



Department  
for Education

**Free School application form 2013  
Mainstream and 16 to 19 (updated November 2013)**

**Polam Hall School**

Polam Hall School – Free School application  
*for Independent School conversion from September 2015*

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Section C: The Vision for Polam Hall as a Free School**

- As a Free School, Polam Hall will present a unique offer for Darlington and the wider Tees Valley region: an all-through, 4-19, co-educational day and boarding school for 640 pupils, rooted in the values of our Quaker founders and 165 years of providing non-selective education for children of a wide range of needs.
- The will grow from its present roll of 250 to a total of 640 by 2020-21, with 2-form entry from Reception upwards, a Sixth Form of 128 and capacity for 60 boarders. The creation of 390 new places will help meet the shortage of primary, and subsequently, secondary places. The possibility of further expansion in 2019 in response to greater pressure for places is set out in our application.
- Our Quaker-inspired educational vision underlines our commitment to the most disadvantaged young people in our area. It responds to the need to build aspiration, resilience and raise academic standards, closing the achievement gap at all levels. It will be achieved through:
  - prioritising children who receive the pupil premium;
  - raising academic standards for all as evidenced by the School's results at both GCSE and A-level, reflected most strongly in the Ebacc measure, where we are the top performing school in Darlington, and the fact that the School has had the highest average point score per A-level entry in Darlington for 4 out of the last 5 years.
  - building on our successful track record in STEM subjects and facilitating A-levels to widen access to HE and FE;
  - our challenge-based approach to learning and rich co-curriculum offering;
  - our boarding provision, which supports an extended day with wrap-around care, hot meals, access to academic and pastoral support and a wide range of activities outside normal school hours available to both day and boarding pupils (the latter including Looked-after children and families of HM Forces)
  - building on our widely-praised tradition for outstanding pastoral care.
- Our all-age approach has been greeted with enthusiasm by the Local Authority and community as a genuine diversification of the local offer, welcome response to the shortage of places, and a real opportunity for Looked-After Children.

### **Section D: Educational Plan**

- A broad and balanced knowledge-rich curriculum across Junior and Senior Schools, structured to meet pupils differing educational needs, will ensure high levels of literacy and numeracy, educate all pupils to the highest standards and prepare them for successful and confident transitions to HE, FE and the work place.
- Our outstanding co-curriculum and creative, challenge-based approach to learning will raise aspirations and build leadership skills, confidence and resilience, improving outcomes for a broader range of pupils.
- Strategies are in place to support pupils from a wider intake including Looked-After Children and those attracting the pupil premium, as well as those with SEN, EAL and the 'Gifted and Talented'.
- The School will benefit from an all-through (EYFS to Sixth Form) monitoring and assessment framework, underpinned by our vertical and horizontal structures and

cross-phase expertise. A Data and Achievement Committee has been set up to lead on monitoring pupil performance and an Assistant Head with responsibility for Data and Tracking Systems will be appointed.

- Particular strengths in STEM, sport, music and technology will be built into our renewed commitment to the local community through new partnerships and outreach.
- Governors and SLT will set robust KPIs to monitor academic achievement of individual pupils and different groups, the establishment of a genuinely inclusive Free School community, outstanding outcomes in pupil behaviour, participation, progression and in staff morale and retention.
- With the support of Durham's EDS, Governors and SLT will have in place a Route Map to inform the School's journey from 'good with outstanding features' (ISI and validated SEF) to 'outstanding' under the revised OFSTED criteria.
- Staffing and leadership structures have been revised to ensure they will be fit for purpose and provide additional capacity, while building on the structures and cultures that have been instrumental in the School's success to date.

