

DURHAM JOHNSTON
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL
DARE TO BE WISE

Year 6 Open Evening

Welcome to Durham Johnston Comprehensive School.
125 years of history, heart and ambition.



Academic Excellence



Acquiring Knowledge



Social Justice



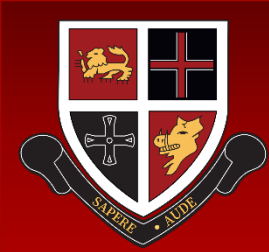
Public Service



Diverse Opportunities

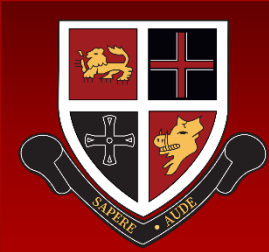
Dare to Be Wise.

Dare to Belong.



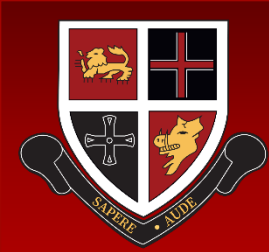
Choosing the right school for your child is hugely important.

It is one of the most important decisions that we ever have to make as parents or carers or students.



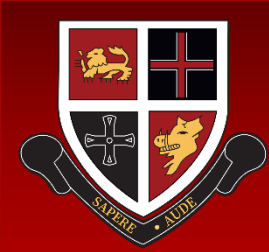
Key questions as a parent or carer

1. What is the ethos of this school? What are the values? Do they align with mine?
2. Will my child be happy? Make friends? Be safe and treated kindly?
3. Will my child be taught well by dedicated teachers? Given the right level of support to succeed? Be prepared to make important decisions at 11, 14, 16, 18?
4. Will my child be given opportunities to develop beyond the classroom? Will the school prepare my child for life in Modern Britain?



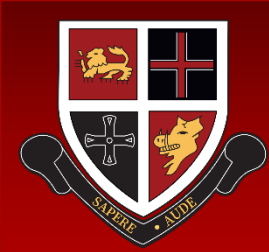
Key questions as a parent or carer

5. Can I trust the adults working with my child to behave in a kind, fair and ethical way?
6. Does the school communicate effectively?
7. Will the school be supportive if my child or family encounter difficulties?



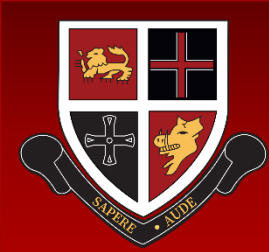
External impressions of our school...

- Sunday Times North East State Secondary School of the Year (... 2017, 2018, 2020, 2022, 2023, 2024)
- Sunday Times North East State Secondary School of the Year for Academic Excellence 2024
- Sunday Times National Comprehensive School of the Year 2019-2020
- Daily Mail Top 100 state schools (...2023, 2024, 2025)
- School Sports Magazine Top 100 Sporting Schools (...2022, 2023, 2024 - 59th nationally, 9th highest state school)
- Only state school to have our Christmas Carol Service in Durham Cathedral; the only state school to sing Evensong there. Only school orchestra to perform at the National Music for Youth Festival in Birmingham.
- *"Its students consistently achieve strong GCSE and A-level results that open doors to leading universities, including Oxford and Cambridge, as well as highly regarded Russell Group institutions."*



“A great education in a great comprehensive school.”

**John Dunford, Headteacher
Durham Johnston 1982-98**



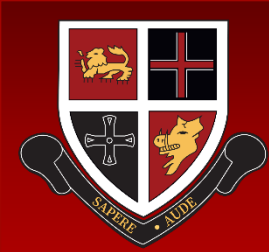
Dare to be Wise

Dare to be Belong

Our School Values

- 1. Academic Excellence**
- 2. Acquiring Knowledge**
- 3. Social Justice**
- 4. Public Service**
- 5. Diverse Opportunities**

“they will take to heart the school’s motto and courageously seek for wisdom, and the world will be a better place because of their presence in it”



What is Academic Excellence?

"Academic Excellence is being the best at getting better. It is something that all students can achieve."

Penny, Year 7

"To me Academic Excellence means not being the best in your class or form, but trying your hardest and being your best version."

Darcy, Year 7

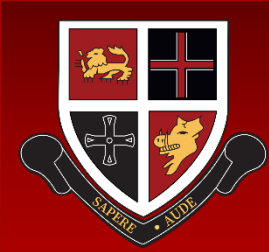
"I think academic excellence is finding a way to persevere through problems."

