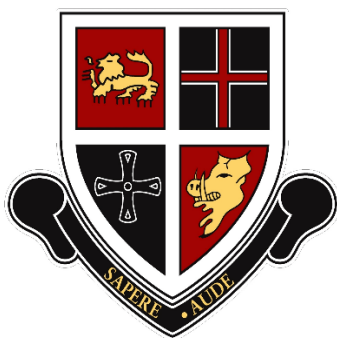


DURHAM JOHNSTON

Life in Sixth Form

2024-2025



Sapere Aude • Dare To Be Wise

Welcome to Durham Johnston Sixth Form

Durham Johnston is proud to be an 11-18 Comprehensive School. We commit ourselves to sustaining an environment of academic excellence and respect for all of our learners. We have an outstanding track record of supporting post-16 students in making beyond expected progress in their academic studies, whilst also helping them in their personal development, so that they are informed and ready to make positive contributions to modern British society.

To all students starting Year 12 courses, we welcome you to the Sixth Form. We are delighted to be working with you for the next two important years as you enter adulthood and feel privileged to be supporting you as you realise your academic and career ambitions. We will provide you with excellent specialist teaching, pastoral support and opportunities beyond the classroom, to enable you to further develop as an informed, adaptable and capable learner. We ask that you work hard, listen to your teachers, ask when you're unsure about anything and be a positive role model in our wider school community.

We look forward to working with you throughout this academic year and wish you the best of luck in all your pursuits!

Mr J Wilbraham (Head of Sixth Form)

DURHAM JOHNSTON - A GUIDE FOR OUR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Who are the Sixth Form team?

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Head of Sixth Form (Assistant Headteacher) | Mr J Wilbraham |
| Deputy Head of Sixth Form | Miss K Simpson |
| Year 12 Lead (Senior Tutor) | Mr C Everett, |
| Year 13 Lead (Senior Tutor) | Mrs H Nixon |
| EPQ Lead | Mr J Bann |

What do students need to do at the start of term in September?

Year 12 students new to Durham Johnston

On **Wednesday 4th September**, please make your way to the **Sixth Form Area in advance of 8.25am** for the introductory conference **8.25am - 12 noon**. This conference welcomes students who previously studied at a school other than Durham Johnston for their GCSEs, offering them a morning to get accustomed to routines in our Sixth Form, meeting key staff and setting some academic and non-academic goals for the forthcoming year before lessons commence in the afternoon. Lunch will be available from our cafés so students can bring cash with them, or a packed lunch if they'd prefer. Students should come in **school uniform**. As an additional note, school ties can be bought from the sixth form office for £10. **Students who have just completed Year 11 at Durham Johnston and who are not new to the school** should be in school, **in uniform**, by 10.45am on 4th September. **All Year 12s lessons begin at 12.45pm on 4th September. The day will end at 2.45pm.**

All Year 13 students

Lessons will start on Thursday 5th September when you should report to your Form Room at 8.20am prompt for registration and to receive your timetable and Student Organiser. The Student Organiser is a key document for your organisation and communication. You will have an extended assembly with Mr Wilbraham and Miss Simpson to welcome you back and outline the key factors for a smooth transition from Year 12 to Year 13 during period 5.

How is the school day organised?

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 08.20 | All pupils to be on site and moving towards their Form Class, or Assembly. The student gates will be locked at 8.20am |
| 08.25 | Registration or Assembly (Extended Form time until 9am one day a week) |
| 08.45 | Lesson 1 |
| 09.45 | Lesson 2 |
| 10.45 | Morning Break |
| 11.00 | Lesson 3 |
| 12.00 | Lunch |
| 12.45 | Lesson 4 |
| 13.45 | Lesson 5 |
| 14.45 | End of the school day for timetabled lessons |

Usually access to Sixth Form area and Café 6 will be available before and after the times above, where students sometimes choose to work pre-school (from 7.30am) and until approximately 5pm. We have a wide and varied range of student-led societies running at lunchtimes and after school. These are an excellent way to meet with people of similar interests, explore topics beyond the classroom and develop your organisation, project management and communication skills. If we don't currently have a society that interests you why don't you start one? See Mrs Nixon for details of how you might go about this.

Catering

Sixth Form students have a choice of purchasing food from the main student servery, the Atrium Café or they can go off site. We have a cashless catering system which enables young people to put money into the cash machines around school at any time of the day and then to pay for meals using an impression of their fingertip. Parents may also pay for meals in advance using the *ParentPay* facility on the school website. While there are always some problems with such sophisticated technology, the system generally works very well. If you encounter a problem with *ParentPay* please contact a member of staff in the **School Office** and they will offer assistance. Sixth Form students are also able to pay cash at the Atrium Café. Drinking water is usually available from chilled mains water dispensers around the school and students are encouraged to fill their bottles before school, or at break or lunch time. Students are allowed water in class (but not in Science, Computer Science or other practical lessons). We do not allow energy drinks in school and will always confiscate such drinks if we see or find them.

Car Park

Please do not arrange to bring students to school by car unless this is absolutely unavoidable. We do not have any parking or even drop-off space for parents on our site and we are instructed by the Local Authority and police to prevent parents coming onto the site in cars, as our car park is so congested that extra dropping-off vehicles constitute a safety hazard. Some parents have expressed concerns about this. Our car park was built in 2009 based on an environmental plan that set out to encourage students and staff to walk or cycle to school. Students driving themselves to school should be aware that there is no easy parking in the local area. Space is very limited and is entirely in residential streets. Poorly parked cars make access to residents' drives and pavements an issue and they are likely to complain to the school or to the police. Sixth Formers are inexperienced drivers so we understand mistakes can be made, however as drivers, students must take responsibility for their own actions. Students need to be able to park carefully and within the law. We cannot defend you from police action. If you have a registered disability and need to drive as a result of that, please talk to us separately.

The focus at the start of Year 12 is on making the transition to A Level study. This involves specific guidance by staff in each subject and general guidance from our pastoral team. The key skills required for success at A Level are outlined in the Student Agreement. The first term is an induction period where we monitor that students keep to the conditions of their agreement. In particular we are looking for a commitment to engagement in their own learning both in and out of lessons. Independent work is expected to the order of four hours per subject each week of which a total of about 12 will be done after private study periods are used in school. Additionally, we expect students to review and consolidate their learning and to complete wider background learning starting with reading the texts they are issued with. Punctual completion and submission of work is an important part of the programme. The first report will be issued to students in October focussing

on transition and A Level study skills.