### Section E: Evidence of Need

- As at 13 December 2013, **613** completed Evidence of Demand questionnaires, accounting for a total of **872** children were received. Polam Hall is the first choice of school for **765** children, with **582 (76%)** of these not currently on the roll. Evidence of demand forms continue to be submitted.
- For reception and Y7 in both 2015 and 2016, demand exceeds capacity.
- The overwhelming demand for places in the Junior School means it will be at capacity from date of opening in 2015, providing an additional 200 local places. The indicated demand for Senior School places will enable controlled growth from Y7, with the School reaching capacity in 2020.
- Our offer as a Free School will:
  - help meet the need for primary places and, from 2017, secondary places;
  - extend choice through our all-through provision, small class sizes and boarding facilities;
  - further extend choice with the provision of a small Sixth Form where wide leadership opportunities and the rich co-curriculum underpin A-level study – only one other school in Darlington has a Sixth Form;
  - prioritise initially up to 20% of places for children attracting pupil premium within the oversubscription criteria (to be reviewed as the School builds its expertise).
- A detailed communications and public engagement strategy continues to ensure that stakeholders and all parts of the local community, in particular those from disadvantaged communities, are aware of our plans to become a Free School. This has included the use of our brochure, leaflets, advertising, social media as well as extensive dialogue with Darlington Borough Council, our local MP, local business and community leaders, and strengthening our links with local schools and colleges.
- Strikingly, we have received major demand from families living in the 10 wards identified as those in which child poverty needs are concentrated (The Child Protection Poverty Strategy published by the Darlington Partnership, 2011): **62% of responses from prospective parents are from families living in postcodes that correlate to these wards.**
- A further sustained campaign to communicate the vision of a Free School with boarding provision, and to generate formal evidence of demand, is in progress as pupils need to be recruited nationally. Activity continues to focus on HM Forces,

those living in remote rural areas in the North of England, and children with a defined boarding need.

### **Section F: Capacity and Capability**

- Our application sets out our track record of excellence in terms of quality of experience and outcomes, as evidenced by: the external report validating our SEF; the 2012 ISI report; the level of demand shown by parents; the support we have received from the LA and local schools partnership; our results; and the destinations of our leavers.
- Governance of the existing School was judged to be excellent by ISI and our experience of running an independent school has helped inform the proposed governance and committee structure set out in our application.
- Polam Hall is led by [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED]
- An 'expert' Steering Group comprising governors, executive and co-opted members has been set up to oversee our Free School application and transition to Free School status.
- A new Academy Trust has been registered (Company Number 8829554), to which the business of the existing School will be transferred on becoming a Free School. The Trust will comprise four members: two governors and two externals with strong links to the School. The Governing Body will operate with up to 13 members: six of whom bring existing expertise, plus two parent governors, one staff member and the Head with two or three governors recruited to meet identified skills gaps.
- Robust systems will be in place to enable the Governing Body to review its performance, hold the Head and SLT to account, and to minimize and deal with any conflicts of interest.
- Current governors and SLT have a strong track record in financial management, delivering surpluses in years of falling numbers during the recession while maintaining excellence in the academic curriculum and co-curriculum, and have set out a viable Free School budget. It is planned to strengthen this financial expertise further by September 2015.
- The School has borrowings (a long-term loan and overdraft facility with Barclays Bank) predicted to amount to [REDACTED] at the end of August 2015. These are secured by a charge over the School's property, a 22-acre site in the centre of Darlington valued at [REDACTED] in 2010.
- The opportunity exists to sell 2.15 acres of largely unused land at the edge of our site. If this sale, which will be subject to planning, goes ahead, it will enable us to invest up to [REDACTED] in sporting and other facilities. While in no way essential to our conversion to a Free School, this would provide even better value for money and enhance our offer to pupils and the wider community.

### **Section G: Budget Planning and Affordability**

- Polam Hall as a Free School is financially viable and sustainable from opening at 100% and 70% capacity as shown in both financial templates, which deliver a surplus in each year from opening in 2015.
- Business models have been prepared on the basis that the School opens debt free in September 2015, with all outstanding debt to Barclays cleared, currently estimated as [REDACTED] at the end of August 2015. Given that no significant

funding is then needed to transform the existing School of 250 to a Free School of 640, this equates to [REDACTED] for each of the 390 new places created. This offers significant value for money.

