from you.

St Swithun's
WINCHESTER

Our school

St Swithun's School, Winchester, is a leading GSA and HMC school offering day, weekly boarding and full boarding for 520 girls aged 11-18. The senior school has six boarding houses for full and weekly boarders, with separate houses for those in their first year and those in the upper sixth. There is also an adjoining IAPS Prep School for girls aged 3-11 with a co-educational nursery.

The girls benefit from excellent teaching, sporting and recreational facilities. St Swithun's is academically selective and regularly appears in the top 30 schools in the national league tables.





Our Location

The school is set on a campus of 45 acres overlooking the Hampshire Downs and within the South Downs National Park. The school is within walking distance of the centre of Winchester, and only a 50-minute journey from central London.

Winchester and its surrounding areas offer outstanding local cultural, historical, sporting and entertainment opportunities in addition to fantastic access to outdoor pursuits. Southampton, Portsmouth, Salisbury and Bournemouth are all easily accessible on public transport.

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WINCHESTER

Our ethos



St Swithun's is an appropriately academic school which means that we celebrate intellectual curiosity and the life of the mind, but not to the exclusion of all else. We expect our pupils to develop individual passions and through them to acquire a range of skills and characteristics. These characteristics will include a willingness to take risks, to question and to debate, and to persevere in the face of difficulty. In the words of Samuel Beckett: "Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better." If a girl can immediately excel at everything we ask of her, we, as educators, must set the bar higher.

We want all pupils to learn about life beyond the school gates, to appreciate the rich variety of our world, to develop an understanding of compassion and to value justice. We encourage all pupils to become involved in fundraising and community work. They should appreciate how their decisions and their actions can affect those around them.

By the time a pupil leaves St Swithun's, she will be well-educated, courageous, compassionate, committed, and self-confident with a love of learning, a moral compass and a sense of humour.

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Our facilities



School buildings are modern and well equipped. As well as academic classrooms and science labs, there is a magnificent performing arts centre with a 600-seat auditorium, a music school, an art and technology block, sports halls and a full-size swimming pool.

We have recently completed the first phase of a major project to create new indoor sports facilities. Information about our Active Lives project can be found here.

There is an impressive library, higher education and student guidance department and ICT facilities. The grounds are spacious and encompass sports fields, courts and gardens.

The School is registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee and as a charity and has a wholly owned subsidiary company (St Swithun's School Letting Company Limited).

A separate charity, Bramston Foundation, looks after our transformational bursary programme.

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Our boarding community

St Swithun's has six boarding houses: Le Roy for year 7 boarders; Finlay for upper-sixth boarders and four senior houses for year 8 to year 12. Each is purpose built and boarders from year 8 upwards have individual rooms. All the houses are close to the main school so that day girls and boarders mix easily.

Being situated less than an hour from London by train gives London based families the flexibility of a country campus school for their daughters within easy reach of home. It also gives easy access to major airports for our overseas students. St Swithun's is a truly global community, and we are always delighted to welcome students from across the world. There are many nationalities represented throughout the school and we believe that this diversity is an incredible asset to our community.

"We like being with our friends, having time to take part in activities, being part of a community and being able to roll out of bed into school via breakfast!"



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Our boarding community

We offer both weekly and full boarding. Weekly boarders return to school on a Sunday evening and typically go home on a Friday evening; a number choose to stay in school on Friday night, if they have an activity on Saturday (such as, a sports match or Duke of Edinburgh expedition). Some also stay in for the whole weekend, if they wish to participate in our varied weekend activity programme.





Weekly boarding is perfect for many busy families, allowing the girls to take part in a wide range of activities and do most of their homework at school during the week, thus keeping the weekend for spending time with their families.

We offer a diverse range of activities on and off site at weekends and full boarders are also allowed to stay with friends or relatives, if they wish.

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Weekend activities



We offer a full and varied weekend programme of cultural, social and recreational activities to suit all our boarders. We believe that the weekend can be an opportunity for girls to take some 'downtime', to try new experiences, to learn how to organise their time appropriately and effectively, and to get to know girls of different ages and backgrounds. Our aim is to provide an appropriate balance of constructive activities and relaxation within a home from home environment.

