



DURHAM JOHNSTON
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL
DARE TO BE WISE



Teacher of English

MPS/UPS

Start date - September 2026

Permanent

Crossgate Moor, Durham, DH1 4SU

www.durhamjohnston.org.uk

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Letter of Introduction

Rosslyn McFadden
Headteacher



Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in being a Teacher of English at Durham Johnston Comprehensive School.

Durham Johnston Comprehensive School is a happy, high performing, oversubscribed 11-18 school in Durham city. We have a national reputation for academic excellence and are well respected in our local community both for our excellent outcomes and our strong pastoral care. The success of our school is built on positive relationships at all levels, and our dedicated staff work together to prioritise the wellbeing and best possible outcomes for all our students. As a Local Authority school, we care for our own community; our focus is always on, 'how will this benefit our students?' and 'what impact will this have on our staff?'. Teachers often stay at Durham Johnston for a significant period of time as wellbeing, professional autonomy and subject specialism are respected and protected.

At Durham Johnston all staff, including leaders, are first and foremost teachers. Our intake is fully comprehensive and we highly value expert practitioners with both a deep interest in their subject and a genuine commitment to social justice. We have many students joining us in Year 7 with the potential to achieve outstanding success academically alongside students who can find accessing education challenging for a variety of reasons. It is important to us that all these students benefit from their time here and they have access to strong subject specialists.

We are seeking a highly motivated and passionate teacher of English who is both an expert practitioner and a colleague with a deep interest in the subject to join our successful English department. Progress and attainment of our students is very strong at GCSE and we offer both A-Level English Language and English Literature. We encourage colleagues at any stage in their career to apply to work in our school. We will always appoint the best person for our school community regardless of age or experience. Our senior leaders and post holders have a genuine commitment to ethical leadership and if you share these values we would welcome your application.

The role is a full time teacher of English, however for the right candidate we may be able to offer a 0.8FTE contract.

Informal visits to the school are very welcome. If you would like meet with us, please email (recruitment@durhamjohnston.org.uk) to book a time.

The closing date is **9.00am on Monday 27th April 2026**. If you are returning your application by email please use the following address: recruitment@durhamjohnston.org.uk

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Rosslyn McFadden
Headteacher

Core Values

Teacher of English September 2026

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At Durham Johnston Comprehensive School all members of our school community are expected to exemplify the school's core values.

- 1. Academic Excellence;** a belief in progress for all.
- 2. Acquiring Knowledge;** the importance of being an educated person and knowing things.
- 3. Social Justice;** providing opportunities for all, regardless of background.
- 4. Public Service;** the importance of making a contribution to the school community and wider society.
- 5. Diverse Opportunities;** a rounded education that 'opens doors' regardless of location or specialism.

In their time with us we want all of our students to make excellent academic progress based upon their starting points, to acquire knowledge, to access opportunities regardless of previous experiences or circumstance, to support others within and beyond our community and to leave us for further success as adults. We are a big and busy comprehensive school, and all teaching and support staff are united in wanting the best for our students. We work hard, and look for ways to adapt, improve, and create new opportunities for our young people. We don't always get things right and sometimes encounter issues and circumstances for which there aren't easy solutions, but we are honest about that and seek to work collaboratively with parents and carers.

We believe firmly in social justice and equality of opportunity for all; when students cross our threshold each morning, they have access to the same opportunities. As a school we believe in education in its widest sense; students can learn a huge amount both in and beyond the classroom, and, of equal importance, by interacting and working with others. The personal development of each student is key to their future success, and we offer a diverse range of extracurricular opportunities, as well as encouraging participation in public service, particularly through our well established House System.

Job Description

Teacher of English September 2026

Permanent



At Durham Johnston Comprehensive School everyone's first responsibility is to ensure our work remains aligned with our school's core values and ethos and contributes to our long-term strategic vision. Whilst job descriptions vary, our common commitment to the welfare and success of our young people does not.

At Durham Johnston Comprehensive School everyone's first responsibility is to work towards the fulfilment of the school plan. While job descriptions vary, our common commitment to the welfare and success of our young people does not.

General Responsibilities

- To fulfil all duties in line with the Teachers' Standards and the professional expectations of the school.
- To provide successful teaching and learning opportunities for all students so that everyone is able to achieve academic excellence and acquire essential knowledge and prepare them for global opportunities.
- To be committed to improving the quality of your teaching in pursuit of academic excellence for all and to take a full and active part in CPD to this end.
- To be a committed and supportive member of your department, cohort team and the whole school community, working collaboratively to ensure the best outcomes for every member of our school community in the name of both social justice and public service.
- To fulfil the role of the form tutor as an essential part of a student's day and their educational experience. The form tutor is in a unique and privileged position, able to see a fuller picture of a student's life and able to support them in being successful.
- To promote good order and discipline in school by maintaining and supporting whole school routines and performing duties as instructed.
- To celebrate and encourage the achievements of all students.
- To promote the aims of the school plan as appropriate to the professional role of a teacher.
- To participate in appropriate meetings with colleagues and parents.
- To take part in the appraisal and professional development system.
- To follow staff procedures and the procedures and instructions of the LEA and the governing body.
- To work at the reasonable direction of the Headteacher.