- Assumptions used to compile the financial projections have been based on the experience of running the existing School in financially challenging times, and benchmarking performance data has been used to validate costs where possible.
- The financial templates have been built to encompass both the growth in pupil numbers and delivery of the educational plan.
- We are able to offer wrap-around care, the development of wider talents and participation in the full life of the School for those in receipt of pupil premium at marginal costs, as these facilities will already be in place for our boarding pupils. This will represent excellent value for money in the use of the additional pupil premium funding received.
- In the 70% model, protection of pupil outcomes has been achieved by prioritising reductions in cost centres that do not impact on learning, introducing creative solutions and increasing use of technology.

### **Section H: Premises**

- The well-equipped School includes boarding, sporting, all-through to Sixth Form and appropriate specialist provision, notably for performing arts and music. It will remain on its current 22-acre site in the centre of Darlington, easily accessible to the local population including the ten wards identified by Darlington Borough Council as having the highest rates of child poverty.
- The property is generally well maintained, though tight finances in recent years have result in the deferment of some refurbishment and non-essential maintenance. Plans are in place to carry out essential works in the 2014-15 academic year.

### **Conclusion:**

The Governors and SLT at Polam Hall believe strongly in the compelling case for our Free School proposal, demonstrated most notably by:

- the overwhelming volume of demand shown for our Free School vision since our public announcement;
- our contribution to meeting the significant local need for places;
- the opportunities presented as a state boarding school for children with a genuine boarding need, including families of HM Forces and Looked-After Children;
- our commitment to improving academic outcomes for all, especially those in real need, closing the achievement gap for disadvantaged children;
- the positive opportunity to work through harmonious partnerships, already bearing fruit with the LA and local schools, to raise standards;
- the excellent value for money of our proposal for at least 390 new places, at a leading educational provider with an excellent track record.

Application checklist

Name of task	Yes	No
1. Have you completed the <a href="#">pre-application registration form</a> by 5pm on Friday 22 November ?	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Have you established a company limited by guarantee?	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Have you provided information on all of the following areas:		
<b>Section A:</b> Applicant details	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section B:</b> Outline of the school	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section C:</b> Education vision	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section D:</b> Education plan	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section E:</b> Evidence of need	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section F:</b> Capacity and capability	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section G:</b> Budget planning and affordability	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section H:</b> Premises	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Is the information in A4 format using Arial 12 point font, includes page numbers and is 50 to 100 pages (excluding annexes) in total?	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Have you fully completed the budget plans?	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Independent schools only*: have you provided a copy of the last two years' audited financial statements or equivalent?	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Independent schools only*: have you provided a link to your school's most recent inspection report and completed a self-assessment form describing how your school would perform against the Ofsted Section 5 criteria	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Reapplications only. If you are reapplying after being unsuccessful in a previous round, have you changed your application in response to the written feedback you received?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Have you sent an email (of no more than 9 MB in size**) with all relevant information relating to Sections A to H of your application to: <a href="mailto:mainstream.fsapplications@education.gsi.gov.uk">mainstream.fsapplications@education.gsi.gov.uk</a> within one of the windows below? § 9am on 6 Jan 2014 and 12 noon on 10 Jan 2014; or § 9am on 5 May 2014 and 12 noon on 9 May 2014.	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Have you sent 2 hard copies of the application by 'Recorded Signed For' post to: Free Schools Applications Team, Department for Education, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT? (See guidance for dates and deadlines).	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

\*Independent schools include existing alternative provision and special school institutions that are privately run

\*\* If your application is larger than 9MB please split the documents and send two emails

**Section I of your application**

11. Have you sent:

- a copy of Section A (tab 1 of the Excel template); and
- §  copies of the Section I Personal Information form for each member, director and principal designate that has not submitted one of these
  - forms within the past 365 days; and
- §  a list of those members, directors and principals designate who have submitted Section I forms within the past 365 days

by 'Recorded Signed For' post to: Due Diligence Team, Department for Education, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT?