Year 12 performance is formally reviewed after the December 'mini-mock' internal exams starting 9th December and students receive a report with up-to-date grades and predictions. Decisions regarding the taking of external or internal exams in summer 2025 will be made at this time.

Our 'Settling In' meeting for parents will take place shortly after the starting Sixth Form, on 17th September at 5.30 - 6.30pm. You will find out more about life in Sixth Form and have the opportunity to speak with key Sixth Form staff. For any students new to the school with any additional needs, particularly for exams, please inform us and provide documentary evidence as soon as possible.

For Year 13 parents, a PIP to help parents understand the university student finance process will be held at 5.30-6.30pm on 2nd October. The main in-school focus at the start of Year 13 is on taking on the role of the most senior members of our student body; setting a positive example, acting as mentors and role models, running societies and organising House events. Of course, the main attention is on working with us to get the very best A Level results possible in their final summer exams. This requires students to keep on top of Year 12 work, building on it with Year 13 content and honing their examination technique. Most of our Year 13 students will be applying for university and we will be helping them complete a strong application including our individual reference. Any student applying for degree apprenticeships/employment will be supported in researching their choices and the application, interview process and references. For Year 13, performance is formally reviewed after the internal exams starting 11th November (covering Year 12 & 13 work) for which you will receive a report. A further report will be issued in March, in time to inform final A level preparation.

Year 12 and Year 13

Time management is one of the most important skills students must learn before moving on to Higher Education and employment. Students are expected to invest sufficient non-contact time and time at home to independent study to make academic progress. This should be balanced with hobbies, social time and perhaps voluntary or paid part time work. Part time work can provide valuable experiences for students but it is important that it does not jeopardise their chances of future success. **We do not believe a full-time student should do more than ten hours of paid employment each week.**

As students make the transition from GCSE through sixth form to university, we feel that they should be given increasing responsibility for managing their own study. We usually allow students some afternoon of **Home Study** where they can spend some of their non-contact periods working at home rather than supervised in school (Private Study). This is a privilege that can be revoked.

The criteria for having Home Study are:

- 3 A Level courses + PHE + at least 2 hours of timetabled enrichment: academic enrichment (eg 4th AS/A Level course, EPQ, on-line course eg 'Futurelearn') and/or personal enrichment (eg community service, including class support, peer mentoring etc)
- No unauthorised absences
- Effort grades A or B on the internal reports
- Good progress in grade terms
- Support from subject teachers' UCAS comments on independence and reliability
- Support from parents

www.durhamjohnston.org.uk



Tweets DJCS

[@DurhamJohnston](https://twitter.com/DurhamJohnston)

To ensure the safety of students it is essential that the school holds up-to-date contact details in case of emergency. Please make sure that you tell the school of any change of address (including any temporary arrangements), telephone number or email address.

Contacting the School – Academic year 2024 - 2025

The key to our partnership with parents is communication. As students are over sixteen much more is expected of them and teachers will hold them responsible for their performance. It is important however that we are aware of problems as soon as possible so that they do not build up. The intensive nature of A level study makes this more true than lower down the school. If you have any concerns about a student then please contact us to discuss this. Emails are particularly useful as they can be distributed to colleagues most effectively. If you are emailing the school please mark your message for the attention of whichever member(s) of staff you feel ought to receive it.

- To tell us about a student's absence, please telephone the school (0191 384 3887) **before 8.20am** and either leave a message on our pupil absence answerphone or speak directly with a member of the office staff. When they are well enough to return to school you should send a letter confirming the date and reason for the absence or make a note in their student organiser.
- If you have a query or have something you would like to discuss or find out about, the Form Tutor is usually the first person to contact. You can do this either by telephoning or emailing the school for the attention of their Form Tutor.
- If your concern is of a more serious or urgent nature then you should contact Mr Wilbraham or Miss Simpson (school number, and then when instructed, dial 3 for the Sixth Form office). Whilst we always try to respond quickly to enquiries, it is important to note that between 8am and 3pm Mr Wilbraham and the sixth form team also have teaching commitments. It could therefore be difficult to speak with parents or carers during the school day.

Email address

School

school@durhamjohnston.org.uk

Uniform

Sixth form students set an example to the main school students and this should consistently be a positive model. Your uniform and the way you wear it reflects your attitude to the Durham Johnston community and your studies. We expect all students to be *smart and decent* in their dress.

Uniform must be worn as detailed - it is part of our school policy.

Students must choose from the following:

Black formal trousers - straight leg or bootcut style only.
Trousers must be full length

or

Black formal style skirt. Skirts should be of reasonable length

Optional

* Plain black V-necked pullover or cardigan or sixth form hoody

* Please ensure that head coverings worn for religious purposes are plain black or white

AND

White shirt (short or long sleeved) worn with a Durham Johnston sixth form tie (available from Parkins). The Sixth Form Office also hold a small stock.

or

White formal blouse (short or long sleeved) with collar

AND

Plain black opaque tights/socks

Plain, formal shoes or boots

Plain/all black trainers

Students who arrive at school wearing incorrect uniform may be sent home.

Outdoor clothing, including hats and scarves must not be worn inside the school building.

A moderate amount of jewellery may be worn.

PE KIT

Sixth Formers involved in PE department activities may wear the department activity uniform on days of participation.

- ◆ Plain black running leggings or tracksuit bottoms
- ◆ Plain red sweatshirt or DJCS training top (optional)
- ◆ White plain polo shirt or T-shirt
- ◆ Trainers (indoor and outdoor)

Durham Johnston training tops and tracksuits are available to purchase from the PE department

As well as their main subjects, students follow our **Preparation for Higher Education (PHE)** and **Careers Guidance** programme to help them select the most appropriate course and institution for them and prepare them for the next steps post Sixth Form. A description of the programme to help students prepare for life after A Levels is outlined below.

