




THE SUNDAY TIMES
SCHOOLS GUIDE
2025
INDEPENDENT SECONDARY
SCHOOL OF THE YEAR
NORTH EAST

Head of Physics
Part Time (0.8 FTE)
1 Year Fixed Term
September start





Welcome to Durham High School

Thank you for considering Durham High School for the next stage of your career in education. Ours is a community where ambition thrives, talents shine, and lifelong friendships are formed.

In December, we were proud to be named The Sunday Times Independent Secondary School of the Year 2025 – a reflection of the outstanding education and care we offer and in December this year, we were named the top performing Independent School in County Durham.

Up until several years ago, boys attended Durham High School for their Pre-Prep and Prep education before moving onto different schools. As part of our school's journey towards co-education boys were welcomed back into our Pre-Prep and prep Department in September 2025 and will join Year 7 to Sixth Form in September 2026.

While the structure of our school evolves, our foundation remains the same. Academic excellence, personal development, and our Christian ethos continue to guide all that we do. Our aim is to nurture each pupil's potential and to foster a lifelong love of learning.

In a beautiful woodland setting with excellent facilities and a dedicated team of teachers and support staff, Durham High School is a place where pupils grow in both confidence and character.

Our strategic partnership with Galaxy Global Education brings new and exciting opportunities for growth and international collaboration.

If you have the skills, experience, and passion for this role, we warmly invite you to apply. We look forward to hearing from you.



Mrs Michelle Hill
Headmistress



About Durham High School

Our location

Durham High School is ideally located in the heart of Durham City in the North East of England, with excellent transport links.

The school is just a few miles from Durham train station, providing direct rail connections to Newcastle, Edinburgh, and London. It is also easily accessible via the A1(M) motorway, connecting to major road networks across the region.

Newcastle International Airport is c.30 minutes away, offering domestic and international flights.

Our heritage

The school was founded in 1884 by the Church Schools' Company and in 1910 the school's governing body took over and formed an independent school for girls aged 3-18. From September 2025 we are proud to be a coeducational school.

During the 1960s, Durham High School moved to our current site, its first purpose-built premises on the edge of the city adjacent to the new Durham University colleges.

Our Aims:

- To create a friendly, caring community based on Christian principles where every individual is valued;
- To develop the potential of every pupil in all areas of their life;
- To encourage academic excellence and a life-long love of learning.

We are keen to widen access as much as possible, with means-tested bursaries, and academic scholarships, to enable as many pupils as possible to attend the school from a wide area.



Benefits of working at Durham High



The successful applicant will benefit from:

- Being part of a fantastically vibrant and supportive community with the most amazing and enthusiastic pupils.
- Super facilities and small class sizes.
- Royal London defined contribution pension scheme.
- Staff Laptop.
- Lunch provided each day during term time.
- Up to 50% staff fee remission scheme for staff children from Reception to Sixth Form.
- Employee assistance programme (Education Support).
- Blue Light reward card.
- Access to in school counsellor.
- Free onsite parking.





The Department

We have an exciting opportunity for a Head of Physics to join our thriving Science Department.

The Department

Physics is taught as a separate subject throughout the school. There is an emphasis on learning through practical work in all years, and pupils enjoy this very much.

In Years 7-9 the pupils have four 55-minute periods of each Science subject per fortnight. Year 7 and 8 are taught in mixed ability tutor groups. The National Curriculum programmes of study are followed at Key Stage 3 in Years 7 and 8, following an in-house scheme of work.

The AQA specification for GCSE Physics is followed in Year 9, as the pupils commence their Key Stage 4 studies. At the end of Year 9, pupils opt to either, follow AQA GCSE Physics, AQA Trilogy (combined science) or Btec Applied Science.

GCSE Physics: While numbers vary from year to year, approximately half of pupils normally opt for the separate sciences and most pupils are entered for the higher tier of the examination. GCSE Physics classes have 6, 55 minute lessons per fortnight.

Trilogy: Physics classes have 4, 55 minute lessons per fortnight. Group sizes may vary with the cohort but will never exceed 24.

