



## BARNARD CASTLE SCHOOL

### Job Description

- Position:** Resident House Matron
- Reporting to:** Housemaster/mistress (HSM)
- Responsible to:** Deputy Head Pastoral (DHP)

### **Purpose**

The position of House Matron is one of significant importance and responsibility. The Matron has a special role in helping the HSM to create a happy and well-disciplined atmosphere throughout the House. The success of a Matron's appointment depends on the establishment of a harmonious relationship with the HSM, based on mutual trust.

Working under the direction of the HSM, the House Matron is required to play a key role in the pastoral care of all the pupils in the boarding house on a day-to-day basis, with particular responsibility for the physical, social and emotional well-being and presentation of the pupils in the House. Ultimately, the objective of the House Matron is to play a significant role in establishing a 'home away from home' environment in which the boarders are at ease and are happy.

### **Overall Responsibilities:**

The following is a description of the responsibilities and duties of a House Matron. A list of expected responsibilities and duties can be neither definitive nor exclusive. Much depends on the way in which the House team works together. The expected responsibilities and duties, however, of a House Matron include:

- The Matron is a member of the residential House team, along with the HSM and Assistant House Master/Mistress. The Matron is responsible for the pastoral care, health and welfare, and health education of the boys/girls in the House. There are other non-residential members of the House team which include House Tutors.
- The Matron reports directly to the HSM on all matters relating to the welfare of pupils and the fabric of the House. The Matron ensures that the right care is given to the pupils and monitors their well-being at all times. This is done by facilitating and contributing to the various routines of the House, which seek to promote the confidence of the pupils within a happy atmosphere. These routines encourage high standards of dress, cleanliness and respectful relationships with staff and fellow pupils.

- The Matron should be an approachable, kind and friendly person who is available to all pupils without discrimination or favouritism. It is the nature of the role that pupils may confide in them from time to time and the Matron will need to listen and exercise sound professional judgement. This will require a caring attitude in line with understanding of the principles of confidentiality and information sharing, so that matters can be dealt with as they arise while the welfare and happiness of the pupils in the Matron's care is ensured. To this end, Matrons make themselves available for training courses and professional development, in accordance with the INSET programme structured by the Head of Boarding and the Bursar.
- A Matron's role is to participate fully in the life of the House. Consequently, each Matron is welcome to attend all meals and is encouraged to eat with pupils. Attendance at House matches, helping with House plays, supporting concerts and being an integral part of social events in the life of the pupils will form part of daily life. This involvement helps develop a positive and supportive relationship with the pupils, who appreciate and draw courage from their Matron's interest in and encouragement of their various activities.
- A Matron should establish close relationships and good communication with parents, taking an early opportunity to do so at the start of a pupil's career at the School, and being available to talk to parents, especially at the beginning and end of every term, half term and at exeat weekends, or when it is likely that parents will be visiting for matches, concerts, plays, etc.
- Although the role is not primarily a disciplinary one, the Matron must uphold the authority of the House Master, the School and the application of the School's rules and policies, with which they should be well acquainted. The Matron plays a crucial part in ensuring continuous adult supervision of the pupils.
- The Matron coordinates pupils' travel arrangements to and from School, for example ordering taxis to or from airports or mainline railway stations via the transport secretary.

## **Duties**

### General Welfare

1. To be responsible, in conjunction with the HSM, for the pupils' general welfare, health and presentation.
2. The Matron will be expected to help new pupils to settle in and to look after all pupils in the house, both on a day-to-day basis and in helping them individually to cope with any crises in their lives. This will involve listening to their problems over a wide range of issues. A Matron is expected to help the HSM to create a friendly and happy atmosphere in the house. A Matron will also often be a point of contact with parents.
3. The Matron is expected to ensure that the pupils are well turned-out and appropriately dressed.
4. The Matron should be monitoring the behaviour of pupils within the house, both good and bad, and alert the HSM to both types.

5. The Matron is expected to assist the HSM on “social” occasions and in entertaining pupils. This includes having pupils within your flat of an evening to entertain them as and when is required.
6. The Matron is expected to support the pupils in their everyday activities where possible, watching them in sports, music, drama etc.
7. With the recognised importance of the Children’s Act and the introduction of National Minimum Boarding Standards, the role of the Matron on the pastoral side is of vital importance. It is expected that the House Matron will undertake continuing professional development with a focus on formal qualifications from the Boarding School Association. A Matron is expected to be aware of child protection procedures in the school and will undertake compulsory training annually.
8. The Matron should monitor pupils’ daily routine (including punctuality, meal attendance and diets) to help the pupils meet expected standards. Matrons, either individually or in coordination with each other, provide a first-aid presence at House matches during sports afternoons.