- Introduction/Overview
 - Higher education and the alternatives especially degree apprenticeships
 - Types of institutions
 - Types of courses

- Teaching and Learning at University
- Bursaries and finance

- Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)
- Research – ‘measure twice – cut once’
- Personal Statements – ‘show don’t tell’
- Interviews
- Student Finance and budgeting

- Additionally
 - Gap years
 - University life and living independently
 - Careers information

Further guidance and advice is available through teachers, visits to open days and conventions, and talks by visiting speakers. (e.g. universities, businesses, guidance organisations).

There are a number of useful websites to help you explore your options for what's next. Here are two good examples:

- UCAS – helps you research your options and courses and complete your application (with our help). <https://www.ucas.com/>
- Aspire – helps you explore careers you might not have considered and includes post-18 options including degrees, school leaver programmes and apprenticeships. https://www.paperturn-view.com/uk/upreach/new_aspire-guide-2020?pid=MTE11704&v=7.1

We also offer the EPQ to enhance application to university, apprenticeship or employment.

EPQ stands for extended project qualification. It is an independent research task and involves either writing an extended essay of about 5,000 words or creating a product with an accompanying shorter essay of about 3,000 words. This product could be anything from a drone to an app to a music composition. Both options require a presentation to your peers and assessors for about 10–15 minutes at the end of the EPQ journey about the final product. Students are also expected to reflect and evaluate the process as you go along, completing a logbook, which comprises part of your assessment. An EPQ is worth valuable UCAS points and can form part of a personal statement. It also develops useful skills like research, essay writing and presentation skills which will come in useful for A levels and beyond. It also lets you study your own choices, whether that be in what you want to study at university or your own personal interests e.g. birdwatching or films from North Korea.

Bursary

Some students may qualify for financial support. Please read the information overleaf and complete the bursary form enclosed in the welcome envelope.

16-19 Bursary Fund Information

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome the specific financial barriers to participation in education. If you face such barriers and meet the criteria you are encouraged to apply for this support by completing the application form attached and returning it to the school along with all the supporting evidence. If you successfully apply for a bursary, you may

be eligible to receive support with costs related to: school meals, travel for education purposes, school uniform, essential books and equipment not supplied by the school, field study visits, exam resits and university applications and related expenses.
Incomplete forms will not be processed, and you will not be able to receive funding until this form is fully processed. There are two bursaries available:

The Discretionary Bursary

You will need to complete Part A of the Bursary Form and provide evidence of all the following:

- Legal right to be resident in the United Kingdom
- You are a student within Durham Johnston Sixth Form
- Aged 16 or over, but under 19, on 31 August 2024.

In addition you will need to evidence:

- Gross household annual income of less than or equal to £45,000; **or**
- That you are in a situation where you are unable to meet your basic needs.

You will need to sign the student declaration.

The Independent Bursary

You will need to complete Parts A and B of the Bursary Form and provide evidence that you meet the criteria for The Discretionary Bursary as well as at least one of the following criteria:

- You are in, or you recently left, local authority care
- You get Income Support or Universal Credit because you're financially supporting yourself
- You get Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in your name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit
- You get Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in your name and either ESA or Universal Credit

Students learn best when their basic needs are met, **if you are ever unable to meet your basic needs, please speak with someone in the Sixth Form Office as you may qualify for The Discretionary Bursary.** The completed form and supporting evidence should be returned to the Sixth Form Office by the end of September in the first instance, **although an application can be made at any point throughout the year should circumstances change.**

The value of financial support awarded to students who qualify for The Independent Bursary will depend on financial need and the level of support needed. Likewise, the level of financial support awarded to students who qualify for The Discretionary Bursary will depend on financial need and the level of support needed, as well as the amount of funding the school is allocated and the number of applicants. The amount awarded for The Discretionary Bursary may therefore be tiered to ensure that the funds are distributed fairly to those most in need.

Receipt of any bursary payment in full is dependent on the student's standards of attendance and behaviour as set out in the Durham Johnston Sixth Form Student Agreement. Should your attendance fall below 95% the school may adjust your funding accordingly. Should you leave Durham Johnston Sixth Form your funding will stop.

The information that you provide will be relied upon and any false or incomplete information may result in future payments stopping, any incorrectly paid funds being recovered and could result in prosecution.

You will receive an email with the outcome of your application. Bursary payments will be made half termly by cheque. You will need to submit a new bursary application each year of study.

You have the right to appeal to the Head of Sixth Form within seven days of the email detailing the outcome of your application and any appeal must be made via email to

6thformadmin@durhamjohnston.org.uk. If you have any further questions or queries regarding the bursary you should seek support from the Sixth Form Office.

Bursary Application Form

Part A: Complete for The Discretionary Bursary and The Independent Bursary

Student Details:

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| Student Name: | Form: |
| Address: | |

| | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Residential Status: | | | |
| Do you have the legal right to be resident in the United Kingdom? (Further evidence may be required.) | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are you an unaccompanied asylum seeker? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you live in a lone parent household? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Necessary Support: - Please indicate the support you need and provide evidence of the cost. | | | |
| Support Required: | Confirmation | Cost | Evidence Required |
| Travel for education purposes including Young Persons Rail Card | <input type="checkbox"/> | | Details of travel arrangements for the year including receipt/ticket. |
| Essential books and equipment not supplied by the school | <input type="checkbox"/> | | Receipts |
| School meals | <input type="checkbox"/> | | N/A |
| School uniform (max £40 per half term) | <input type="checkbox"/> | | Receipts |
| Essential field study visits | <input type="checkbox"/> | | School letter. |
| University applications / interview expenses | <input type="checkbox"/> | | Travel receipts, interview information |
| Exam resits | <input type="checkbox"/> | | Details of resit. |
| About You: – Please tick the statements that apply and attach supporting evidence: | | | |
| Requirement | Confirmation | Typical Evidence Required | |
| You are aged 16 or over, but under 19, on 31 August 2024. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Student enrolment details | |
| You have a gross household annual income of less than or equal to £45,000 Please state your actual gross household annual income below: | <input type="checkbox"/> £ _____ | Recent P60, Universal Credit Statement or Tax Credit Statement. | |