This job description is current and was reviewed on 2nd February 2026, but following consultation with you, may be altered to reflect or anticipate changes in the job which are commensurate with the salary and job title. All posts will be reviewed annually.

Person Specification

Teacher of English September 2026

Permanent



	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appropriate Honours Degree• Qualified Teacher status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evidence of further study and/or Further Professional Qualifications
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evidence of being an outstanding classroom practitioner• Experience of working successfully and collaboratively to improve outcomes for all students, especially those who need additional support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experience of supporting students with additional needs• Experience working collaboratively with middle leaders• Experience working with pastoral colleagues• Experience of communicating with parents and other stakeholders
Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to help create a strong culture of success in the classroom• Ability to work collaboratively and strategically• Ability to build, forge and sustain partnerships• Ability to inspire, challenge, and support students• Awareness of inclusion, equity, and diversity in lesson planning• Strong analytical and problem-solving skills• Strong knowledge of the national curriculum for English• Ability to use ICT proficiently and digital media software	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to use data and other information to self-evaluate and improve your own practice• Strong understanding of safeguarding and child protection procedures

Person Specification

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Personal Attributes

- Commitment to the school's ethos, core values, and strategic vision
- Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- A passion for English and reading that inspires both students and staff
- Commitment to continuous professional development
- Commitment to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion
- High expectations of self, colleagues, and students
- Ability to model professional standards, integrity and behaviours articulating clear values and moral purpose
- Ability to communicate effectively
- Ability to build effective working relationships with staff at all levels
- Ability to engage with and motivate students who may find school challenging
- System orientated, extremely well organised and able to solve problems.
- Passionate about supporting young people
- Calm, approachable, and emotionally resilient
- Reflective and open to feedback
- Kind, tolerant and considerate with a sense of community and a commitment to public service
- Considerate to the wellbeing of colleagues and students

Department Overview

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English at Durham Johnston Comprehensive School

This is a wonderful opportunity for a talented teacher to join an exceptional department. The English Department consists of fifteen well-qualified English teachers, including 5 postholders, who work together as an effective team.

The Durham Johnston English Department seek to open doors for all students by fostering a love of reading that will help them both enter worlds of imagination and understand the world that they live in more deeply. This focus on enjoying a wide range of classic and diverse literature aims to equip our young people for life in Modern Britain as well as to develop the essential reading skills needed for success in their next steps, for example GCSEs, A Levels and beyond. Furthermore, we nurture an enthusiasm for writing, by encouraging creativity in fiction writing, such as creating fantasy and dystopian worlds, alongside critical thinking and analytical skills in non-fiction writing. We believe in social justice, with all classes in a year group experiencing the same breadth and depth of curriculum.

The school has an extremely varied catchment area; therefore, Quality First Teaching to cater for students of all abilities and backgrounds is essential. Inclusivity is paramount; we provide support for all, through live modelling and scaffolding, as well as meeting the intellectual challenge of stretching the school's large number of very able students. The department has high expectations of all but, also, places great emphasis on care and support.

In Years 7-11 students are streamed into two bands, with a smaller nurture group where necessary.

The department believes strongly in broadening and enriching the range of students' experiences through a variety of activities in and out of school, such as theatre trips, workshops and reading events, and is always looking for new opportunities in this area. Public speaking is a compulsory part of the English curriculum in all years, with a Public Speaking Competition for KS3, as we believe good oracy skills open doors for young people. We enjoy competing in the Poetry By Heart Competition and the National Kids Lit Quiz.

The department is a strong team, and we encourage the full involvement of department members in its development through opportunities offered for taking a variety of responsibilities. This policy aims to make the most of individual expertise while furthering staff development.

The department has developed a spiral curriculum that spans five years, reinforcing and deepening knowledge and skills throughout years 7-11, and often beyond. We interleave the teaching of reading and writing, so that we can inspire students to produce a range of creative and critical pieces through the study of great works of literature, both from the traditional canon and more modern works of fiction and non-fiction.

Durham Johnston English Department prides itself on working collaboratively to create, review and evaluate resources and make adaptations to ensure they are effective. The department is seeking an individual who can collaborate with other teachers within the department to develop our current practice.

Department Overview

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The department's recent internal quality assurance visit stated: "To be a pupil in this department is to be taught a well-structured and coherent curriculum by subject experts. It is to be encouraged to debate and discuss key ideas that reflect the complexity of twenty-first century Britain whilst also being offered access to rich cultural capital. It is also to be offered precise guidance on how to improve as a learner."

Results: Summer 2025

GCSE English Language	73% of students achieved grade 5 or higher
	86% of students achieved grade 4 or higher
GCSE English Literature	69% of students achieved grade 5 or higher
	84% of students achieved grade 4 or higher
A2 English Language	83% of students achieved grades A*-B
A2 English Literature	81% of students achieved grades A*-B

Context of Durham Johnston Comprehensive School



Comprehensive Nature

Durham Johnston Comprehensive School is a truly comprehensive school that genuinely serves a social cross-section. We strongly believe that all students regardless of background or ability should have access to a knowledge rich curriculum and are unique in our commitment to both academic rigour and social inclusivity. We have high ambitions for all our students, and we are determined to ensure that every child, no matter where they grow up, whatever their personal circumstances, whatever life has given or denied them, has the opportunity to fulfil their potential and to be happy. For many colleagues, it is this unique opportunity to teach across the ability and social spectrum that is one of the main draws of the school.