Jack, Year 9

"Academic excellence to me means not grades but being strong and passionate for the subjects you learn, trying hard and success in the subjects you love. Academic learning isn't scores; it's the values and knowledge you take away from the lesson." Ella, Year 10

"Academic excellence is you reaching your potential. For someone it might be grade 9s; for some people it might be grade 4s. As long as you know you've done your best then there is nothing more you can do." Ben, Year 11

Every child can achieve Academic Excellence at Durham Johnston because excellence is defined by growth, resilience, kindness, and effort.



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Belonging to a community

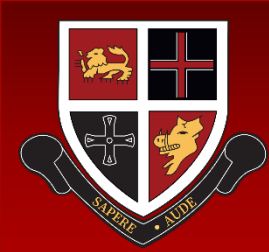
"... has thoroughly enjoyed her first year at Johnson School, and we're thankful for the opportunities you've given her to participate, grow, and shine. Your support has greatly boosted her confidence"
Year 8 Parent

"Since joining Durham Johnston, we have seen a marked improvement in our daughter's confidence and self-esteem. She is thriving both personally and socially, and it is wonderful to see how happy and engaged she is.." Year 8 Parent

"Such a level of support was beyond anything I had expected. I work at a local primary and I know the pressure on time so could not believe his kindness. From there the support never ended"
Year 11 Parent

"We would like to thank you for the amazing experience ... had with the school over the years. What you offer in school, outside of school and how you deal with day to day school life, parents and the community is nothing less than amazing!"
Year 11 Parent

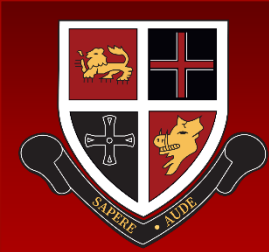
**Our strongest outcomes begin with belonging.
Before students can access our curriculum, they must access our community.**



125 Years of the same belief in and ambition for the young people of Durham

“...high scores and successes are important because they show evidence of industry and progress, but we do not forget other important features... vital to the formation of character and personality.”

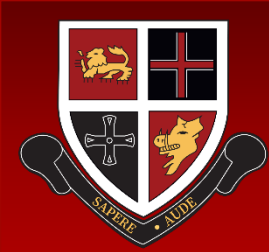
**Mr Whalley, Durham Johnston's first Headteacher
Durham Advertiser 18th December 1908**



A Year 7's Wisdom

“You can’t be perfect, but you can try and aim for your best — and that is your perfect.”

Claudia, Year 7



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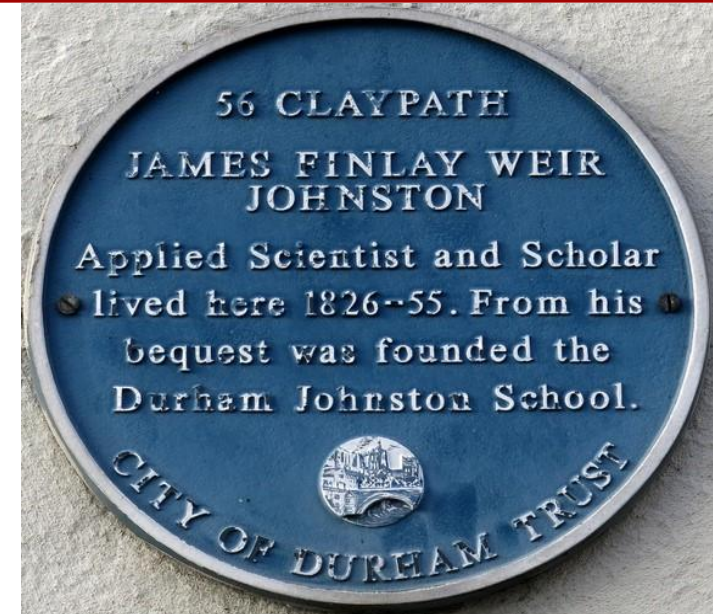
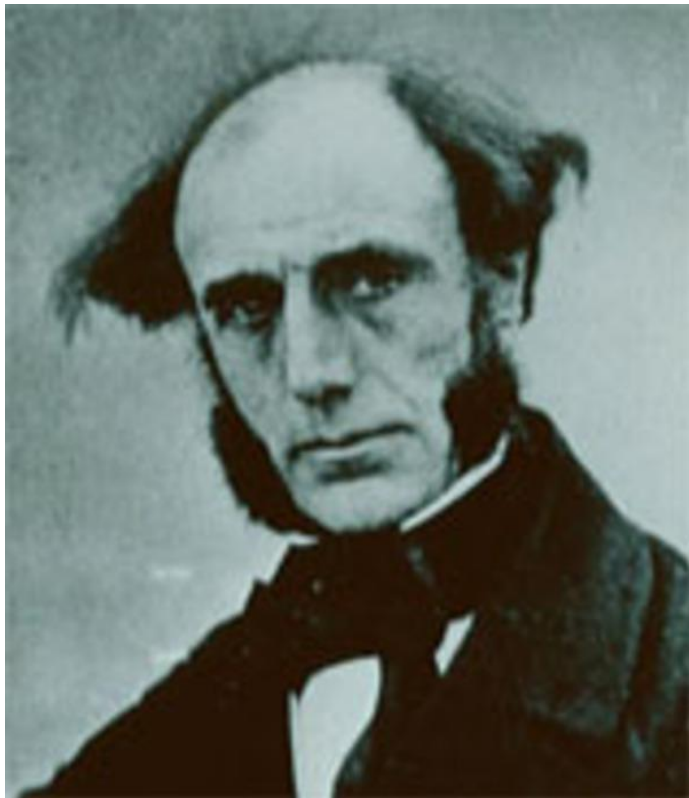
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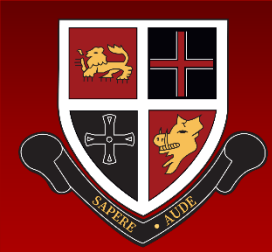
Mr Wilbraham
Deputy Headteacher



