

Job description and person specification

Bede's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Job description

Job Title:	Senior House Parent
Reporting to:	Welfare Manager
Line management responsibility for:	House Parents
Main purpose of the role	
To undertake, manage and be responsible for the overall running of the Boarding Houses and House Parents, ensuring the safety and emotional well-being of students and upholding the good name of Bede's. Managing the Boarding Houses: To ensure that House Parents are running their Boarding House effectively and efficiently, making sure that all domestic systems are in place and functioning optimally (cleaning, laundry, maintenance) and making sure bedtimes are adhered to. House Parents: Manage the House Parents and support them to build their skills in their role. This may include supporting House Meetings, assisting with duties and guiding them with signage and how best to manage their House. Health & Safety/House Maintenance Checks: Carry out room inspections and conduct Health & Safety and damage checks to ensure a clean, tidy and safe living community in which students feel comfortable and cared for. House Communities: Develop methods to foster an environment of belonging in the Boarding Houses, including friendly levels of competition between Boarding Houses. Supporting the House Parents to build the community feel within their Boarding House. Deputise: To deputise for the Welfare Manager to ensure continuity within all aspects and areas of their role, in cases of scheduled or unexpected absence during the Summer School season. Activities & Academy Sessions: To assist the Activities Leaders with (and when appropriate, lead) a range of sports and activities sessions or supervise students whilst on their academies lessons, positively, competently, professionally and safely (reading and understanding all relevant Risk Assessments) in order to provide a first class Social Programme for all students attending the Summer School. Check-in/out: To support the Administrator and Welfare Manager to check-in/out students. Senior House Parents will organise Activity Leaders and House Parents on check-in days so that students are checked-in efficiently, providing a speedy but friendly service to arriving students. They may also support the Welfare Manager with documenting and organising medication checked in by students upon arrival.	

Student Conduct: To observe, monitor and manage student conduct and behaviour and deal with any incidents of aggressive behaviour or bullying immediately to promote a harmonious international community in which every student can be confident, unafraid to voice opinions and thrive, no matter what their beliefs, customs or differences may be.

Safeguarding: To promote and safeguard the welfare of all children and young people you come into contact with, ensuring you are aware of, and complying with, all safeguarding policies and procedures.

Pastoral Care: To work collaboratively with all Activity Leaders and House Parents, as well as the Welfare Manager, Nurse and Centre Director, sharing information as necessary to provide a strong, competent, and consistent welfare service to ensure the physical and emotional well-being of all attending students, constantly being mindful of their attitude, demeanour and performance, dealing with minor problems and referring serious problems to the Welfare Manager and/or Centre Director. To take personal responsibility for any homesick students.

Sick Students: To provide students with a first-class care and welfare service, looking after any sick students who are under the care of the Nurse or Welfare Manager, but who need to stay in bed, making sure they are comfortable and have access to food and water, to provide students with a first-class care and welfare service. Ensure sick students are not left on their own for long periods of time.

House Registers: To ensure House registers are completed and filed by Activity Leaders or House Parents at the appropriate times during the day (wake up, afternoon and evening), always following protocol in case any student is absent or goes missing, in order to ensure students' safety.

Dining Room Duties: To actively manage and supervise students during mealtimes (queue, serving area & seating areas) to ensure a calm and pleasant catering experience for students, catering staff and host-school staff, being particularly mindful of and acting upon students who seem to not be eating.

Student Feedback: To take personal responsibility for ensuring that every student in the Boarding House completes their online arrival/departure questionnaire on time and to act upon any negative feedback given by students to provide a first-class programme of study, sports, social events, and excursions.

Night Emergencies: When in the Boarding House, deal with any emergency that may arise during the night to ensure the safety of the students and staff.

Set Up and Pack Down: All centre staff are responsible for and required to help with the set up and pack down of the centre. This will be subject to contract length, therefore you may only be required to help with set up or pack down and not required for both.

Other Responsibilities: To undertake such other reasonable duties from time to time as the summer school may reasonably require.

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Person Specification

The person specification focuses on the knowledge, skills, experience and qualifications required to undertake the role effectively. Please ensure that your application demonstrates how you meet the essential criteria. You will be assessed by your completed Application Form and covering letter (A), at interview (I) and in some instances by an exercise (E).

Requirements	Essential / Desirable	Measured by A, I, E
Education and Qualifications		
Applicants with any medical training or professional qualification in childcare, social work, education, counselling or psychotherapy are particularly welcomed	D	A
First aiders are particularly welcomed	D	A
Knowledge and Skills		
A strong awareness of Health, Safety & Safeguarding (specifically as it relates to residential accommodation) is essential	E	I
Strong and demonstrable organisational skills	E	I/E
Experience		
Minimum of 1 year experience working with children in a professional context	E	A/I
Experience of working in a residential context is essential	E	A/I
Experience dealing with international students is preferred	D	A/I
Personal competencies and qualities		
The ability to work efficiently and effectively in a fast-paced, highly changeable, highly pressured, and often challenging environment is essential	D	I/E
Ability to solve issues and problems with/between staff and students is required	D	I
Other Requirements		

Additional information:

Bede's Summer School, which attracts students from 50+ countries between the ages of 6 to 20 years, is a highly successful enterprise and a renowned part of the overall Bede's offering. All staff are challenged, both individually and collectively, to share the Summer School's ethos and actively contribute towards the Summer School achieving its objectives.

The safety and emotional well-being of students is paramount to the success of the Summer School experience and is a key contributor to why parents send their children, and agents send their clients, to Bede's.

The job holder must be committed to providing a first-class pastoral care service that not only ensures students' physical and emotional well-being but also enables them to feel motivated and empowered to seize every opportunity whilst at Bede's. The Senior House Parent must create a home-from-home that fosters respect, understanding and inclusiveness within a massively culturally diverse environment.

Managing a Boarding House and assuming responsibility for up to 70 students who are away from home is no easy task for the House Parents. Therefore, the Senior House Parent will need wide-ranging skills, experience, and expertise to support and guide the House Parents to provide a first-class welfare service for students, achieve and maintain the high standards required and uphold the good name of Bede's Summer School.

The ability to think quickly, show common sense and pay attention to detail in many different and often unpredictable situations is fundamental for this role. Adaptability and flexibility are critical skills, as is a cheerful, positive, and can-do attitude, which is a prerequisite of the job. Senior House Parents must be sensitive, understanding and maintain the ability to remain calm in stressful situations whilst thinking clearly using logic and reasoning.

It is crucial that staff maintain appropriate boundaries between themselves and the students in their direct care and with whom they come into contact. This may be particularly challenging for Senior House Parents who are close in age to some of the students at the centre. Staff members can never become students' friends.

Senior House Parents usually work an early or late shift, in collaboration with the Welfare Manager and any other Senior House Parents. The working day can be long, intense, and often quite challenging (especially on arrival and departure days) but it is also varied and fast-paced and of course, living and working with young people can be immensely rewarding.

Senior House Parents are residential - even when off duty, they must be willing to "leap into action" in case of any emergency that may arise, especially during the night.

Senior House Parents are ambassadors of the Summer School and must contribute to upholding the good name of Bede's, locally, nationally, and internationally. At all times, whether on duty or off duty, in uniform or not, Senior House Parents must act appropriately and do nothing that may compromise or jeopardise the School's excellent reputation.

Our goal is to give students an educational, culturally enriching, enjoyable and memorable summer experience in a safe and supervised setting. We only employ those staff who are willing to accept this responsibility and who have the necessary wide-ranging skills, experience, and commitment to help us achieve our goal of being the very best Summer School.

Reviewed: October 2025