The weekend activity programme is open to all boarders, free of charge. We welcome feedback from the girls about the trips they go on, and we are always interested in suggestions for future trips.

Structure of weekends

On Friday evening, girls have the option of taking part in activities or relaxing. On Saturdays, there are sports fixtures and other school activities, optional weekend activities and the opportunity to go into Winchester and visit shops and cafes. On Sundays, there are some fixtures and other school activities, optional weekend activities and chapel in the evening.

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Earlsdown house



Earlsdown house is one of our four senior houses, for girls in Year 8 (U4) to L6. At St. Swithun's, girls in our senior houses have their own individual bedrooms with prep desks and large wardrobes. The house has multiple large common spaces, where we hold whole house meetings and activities (including weekend sleepovers). It also features a house kitchen, where girls can access snacks produced by the house's day matron, or cereal/ toast. There are usually around 40 full and weekly Earlsdown boarders, and a small number of girls spend one or two nights a week as flexi-boarders.

Earlsdown is a dynamic and vibrant house where girls thoroughly enjoy the many opportunities boarding affords them. They learn life skills in a home-from-home environment. In our senior boarding houses, boarders forge strong friendships with each other, forming a continuous and supportive network which endures throughout their time at school.

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Pastoral structure

The boarding housemistress is part of a wider pastoral team comprising:

- Deputy head pastoral - designated safeguarding lead
- Head of boarding – deputy designated safeguarding lead
- Chaplain
- Health centre - school nurses, psychologist, counsellors and visiting GP
- Housemistress/master for each boarding house and day house
- A team of resident tutors, matrons or deputies, day matrons and graduates
- Two evening house tutors per boarding house
- Heads and deputy heads of section
- Form tutors

Caring for young people can be challenging, but it is also great fun. Our boarding staff set standards and enforce rules for the good of all but seek to do so with a lightness of touch. They provide support, care and a framework in which the girls can develop as individuals. Good communication with parents is essential and we work hard to maintain contact.



St Swithun's
WINCHESTER

Boarding housemistress

Role overview

The housemistress is a key person in the lives of the girls in their house. She is the main point of contact (both formal and informal) for parents and is responsible for the happiness, wellbeing, welfare and discipline of the girls in her house.

The housemistress can be a teaching or non-teaching role. If a teacher, the housemistress will teach up to 0.5 of a full timetable; we will consider candidates with any subject specialism. If not in a teaching role, the housemistress may be asked to support the school with some administration tasks for an equivalent amount of time.

The housemistress will have an overview of the girls' wellbeing and will liaise with colleagues across the school concerning their academic and personal progress. In this respect the housemistress is crucial in ensuring a link between the academic and pastoral life of the school. Houseparents' work within the pastoral team and liaise with academic, medical and administrative departments. You will be supported by a resident tutor or matron, who will deputise for you during time off, and a day matron who will help you with aspects of running the boarding house. A graduate assistant also lives in house and two evenings per week members of staff act as house tutors and help with evening activities.

The housemistress has an allocated day off each week and alternate weekends off. A weekend off starts at 16.20 on Friday and ends at 17.00 on Sunday. During the week, the day off is from 7am until 7am the following morning.

The role is available with a three-bedroom flat attached to the boarding house, with a private garden; accommodation is provided rent free and may be occupied all year round. The housemistress may occupy the accommodation with family, subject to necessary safeguarding checks.

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Boarding housemistress

Key responsibilities

Pastoral

- Work in partnership with the resident tutor and day matron to ensure the welfare and wellbeing of the girls and take an active interest in all they do, including health, safety and hygiene, and liaising with the health centre as appropriate.
- For girls joining the school, manage the transition to St Swithun's and ensure a successful induction to boarding.
- Deal with the girls' individual pastoral issues and keep in close contact with parents, the head of boarding, and other staff, as necessary.
- Implement and maintain the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools for welfare and pastoral care in house.
- Promote and encourage the girls to enjoy the co-curricular and weekend activities programme.
- Supervise homework in the evenings, as well as the general life of the girls in the evenings and at weekends.
- Organise and take part in activities at weekends and after prep in the evenings.
- Develop a sense of community and encourage the girls to make positive suggestions to improve boarding for all and respond to such suggestions.
- Provide and organise escorts to functions / appointments out of school.
- Oversee the arrangements for chapel or church attendance for boarders in school on a Sunday and accompany them, if necessary.
- Eat in the dining room with students in a supervisory capacity and ensure that girls eat a balanced diet.