### Health

1. To assess illness, then to deal with minor problems and to refer to the School Nurse at the Medical Centre all other medical matters, in accordance with the advisory notes issued by the school Doctor.
2. To arrange physiotherapy and medical appointments and to accompany and transport pupils as necessary.
3. To act as a first aider in the event of a medical emergency in the House, liaising with the School medical staff and external organisations, and to take emergency cases to hospital where appropriate.
4. To keep in-house medical files up-to-date and ensure that the absences list is accurate.
5. To communicate effectively with HSM, Assistant HSM and parents where necessary.

### Housekeeping

1. To ensure that there is a clean and pleasant environment in the House throughout the term. S/he works with the Domestic Services Management Team who are responsible for the cleaners and the standards the School requires.
2. To supervise the collection and redistribution of pupils’ laundry. Liaising with the Domestic Services Management Team to ensure that the pupils’ personal clothing and items throughout the House (like curtains) are kept in good repair and are named.
3. To liaise with the HSM in ensuring that satisfactory and safe standards are maintained in the House, including reporting any necessary repair or maintenance work to the Maintenance Team.
4. To be in charge of securing pupils’ rooms at the end of term and at half terms. This could involve preparation if the House is being let out during the holidays or for clearing up after refurbishment work.
5. The matron liaises with the HSM on necessary reports and improvements to the furnishing, furniture and fabric of the House.

### Other:

1. The Matron should be familiar with the School's health and safety policies as they relate to boarding Houses and assists the House Master in implementing them.
2. The Matron should be familiar with the fire-safety procedures of the House as sometimes they are the responsible person on site in the event of an alarm or fire.
3. The provision made by the School for the welfare of boarders is regularly inspected by the ISI. Matrons play a vital part in implementing and exceeding the requirements of the National Minimum Boarding Standards, and the Matron should be aware of these.
4. The Matron is required to own, insure and drive a car so as to be able to accompany pupils to hospital or similar. The School provides additional 'occasional business use' motor insurance cover (details of which are available from the Bursar). Mileage will be reimbursed in accordance with HMRC's Fixed Car Profit scheme. Copies of MOT certificates should be given to the Director of Operations

### **Support:**

The Matron will be appraised by the HSM on an annual basis, but routine communication will be ongoing. Professional development is encouraged and will be discussed as part of the Performance and Development review.

The Matron will be provided with a self-contained flat in the boarding house to which they are attached. They are an important part of the School's residential community. House matrons are residential during term time.

### **Hours of work:**

It is not possible to lay down specific hours of work to cover emergencies, such as a pupil's illness during the night, but in general a Matron is expected to be available to deal with both routine matters and emergencies as they arise. There will be times of extreme activity and pressure as well as times that are less busy. One full day and evening off per week is granted during term time, which is decided between the House Master and Matron. All Matrons are on duty over weekends.

### **Holidays**

School holidays can usually be taken in their entirety except for the requirement to work for a minimum of two working days before the start of each term and two days after the end of term, together with the domestic staff, in order to clean and prepare the House for use by the pupils or for a holiday let. Any adjustment, should be agreed with your HSM.

## Person Specification

	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<u>Education and qualifications</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A good general education</li> <li>- Driving licence (and preferably own car)</li> <li>- Food hygiene certificate</li> <li>- Emergency first aid certificate</li> <li>- Level 2 safeguarding child protection qualifications</li> </ul>	X X X X X	
<u>Experience</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Boarding School Matron</li> <li>- Nursing</li> <li>- Residential care</li> <li>- Experience in an educational or medical environment</li> <li>- General office administration</li> <li>- Working as part of a team</li> <li>- Working unsupervised and on own initiative</li> <li>- Working with children out of their home environment</li> <li>- Working at a supervisory level</li> </ul>	X X X X X X X X	X X X X  X   X
<u>Skills</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good verbal and written communication skills</li> <li>- Ability to work well in a team</li> <li>- Ability to supervise domestic staff</li> <li>- Ability to work quickly and calmly under pressure</li> <li>- Ability to prioritise and manage own work</li> <li>- Ability to offer a high level of pastoral care to pupils</li> <li>- Proficient IT skills</li> </ul>	X X X X X X X	
<u>Personal qualities</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ability to motivate and work with pupils</li> <li>- Ability to develop a culture of mutual respect with pupils</li> <li>- Emotional resilience</li> <li>- A caring disposition and an empathy with and understanding of young people</li> <li>- High level of discretion</li> <li>- Patient, unflappable, flexible and adaptable</li> <li>- Good manner with parents and guardians, and other staff</li> <li>- A good sense of humour</li> </ul>	X X X X X X X X	

*The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All adults in the School community are expected to follow its child protection procedures.*