A Level: Physics is a popular subject within the school and successful at recruiting A-level students. Maximum class size for A level is 13. Pupils have eleven lessons per fortnight.

Facilities

The Science Department facilities are outstanding and there are two laboratories for each of the three sciences with an office for each Head of Department, a large preparation room, greenhouse and a science staff room.

All the laboratories are well equipped with Interactive screens and IT facilities and a class set of laptop computers. The Department receives brilliant technical support from a Laboratory Manager and team of technicians.

Extracurricular Activities

All staff contribute to at least one extracurricular activity which may or may not be related to their specialism. The Science department organises STEM clubs, trips, and participates in competitions across all Key Stages.

All teachers help to link curriculum learning with careers and promote extracurricular learning opportunities. 'Science Sparks' is an outreach programme for enthusiastic Year 6 pupils from partnership primary schools, and our own Year 6 pupils.



Job Description

Remuneration: DH1-9 Salary Scale (£31,706.17 - £45,388.40) plus Responsibility allowance R5 (£2060) and a 4-lesson remission from the teaching timetable.

Accountable: to the Senior Deputy Headmistress

Key Responsibilities:

1. Policy / Strategic direction and development

Contribute to whole school policy-making and strategic planning as required by the Headmistress.

Create a forward-looking and ambitious development plan for the Department in line with the school's strategic objectives and maintain a department handbook.

Take the lead in ensuring that school policies and strategies are embedded in schemes of work and departmental plans.

Contribute to the whole school Self Evaluation process

Contribute to shared best practice via Head of Department meetings

Contribute to Local Advisory Board Education committee when required

As part of the annual review process, agree an annual department Teaching and Learning target, which is referred to throughout the year.

2. Leadership and management of others

Lead and manage the department and motivate your staff to ensure that they have clear expectations of their roles, and that high performance standards are achieved and maintained.

Manage the daily running of the department, staffing requirements and departmental timetables, delegating as appropriate, to ensure the department's efficiency and to afford other colleagues' good internal professional development opportunities.

In conjunction with the Headmistress, be responsible for appointing new colleagues to the Physics Department.

Induct new colleagues and ensure they have access to schemes, policies and the departmental handbook.

Appraise each colleague annually, to include at least one formal lesson observation per colleague

Carry out work scrutiny, learning walks and pupil voice, as outlined in the Quality Assurance document

Ensure that all colleagues are giving high quality feedback in-line with the School and Departmental marking and assessment policies.



Job Description continued

Key Responsibilities Continued:

2. Leadership and management of others continued

Offer support for any colleague who is underperforming or who is struggling with any aspect of their Physics teaching role

To quality assure reporting and grade sheets process relating to Physics and Trilogy Science.

Responsibility for Physics staff development, ensuring that appropriate in-service training is undertaken to ensure continuous improvement within the department.

Chair departmental meetings to ensure that they are used effectively to review performance and that actions are recorded and implemented.

Attend Head of Department meetings and other meetings as required as a middle leader.

Liaise with parents as appropriate

Act as a mentor for ECTs, as necessary.

3. Administration

Produce and update an annual Department Handbook (OneDrive) which contains:

- All Schemes of Work
- An updated annual Department Development Plan
- An external examination analysis of the previous year's examination results
- All department policies

In addition:

Keep up to date with ISI regulations and prepare documentation for inspection

To complete paperwork relating to annual review

To complete exam entries and any paperwork relating to external examinations.

To prepare examination papers for all year groups for mock examinations and internal examination week, meeting the access arrangements of identified pupils

To complete paperwork and meet with colleagues in your department who have been absent for whom you have line management responsibilities



Job Description- Continued

Key Responsibilities Continued:

4. Teaching and learning

Lead the teaching of Physics across the age range 11-18, including GCSE and A Level.

Inspire and promote excellent attainment in Physics through promoting high standards of teaching and learning.

Exemplify in your own practice, the skills of teaching and learning typified by lead professionals and ensure that good practice is shared throughout the department.

