

Durham Johnston

# Governors Handbook

2017-2018

*Sapere Aude -  
Dare to be wise*

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# Governors Handbook 2017-2018

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## Section 1: Governing Body

### Roles and Operation

Governors are responsible for:

- raising standards of academic achievement
- recruitment of staff
- representing the views of the local community
- managing school budgets
- taking a strategic overview of staff performance
- promoting the values and ethos of the school.

### The School Governing Body

There are a number of different categories of governor. The Instrument of Governance provides for the governing body to consist of the following:

<b>Parent governors</b>	6	Parents, including carers, of pupils are eligible to stand for elections as governors. Parent governors are elected by the parent body. If insufficient parents stand for election, the governing body may appoint parents.
<b>Local Authority</b>	1	LA's are encouraged to appoint high-calibre governors to schools that need the most support and to appoint candidates irrespective of any political affiliation or preference. Authorities may appoint minor authority representatives, e.g. district and parish councillors, as authority governors.
<b>Staff governors</b>	2	The Head is a staff governor by virtue of their office. Other staff, both teaching and support, may become governors as long as they are paid employees (volunteers do not qualify). Staff governors are elected by the school staff. In event of more than one candidate is nominated then a ballot will be held.
<b>Co-opted</b>	7	Community governors are appointed by the governing body to represent community interests. They can be individuals who <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live or work in the community served by the school</li> <li>• Are committed to the good governance and success of the school even though they do not work or live close to it.</li> </ul> <p>The definition of community governor is wide. People from a business or professional background and minor authority representatives can be appointed as community governors.</p>

<b>Associate</b>	1	Persons who attend in an advisory role. They do not have voting rights
<b>Associate (student) governors</b>	2	Students (Year 12) are elected to a one-year term of office by their peers and formally appointed by FGB. They do not have voting rights. They attend full Governing Body meetings and Pupil Wellbeing sub-committees.
<b>Observers</b>	6	Senior school staff who are present at and help service the sub-committees of the Governing Body. They do not have voting rights.

### The Clerk to the Governors

The governing body has a dedicated, trained clerk, who is answerable to the governing body. The chair of governors, the Headteacher and the clerk to the governors meet

often to plan the agenda of the full governing body meetings and the process of school improvement through the school development plan and policy formation and update. The clerk needs to be on good terms with all members of the governing body and the chair. Equally importantly, the clerk must be on good terms with the Headteacher as it is necessary to refer to the Headteacher on a number of issues and to keep the Headteacher informed about relevant governing body matters from time to time.

Contact details: Telephone 03000 265688 or email [helen.moss@durham.gov.uk](mailto:helen.moss@durham.gov.uk)

## **Confidentiality**

As a governor you will have access to, or overhear information regarding students, staff and the internal workings of the school. Governors are expected to observe absolute confidentiality regarding school matters at all times.

## **Data Protection**

The school is required to register as a Data User under the Data Protection Act. Each use of data needs to be registered separately and we have registered the following uses:

- Maintenance of school attendance records
- Examination entries and results
- Staff personal and timetable details
- Purchase/supplier information
- Maintenance of student timetable and option choices
- Maintenance of personal information relating to students
- Maintenance of students' assessment and achievement records
- Recording authorised users of the school ICT systems

Word-processed data is exempt if you are merely using the editing facilities of a simple word processor to produce a letter, report or other document. Registration would be needed only if the data is intended to be searched, sorted or extracted by the software. Registration must cover information held on home computers as well as school computers.

Governors are reminded that the registration of use of personal data held on a computer is a legal requirement and failure to register could lead to prosecution. Governors should notify the School Manager of any use of data not covered above.

## **Safeguarding**

All governor appointments are subject to satisfactory enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) clearance.

## **Business/ Pecuniary Interests**

All governors are required to complete a business and pecuniary interests form on an annual basis. In order to ensure that there is no likelihood of a conflict of interest arising,

governors should inform the clerk to the governors of the following when completing the form:

- Employment with a local or public authority
- Private practice of any profession
- Engaging in trade or business

Every committee or full governing body (FGB) meeting will have, as an agenda item, an opportunity for attending governors to declare an interest in any of the items on the particular agenda.