125 years of educating the young people of Durham



Free;
Girls and boys learning together;
Academic subjects: Maths and
sciences, History, English and
languages.



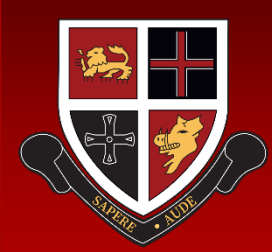
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Curriculum

Curriculum Ethos

- Designed for our students
- Balance and opportunity
- Challenge for all
- Success for all
- Experienced subject specialists

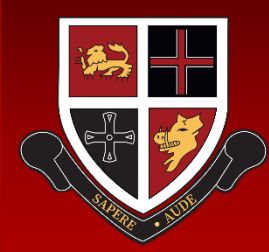




Year 7 Curriculum

- English (3)
- Mathematics (3)
- Science (3)
- Geography (2)
- History (2)
- French (2)
- German, Latin, Spanish (1)
- RE (1)
- Art (1)
- Computing (1)
- Design and Technology (1)
- Food and Nutrition (1)
- Music (1)
- PE (2)
- PSHE (1)



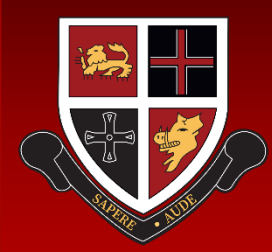


Progression – Options Choices in Year 9

- Make their option choices for Key Stage 4 in February of Year 9
- Choose 3 subjects in addition to the core

- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| • Art | • Engineering (Voc) | • Latin |
| • Business | • French | • Music |
| • Computing | • Food and Nutrition | • Photography |
| • Construction (Voc) | • Geography | • Physical Education |
| • Drama | • German | • Spanish |
| • Design Technology | • Health & Social (Voc) | • Sport (Voc) |
| • Engineering (GCSE) | • History | • Textiles |





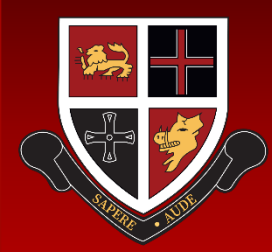
Progression – Post 16

- Guidance and support for all students

Subjects Offered at A-level

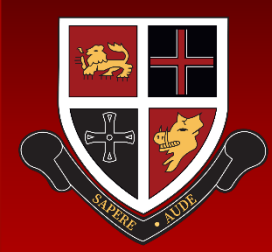
- | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| • Art | • English Literature | • History |
| • Biology | • Ethics and Philosophy | • Mathematics |
| • Business | • Film Studies | • Music |
| • Chemistry | • French | • PE |
| • Classical Civilisations | • Further Maths | • Physics |
| • Computing | • Geography | • Psychology |
| • Economics | • German | • Sociology |
| • English Language | • Gov and Politics | • Spanish |