(See guidance for dates and deadlines)

✓	■
■	■

**Declaration**

**\*\*This must be signed by a company member on behalf of the company / trust\*\*** I confirm that the information provided in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I further confirm that if the application is successful the company will operate a Free School in accordance with:

- §  the requirements outlined in the 'How to Apply' guidance;
- §  the funding agreement with the Secretary of State;
- §  all relevant obligations and requirements that apply to open academies (e.g. safeguarding, welfare and bullying) – this includes statutory requirements (those that are enshrined in legislation) and non-statutory requirements (those contained in DfE guidance); and
- §  the School Admissions Code, the School Admissions Appeal Code and the admissions law as it applies to maintained schools. 16 to 19 applicants do not need to follow these codes but must have admissions arrangements and criteria which are fair, objective and transparent.

I have fully disclosed all financial liabilities and the full extent of each/any debt for which the company, trust or existing school is liable.

I confirm that I am not and have never been barred from Regulated Activity within the meaning given by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. I further declare that all current Members and Directors of the Company have confirmed to me that they are not and have never been so barred, and that if it comes to my attention whilst I am a Member or Director of the Company that I or any other Member or Director are or have been so barred I will notify the Department for Education. I and all other Members and Directors of the Company understand that the Company's Free School application may be rejected if a Member or Director of the Company is found to have been barred from Regulated Activity.

I acknowledge that this application may be rejected should any information be deliberately withheld or misrepresented that is later found to be material in considering the application.

**Signed:**

**Position:** [REDACTED] **Print name:**

**Date:** [REDACTED] **7 January 2013**

**NB: This declaration only needs to be signed in the two hard copy versions of your application. Please use black ink.**

Please tick to confirm that you have included
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all the items in the checklist.







SECTION A: APPLICANT DETAILS

1. PLEASE USE THIS FORM AS IT IS PROVIDED. DO NOT CREATE ANY NEW TABS OR CHANGE THIS FORM IN ANY WAY.
2. Please can all applicants fill in section A, even if they have previously applied for a free school. This will ensure that records are kept up to date.
3. If you are submitting multiple applications it is only necessary to fill in section A once.
4. The text boxes can be made bigger by increasing the row height.
5. To insert a new line in a text box, press alt + enter.
6. Please answer all questions. If questions are not applicable, please put 'NA' in the box.

[Jump to about the company](#)  
[Jump to further details about the group](#)  
[Jump to links to other organisations](#)

**Basic information**

Pre-registration reference number	6571
Name of proposed school:	Polam Hall School
Is this a route one application or a route two application?	Route 2 application
Name of lead applicant:	<Redacted>
Address of lead applicant:	<Redacted>, Polam Hall School, Grange Road, Darlington, County Durham DL1 5PA
Email address of lead applicant:	<Redacted>
Telephone number of lead applicant:	<Redacted>
How you would describe your group?	Converting independent school
If 'Something else' please describe your group:	N/A
Have you applied before for this school, whether under the current name or something else?	No
If 'Yes' and the name of the school was different, please say what the original name was:	N/A
If 'Yes', when did you last apply? N.B. The options are dates of submission of applications, not the announcement of results.	N/A

**About the company**

Have you established your trust in accordance with the DfE model articles of association?	Yes
Company name:	Polam Hall Educational Trust
Company address:	Polam Hall School, Grange Road, Darlington, County Durham DL1 5PA
Company registration number:	8829554
Date when company was incorporated:	02-Jan-14
Please confirm the total number of company members (must be a minimum of 3):	3
	<Redacted>
	<Redacted>
	<Redacted>

Please give the names of all company members:	