### **The Committee Structure**

The governing body reviewed the committee structure in 2007/08 with a view to improving the monitoring and evaluation of the school's progress in relation to the school development plan (SDP). Some of these committees have a direct link to SDP priorities:

<b>Committee</b>	<b>SDP Priority</b>
Curriculum and Standards	1, 2, 3
Pupil Wellbeing	2, 4, 5
Finance, Grounds, Premises, and HR	4, 5
The full Governing Body	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

There are a number of statutory committees which are called as required:

- Capability
- Capability First Appeal
- Capability Final Appeal
- Pupil Discipline
- First/Pay Review
- First/Pay Appeals
- Head's Performance Review Group

The strategic priorities of the school 2014-2018 are as follows:

Strategic priority one	Further improve provision and outcomes for students whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable (specifically, SEND and PP students).
Strategic priority two	Improve motivation and commitment of 'our rising stars'; those who, across time, lose motivation and make slower progress as a result.
Strategic priority three	Ensure that the formal and informal curriculum match the needs of the students and external examination changes.
Strategic priority four	Develop more robust links between the school and our parents, our community and our alumni.
Strategic priority five	Develop the effectiveness of our staff, by developing skills to match the curriculum, succession planning, and formalising the sharing of good practice.

### **Attendance at Meetings**

A record is kept by the clerk of governors of attendance which can be reported to the FGB.

It is an expectation that apologies are given when not attending a meeting with the reason provided. The meeting will decide whether or not to accept the apology. Failure to attend and to give an acceptable apology results in the absent governor being recorded as a non-attende. Such events are counted against the governor in certain circumstances, potentially resulting in the governor being suspended from the FGB.

### **Cycle of Meetings**

The FGB meets six times a year. The committees meet three times per year. A schedule of meeting dates is provided at the start of each academic year. Additional meetings may be called by the chair of governors if the need arises.

### **Terms of Reference**

The committee structures and their terms of reference are reviewed and developed annually (at the end of the academic year) to ensure that the governing body is in an appropriate format to carry out their responsibilities in the ever-changing educational context.

### **Agendas**

The meetings follow a standard format and agenda. The clerk to the governors sends out the agenda and accompanying papers seven days prior to each meeting. It is the responsibility of the chair of each sub-committee to set the agenda, in consultation with the relevant school staff, in time to meet the deadline dates. If you wish to have an item

added to the agenda you need to contact the clerk or relevant chair of the committee or FGB before the papers are sent out.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

School governing bodies provide a strategic and policy framework within which schools are run. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and staff to guide and advise governors, implement the plans and deliver the curriculum.

The governing body is responsible for raising expectations, acting as a critical friend to the school and holding it to account.

As unpaid, voluntary public servants, a school's governing body helps to sustain the school's identity and provide a link with the community it serves. The governors can be seen as trustees for the performance of the school, in the interests of current and future students. In everything they do they must, by law, aim to promote high standards of educational achievement at the school.

Governing bodies delegate many of their responsibilities to the Headteacher, but there are some areas of responsibility that they cannot, by law, delegate or which they may choose not to delegate. Although decisions may be delegated, the governing body as a whole remains responsible for any decision made under delegation.

## **Governor Support**

The Head is the governing body's principal educational adviser. The clerk to the governors provides support to governors and endeavours to ensure that they work within current legislation and the framework of their Instrument of Governance.

The governing body subscribes to the LA School and Governors Support Service (SGSS). All new governors receive a welcome pack from the LA. All governors receive a termly newsletter from Governors' Services.

A link to the current Governance handbook published by the DfE is available below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>

## **Governor Training**

The LA School and Governor Support Service provides a number of training courses for new and experienced governors, details of which are published in the termly magazine. The school actively encourages all governors to take advantage of these training courses, which are provided to governors free of charge.

## **Governors' Allowances**

The Education (Governors Allowance) Regulations 1999 allow maintained schools to extend their schemes for paying governors' expenses, including childcare costs, from the school's delegated budget. However, the governors of Durham Johnston have agreed that they will not in normal circumstances make any claims under these provisions.

## **School Policies**

Policy formation and approval is an important element of the governing body's functions. There are a number of statutory policies that schools must have in place, as well as other policies which aid in the effectiveness of the school. These policies are reviewed on a regular basis.

Some of the policies – i.e. Pay Policies are provided by the LA – who have negotiated the terms within them with the recognised trade unions. Under these circumstances these policies are usually adopted without any amendments. Other policies are based on the school context and are therefore produced by the school staff; these should be in an agreed standard format. A schedule of policy review has been developed and is available from the clerk to governors. Policies initially go to the appropriate committee for their discussion. They will then be presented to the FGB with the committee's recommendations.

Governors wishing to see a policy can request a copy from the clerk or the school.

## **Visiting the School/Links with Departments**

Although technically no governor, including the chair of governors has any right to be on the school premises, the school welcomes governor visits. However – permission should always be sought from the Headteacher or a delegated member of staff. Governors do not have the right to sit in on lessons.

Governors are linked with one of more departments and meet with the subject leaders one or more times each year to enable governors to have a detailed understanding of subject courses.