20	Newcastle	4	Leeds Beckett	2	York St John's
10	Manchester	4	Warwick	1	King's College, London
9	Leeds	3	Bristol	1	Aberdeen
9	Northumbria	3	Cambridge	1	Chester
9	Sunderland	3	Liverpool	1	Edge Hill
9	York	3	UCL	1	Fashion Retail Academy
8	Durham	3	St Andrew's		
7	Edinburgh	2	Cardiff		
6	Lancaster	2	Exeter		
6	Sheffield	2	Loughborough		
5	Imperial	2	St Andrew's		
4	Nottingham	2	Sussex		

Continuing our reputation of academic excellence at Sixth Form
Over 70% of our students secured places at Russell Group this year!



Outcomes That Open Doors

Following GCSEs, our students move confidently into the next stage. Most students choose to remain at Durham Johnston Sixth Form, but they also move on to local colleges, or apprenticeships — supported by strong GCSE outcomes and a culture that helps every child find the right pathway.

Over 70% of students choose to stay at Durham Johnston Sixth Form.

Over 10% of the 2026 cohort progressed to Medicine or Oxford/Cambridge.

Over 150 students have secured places at Oxford or Cambridge since 2012.

Continued success in prestigious degree apprenticeships, combining university-level study with paid professional employment.

High-quality destinations — from local institutions such as Northumbria University to world-renowned universities like King's College London.

**Continuing our reputation of academic excellence at Sixth Form
Over 70% of our students secured places at Russell Group this year!**



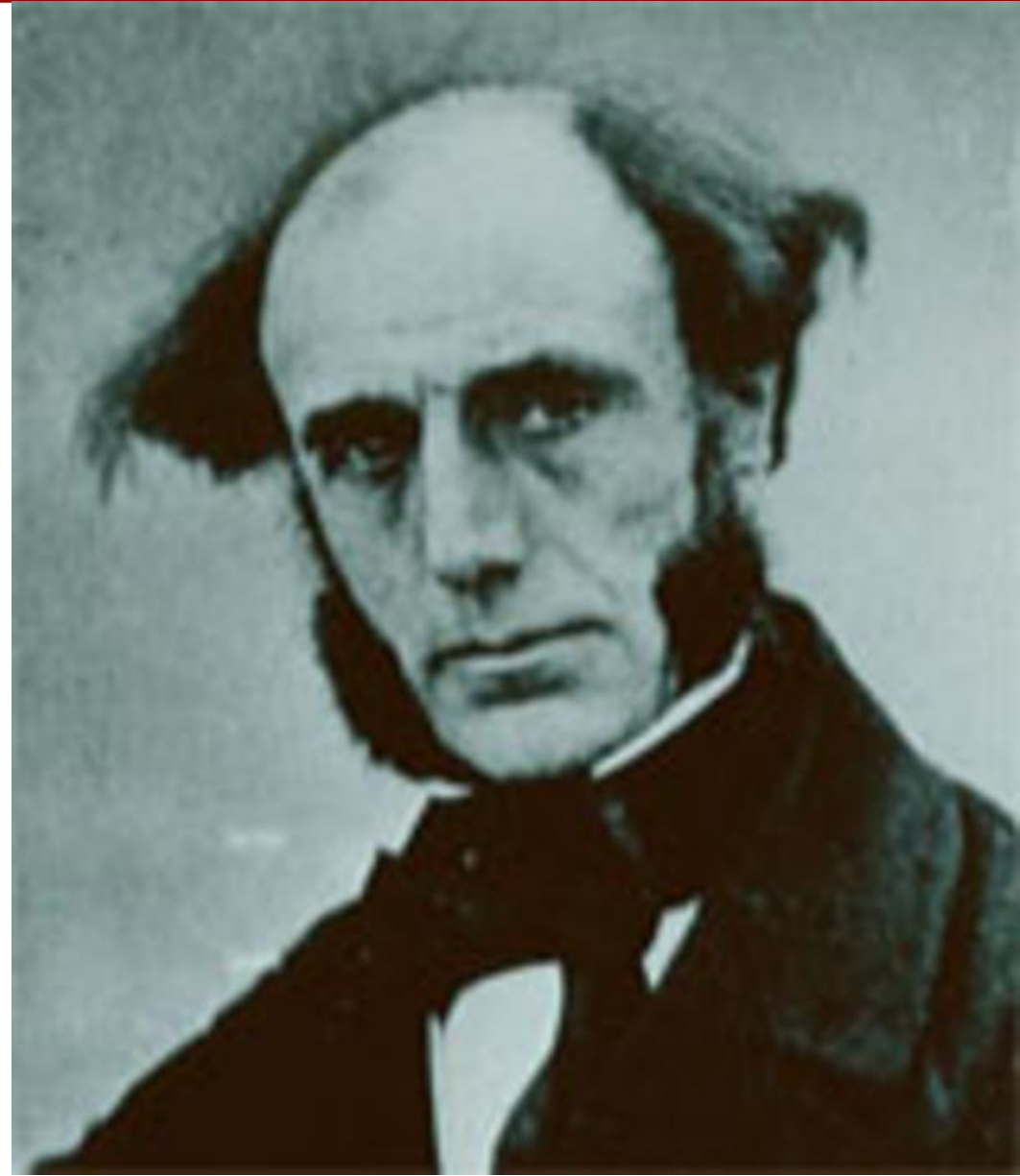
The best applicants convinced us that they had considered their choice of university and subject carefully. They demonstrated that they could organise their time and **thoughts under pressure, responding positively to challenge, arguing logically, and revisiting and refining their initial 'take' on a question when presented with new information, or new lines of inquiry.** They were able to provide a variety of examples in support of their opinions, derived from academic sources, as well as personal experience, and displayed real intellectual curiosity about the topics discussed, even where these related to aspects of the degree course outside the area in which they hoped to specialise.