Ensure the curriculum is appropriate to the needs and abilities of each group, and of the individuals within the group, and that expectations are realistically high.

Ensure that schemes of work are used, reviewed and modified to enable the maintenance and development of high standards of teaching and learning.

Monitor pupils' work and the classroom practice of those in the department to ensure high standards are maintained.

Ensure that within the department individual pupil progress is regularly assessed, recorded and reported and used to inform future teaching and setting, and that pupil progress is tracked using appropriate department and whole school data.

Be responsible for coordinating and evaluating departmental interventions to maximise progress.

Advise parents where there is cause for concern about the progress of an individual.

Keep up to date with developments in Physics teaching and education in general to ensure that best practice is adopted within the department.

Prepare students for university applications, including Oxbridge, as required and to complete high quality UCAS subject references.

Attend school on the days when public examination results are published in order to provide guidance for students and professional advice for colleagues.

Have a good working knowledge of performance data mechanisms (GL Assessments) in order to carry out effective pupil tracking and retrospective examination performance.

Appreciate the Christian ethos of Durham High School and promote its values through the work of the Physics department.



Job Description- Continued

Key Responsibilities Continued:

5.Co-curricular

Instigate, promote and deliver the Physics co-curricular programme, in keeping with that expected at a leading independent school, confirming and building on the school's reputation for excellence, and providing for the range of abilities.

Develop and lead enrichment activities, including a programme of trips, visits, workshops.

To develop and lead Physics master classes for outreach.

Enter pupils for competitions and external events.

To lead on the arrangements for the Physics Department transition lessons for 'Into Year 7 Evening.'

6.Marketing and external links, including public occasions

Actively promote the department within the school community to encourage pupils' interest in the subject area.

Liaise with the Director of Marketing to highlight and promote all events within the Physics Department.

Lead the department on Open Days and Sixth Form Open Evening to provide engaging activities and stimulating classroom environment for the positive promotion and marketing of the school.

Contribute to the positive promotion and marketing of the school and in the local and wider community.

7.Communicate with parents

Write reports and grade sheets according to the school's assessment calendar.

Ensure reports include specific targets and strategies for pupil development.

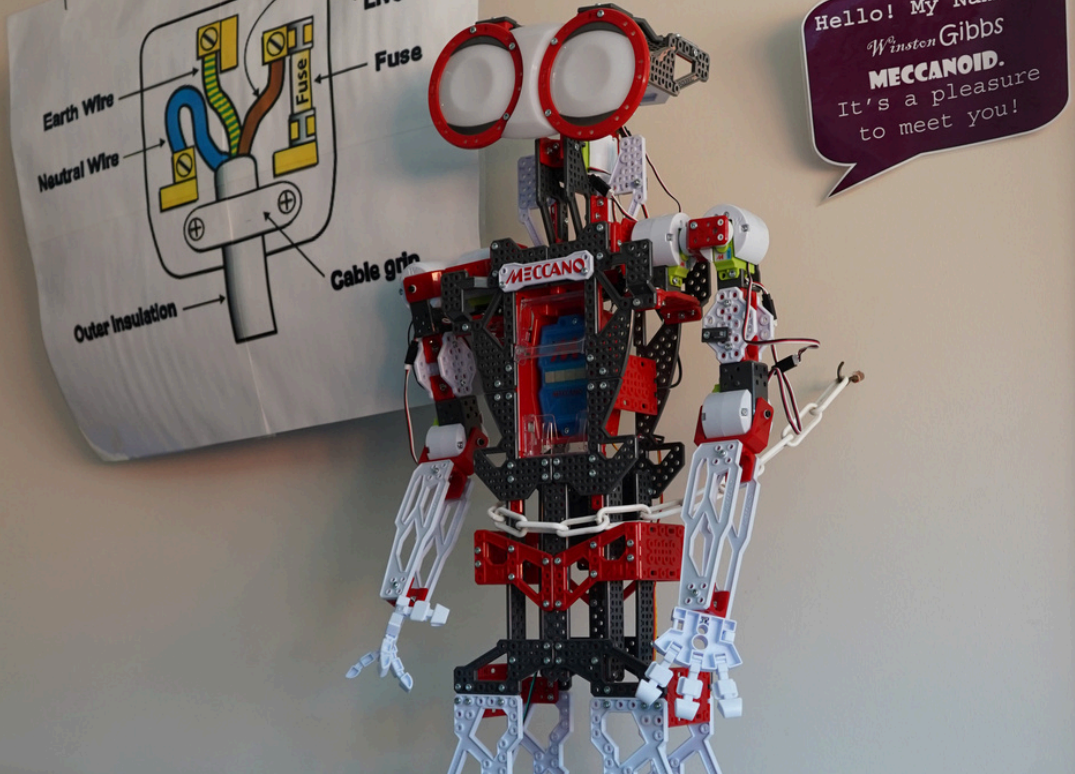
Attend Parents' Meetings.