## **School Events**

Governors are invited to all special events and receive copies of any relevant publications from the school.

## **The School Development Plan**

The school development plan (SDP) identifies the key priorities for the forthcoming three years and provides action points to support these priorities. The governors and staff review the document on an annual basis.

## **Summary of Examination Results**

After the public examination results have been published, the school carries an in-depth review of the school's results. The Curriculum and Standards Committee and full Governing Body receive a detailed presentation of this analysis. The data is also published on the school's website.

School and College Achievement and Attainment Tables can be viewed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables>

## **Section 2: The School**

Durham Johnston is an 11-18 comprehensive with nearly 1600 young people and an intake of 238 into each year group.

Durham Johnston is an extraordinary school and one of the few genuine comprehensive schools in Britain with young people from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities. Staff are highly skilled and are equally at home with those students who are struggling to learn as with some of the best young minds in the country. We appoint staff who are committed to their jobs and prepared to throw themselves into school life. We know that a teacher's responsibility extends well beyond the walls of a classroom. Staff play an active role in staff teams and make good working relationships with young people, leading them to the highest standards of achievement. The school's support staff facilitate this and help us improve our standards of service.

The school is proud of its traditional ethos and celebrates stability and reliable excellence. The maintenance of a happy, orderly and successful community built upon classroom excellence, long term commitment and strong personal relationships is pivotal to our success.

Education is taken seriously at Durham Johnston. Students are expected to strive for the highest standards and to grow into good citizens. The school aims to transform lives through learning and our new buildings inspire us to even greater heights.

### **Secondary School Admissions in County Durham 2018-2019**

The LA is responsible for setting the admission policy and criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools in County Durham. Further information is available on Durham County Council's website [www.durham.gov.uk](http://www.durham.gov.uk).

## Section 3: School Details

### School Day

The school day begins at 08.30 and ends at 14.45. Lunchtime is from 12.00 – 12.45 for students in years 7, 8, 12 and 13 and from 13.00 – 13.45 for pupils in years 9, 10 and 11.

### Leadership and Management

Title	Name	Responsible for:
Headteacher	Michael Wardle	The strategic direction of Durham Johnston
Deputy Head	Richard Bancroft	Achievement, departments, daily operations
Deputy Head	Andrew O'Sullivan	Quality assurance, leadership of teaching, pupil premium, curriculum (strategic)
Deputy Head	Ros McFadden	Timetable, staffing, curriculum (operational)
Assistant Head	Steve McArdle	Assistant Head (Director of Post-16)
Assistant Head	Nick Weaver	Pastoral, behaviour management, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
Director of Resources	Helen Charlton	Finance, all non-teaching staff and functions, leadership of safeguarding, RA and H&S

### Personnel

A comprehensive list of the teaching and support staff for the whole school is issued to governors at the beginning of each academic year.

### Curriculum Years 7-11

#### Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 and 9)

During this Key Stage pupils will study English, Mathematics, Science, Languages, History, Geography, RE, PE, Technology, Music, Art, and Computing.

Students will choose an additional language in Year 8 which continues into Year 9. It is in Year 9 that students make their choices for KS4.

#### Key Stage 4

At KS4 as well as the core curriculum and the other KS4 subjects a number of additional subjects are offered, these change with demand, but would typically include at GCSE, Business Studies, Computer Science, Photography, Performing Arts and a variety of technology subjects. We value Modern Foreign Languages and almost all of our students take at least one language at GCSE.

When young people join us in Year 7 at Johnston they are taught in mixed ability groups for all subjects apart from Maths and English in which they are taught in sets according to their ability in the subject. Setting increases from Year 8 upwards and we review our arrangements regularly to make sure all pupils are in the right teaching group.

The Learning Support department is committed to enabling young people to have a full, happy and successful time at Johnston. The core purpose is to assist students with

SEN and additional needs to fulfil their potential. With this aim, staff are able to identify the needs of these students in several ways and then use this information to offer tailored intervention and focused support.

## Sixth Form Curriculum

Our reputation is built on the firm foundations of high quality teaching, careful monitoring of each student's needs and strong pastoral support.

Every Sixth Form student at Durham Johnston has:

- an individually negotiated timetable
- a well-planned programme of academic work
- built-in development of study skills in all courses
- guidance and careers advice
- the opportunity for work experience
- links with employers and higher education
- opportunities for physical recreation and community service
- the opportunity to learn new foreign languages
- the opportunity to improve computer literacy
- the opportunity to develop undergraduate level skills through completing an Extended Project
- an entitlement to continuing personal development

Sixth form students need to achieve the best they can so that the right platform is built for the future. The outstanding achievements of Durham Johnston sixth formers, both at school and after they leave, are testaments to their commitment and our education.