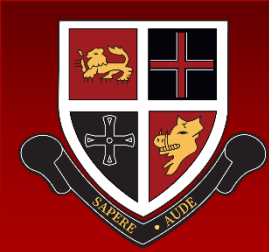
Dr Emily Tomlinson, Christ's College, Cambridge.



It is OK to get stuck

It is OK to ask questions



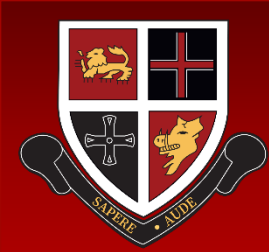


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Mrs Bell
Deputy Headteacher



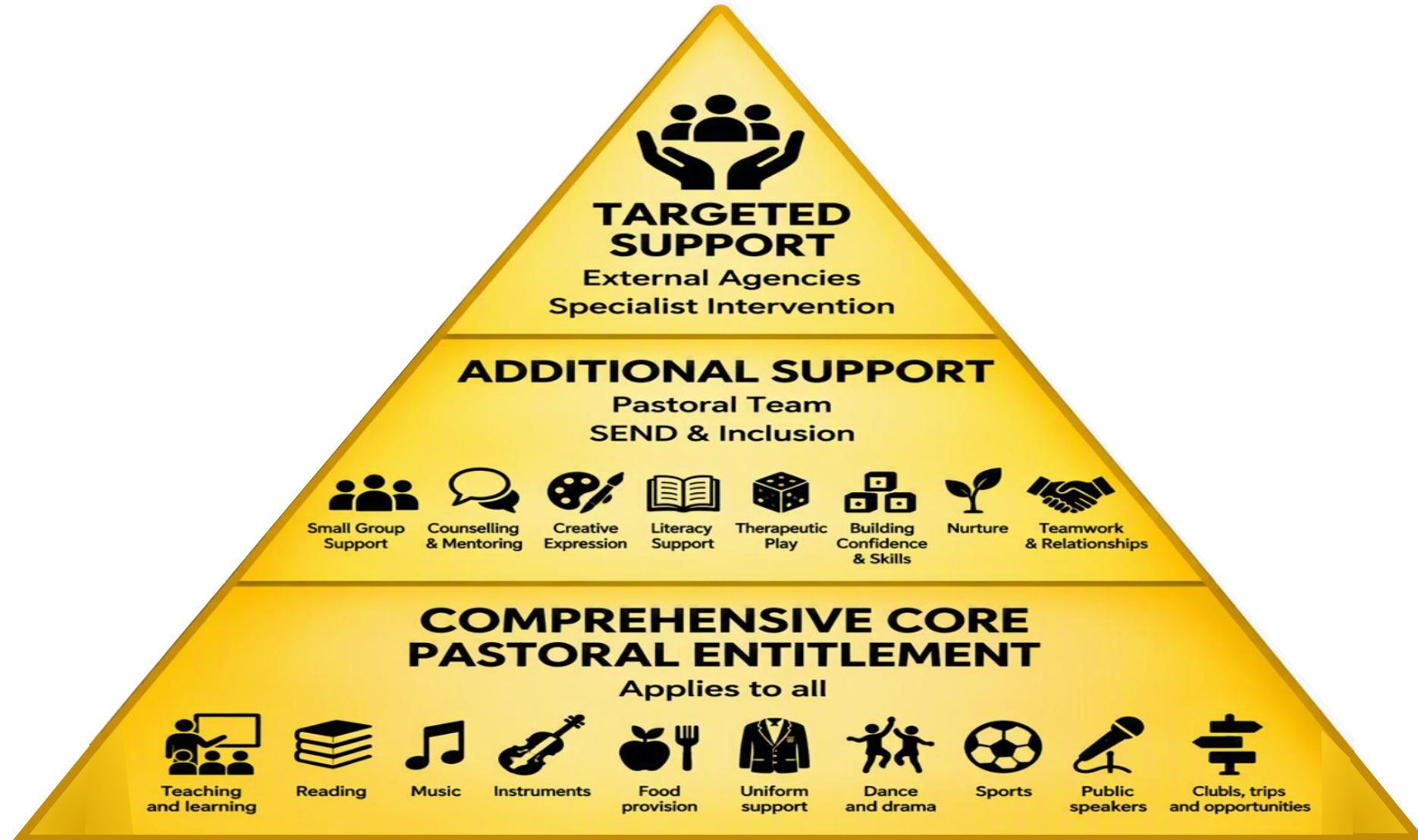
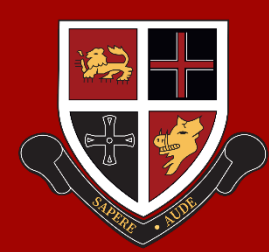
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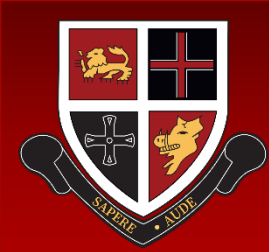
Pastoral support