Leadership

Durham Johnston is a local authority school and has no plans to join or form a Multi Academy Trust. This allows the school to have its own unique identity and ensures that leadership decisions are made for the benefit of our students and our community. The school is led in a way that seeks to maximise the autonomy of individual classroom teachers and departments, as we recognise that highly dedicated, educated and trained professionals are the people best placed to determine how to teach their subject to the individuals in their classroom. The leadership of the school look to ensure that departments and classroom teachers are supported in a way that allows them to focus on this as much as possible; we keep good order and let our teachers teach.

At a leadership level we are committed to the values of ethical leadership. As a leadership team we listen and respond to staff concerns and our staff are able to raise problems and tough issues when necessary. In a recent staff survey, an overwhelming majority of our staff said they felt well supported by the school's senior leadership team.

Staff Wellbeing

The wellbeing of our staff is central to the ethos of Durham Johnston Comprehensive School and this is evidenced in our exceptionally high staff retention. Leaders are very conscious that our staff are what makes Durham Johnston special; we value them and look after them. We have a strong sense of community within our school and our staff work very hard as a team to support one another. We welcome opportunities to come together as a staff and these can range from tea and scones in the staff room, to the highly competitive end of term departmental quizzes. Many staff socialise both inside and outside of school and in school run sessions such as sport and fitness clubs and wellbeing sessions. Our staff like each other and enjoy spending time together.

Pastoral Care

Students at Durham Johnston benefit from exceptional pastoral care. One of the greatest strengths of the school is the strong, caring relationships between staff and students and the warm, harmonious ethos is regularly commented on by external visitors. We are incredibly proud of our students and who display a positive attitude to their studies and demonstrate a consistently strong desire to learn - we have an unusual culture where it is "cool to be clever". Behaviour in lessons and around school is consistently calm and purposeful due to effective systems built on strong relationships. Our strong pastoral systems help to ensure that every child feels valued and cared for and we offer a bespoke range of support where needed. Our pupils and parents and carers report that bullying is rare but, when it happens, it is dealt with highly effectively. Attendance at our school is very high.

Context of Durham Johnston Comprehensive School



Sixth Form

Our sixth form has a national reputation for excellence and is a specialist A-Level centre. We have over 350 students who join us from a wide geographical area and a range of schools. We offer 25 traditional A-Level subjects and our results consistently place us as one of the highest performing state schools nationally. The vast majority of our students go on to study at Russell Group universities and around 15% of our students each year typically secure places at Oxford, Cambridge, or for Medicine/Veterinary courses. Pastoral support in the Sixth Form is highly specialised and our expert staff and our students receive excellent guidance on transition, UCAS applications, personal statements as well as support on mental wellbeing and building resilience and good habits.

In addition, we offer an exceptional super curricular programme to develop our students beyond the exam syllabus. Our Sixth Formers are remarkable young people and they engage in a wide range of enrichment and leadership opportunities. This includes student led societies ranging from the very academic (quantum computing) through to those that are more social (the Taylor Swift society). Our House leads organise and run house events and competitions, as well as charity fundraising events. Other activities they engage in include: Debate, MedSoc group, Oxbridge group, Year 11 mentoring, Year 7 paired reading, Library leads, Mental health ambassadors, Subject ambassadors, Sports and Music.

Extra-Curricular

We are proud of the range of sports our young people can take part in and the school has regularly been recognised in the top 1% of sport schools nationally by School Sport magazine. This reflects both the range of sports offered, as well as the high standards that many of our students achieve. Our music department lead a series of highly popular orchestras and choirs and we are excited about our upcoming musical. However, it is not just in these two areas that children can access a wide range of opportunities, our offer extends from coding to gardening; from film club to Ancient Greek. There are clubs for everyone and our young people always meet students with a shared interest. We actively seek to ensure that all children find something they can enjoy during their time at Durham Johnston. We were chosen as The Sunday Times National Comprehensive School of the Year for 2019/20 and we are very proud that the award was based upon a wide range of factors, including the opportunities that we provide for students regardless of their backgrounds or personal circumstances. We regularly receive regional awards for academic excellence.

Living in the North East

Living in the North East is an attractive proposition. Many of our staff live within our catchment area and house prices in the region mean that it is ideal both for those seeking to establish themselves on the property ladder, or for families in need of more space. As well as the historic city of Durham, the surrounding area offers much in the way of natural beauty for people to enjoy, whether walking in the Wear valley, visiting the Borders or North York Moors, or surfing in the North Sea on the Northumberland Coast. Equally close is the vibrant city of Newcastle upon Tyne. Well served by transport links, the school is close to both Durham train station, a key stop on the East Coast Mainline, and the A1 (M), allowing easy access to Newcastle, York and London.