## Term and holiday dates for the Academic Year 2017-2018

	Term Ends	Term Begins
		6 September 2017
Autumn Half Term 2017 (1 week)	Friday 20 October 2017	Monday 30 October 2017
Christmas 2017 (2 weeks and 1 day)	Thursday 21 December 2017	Monday 8 January 2018
Spring Half Term 2018 (1 week)	Friday 9 February 2018	Monday 19 February 2018
Easter 2018 (2 weeks and 1 day)	Thursday 29 March 2018	Monday 16 April 2018
May Day 2018 (1 day)	Friday 4 May 2018	Tuesday 8 May 2018
Summer Half Term 2018 (1 week)	Friday 25 May 2018	Monday 4 June 2018
Summer 2018	Friday 20 July 2018	Wednesday 5 September 2018

## Appendix A:

### Sub-Committee Membership, departmental links and areas of special interest

Governor	Category	Sub-Committee Membership	Special Interest
Vacancy	Parent	To be confirmed on appointment	To be confirmed on appointment
Mr Nicholas Black	Parent	Finance, Premises and HR Curriculum and Standards First Pay Appeals	Careers Data Protection/FOI
Prof R Blackman-Woods	Associate	N/A	N/A
Mr Miles Brown	Co-opted	Finance, Premises and HR First Pay Appeals Pupil Discipline	Strategic ICT and Computing
Mrs Christina Buckley	Parent	Pupil Wellbeing First Pay Appeals Pupil Discipline	Learning Support
Mrs Kimberly Curry	Parent	Curriculum and Standards First Pay Appeals Pupil Discipline	Languages E-Safety
Mr David Fisher	Co-opted	Finance Premises and HR Pupil Wellbeing First Pay Appeals	Design and Technology Estates Planning
Mr David Gibson	Parent	Finance, Premises and HR Pupil Wellbeing First Pay Review	Social Sciences Pupil Premium and CLA SEND
Ms Kathryn Larkin-Bramley	Co-opted	Curriculum and Standards <b>Finance Premises and HR (Chair)</b> Head's Performance Review First Pay Review	Business Studies Geography
Vacancy	Parent	To be confirmed on appointment	To be confirmed on appointment
Dr Nigel Martin	Co-opted	Finance Premises and HR <b>First Pay Review (Chair)</b> Head's Performance Review Pupil Discipline	Mathematics History
Prof Simon Morris <b>Chair</b>	Co-opted	<b>Curriculum and Standards (Chair)</b> First Pay Review Head's Performance Review Pupil Discipline	Sciences More Able
Miss Barbara Murphy	Staff	Pupil Wellbeing Curriculum and Standards	Health and Safety Pastoral Care
Mrs Elizabeth Scott	LA	To be confirmed	To be confirmed
Miss Ellen Slater	Student Associate	Pupil Wellbeing	N/A
Mr Simon Timmins	Student Associate	Pupil Wellbeing	N/A
Dr Michael Wardle	Staff	Curriculum and Standards Finance Premises and HR Pupil Wellbeing	N/A
Mr Ivan Whitfield	Co-opted	Finance Premises and HR First Pay Review Pupil Discipline	PE Community engagement
Dr Sandra Whitton <b>Vice Chair</b>	Co-opted	<b>Pupil Wellbeing (Chair)</b> First Pay Review Head's Performance Review Pupil Discipline	Music Safeguarding Child Protection Child Sexual Exploitation

## **Appendix B:**

### **Schedule of Meetings for 2017-2018**

#### **Full Governing Body**

Thursday 2 November 2017  
Thursday 8 February 2018  
Thursday 22 March 2018  
Thursday 10 May 2018  
Thursday 12 July 2018

#### **Curriculum and Standards**

Thursday 5 October 2017  
Thursday 7 December 2017  
Thursday 29 March 2018  
Thursday 7 June 2018

#### **Finance, Premises and HR**

Wednesday 4 October 2017  
Tuesday 5 December 2017  
Thursday 8 March 2018  
Thursday 19 April 2018  
Thursday 14 June 2017

#### **First Committee (Pay Review)**

Monday 6 November 2017

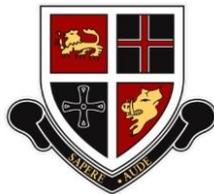
#### **Headteacher's Performance Review**

Autumn Term – date to be confirmed

#### **Pupil Wellbeing**

Thursday 30 November 2017  
Thursday 15 March 2018  
Thursday 21 June 2017





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