Pastoral support at Durham Johnston Comprehensive School

- Form Tutor
- Assistant Year Leader
- Year Leader
- SEND and Inclusion Team
- Support staff
- Subject staff







Class Groupings

- There are 9 Form classes – D U R H A M J C S
- Most subjects are taught in mixed ability groups both in Key Stage 3 (Y7-9) and Key Stage 4 (Y10-11).
- From Year 7 students are taught in sets for English and Maths.
- From Year 9 students are taught in sets for Science.
- Students are grouped broadly by ability in PE and there is setting in some languages.



What Does a Year 7 Week Look Like?

PERIOD	TIME	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
REG	8.20-8.45	TUTOR TIME	TUTOR TIME	TUTOR TIME	TUTOR TIME	TUTOR TIME
1	8.45-9.45	SCIENCE	GEOGRAPHY	DESIGN TECH	GEOGRAPHY	MUSIC
BREAK (Year 7 & 8 students only)						
2b	10.00-11.00	PSHE	ENGLISH	ART	MATHS	HISTORY
3	11.00-12.00	FRENCH	MATHS	PE	ENGLISH	FRENCH
LUNCH (Year 7 & 8 students only)						
4b	12.45-1.45	COMPUTING	RE	SCIENCE	HISTORY	MATHS
5	1.45-2.45	PE	SCIENCE	ENGLISH	MANDARIN	FOOD/TEXTILES

FORM CLASS
MIX of 2/3 FORMS

Extended
Tutor time 1
day a week
until 9.00

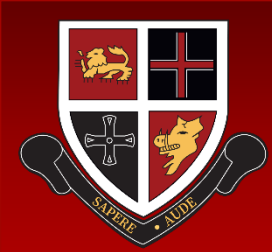
First 3 lessons
are reduced
to 55 minutes



Music Department

-
- A young woman with blonde hair tied back, wearing glasses and a dark school blazer, is shown in profile, playing a brass instrument, likely a trumpet. She is looking down at her sheet music on a stand. In the background, other students are visible, some also playing instruments, in a bright music room with large windows.