| Part B: Complete for The Independent Bursary | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| Requirement | Confirmation | Typical Evidence Required |
| You are in, or you recently left, local authority care | <input type="checkbox"/> | Recent letter from the Local Authority. |
| You personally get Income Support or Universal Credit because you're financially supporting yourself | <input type="checkbox"/> | Recent IS or UC award letter to you personally. |
| You get Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in your name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit | <input type="checkbox"/> | DLA award letter. |
| You personally get Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in your name and either ESA or Universal Credit | <input type="checkbox"/> | Recent award letter for PIP and recent UC award letter to you personally. |

| Student Declaration: Complete for The Discretionary Bursary and The Independent Bursary | Confirmation |
|--|--------------------------|
| I have read the 16 – 19 Bursary Fund Information and am making a bursary application in accordance with that information. All information within the application and supporting evidence is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I give consent for the information which I share with the school to be stored in line with the school's retention guidelines, in accordance with the UK GDPR Data Protection Policy and to be shared with third parties for the sole Purpose of Post 16 Bursary Application. Please refer to the Privacy Notice on the school website for further information. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO WITHDRAW OR PROVIDE ANY CONSENT AT ANY TIME. SHOULD YOU WISH TO DO SO PLEASE EMAIL THE GDPR TEAM: GDPRTEAM@DURHAMJOHNSTON.ORG.UK | |
| Name: Signed: | |
| Date: | |

Attendance at Durham Johnston Comprehensive – Sixth Form

Excellent attendance is a key part of A level success and in terms of students' next steps, attendance will be explicitly commented on in university and employment references. It is a basic

expectation for students to attend all form periods, assemblies and academic classes, including Private Study and PHE (Preparing for Higher Education).

Students are expected to stay on site throughout the school day apart from lunchtime when sixth formers are allowed to leave school premises and when Home Study is part of their timetable. Sometimes pastoral or subject activities will be arranged outside of normal class times, but within the school day. These take priority over all other arrangements. It is for the school to decide whether a particular absence is to be authorised or not. The only justification for non-attendance is illness, or unforeseen personal and/or domestic circumstances which are outlined below.

During absence, contact should be made with school by telephone or email on the first day to explain the cause and likely duration of absence and to request work. Students in Sixth Form must not arrange routine medical and dental appointments or driving lessons in class time, including Private Study and PHE. Students are expected not to arrange holidays within term time – and they will not be authorised. Sixth Form work is intensive and absence is detrimental to academic progress. When a student returns to school it is their responsibility to consult teachers about missed work and the rescheduling of deadlines for the completion of assignments. Excellent attendance underpins outstanding academic progress and the school will recognise exceptional attendance standards in UCAS references and its rewards system.

Probation

On starting A-Level study, all Year 12 students are classed as being 'on probation' during the first half term of the new academic year. Students are removed from probation if departments and Sixth Form Leadership are satisfied that acceptable levels of effort and progress in class, with independent study, punctuality, attendance and uniform are being met. Students will not be removed from probation (with resultant closer monitoring from Durham Johnston staff) until sufficient improvements have been made to meet the school's basic expectations.

Reporting absences

In the first instance, it is the responsibility of parents or carers to report absences. Parents should contact **the main school office before 8.30am on 0191 384 3887** to report students' unexpected absences. This must be done on every day of the absence. If a student is expected to be absent for a number of days, details must be given on the expected return to school date and updates given during the period of absence.

If a student becomes unwell during the school day, or needs to leave due to an emergency, the student must report to the Sixth Form office. Here they can access first aid and contact will be made directly with a parent, carer or appropriate family member. Students cannot leave the school site without permission from both a family member and a member of the Sixth Form team, in order to safeguard their welfare. Please ensure that the emergency contact details the school holds are up to date.

Planned absence

If an absence is known about in advance, it is students' and parents' responsibility to notify the school and request work as far in advance as possible. A decision on authorising a planned absence cannot be made by the school until **a Request for Approved Absence form (a 'blue' form)** has been collected from the Sixth Form office, completed by the student and parent/carer and returned to the office. Alongside this, evidence of an appointment, open day or interview must be provided to the school before authorisation can be given. Alternatively, parents/carers can email the school address school@durhamjohnston.org.uk FAO of the Sixth Form office, stating the reason for the requested approved absence with the appropriate evidence attached.

Concerns will be raised with parents/carers if there are a significant number of repeated absence requests.

No planned absences will be approved during Year 12 or Year 13 mock exam weeks or the national exam period. These dates will be shared with students at the start of each term.

In the most sensitive of circumstances, please notify the Sixth Form leadership team on 0191 384 3887 and request a phone appointment for a private discussion.

Reasons for planned absence

The following list gives some examples of situations where an absence may be authorised if they are believed to be genuine and unavoidable, with evidence provided:

- Non-routine hospital, dentist or GP appointments
- Diagnosed medical conditions that require ongoing hospital treatment
- Family bereavements
- Court attendance for jury service
- University or apprenticeship interviews
- Designated religious festival

Requests for Extended Leave of Absence

There may be exceptional circumstances where students need to request an extended Leave of Absence that goes beyond one school day. These cannot be approved by the Sixth Form team. Students must ask for a **Leave of Absence Form ('pink' form)** from main school reception. It is then down to the discretion of the Headteacher as to whether a request for leave can be granted as authorised.

Punctuality

The school day formally begins at 8.25am in Form Time. The school gates close at 8.20am. Students are expected to be at Form Time for registration and their personal development programme, by 8.25am.

Students' punctuality will be monitored by staff and concerns communicated with home. Within Form Time, attendance of Sixth Form assemblies is also compulsory and punctuality (unless unforeseen public transport issues cause delays) will be monitored. Subject departments will also monitor punctuality to lessons and again, any concerns will be raised with the student and with home. Possible sanctions include revocation of Home Study or after school payback of time until sustained improved punctuality to Form Time and lessons is evident.

Late passes

We understand that for a small number of students, situations outside of their control may mean that they cannot always arrive to school on time. These students may apply for a late pass, either on a temporary basis (e.g., for a short-term injury) or for the academic year (e.g., for travel distance). A late pass application form can be collected from the Sixth Form office and must be returned, signed by parent and student, before a late pass can be issued.

However, Form Time is an essential part of the school day. Students who have been granted a late pass must ensure they read the form time notices and/or assembly slides – shared on Teams – and endeavour to collect letters, timetables and reports from their form tutors. Failure to do so will result in students missing vital information and possible opportunities.

