



DURHAM JOHNSTON
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL
DARE TO BE WISE



Teacher of Geography

MPS/UPS

Starting date - September 2025

Permanent

Crossgate Moor, Durham, DH1 4SU

www.durhamjohnston.org.uk

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Letter of Introduction

Mrs McFadden
Headteacher

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest as a Teacher of Geography.

Durham Johnston Comprehensive School is a happy, successful and dynamic community. We have a national reputation for academic excellence and are well respected in our local community, something of which we are very proud. Teachers often stay at Durham Johnston for a significant period of time as we value staff well-being and allow a significant amount of professional autonomy.

We are looking to recruit a talented and ambitious Geography Teacher who is both an expert practitioner and a colleague with a deep interest in the subject.

It is important to note that our intake is fully comprehensive. 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 truly important to us that all these students benefit from their time here. We are seeking teachers who can offer academic stretch in addition to focused and exciting learning in the classroom. You should also have a genuine commitment to social justice and ensuring that every child you teach benefits from your outstanding subject knowledge.

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. Therefore, applications from ECTs are welcomed, as are applications from more experienced teachers.

Informal visits to the school are welcome. If you would like to visit the school, please email school@durhamjohnston.org.uk marked for the attention of Anna Colquitt (Associate Assistant Headteacher) to book a time.

In addition to completing the application form we would like you to outline, in no more than two sides of A4 paper, why your experience and personal qualities make you a strong candidate for this post, especially in relation to the job description and person specification.

The closing date is **12.00pm on Tuesday 6th May 2025**. 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

Advertisement

Teacher of Geography MPS/UPS Permanent
September 2025



Teacher of Geography MPS/UPS

Required for September 2025

Permanent

Durham Johnston Comprehensive School is a school that offers high levels of autonomy to staff and consequently has a track record of academic excellence. We are looking to appoint a truly effective practitioner within our high-achieving Geography Department. Applications from ECTs are welcomed, as are applications from more experienced teachers.

Teachers at our school are passionate about their subject and passionate about social justice. We believe that every child, regardless of social background, has the right to an enriching and rigorous academic education. We all share a commitment to ensuring the children in our care are able to feel safe, happy and supported to achieve their full potential. If these values are ones you hold then we would welcome your application.

An application pack can be downloaded from our main advert online.

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“Durham Johnston Comprehensive School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all its staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All post holders are subject to a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check”.

Closing Date: 12.00pm on Tuesday 6th May 2025

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recruitment@durhamjohnston.org.uk

Job Description

*Teacher of Geography MPS/UPS Permanent
September 2025*



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 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 performance management as directed.
- 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 June 2024, 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 Geography MPS/UPS Permanent
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Essential Requirements

The following points give a list of qualities which are essential for appointment to this post (with the methods by which they will be assessed indicated in brackets).

- An honours degree in an appropriate discipline. (application form)
- An approved teaching qualification. (application form)
- Recent successful teaching experience as a qualified teacher, or a successful teaching practice. (reference, interviews, lesson)
- The ability and willingness to collaborate effectively with colleagues. (reference, interviews)
- Ability to provide and maintain a safe, calm and well ordered environment for all students, focussed on safeguarding students and developing exemplary behaviour. (reference, interviews, lesson)
- A genuine passion for social justice which runs alongside a passion for your subject and the potential to become an excellent teacher at Durham Johnston Comprehensive School. (letter, reference, interviews)
- Insistence upon high standards for all students, instilling a keen sense of personal responsibility and accountability for students. To challenge poor or inappropriate behaviour when necessary. (reference, interviews, lesson)
- The ability to communicate effectively with young people from a range of backgrounds. (reference, lesson, interviews)
- Strong organisational skills and the ability to meet deadlines. (reference, interviews)

Commitment to Ethical Leadership

All teachers and postholders at Durham Johnston Comprehensive School are expected to exemplify seven virtues of Ethical Leadership. We define these virtues as:

Trust: Leaders should be trustworthy and reliable. They hold trust on behalf of children and should be beyond reproach. They are honest about their motivations.

Wisdom: Leaders use experience, knowledge, insight, understanding and good sense to make sound judgements. They should demonstrate restraint and self-awareness, act calmly and rationally, exercising moderation and propriety as they serve their schools and colleges wisely.

Kindness: Leaders demonstrate respect, generosity of spirit, understanding and good temper. Where unavoidable conflict occurs, difficult messages should be given humanely.

Person Specification

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Justice: Leaders should be fair, and work for the good of all children. Leaders should work fairly for the good of children from all backgrounds. They should seek to enable all young people to lead useful, happy and fulfilling lives

Service: Leaders should be conscientious and dutiful. They should demonstrate humility and self-control, supporting the structures and rules which safeguard quality. Their actions should protect high-quality education.

Courage: Leaders should work courageously in the best interests of children and young people. They protect their safety and their right to a broad, effective and creative education. They should hold one another to account courageously.

Optimism: Leaders should be positive and encouraging. Despite difficulties and pressures, we are developing excellent education provision to change the world for the better.

Department Overview

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Geography at Durham Johnston Comprehensive School

The Geography Department at Durham Johnston is a successful department with a commitment to high quality geography teaching and a strong collaborative ethos. Teachers are knowledgeable and passionate about the importance and value of geography and convey that enthusiastically to our students. The department currently consists of 5 full time teachers and 1 part time teacher, all of whom are well qualified, experienced and have degrees in geography. This commitment to our subject and high-quality teaching consistently returns excellent results at GCSE and A-Level.