Communicate clearly and promptly (following the communication protocol) with parents if requested.

8.Understand the importance of safeguarding

In line with our commitment to safeguarding, all members of staff have a duty of care towards Durham High School pupils and are expected to report any such concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Complete weekly break time and lunchtime duties as per the rota and Homework Club duties as allocated.



Person Specification

Skills

Leadership skills: the ability to lead and manage people to work towards a common goal - *Essential*

Leadership skills: Have experience of Line Managing people, including throughout the Appraisal process - *Essential*

Decision making skills: the ability to solve problems and make decisions - *Essential*

Teamwork: the ability to work collaboratively with others - *Essential*

Communication skills: the ability to make points clearly and understand the views of others - *Essential*

Self-management skills: the ability to plan time effectively and organise oneself well - *Essential*

Knowledge Base

Excellent subject knowledge and understanding - *Essential*

Excellent professional knowledge and understanding - *Essential*

Understanding of national and examination curricular requirements of the subject - *Essential*

Up to date with professional developments in the subject and other aspects of education - *Essential*

Experience of creating and delivering engaging and challenging programmes of study - *Essential*

Awareness of health and safety requirements relevant to the job - *Essential*



Person Specification - Continued

Qualifications

Qualified teacher status - *Essential*

Good honours degree in Physics or related subject- *Essential*

Masters Degree - *Desirable*

Experience

Experience as a subject teacher covering KS3-5 Physics - *Essential*

Experience of teaching A level and GCSE in Physics- *Essential*

Experience of organising or participating in extra-curricular activities - *Essential*

Experience of participating in or leading a whole school initiative - *Desirable*

Experience of leading a whole School event linked to the department - *Desirable*

Attitude/ approach

Ability to enthuse children and adults - *Essential*

Possess a positive attitude and approach to change and development - *Essential*

Enjoy rising to the challenges inherent in a school environment - *Essential*

Good Sense of Humour - *Desirable*

Ability to consistently provide a high quality, welcoming and supportive learning experience for all pupils-
Essential



How to Apply

Please complete the application form, available on the School's website, and submit as a pdf document, with a covering letter of no more than two sides of A4 (pdf), outlining your reasons for applying and why you will be a good fit for our school community.

Please note, this job is not suitable for an ECT.

Applications should be addressed for the attention of the Headmistress and sent by email to: headmistress@durhamhighschool.com.

Closing date for applications:

9am, 15 June 2026.

Interviews will be held week commencing:

Week commencing 15 June 2026.

Safeguarding and Safer recruitment

Durham High School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The successful applicant will be subject to an enhanced DBS disclosure and Prohibition from teaching and management check

In addition, as part of the shortlisting process, Durham High School will carry out an online search on the shortlisted candidates as part of its due diligence, as per the governments 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' document (September 2025)

Equal Opportunities

The School is committed to the principles of equal opportunity, diversity and inclusion. We are committed to attracting and retaining the very best staff and ensuring that our staff body reflects the diversity of our students and local community.





Durham Education Limited is part of The Galaxy Global Education Group and is registered in England, Company No. 15934079

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