Form Time is also where our Personal Development curriculum is delivered. This is a statutory entitlement for all post-16 learners. Part of this will be delivered by external providers, so it is essential that students attend Form Time as frequently as possible in order to access this curriculum. It is expected that students review the PD materials they have missed themselves, just as they would if they missed a lesson.

Late passes are conditional and will be reviewed termly. If a student fails to keep up to date with notices or the PD curriculum, the late pass may be revoked.

External commitments

Whilst we support Sixth Form students in exploring opportunities outside of school and undertaking part time work, studying an A-Level programme is a full-time, in person, commitment. It is therefore vitally important that students:

- Do not book driving lessons or tests during the hours of the school day.
- Do not undertake a high number of hours of part-time employment (recommended no more than 12 hours per week).
- Do not commit to work shifts or training that begin before the school days ends.
- Understand that Home Study periods can be revoked and changed, and there may be times in the academic year where timetables need to be amended and reissued.
- Understand that both national and mock exams will extend beyond the school day. These cannot be moved due to external commitments.

If students undertake a significant number of paid hours in employment, we will no longer be able to register them as a full-time student. This will affect bursary payments and some child benefits.

Truancy

If a student does not attend a timetabled lesson (including Private Study) without a reason provided, this will be categorised as truancy. This will be communicated with the student and their parent or carer and the appropriate sanction will be issued. This may include temporary removal of Home Study, attendance to an additional lesson, or internal suspension for repeated occurrences.

Monitoring of attendance

As with all schools, colleges and employers, the Sixth Form team will monitor attendance of all students and communicate concerns with students and parents/carers.

We categorise attendance figures as:

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| Definitions of attendance | |
| Excellent | 100% |
| Good | 99-95% |
| Below expectations | 94-90% |
| Cause for concern | 89-85% |
| Serious concern | Below 85% |

We will endeavour to support students and their parents/carers in maintaining good attendance. Below sets out the stages of support.

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Stages and sanctions | School Staff |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|

| | |
|---|--|
| | |
| <p>Stage 1 Below expectations - 94-90% Letter home. Removal of Home Study temporarily (two weeks in the first instance).</p> | <p>Pastoral support - Form Tutors</p> |
| <p>Stage 2 Cause for concern - 89-85% Letter home and meeting with parents. Home Study removed. Reviewed on half termly basis. Extension of probationary period.</p> | <p>Sixth Form Leadership (Year 12 and Year 13 Leads) and whole-school Attendance Lead</p> |
| <p>Stage 3 Serious concern - below 85% Meeting with parents. Home Study revoked pending review in light of sustained, improved attendance. Extension of probationary period. Potential reduction in study programme.</p> | <p>Deputy Head of Sixth Form and Year Leads</p> |
| <p>Stage 4 Sustained concern - below 80% Meeting with parents. Curriculum offer (12 into 13) reviewed. Payment of exam entries, in line with DFE guidance. Bursary payments reviewed.</p> | <p>Deputy Head and Head of Sixth Form (Assistant Headteacher)</p> |
| <p>Stage 5 Continued absence, below 80% and no sustained improvement since stage 4. Meeting with parents. Offer of place of study reviewed immediately. Fit to study review (where appropriate to the context).</p> | <p>Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher</p> |

In the circumstance of continued absence, Durham Johnston will follow DFE guidelines. Where appropriate, continued absence can see bursary payments temporarily suspended or in the most acute of cases, the offer of a place to study withdrawn.

Barriers to attendance

We pride ourselves at Durham Johnston in being a supportive, inclusive community of teachers and learners. Students and parents/carers are therefore encouraged to disclose to the school any physical or mental health need, as well as any significant personal circumstances, so that we can establish how best to support the individual student and what reasonable adjustments can be made, where possible. Where there are specific needs or circumstances, early disclosure of information can help the school in attempting to offer the appropriate support and make contact with other agencies, where appropriate. This prompt sharing of information is also especially important for those students joining the Sixth Form from other secondary schools.

In some cases, such as for applications for access arrangements, it will be necessary for students and parents/carers to provide evidence of the physical or mental health need. The school will work together with students, parents/carers and, where appropriate, external agencies (such as CAMHS) to create a Study Support Plan that sets out the support and reasonable adjustments to help the individual student access their study programme.

Limits to support

Durham Johnston is not a distance learning provider so full in-person attendance is a basic requirement for completion of study at A Level. Furthermore, our resources and the support available are both finite so there must be reasonable expectations on what can be offered, as all the school's students' needs must be catered for. Durham Johnston will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments but there may well be times where the school will judge that it has made sufficient reasonable adjustments, having exhausted all support options available. It may be the case that where the welfare of the student is at risk, we need to complete a Fitness to Study review, and seek guidance from medical professionals. Further information can be found in the Fitness to Study Policy.

Conduct

Sixth Form is non-compulsory education. All students who come to Durham Johnston must sign the student agreement (also counter signed by a parent or carer),

Name of Student ,

In accepting a place in the Sixth Form I agree to the following:

I will set a good example to other students by maintaining the highest standards in my work and conduct in all areas of school life.

Academic Excellence and Acquiring Knowledge

I will make the most of every lesson by preparation, participation and consolidation.

I will make full use of my private study periods in school.

I will complete all independent work and submit it by the required time.

I will attend all form periods, lessons and private study periods on my personal timetable.

Personal and Community - Public Service, Social Justice and Diverse Opportunities

I will provide a written explanation from my parent/guardian of any absences.

I will act with courtesy and treat others with respect to effect the smooth running of the sixth form.

I will participate in and contribute positively to the school community.

Signed

As parent(s) or guardian(s) we support the Student Agreement and undertake to support the student in completing academic work both in and out of school, to ensure full attendance and to work closely with the school to ensure a successful outcome.

Signed

The school will do its best to:

**Provide you with the highest possible quality of teaching to help you achieve academic excellence
Promote the best possible learning atmosphere in lessons and in private study to help you acquire knowledge.**

Provide you and your parents with information on your progress.

Discuss concerns with you and, when necessary and appropriate, with your parent(s).

Monitor your attendance.

Help you to prepare for your future and to provide references to Higher Education and employers in line with social justice and to help you become a valuable public servant.