Please list all company directors, providing their name and the position they will hold when the school is open:	<Redacted>
	<Redacted>
	<Redacted>
	<Redacted>
	<Redacted>
	<Redacted>
	<Redacted>

Please provide the name of the proposed chair of the governing body, if known:	<Redacted>
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**Further details about the group**

Are any members of your group related in any way, including by marriage, to any other? NB this includes company members or directors, members of the project group, etc.	No
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Are you an approved academy sponsor?	No
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How many existing free schools or academies are run by your group?	None
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If you already run one or more free school or academy or are part of some other group of schools, please state the name of your chain/group. This may be the same as the name of your company:	N/A
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If you are an existing single school seeking to establish a new school or an independent school looking to convert please provide your six digit reference number:	841/6000
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If you are an existing single school seeking to establish a new school or an independent school looking to convert, please provide the rating of your most recent inspection:	Good with excellent features - ISI Report 25-28 September 2012
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If you are an existing single school seeking to establish a new school or an independent school looking to convert, please provide a link to your most recent inspection report:	<a href="http://www.isi.net/schools/6786">www.isi.net/schools/6786</a>
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If you are an existing single school seeking to establish a new school or an independent school looking to convert, please provide a link to your performance data for the last 3 years:	<a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/cgi-bin/schools/performance/search.pl?location=polam+hall&amp;phase=all&amp;searchType=location">www.education.gov.uk/cgi-bin/schools/performance/search.pl?location=polam+hall&amp;phase=all&amp;searchType=location</a>
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How many free schools are you seeking to open in this application round?	1
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**Links to other organisations**

Through its members, directors or otherwise, does the company limited by guarantee have any formal or informal links (e.g.. financial, philosophical or ideological) with any other organisations within the UK or overseas? These may include: other free school groups; existing free schools or Academies; independent schools; other institutions; charitable bodies; and/or commercial or non-commercial organisations.	Some of the directors and members named above will remain directors of the independent school company, Polam Hall Darlington Ltd. We will ensure that there is no conflict of interest for the governing body. It is intended to recruit at least three further three directors for Polam Hall Educational Trust, as outlined in Section F3b, to enhance the skills of the governing body, as well as the Head, two parent governors and a staff governor.
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If Yes, please provide the following information about each organisation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• their full name;</li> <li>• their Companies House and/or Charity Commission number, and if appropriate the nature of the link; and</li> <li>• the role that it is envisaged they will play in relation to the free school.</li> </ul>	Polam Hall Darlington Ltd, company number 7261538, charity number 1136642. It is proposed that the property and assets of this charity are transferred to the new academy trust in August 2015, on settlement of its outstanding liabilities by the DfE. It is envisaged that Polam Hall Darlington Ltd would remain in existence for a short period after the Free School opened in September 2015 but would be wound up once all outstanding parent payments have been received. It would have no role in relation to the Free School from September 2015.
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Please specify any religious organisations or institutions connected to your application (local, national and international). There would include mosques, churches, gurdwaras, temples and other places of worship. In particular, please describe in specific terms the religious affiliations of your group, including where appropriate any denomination or particular school of thought that influences your group (e.g. Pentecostalism, Deobandism, Reform Judaism, etc.).	None
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If any members of your group are also involved in other applications to open a studio school, UTC or free school in this application round, please give the names of the other applications and state the link:	
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Have you received help and support from the New Schools Network (NSN)?	<Redacted>
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In addition to any support/advice from the New Schools Network, did you put together this application with support from another company or organisation?	Yes
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If Yes, please list the name(s) of the organisation(s) and describe clearly the role they played in developing your application. Please also describe the role (if any) you envisage for them in setting up and/or running the free school if your application is successful:	Project management from <Redacted> - <Redacted>. Her role has been to advise on the application process and coordinate the preparation of the application to meet the submission deadline. She has also advised on marketing and communications strategy and the collation of the evidence of demand for the Free School, contributing to drafting Section E. In conjunction with the Chair of Finance, Head and Bursar she has also contributed to Section G and the financial projections. Any future role in the transition to Free School status is likely to be in an advisory capacity.
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SECTION B: OUTLINE OF THE SCHOOL

