



JOB DESCRIPTION HOUSEMISTRESS

Thornton College, Convent of Jesus and Mary, Thornton, Milton Keynes, MK17 0HJ

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Charity No. 247358

THORNTON COLLEGE

Thornton College is a leading independent Catholic day and boarding school for girls, offering a warm and nurturing educational environment alongside a rigorous and exciting curriculum.

There are approximately 400 children in our Pre- Reception, Pre-Prep, Prep and Senior departments, aged from 3-18. Over 50 girls board on a weekly or termly basis and many more take advantage of our occasional boarding option.

The School is part of the wider Jesus and Mary Trust that educates young people in 29 countries across the world. It is set within 25 acres of beautiful parkland just outside Buckingham and within easy reach of Milton Keynes, and conveniently located between Oxford & Cambridge. Children of all Christian denominations, of other faiths and of no faith are welcome in our school. All are equally valued, and all are equally important.

Thornton is a school that parents and girls can trust to deliver the highest standards of education coupled with outstanding pastoral care. We are dedicated to blending academic excellence with a richness of opportunity beyond the classroom. We believe that teaching and learning should be both challenging and enjoyable for pupils of all abilities and we aim for the highest possible standards. Our academic results are testament to the way the girls are challenged and motivated to give their best in all they do.

The provision of single-sex education during formative years enables students to grow in confidence, whilst enjoying an education that is specifically tailored and that recognises the different ways in which girls learn.

There is an exciting School Development Plan, which has the continued strengthening of the school's academic standing as the priority. Following the successful opening of our award-winning Science and Prep Classroom building and our Expressive Arts Studio, we opened a Sixth Form in September 2016 which has thrived and proven to be a successful addition to our school. The school received 'Excellent' in all areas in its most recent ISI inspection (October 2022), with inspectors commenting upon the 'dynamic teaching' and the 'positive attitudes to learning' displayed by 'pupils of all ages.'

Job Title:	Housemistress
Job Purpose:	The smooth running of a boarding house in accordance with the DfE National Minimum standards for boarding schools
Reporting to:	Deputy Head and Head of Boarding
Accountable to:	Headteacher and Deputy Head
Responsible for:	Boarding pupils and Boarding Assistants

This job description provides a guide to, and general description of the duties and responsibilities of the Housemistress. The Housemistress will be expected to undertake any other related tasks as may reasonably be requested by the Deputy Head and Head Teacher

Aims and Functions

- The role of the Housemistress is to promote high standards in all aspects of student life
- To act 'in loco parentis' for the girls and to provide all boarders with the best possible experience of a boarding education by ensuring a supportive environment: a home from home for boarders in order that they thrive academically and holistically
- To ensure the safeguarding, good discipline and pastoral well-being of all boarders
- To operate as an effective member of the boarding team, ensuring good communication throughout.
- To uphold Health and Safety standards and requirements within the Boarding House.
- To support the running of an effective boarding provision at Thornton College.

Care, Welfare and Development of Boarding Pupils

The Housemistress should:

- Know each girl in her care personally and be concerned for her development – academic, social and personal welfare.
- Liaise with the Heads of Year, Form Tutors and Subject staff to support the boarder's academic progress. To implement and maintain the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools for welfare and pastoral care in the Boarding House.
- Develop awareness of general health, hygiene, eating and sleeping natures and liaise with the Medical Team on a regular basis, i.e., ensuring that every girl attends all meals and supervised study as a matter of course by completing the relevant registers and maintaining an orderly bedtime routine.
- Undertake study supervision, break and lunchtime duties as required.
- Support and contribute to the annual review of house policies and the Boarding Handbook.
- Have oversight of the dormitories and other boarding areas on a daily basis ensuring that they are tidy and clean.
- Follow the College's policies and procedures.
- Support the College's boarding disciplinary policy and implement a clearly understood and fair system of sanctions within the House in relation to the College's Code of conduct.

- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection of any concerns regarding Child Protection or the safeguarding of children or anything that would require further action beyond the remit of the Boarding Staff.
- Attend and oversee the Student House meeting for pupils that meet regularly to discuss any issues concerning your House.
- Develop in the pupils, a sense of collective responsibility and sensitivity to the difficulties and needs, of others, and to encourage such support and help for each other as is appropriate.
- Ensure the safety and security (physical and emotional) of all girls in the House at all times when they are in the College's care.
- Drive the school minibus for boarding outings and Mass on weekends when on duty.