Conduct in lessons, Form Time and in the wider school community before, during and after school, matters. The school can temporarily or permanently withdraw an offer of a place to study here if terms of the Student Agreement are broken. Please find the link to the school's behaviour policy:

[School Policies | Durham Johnston School](#)

Expected conduct from Sixth Form students:

- Punctual attendance of Form Time, Private Study, PHE and lessons.
- Wear the Sixth Form uniform, as set out online and in student planners.
- Private Study is timetabled to support the students with independent work. Attendance is compulsory – registers are taken and non-attendance is reported on. It is students' responsibility to ensure they have received their registration mark.
- Home Study is a privilege in recognition of students' ability to work independently and desire to complete voluntary work in school or in the wider community. It is a privilege that can be revoked.
- PHE (Preparation for Higher Education) which runs from January in Year 12 until December of Year 13 is timetabled fortnightly. The lessons are compulsory and focus on the research application and decision-making phases of the university and apprenticeship admissions cycle.
- Personal Development is a compulsory component of the students' education in preparation for life in modern Britain. Form Time, assemblies and extended PD sessions are all compulsory; non-attendance is reported on as would non-attendance of academic subjects' lessons.
- Part-time work is an important part of students' increasing maturity and responsibility. However part time work is not to be undertaken in place of Form Time, Private Study, PHE or academic lessons. The students' priority is their timetable at Durham Johnston.
- This is a non-smoking/non-vaping site. Students failing to follow this rule will face disciplinary procedures as outlined in the school's behaviour policy and sixth form student agreement.
- Students should not leave site at unauthorised times and not bring anyone onsite who is not cleared to visit the school.
- IT usage is monitored. Failure to follow appropriate usage terms and conditions will face disciplinary procedures as outlined in the school's behaviour policy and sixth form student agreement.
- Students are expected to check their school email inbox and Teams regularly and communicate, and behave, with staff appropriately through these channels.
- Use language in and around the school site that is appropriate to a professional setting, especially in the vicinity of younger children.
- Mobile phones are restricted in their use. Only in the designated Sixth Form Area or Café 6 can phones be used. Phones cannot be used in the main school building. Students must follow instructions from staff immediately and make a positive contribution to the school community.

All of the above is designed to support students with a productive, supportive climate for learning that should enable them to make the academic progress to fulfil their next step ambitions.

Year 12 into Year 13

Students must pass their end of Year 12 examinations in order to continue that subject into Year 13 (Grade E or below suggests success at A-Level is highly unlikely). If a September resit does not see sufficient improvement to the student's grade in the subject, alternative Year 12 courses will be explored, albeit priority for those courses must go to new starters in Year 12.

School term/holidays dates for the academic year 2024 - 2025

[Term dates for the academic year 2023 to 2025\(1\).pdf \(schudio.com\)](#)

| Date school closes | Date school reopens |
|--|---|
| | School reopens for Year 12 Wednesday 4 September 2024 School reopens for Year 13 Thursday 5 September 2024 |
| Autumn half term (1 week) Friday 25 October 2024 | Monday 4 November 2024 |
| (INSET Day School closed to students - Fri 29 November) Thursday 28 November | Monday 2 December |
| Christmas 2024 (2 weeks and 1 day) Thursday 19 December 2024 | Monday 6 January 2025 |
| Spring Half Term 2025 (1 week) Friday 21 February 2025 | Monday 3 March 2025 |
| Easter 2025 (2 weeks) Friday 11 April 2025 | Monday 28 April 2025 |
| May Day 2025 (School closed Mon 5 May) Friday 2 May 2025 | Tuesday 6 May 2025 |
| Summer Half Term 2025 (1 week) Friday 23 May 2025 | Monday 2 June 2025 |
| Summer 2025 Friday 18 July 2025 | Date to be confirmed |






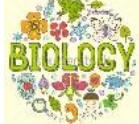
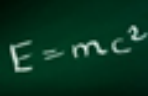











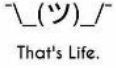
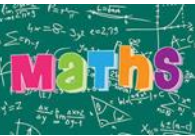
- ✓ Any questions you have go to your teacher, they're there to help you and they want the best for you. The chances are someone else in the class might be thinking the same thing.
- ✓ Find a revision schedule that works for you! I use an app called **Flora** that tracks your progress and plants flowers in your own garden for every hour of revision you do.
- ✓ Make sure that you don't fall behind with work and stay on top of it. Don't accumulate it over the week, get it done once you get it. By finishing all class work earlier you then have more time to go over things you may not understand or you are able to read ahead.
- ✓ Make sure you start revision early, e.g. making flashcards after every topic. It also really helps to read ahead, so that when it comes to the lessons, it's more of a recap. Do your homework on time, preferably as soon as you get it, and make the most of your private study periods as they are really useful for getting as much work done as you can.
- ✓ Do practice questions on **physicsandmathstutor.com**.
- ✓ It doesn't have to be hours every night but just consolidate your work after the lessons. (Your private study periods are a great way to do this).
- ✓ Be organised with your work, (Deadlines, revision plans, etc) and use your private study times well. They are not "free periods." They are an opportunity for independent study. Complete the homework from your lessons as soon as possible and then use that time for revision. Consistent revision from the beginning will make your exams much more manageable.
- ✓ Do your homework as soon as you get it. Don't underestimate the jump from GCSEs to A levels. Talk to your teachers and ask for help because they 100% will give it to you!
- ✓ Start making revision resources early on, even if it's just a quizlet or too, future you will thank you!
- ✓ Don't be daunted by how much information there is, even if you just revise one section it's a step in the right direction.
- ✓ Listen to all teacher feedback, specifically in essay subjects. A Levels are much more about how you write and structure pieces than knowing the content and being a talented writer.
- ✓ Choose subjects that you want to study, not the ones that your friends take or that you think look good, but also ones that suit the way you work. Don't take a subject if it is incredibly hard for you to do.
- ✓ Make a definition list and put it at the front of your folder adding in every new definition you receive as soon as you get it.
- ✓ Keep on top of work and make sure to ask questions about what you don't understand. Always try to get the best result possible in mocks because you don't know what could happen down the line.
- ✓ READ AHEAD!!! I find it so much easier in lessons and further down the line for revision by reading ahead to start with. At the start of year 12, I was told to do this but was a bit too lazy to do it but then everything gets a bit much and you end up stressed to bits. It's far better to do it now than later.
- ✓ Get on top of your work and don't get stressed. A LEVELS ARE SO MUCH MORE DIFFICULT! I went comfortably from 8s to Ds and I understand now that I needed a different approach. In fairness, I was told this was the case in assemblies. Making mistakes is fine so long as you change and learn from them (after that I'm not getting Ds anymore).
- ✓ Use your private study periods!! Even if you set aside your one-hour period for a more relaxed work approach, using your frees for work is the best habit to get into. Make a study playlist - this will help you 'get in the zone'.
- ✓ Use sessions provided for extra support. Some subjects do lunchtime or afterschool drop-ins and if it's about anything else then Sixth Form staff can see you early or at lunchtime. Don't be afraid to ask.