1. PLEASE USE THIS FORM AS IT IS PROVIDED. DO NOT CREATE ANY NEW TABS OR CHANGE THIS FORM IN ANY WAY.
2. The text boxes can be made bigger by increasing the row height.
3. To insert a new line in a text box, press alt + enter.
4. Please answer all questions. If questions are not applicable, please put 'NA' in the box.

[Jump to use of freedoms](#)

<p>This application form is designed to be used for mainstream applications and 16-19 applications. If the school you are proposing does not really fit the definition of a mainstream or 16-19 school but does not fit the definitions of special or alternative provision schools either, you need to use the template that is the closest fit and explain how your school would differ. <b>If this applies to your application please briefly outline the main differences.</b> You will also need to address these differences in more detail in the relevant sections of the application.</p>	
In which local authority is your preferred location?	Darlington
Proposed opening year:	Sep-15
Age Range:	Apr-19
If 'other' please specify	
Will the school have a sixth form?	Yes
Will your school be co-educational or single sex?	Co-educational
Is your school a hybrid type?	No
Do you intend that your proposed school will be designated as having a religious character? NB Please refer to the glossary of terms in the 'How to Apply' guidance for more information about religious character/designation:	No
Do you intend your proposed school to have a faith ethos (but will not be designated as having a religious character)?	Non-denominational but with an ethos built on the values and mission of our Quaker founders.
If you answered yes to either of the above questions, please say which faith:	Quaker values
If you answered 'Other' to the question above or you would like to specify a particular denomination (e.g. Church of England), please specify:	
Will your school have a distinctive pedagogy or educational philosophy, for example Steiner or Montessori?	No
If other, please specify	
Maximum capacity of proposed free school:	640
Please say which year groups the school will have in first year and the PAN for each	The school will have pupils in every year group from Reception to Year 13. PAN for 2015 is 40 for Reception, 4 boarding places in Years 7 and 9, 10 day places and 6 boarding places in Year 12.
Date proposed school will reach expected capacity in all year groups:	2020 - 2021
Will your proposed school include residential provision?	Yes

If 'Yes', please give further detail:	It will offer day and boarding places. At capacity there will be 580 day pupils and 60 boarding pupils. The school already has provision for this number of boarding places.
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For 16-19 applicants only - please select an age range that best fits secondary schools in the area in which you propose to establish your school:	11 - 16. There is only one school in Darlington currently offering sixth form education.
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Are you planning to contract the management of your school to another organisation?	No
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Have you already identified a principal?	Yes
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If yes please say when you propose the principal would start:	<Redacted>.
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Please say how many people will sit on your governing body:	12-13 with a capacity for 15 to allow for succession planning
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### Use of freedoms

Will you operate a non-standard school day?	Yes - an extended day.
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Will you operate a non-standard school year?	Yes - longer school holidays than standard maintained schools but with summer schools in progress through the longest breaks.
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Will you adopt the national curriculum?	Yes
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Will you adopt non-standard terms and conditions for teachers?	We will continue current terms and conditions which reflect but do not adhere to the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.
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Do you plan to make employ teachers without QTS?	No
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Please list any other freedoms you intend to use	Extended school day with supervision until 5.30pm and the opportunity for 'day' boarding with breakfast and evening meals included. Financial management and control of the school budgets which we will use
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## Section C: Education vision

### 1. RATIONALE AND CONTEXT FOR POLAM HALL'S VISION AS A FREE SCHOOL

*Opportunity and excellence for all*

As a Free School, Polam Hall will present a unique offer for Darlington: a non-denominational, co-educational day and boarding 4-19 school, with capacity for 640 pupils. Building on the values and mission of our Quaker founders, pupils of all abilities will access a rich academic curriculum supported by an exceptional co-curriculum. We will draw full benefit from Academy freedoms in setting out an extended day that dovetails with our boarding provision, in which we have long and successful expertise.