Housemistress Records

The Housemistress is responsible for:

- Recording and monitoring information using the management information systems; iSAMS, CPOMS & SISRA.
- Keeping careful records pertaining to trips and visits including permissions from parents and guardians. Ensuring that the 'handover' logbook, discipline, medication, sanctions and other centralised records are kept up to date.
- Responding to parent's emails/ telephone calls/ messages within 24 hours and ensuring that the Deputy Head is kept fully informed of relevant issues.
- Completing records of any communications/contacts with parents and guardians.
- Ensuring that a member of the team meets parents every Friday evening when bidding farewell to weekly boarders and Sunday evening to welcome them back. Responding to staff emails/ telephone calls/ messages within 48 hours and ensuring that the Deputy Head is kept fully informed of relevant issues.
- Undertaking CPD, in accordance with the College's CPD process.
- Attending the weekly House Staff meetings that are chaired by the Deputy Head.
- Reporting any issues or concerns in relation to furnishings, fixtures, fittings, and all housekeeping and maintenance matters in the Boarding House to the Housemistress relevant colleagues.
- Monitoring of pocket money for Prep. children within the House, to ensure that they are adequately prepared for events occurring during the school day.

Contact with Parents

The Housemistress plays a key role in developing mutual trust and partnership between home and School. Regular communication with parents is invaluable, particularly for those who live abroad. Contact may be maintained by means of informal meetings, by telephone, by social media, by email or by letter. Weekends are a good opportunity to keep in touch with parents who collect/bring girls to school by car.

The content of routine emails/telephone calls should be briefly recorded in the daily log within CPOMS

Full reports are written for each girl twice a year. The House Mistress will be responsible for these and will be reporting on the boarders:

Organisation of time and approach to study set

Social interaction with peers and staff

Contributions to the activities and the community life of the College

Conduct in the Boarding House

We require our international boarders to have a guardian resident in the UK who is able to act 'in loco parentis'. The Housemistress must ensure we have an up to date

Duties and Tasks

- To work with the House Team to devise and deliver a vibrant and comprehensive induction programme at the start of each academic year.
- Effective marketing of the school is the responsibility of all staff; therefore the Housemistress should ensure that her actions give a good public image of the College.
- To be involved in marketing the school on Open Days, Boarders' Induction and at other times when prospective parents are visiting and want to see the boarding provision.
- To work alongside the Housemistress of KS4/5 to ensure that a full and varied programme of extra-curricular activities is available within the Boarding House and to encourage pupils to be involved in a range of activities, particularly at weekends.
- To work alongside the Housemistress of KS 4/5 to develop a programme of trips, which are popular with the girls and to ensure appropriate risk assessment and staffing.
- To be resident in the House accommodation provided by the School during term time, and to co-ordinate the beginning and the ends of term i.e.:
 - Be back on duty at least one full day prior to the start of each main term date that boarders are expected to return; and to remain at the end of term to ensure all duties are completed before the holidays. All members of the boarding team are expected to be on duty for the duration of the first and last week of term.
 - Sleep in boarding accommodation each night except for your main two off duty nights each week (other off duty evenings do not normally allow for sleeping out of school). Boarding duty at weekends is on a rotational basis.
 - Whenever on site, whether on or off duty, not being unfit to respond due to the influence of alcohol or drugs, for purpose of dealing with emergencies, responding to fire alarms or unexpected contact with visitors, parents, staff or pupils.
 - Deal with emergencies of any kind, including escorting girls to hospital, in the event that one of the Medical Team is not available to do so.
- To attend staff briefing sessions.
- To organise and ensure that the girls attend Mass every week.
- To attend full school assemblies, when on duty.
- To attend such meetings and official School functions as are appropriate to your role.
- To play an active role in the wider life of the school and inspire this positive attitude in the students.
- To work at the School Fete each year.

- To oversee regular fire practices of your boarding house each term in the evenings, during the night and at weekends under the leadership of the Fire Officer.
- To maintain an up to date working knowledge of the procedures required by the UKBA with regard to international students and work with the admission and admin teams to ensure all requirements are met. All staff are responsible for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of students at Thornton College by ensuring compliance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at all times. It is a requirement of all staff to report any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of students in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.
- To actively support the vision and ethos of Thornton College and contribute to the school culture which is inclusive and welcoming.
- All staff are required to undertake whatever else may reasonably be requested by the Headteacher in support of the Aims of the School.

Other Aspects

Accommodation / Residential Requirements

House staff are required to reside at the School during term time when on duty. Accommodation for this post is in the Main Building. The entire school site is a non-smoking and non-vaping area. All meals are provided free for staff during term time. House staff are responsible for the cleaning of their own accommodation although suitable equipment and materials can be provided. We cannot accommodate pets on site.

It is intended that the Housemistress will have 2 days off during a week's duty. Boarding staff may use the School sports facilities (at allocated staff times).

CPD Review

The Housemistress) Deputy Head will review the Housemistress each academic year. This CPD review is designed to help, support and encourage professional development and performance.

Training

The Housemistress will be expected to undertake the relevant Boarding Schools' Association qualifications at the level applicable if she has not already done so.

All Boarding staff are required to undertake the appropriate level of training for pool safety.

All staff are expected to maintain continuous professional development by attending appropriate internal and external training courses, seminars and conferences.

MIDAS training to drive the school minibus will be given.

All Job Descriptions are subject to annual review.