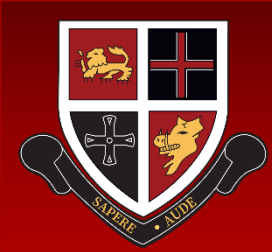


PE Department

- Athletics (Indoor & Outdoor)
- Badminton
- Basketball
- Biathlon
- Boccia*
- Cricket
- Cross Country
- Curling*
- Cycling and Mountain Biking
- Dance
- Dodge Ball
- Football
- Futsal
- Hockey
- Humberball
- Longball
- Netball
- Outdoor and Adventurous (Orienteering)
- Rounders
- Rowing
- Rugby
- Table Cricket*
- Table Tennis
- Tennis

**Disability Sports*

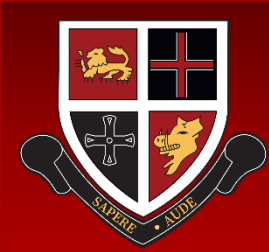




Other Clubs and Activities

- Art and Design Club
- Board Game Club
- Book Club
- CAD Club
- Chess Club
- Christian Union
- Crest Science Award Club
- Cyber Explorers Club
- Debating Club
- Drama Club
- Dungeons and Dragons
- Gardening Club
- Greek Club
- Intro to Sign Language
- Japanese Club
- Jigsaw Club
- Languages with Sandwiches
- Lego Club
- Magic Club
- Programming Club
- Puzzle Club
- Science Club
- Scabble Club
- Script Writing Club
- Taylor Swift Society
- Technical Theatre Club
- VEX Robotics
- Warhammer Club
- Weird Science
- And many, many more





Being Part of a Community Our House System & Rewards

- Raising money for a wide variety of charities.
- Supporting students in different year groups.
- Involvement in a range of competitions and events.
- Achievement points are awarded for a variety of different reasons, academic and pastoral, and each year group has its own reward system.



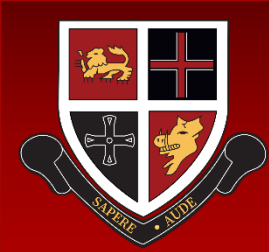


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What do our core values mean to our newest experts?

1. Academic excellence
2. Acquiring knowledge
3. Social justice
4. Public service
5. Diverse opportunities





1. Academic excellence

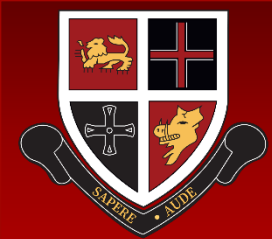
"Staff at Durham Johnston have designed curriculums that capture pupils' interests. What pupils study often exceeds that expected by the national curriculum."

"The sixth-form provision is exceptional."

"A focus on academic reading supports students to develop their understanding beyond the norm for their age. This, coupled with expert support from teachers, allows students to achieve exceptionally highly in external examinations, preparing them well for future destinations."

Betty

"I am worried that it's so much bigger and there seems so much to learn, more than Primary school. I am scared to leave"



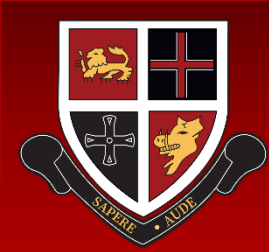
2. Acquiring knowledge

"Behaviour in lessons and around school is consistently calm and purposeful due to effective systems built on strong relationships. Pupils and parents and carers report that bullying is rare but, when it happens, it is dealt with highly effectively. Attendance at school is very high. Pupils consistently display a positive attitude to their studies."

"Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They work skilfully with pupils to help them develop a deep understanding of what has been studied. Pupils are able to apply this knowledge flexibly, including linking things they have learned in one subject to new learning in another area of the curriculum."

Rowan: "When will I ever learn my way around?" "When will it feel like my school?"

Avi: "What if I am late or make a mistake in lessons?"



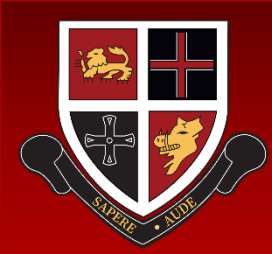
3. Social justice

"Durham Johnston is a school where pupils feel safe, happy and valued. There are strong, caring relationships between staff and pupils and the school has a warm, harmonious ethos. Students demonstrate a strong moral compass and are proud to be part of the school community."

"Pupils benefit from an exceptionally well-constructed taught personal, social, health and economic education (PHSE) programme. The programme skilfully combines provision from subjects, including religious studies, extended form time and assemblies. This supports pupils to develop a rich understanding of the world around them."

Kendrick

"Will I fit in? There are so many new faces."