At the heart of our vision is our commitment to delivering excellent academic outcomes for all children, whatever their ability and background. We have a proud tradition of academic inclusivity, and have never used academic selection. Our outstanding pastoral care will enable us to support the intellectual and personal growth of young people from a wide range of backgrounds, helping them develop across the key points of transition, ensuring they acquire the highest possible levels of literacy and numeracy.

Leadership, aspiration, creativity and resilience have long been embedded in our curriculum and co-curriculum. This drives us to raise the ambitions of a wider range of pupils, helping all make confident transitions to higher/further education and the world of work. The opportunities that day pupils gain from studying within a state boarding school will reinforce the curriculum, as well as fulfilling a vital function for 'Looked-after' children who we will support in partnership with Darlington Council, for children with a boarding need, and for HM Forces families.

The Free School reform has opened up opportunities for independent schools with a genuine vision of social inclusion to contribute to closing the achievement gap, increasing social mobility and access to top universities. With our Quaker-inspired mission for transforming lives through education, Polam Hall, under Free School status, will be a beacon for a holistic and inclusive vision of education. A managed programme of growth will ensure that the opportunities that are afforded by our small size will be maintained, while enabling us to enrich the overall offer and make this accessible to a wide number of pupils. A significant commitment to supporting children who attract the Pupil Premium will underpin this growth as we raise standards for all young people.

#### **The Darlington context: the drive to counter local deprivation**

*Promoting and achieving choice and diversity in our school system is a way of creating a climate which fosters high and improving standards of achievement – Schools@onedarlington, and Darlington's School Organisation Plan, 2013 [SOP, 2013]*

Darlington has above national average levels of deprivation; seven of its 24 wards fall within the most deprived decile in England [Multiple Indices of Deprivation 2010]. Geographically there is an east/west divide within Darlington, with the eastern wards typically more deprived. Recent figures show a 13-year difference in life expectancy between separate communities in Darlington that are less than a mile apart. Polam Hall is situated within the Park East Ward, one of the seven most deprived in Darlington.

Situated at the very heart of Darlington, our Quaker-inspired vision has given us a deep commitment to inclusion and accessibility, and to building bridges within this diverse community, through education. This commitment is reflected in the growing percentage of pupils in receipt of bursaries – rising from 12.3% of the roll in 2010 to 19.6% in 2013. Polam Hall is in demand as a school that nurtures each child in a closely supportive pastoral environment. In the most recent year, 7 pupils received bursaries of 90% or more.

As a Free School, we will prioritise children who receive the Pupil Premium within our oversubscription criteria. The School currently draws about 8% of its pupils from the most deprived wards; but as part of the response to our campaign to show demand for our Free School proposals, we have identified significant numbers of parents (over 60% of Darlington respondents) who live within postcodes that correlate with the 10 most deprived wards [see Section E].

### **Working in partnership to meet basic need and parental demand**

Darlington Borough Council has identified a high level of need for primary school places, which by 2015 will exceed those available. Darlington has also recognised the need to build in new secondary places from as early as 2017 to accommodate the higher number of children in primaries who will be moving on to secondary age education. Housing data analysis suggests a need for 5800 new dwellings over a 15-year period from 2011 to 2026, notably in the central urban area, close to Polam Hall [SOP, 2013]. Borough planning makes clear that by the time the expected increase in Polam Hall's Junior School works through, the School will be contributing to meeting the demand for places at Senior School level as well.

Our Free School proposals have already drawn impressive support; our postcode analysis shows that there is indeed strong demand for education at Polam Hall among families who cannot afford places [see Section E]. Since our public launch in October 2013, our Evidence of Demand questionnaire has attracted responses for over 800 children. Even before submission of our application, more than 200 children have applied to join the School by September 2014.