Geography is a key part of the curriculum for students at Durham Johnston, with two hours a week allocated across the three years of Key Stage 3. This allows us to create a learning environment where questioning, critical thinking, and the freedom to learn from mistakes are encouraged. Geography provides a breadth and depth of subject-specific and transferable knowledge and skills that challenges and engages all students. Opportunities are also provided for all students to engage with geography beyond the classroom through fieldwork, supra- and extra-curricular activities.

To be part of this well respected and successful department you will need to have excellent knowledge and understanding of both physical and human geography. We are looking for committed geographers who are dedicated to developing their geographical knowledge and skills and sharing that with others. You will need the enthusiasm, knowledge, and ability to teach a range of important and topical geographical topics to all ability levels across all key stages.

Results: Summer 2024

GCSE	34% of students achieved grade 7 to 9
	64% of students achieved grade 5 or higher
	77% of students achieved grade 4 or higher
A level	54% of students achieved A* - A
	77% of students achieved A* - B
	92% of students achieved A* - C

Curriculum

At Key Stage 3 we have developed a curriculum that is engaging, relevant and dynamic, reflecting the nature of the rapidly changing world around us. As the world changes, so does the curriculum. Across the three years students are taught key geographical concepts, knowledge, and skills across a range of human and physical geography topics, enabling students to develop as geographers with a keen interest in the world around them. This key stage provides the foundation for students to

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build detailed subject knowledge, subject specific and transferable skills, and go onto achieve excellent results at both KS4 and 5.

At GCSE we follow the AQA specification, studying physical landscapes of the UK (coasts and rivers); the living world (tropical rainforests and cold environments); hazards; urban issues and challenges; changing economic world; resource management (food). Students complete two days of local fieldwork to investigate changes in a river system and challenges facing an urban area. Uptake at GCSE is very good, with 4-5 classes in each year at GCSE.

At A-Level, we follow the AQA specification, studying water and carbon cycles; coastal systems and landscapes; hazards; global systems and global governance; changing places; contemporary urban environments. Students complete four days of fieldwork in relation to both human and physical geography. Students conduct an independent investigation based on their primary and secondary field data to complete a 4,000 written report, supported through this process by subject specialists. Uptake at A level is good with 1-2 classes in each year at A level.

Enrichment

The department provides a strong extra-curricular provision for students across all key stages. The Key Stage 3 Geography club meets weekly with a focus on national and international competitions, producing articles for the geography news bulletin and career information. The department promotes and supports student applications each year in the annual Geographical Association photography competition and the Royal Geographical Association Young Geographer of the Year competition.

For our GCSE and A level students we have developed a programme of half termly after school talks and workshops with speakers from a range of organisation including local universities, the Environment Agency, and the RSPB.

In addition to the fieldwork opportunities provided, the department also runs an annual residential educational visit for A-Level students in the summer term. Past visits include Italy, Iceland, and London.

Opportunities for Development

Professional development is important to us both as a school and a department, we value our staff and encourage their continual improvement as teachers and subject specialists. Regular department meetings and whole school CPD provides opportunities for the department to work together to improve our own practice as well as the curriculum provision for all students. We regularly collaborate as a department to share best practice, ideas, and expertise in relation to pedagogy as well as geographical knowledge and skills.

Staff are encouraged to seek out opportunities for professional development, with many options provided through our Geographical Association and Royal Geographical Society department memberships. In recent years, staff have attended and participated in the Geographical Association Annual Conference and Exhibitions; worked with academics at Durham University to develop virtual reality learning opportunities for students; have supported trainee teachers alongside local universities; attended workshops on Geographic Information Systems and fieldwork to support the embedding of these into our curriculum; worked alongside other geography departments within the local authority; and collaborated with local primaries to develop their KS2

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geography curriculum. Teachers joining the department will have a wide range of opportunities to develop and hone their professional practice.

Context of Durham Johnston Comprehensive School



Core Values

School systems at Durham Johnston are built around five core values which, together, form our ethos and are at the heart of everything that we do.

Academic Excellence: a belief in progress for all.

Acquiring Knowledge: the importance of being an educated person and knowing things.

Social Justice: providing opportunities for all, regardless of background or personal circumstance.

Public Service: the importance of making a contribution to both the school community and wider society.

Global Opportunities: a rounded education that 'opens doors' regardless of location or specialism.

It is important to us that anyone wanting to work at Durham Johnston realises that each of our 5 values are of equal importance. We want our students to gain both a high level of academic knowledge, whilst also contributing to the wider community. We also want every child to enjoy such opportunities, regardless of background. Our teachers have a passion for their subject and a determination 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.

Leadership

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.

Pastoral Care

Our pastoral systems help to ensure that every child feels valued and cared for. We believe strongly in the power of community to help make potentially worried or anxious children feel safe and secure, and to provide a sense of collective endeavour. Our tutors play a vital role in this. Tutors can also help students make the most of our vast extra-curricular programme. We are justly 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

Context of Durham Johnston Comprehensive School (Cont.)



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, with the department being recognised as a Music Mark School Member "in recognition of a commitment to providing high quality music education for all children and young people" as well as holding the PTI Mark for Subject Leadership. 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 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.

Staff Wellbeing

The wellbeing of our staff is central to the ethos of Durham Johnston Comprehensive School. 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.

At a leadership level we are committed to the values of ethical leadership and try to model this at all times. 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.

Living in the North East

Living in the North East is an attractive proposition within itself. 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. 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.

Durham is a beautiful place to live and at Durham Johnston Comprehensive School we value experience and believe that teachers should be given the professional autonomy to teach and make decisions that work for their students. On that basis, we hope that we are the right school for you.