4. Public service

"Pupils are supported to develop a strong understanding of the world around them. In line with one of the school's core values of public service, a significant number of pupils demonstrate a tangible commitment to make a positive contribution to their local community and beyond, both now and in the future."

"Strong pastoral care allowed leaders to implement bespoke support for those most in need. Leaders made well-judged adjustments to behaviour systems. These supported staff to improve behaviour without undermining the warm, harmonious ethos of the school"

Nate

"Will I still be friends with my friends from Primary, how can I make new friends?"



5. Diverse opportunities

"An extensive extra-curricular offer provides pupils with the opportunity to develop existing interests and explore new ones. The school carefully monitors attendance at clubs and societies. Where pupils need support to attend, they receive it."

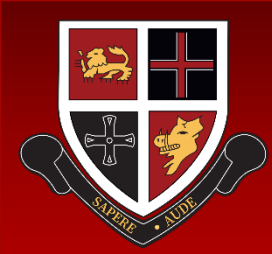
"Pupils benefit from a strong careers education from the start of Year 7. They develop strong knowledge of the various options open to them post-16 and post-18, as well as a wide range of potential careers."

Amelie

"Is this a happy School? Will I be happy Here?"

Sophie

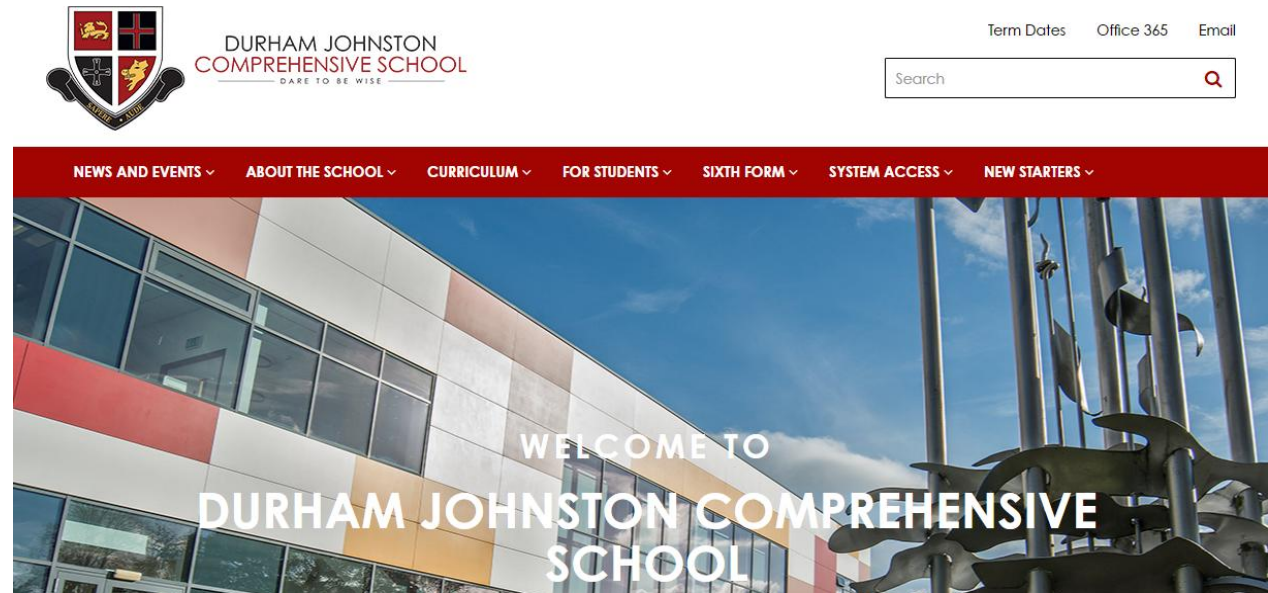
"I know people are nervous because of the change, I'm not but I had to help my friends who were."



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Social media

- www.durhamjohnston.org.uk
- durhamjohnstoncomprehensive
- durhamjohnston_sixthform
- djcspe



How does the application process work?

September 2026	Applications open.
30th October 2026	Closing date for applications.
1st March 2027	National offer day. Offers are made by the Local Authority admissions team.
From 22nd March 2027	Reallocation day. You can ask for your child's name to be added to a school waiting list for the 2027/28 academic year.
From April 2027	The transition process begins and additional visits and parental opportunities are shared.
Friday 2nd July 2027	Induction day.
Friday 27 th August 2027	Additional Transition opportunity, ½ day visit.



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