- ✓ It can be quite daunting to start in Sixth Form, whether you have been in the school from year 7 or if you have come from a different school. However, remember that all of the year 12s are in the same position as you, the year 13s were there only last year and the teachers have been there themselves and they have also helped many other students to settle in. Don't be afraid to speak to people to ask for help, guidance or support. Something that I really love about Durham Johnston is the community feeling; Everybody helps everybody else and we're here to help you as well.
- ✓ Make friends in each of your classes, so that you always have somebody to discuss things with and help each other. If you're really stuck, go and ask the teachers, as they'll always help you as much as they can - don't wait to ask them because soon you'll forget about it and when you come to revise, you'll realise you still don't understand.
- ✓ Eat healthy.
- ✓ Try to get involved in societies or start your own.
- ✓ Stay organised, ask for help, keep reminding yourself of your end goal.
- ✓ Take opportunities that come up when you feel that they will suit you and join a society. Don't be afraid of your friend group growing and changing. Time management is going to be important as you take more responsibility for your independent learning.
- ✓ Be a friendly face for everyone!
- ✓ Make new friend groups, branch out to others, make the most of free periods and don't be complacent.
- ✓ Sleep well every night, earlier than you normally would.
- ✓ Take opportunities: go along to societies at lunch, use revision sessions, use your teachers, be creative, plan ahead for university and courses and do anything which will boost your CV and UCAS applications inside or outside of school.
- ✓ Having a balance between revision and socialising/hobbies.
- ✓ Start doing things for UCAS/ uni application early on as it creeps up on you.
- ✓ Use your private study to create a happy medium between study and social time by studying alongside other people in your private study period, by doing this you get valuable study time locked in whilst also allowing social time, specifically with students new to the school.
- ✓ Be yourself and don't make a new personality to fit it.
- ✓ Hit a good balance of work and play. If you don't work enough, you'll fall behind and will only get more and more stressed but equally importantly, make the most of your time to enjoy yourself. The lessons and relationships with the teachers are more relaxed and so that element of fun is crucial.
- ✓ Getting involved in societies. Looking back at year 11 me, I never thought I would have joined any and am so happy that I was encouraged in assemblies at the start of year 12. I enjoyed them way more than I thought I would and it had become valuable to my studies as well as just a lunchtime activity! Loved MedSoc and Language Soc. Also taking other opportunities such as becoming a house leader, which I also never would have done in the past but it has been nothing but fun and rewarding.
- ✓ Don't miss days of school, keep your attendance high, lessons have so much more content compared to GCSEs lessons (which are easier to catch up on the work).
- ✓ If you're new to the school (coming to the sixth form from doing GCSEs at another school) then don't stay in your previous school bubble, make friends. If you came from Durham Johnston previously then make new friends with the people from other schools, I made friends with somebody from another school who I would now consider to be one of my closest friends - so do it.
- ✓ Collaborate. Be resilient. Get involved.
- ✓ Don't compare yourself to others. Just because someone else is working / revising in a certain way doesn't mean it will work for you! Be confident in what you are doing and know that if you are always focusing on learning and meeting deadlines, you are doing well.
- ✓ Be kind to everyone, it really does make the year feel more like a community.

✓ **What our students say..... This subject is great because...**

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| <p>Art Creativity freedom of choice of what you want to explore and study, and I was also surprised by how deep and mind broadening the subject is.</p> | <p>Biology There are a lot of practicals in biology which help you understand the content a lot more as you're applying what you've learnt to a real-life situation.</p> | <p>Business I had never taken business before, so it was entirely new to me. However, it ended up becoming my favourite subject as I ended up learning the most from it as it is all around us. You notice more things day to day. The way it is taught by the teachers keeps you very engaged and interested.</p> | <p>Chemistry It helps further explain why things work which is both interesting and helpful to give more depth to other science subjects. You're given more freedom and trust with practicals which helps develop confidence with skills.</p> | <p>Computer Science It's challenging but the small class size means that you always have someone you can ask for help when you get stuck. Teamwork is really important.</p> |
| <p>Economics It allows me to understand the social and economic conflicts occurring around the world through simple fundamental chains of reasoning, authorizing me to use high depth theory to orchestrate the correct pivot for a specific financial state.</p> | <p>English Language English Language at A-Level is so different to GCSE level. You get to study language in a more in-depth and scientific way, covering a range of topics. You move from looking at written texts in Year 11 to seeing how areas such as accents and gender influence our language, as well as how children learn to write and speak! It is really interesting.</p> | <p>English Literature English Literature- the content is very interesting, and the lessons have quite a lot of class debate within them, which I prefer because it helps you to examine separate viewpoints.</p> | <p>Ethics & Philosophy I love the critical analysis side, how you're able to pick apart each theory. The teachers also make the lessons really engaging. Finally, as there are three different branches (DCT, Phil, and Ethics) that you study at the same time, you never get bored.</p> | <p>French French stops being about learning answers to questions such as what's your favourite food and becomes an exploration into different cultures and thought-provoking topics. You have to be more self-motivated, but this can push you to a higher level of proficiency in the language.</p> |
| <p>Geography The best subject for an insight into the world we are a part of as its various components explore so much - both physical and human. Fascinating to learn about and a great mix of elements to the course.</p> | <p>German The close-knit, small class makes learning German enjoyable and often easier than GCSE level when classes are bigger. It is the most rewarding subject that I study because gaining fluency in another language is one of the most challenging things you can do. Studying German at A-level makes this a lot easier.</p> | <p>History I love this subject, because every lesson I learn something new about the world and the people who were in it previously. It's so interesting to see the patterns we as humans cannot deter from and all of the artefacts we leave behind in our paths. By looking back at History, we can see how far we have come and how much we have left to accomplish.</p> | <p>Maths With Maths, the main thrill comes from a question you struggle to answer but ultimately get it right with no help. The feeling of satisfaction is great.</p> <p>Further Maths Further Maths - it's an extra challenge that lends itself to normal Maths (i.e. it makes normal Maths genuinely easy).</p> | <p>Media Studies Such an interesting subject that is so different to all of the others. So enjoyable but academic at the same time. Allows you to get a good balance between practical and written work.</p> |
| <p>Music Music - because it goes way more in depth at A level, and you learn so many more techniques and appreciate the subject more as a whole.</p> | <p>Physical Education You get to learn a wide range of topics often linking to other subjects such as psychology. It is really interesting to learn things that you can then use in your own sport and exercise routines to improve your fitness, performance and health.</p> | <p>Physics It is my favourite subject because every aspect of it has real world applications in your day-to-day life that you don't always get to observe unless you know how it works.</p> | <p>Politics The politics syllabus is relevant and up to date. I find it fascinating to learn about how the government works and to gain insight into what I've seen on the news.</p> | <p>Psychology Skills learnt are perfect balance of creativity and logic. Finally, it's a very interesting subject because it relates to everyday life.</p> |
| <p>Sociology It teaches you a wide perspective on society, and can go down a degree in it and opens a good range of doors, for example for me education.</p> | <p>Spanish There's a much bigger focus on the history and culture of Spain making it even more interesting than GCSE.</p> | | | |