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WINCHESTER

Boarding housemistress

Key responsibilities

Communication

- Ensure effective and consistent communication with other house staff.
- Liaise with parents and guardians of boarders as necessary, ensuring appropriate tone and timing of messages.
- Liaise with form tutors and the head of years to ensure pastoral and academic matters are addressed.
- Support marketing and admissions activities, including giving enthusiastic house tours to prospective students and parents.

House management and administration

- Work with the resident tutor to supervise and direct house tutors and graduates who will be on duty some evenings.
- Work in partnership with the domestic and estates teams to ensure the good repair, maintenance, and security of the house.
- Take responsibility for the house accounts and budget and the girls' own pocket money.
- Together with other house staff, ensure that pupil records are kept up to date and that they are stored securely.
- Check all weekend, exeat, half-term and end of term travel arrangements; communicate these clearly with house colleagues even with respect to weekends when you are off duty.
- Closely track and record leave from school for international pupils sponsored under a Child Student Visa (UKVI).

St Swithun's
WINCHESTER

Boarding housemistress

Key responsibilities

General

- Attend meetings as required including weekly boarding meetings, weekly staff meetings, parents' meetings, and any other meetings requested of teaching and boarding staff.
- Attend major school functions and events including supporting students by attending performances and sports fixtures.
- Be thoroughly conversant with school policies and procedures and ensure that all members of boarding house staff are aware of these policies, particularly those relating to boarding procedures, safeguarding, Anti-Bullying, Health & Safety.
- Be in residence, as required, before the beginning and after the end of each term to ensure the smooth running of the house, including five days before the start of each academic year.
- Perform any other tasks that the headmistress or head of boarding may reasonably assign to a housemistress from time-to-time.
- If a teacher, adhere to the teacher job description regarding expectations of all teaching staff, considering the 0.5 teaching expectation.

Please note that because of the sensitive nature of some of the pastoral care required in the boarding house, it is a genuine occupational requirement that the postholder is a woman, in line with the Equality Act 2010, schedule 9.

St Swithun's
WINCHESTER

Person specification

Qualifications:

- If applying as a teacher, a degree and teaching qualification (role not suitable for ECT).
- BSA boarding certificate (desirable but not essential); a valid D1 or PCV driving licence and willingness to drive a 14-seater minibus (desirable, not essential, MIDAS training will be provided)

Experience:

- Teaching expertise and/or previous pastoral experience with pupils aged 11-18.

Important qualities to be found in a housemistress:

- A genuine desire to take on the often-challenging role of guiding and supporting girls in these age groups
- The ability to manage the running of the boarding house whilst remaining approachable and open to the pupils
- Enthusiasm, adaptability and resilience
- The ability to reflect, review and refine to provide the best possible boarding experience for the pupils
- The ability to work effectively as part of a team within the house, across the wider boarding community and across the school community as a whole
- A calm and positive temperament with a sense of fun
- An awareness of the importance of child protection and safeguarding
- The ability to exercise total discretion and uphold confidentiality, when appropriate

These qualities will be assessed through application, references and interview.

St Swithun's
WINCHESTER

Terms and conditions and application process

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This is a permanent role involving significant evening, overnight and weekend work. The postholder will receive a TLR payment in addition to their base salary in recognition of the significance of the role and the commitment required.

The school offers a range of benefits, which currently include:

- Choice of TPS or DC pension scheme for teachers, generous DC scheme for non-teachers
- Free membership of the school swimming pool and heavily subsidised access to a range of activities on site including yoga and strength and conditioning
- Discount on school fees
- Refreshments whilst working, and free meals when on duty
- Access to an employee assistance programme

APPLICATION

The closing date for applications is Friday 30 October 2026 at 9.00am

We anticipate holding interviews in early November.