Examples of Durham Johnston Student-Led Societies

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| MedSoc  | FemSoc  | Pride  |
| QuizSoc  | Global Discussion Society  | BioSoc  |
| Physics  | Debating  | Computer Science  |
| Drama  | ChemSoc  | Languages Soc  |
| Psychology  | PolSoc  | LawSoc  |
| History  | Music Society  | Christian Union  |
| That's Life  That's Life. | Young Minds YOUNGMINDS fighting for young people's mental health | Maths Soc  |



And – there are lots of music events each week:

Chamber choir
Wind Band
Senior Choir
Senior Orchestra
Big Band

Looking after mental wellbeing – our own and others

At DJSF we take mental wellbeing seriously and work together to build resilience and good habits. Our Year 12 survey last year was shared with students and staff in depth. Two key messages came through in particular.

Mental Wellbeing Survey

1. **Be proactive in communicating** (both ways) with us – checking emails/notices and asking the appropriate member of staff to help resolve any issues. Who can help at DJSF? Form Tutor / subject teachers / Sixth Form staff? If you are unsure who the best person is – come to see Mr Wilbraham or Miss Simpson to ask. We will help and/or point you in the right direction.
2. **Support one another** – we are all members of one community – DJSF. If you see or hear something that concerns you – help. This might be smiling/including the student – or coming to see Mr Wilbraham or Miss Simpson to pass on your concerns.

These are some of the useful websites that we suggest you explore – many form the basis for Tutor group discussions.

- We have these calendar / posters up on the Sixth Form office door. They just help to give you a little nudge to keep you in a good place. The website is worth exploring - something for everyone. You can download the app and it will give you little daily support messages. Have a look.
 - <https://www.actionforhappiness.org/calendars>
 - <https://www.actionforhappiness.org/10-keys-to-happier-living>
- <https://youngminds.org.uk/>
- <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/mental-health-awareness-week>
- <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/wellbeing/wellbeing/>
4 minute video.
- <https://www.mind.org.uk/need-urgent-help/how-can-i-distract-myself/videos-websites-and-apps/>
- <https://www.kooth.com/> - and watch the video - <https://www.kooth.com/video> (1 min 35secs)
- We liked these very simple and accessible ways to help you feel good – how many do you do regularly?
 - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/56kW7S2dWkWSQjsTzrBywFH/10-simple-pleasures-to-keep-you-going>



Who can help you at Durham Johnston?

We have a number of experienced members of staff to support you through your transition to more independent and advanced study. Additionally, your increasing maturity brings with it new challenges and opportunities. Key people to support and guide you are: your Form Tutor, subject teachers and your Sixth Form staff:

Mr Wilbraham - Head of Sixth Form
Miss Simpson - Deputy Head of Sixth Form
Mr Everett - Sixth Form Senior Tutor Year 12 Lead
Mrs Nixon - Sixth Form Senior Tutor Year 13 Lead
Mrs Doy - Sixth Form Administrator
Miss Phillips - Sixth Form Study Supervisor

How do I contact staff? Any member of Durham Johnston staff can usually be contacted in person or by school email (for a quick decision or to arrange a meeting).

Not sure who to ask? Come to the **Sixth Form Office**

Other contact details:

- **School Nurse** – appointments through Sixth Form office
- **Counsellors** –to arrange a confidential meeting with a Counsellor, come to sixth form office.



A few comments from our students

I know that teachers are on my side. They really do want me to get the best grades I can

Don't compare yourself to other students

Get homework done. Do not let it gather up because you will regret it

I feel a lot more comfortable studying independently for subjects that I enjoy and take an interest in

Make the most of it and enjoy what Johnston has to offer

Don't hold back, meet new people, try new societies, learn new things

It was easy to settle in DJSF, harder to settle into A level study habits

Collaborate. Be resilient. Get involved.

Use your private study periods!!
Make a study playlist-this will help you 'get in the zone'

Be confident in what you are doing and know that if you are focussing on learning and are meeting deadlines, you are doing well

Find the right revision style for you as early as possible

Keep on top of work and make sure you ask questions about what you don't understand

Don't miss days of school, keep your attendance high, lessons have so much more content compared to GCSE lessons

Only surround yourself with people who make you happy. Remove yourself from negative situations

I settled in quickly. I much prefer the Sixth Form experience to GCSEs

Be kind to everyone, it really does make the year feel more like a community

Hit a good balance of work and play

I use my planner every day