Applications must be submitted using our online application form which can be found **here.**

For any queries about the role or the application process, please contact the HR department by telephone: 01962 835798 or email: recruitment@stswithuns.com

St Swithun's
WINCHESTER

Child protection and safeguarding

"St Swithun's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All staff are expected to share and support this commitment, and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure & Barring Service."

Child Protection Statement

- Every child has the right to freedom from physical, racial, sexual, verbal or mental abuse (this includes bullying and intimidation). Our overriding aim is the protection of the individual child within the school.
- We require staff to be fully aware of what child abuse is and the different forms in which it may present itself, and of their duties in respect to child protection.
- We will provide adequate training (both as part of an induction and an ongoing process) in recognising abuse, and what to do if abuse is suspected.
- We are committed to maintaining good communication within the School on child protection issues and to following recognised procedures.
- The Head ensures that the recommended procedures are followed when recruiting staff.

St Swithun's
WINCHESTER

Equal opportunities

St Swithun's welcomes applications from candidates from a diverse range of backgrounds. The school will recruit predominantly based on an applicant's relevant skills, experience, capabilities and potential for development. The ability to work collaboratively with others will also be taken into account.

St Swithun's is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all staff and applicants. We aim to create a working environment in which all individuals can make best use of their skills free from unlawful discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

We do not discriminate unlawfully on the basis of age, disability, marital or civil partner status, race (including nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy or maternity (defined in the Equality Act 2010 as protected characteristics).

If you have questions about our recruitment processes or would like any support to access our recruitment process fully, please do contact us at recruitment@stswithuns.com.

St Swithun's
WINCHESTER

Explanatory notes

Application Form

Applications will only be accepted from candidates completing the enclosed application form in full. CVs will not be accepted in substitution for completed application forms.

Candidates should be aware that all posts in the school involve some degree of responsibility for safeguarding children, although the extent of that responsibility will vary according to the nature of the post. Please see the job description for the post.

Accordingly this post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as 'spent' must be declared.

The successful applicant will be required to complete a disclosure application form from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

In accordance with government guidelines, we will seek references on shortlisted candidates for teaching and some other posts, and approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications before interview. In other cases, if this has not been done, any offer of a post will be conditional upon receipt of satisfactory references. References should be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employer does/did not involve work with children, then the second reference should, if possible, be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Referees should not be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend.

If you are currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, your current employer will be asked about disciplinary offences, including disciplinary offences relating to children or young persons (whether the disciplinary sanction is current or time expired), and whether you have been the subject of any child protection allegations or concerns and if so, the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. If you are not currently working with children, but have done so in the past, that previous employer will be asked about those issues. Where neither your current nor previous employment has involved working with children, your current employer will still be asked about your suitability to work with children, although they may, where appropriate, answer not applicable if your duties have not brought you into contact with children or young persons. The School will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and will not rely on references provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials.

You should be aware that provision of false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police and/or DfES Children's Safeguarding Operation Unit.

St Swithun's
WINCHESTER

Explanatory notes

Invitation to Interview

If you are invited to interview, this will be conducted in person and the areas which it will explore will include suitability to work with children.

All candidates invited to interview must bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post (e.g. the original or certified copy of certificates, diplomas, etc.). Where originals or certified copies are not available for the successful candidate, written confirmation of the relevant qualifications must be obtained from the awarding body. All candidates invited to interview must also bring with them:

At least two forms of identification, i.e. current driving licence (including photograph), a passport, a full birth certificate or marriage certificate, a utility bill or financial statement showing the candidate's current name and address. These must be issued within the last three months and provide verification of address. Documentation confirmation their national insurance number, where appropriate, any documentation evidencing a change of name.

Please note that originals of the above are necessary - photocopies or certified copies are not sufficient.

Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if these have not already been received).
- A check of the DfES barred list database, and the Protection of Children Act List as appropriate.
- A satisfactory DBS disclosure.
- Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas in the previous ten years, such checks and confirmations as the school may require in accordance with statutory guidance.
- Satisfactory completion of the probationary period.
- Verification of medical fitness appropriate for the job's requirements.
- A written declaration that neither they nor anyone in their household is disqualified from working with children.
- Verification of professional status, such as GTC registration, QTS Status (where required), NPQH.
- Verification that the teacher/applicant is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State.
- Verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999).