Darlington Borough Council has welcomed Polam Hall's contribution to meeting both the basic demand for primary age places, and to widening choice, as part of the 'family' of schools. The Borough is committed to *'strong Governing Bodies and skilled school Leadership teams converting to Academy status and also to Free Schools which meet identified needs... [to] deliver the best outcomes for children across the Borough'* [SOP, 2013]. We have liaised closely over a draft admissions policy that can make the most of our wide catchment area (which draws currently from both urban and rural areas) in order to help meet demand without encroaching on the catchments of other schools. The Borough has particularly welcomed the proposal that our state boarding facility could help improve provision for Looked-After Children in Local Authority care.

*'Discussions have been held with Polam Hall, regarding the potential use of their boarding facilities for Looked-After Children and as a family support option to prevent family breakdown... The strategy of the Council is to target family support services to those where risk of breakdown and children becoming looked after is greatest. Term time school boarding is a significant option for some families in maintaining the family and improving school attendance and achievement. The looked after population is diverse and again the option of a local boarding facility increases the ability to provide a positive placement. Discussions will continue exploring the detail of these ideas.'*  
[Statement from LA, Department of Children, Families and Learning, December 2013]

## **Choice and Diversity**

To develop choice and drive up standards, Darlington has developed a successful model of school interdependence within a collaborative framework that encourages schools to use their autonomy and share expertise. The Borough embraces the principle that each school will *'have its own distinctive character as parents and their children may prefer one type of school over another'* [SOP, 2013]. Only Carmel, the Roman Catholic faith-based Academy, has retained its own Sixth Form; other students have to choose between the very large Sixth Form College or FE provider. No school currently provides for children to be educated across the ages 4 to 19, although there is local interest in developing this model. Our Free School proposal to retain smaller class sizes across this age range has already attracted positive comment across Darlington.

The three high-performing secondary schools (Carmel, Hummersknott and Hurworth) are heavily oversubscribed, and all but one of the secondary providers in the borough will hit their PAN for Year 7 in 2015 [SOP, 2013]; pressure for places will increase markedly from 2017. Popular schools typically receive twice as many applications as there are places [SOP, 2013, based on 2012 applications]. As a smaller school, with two-form entry (three-form at Y7 proposed in 2019), and only 60-70 per year in the Sixth Form, Polam Hall offers a real alternative for raising attainment and closing the gap. We will collaborate with other schools, sharing expertise in managing key points of transition.

Our boarding provision gives us the basis for further enriching the breadth of choice in Darlington. Polam Hall offers an extended day, with seamless support for children who need further help outside school hours, or who benefit from the provision of meals at morning and evening. Our facilities allow a cohesive 'all year' approach to the rich co-curricular programme. We will set out a summer programme of activities to maximise the benefits of the site, address issues such as regression in basic literacy and numeracy, independent thinking and university preparation, preparing pupils for the next stage of their learning. These activities will benefit a wider range of children from across Darlington, especially those who are approaching key points of transition.

Polam Hall responds positively and inclusively to the pressures experienced by pupils with a range of learning needs. The Authority's Schools@onedarlington Review reflected concerns about *'students (with special needs) being moved round the Darlington system... with some children having been in 3 different primary schools in one school year'*. Providing stability for all has long been a hallmark of the School, and by engaging pro-actively with the Borough's Fair Access Protocols, supporting pupils with SEN on an 'all-through' basis, we will contribute to the seamless cross-age entitlement envisaged as best practice under recent national reforms, enabling our young people to reach their full potential and make a successful transition to adulthood.

## **Raising standards**

While Darlington as an authority outperforms the national measure at KS2 and is close to the national measure at KS4 of 5+ A\*-C GCSES, the performance of its individual schools is very variable, as shown in OFSTED judgments for schools within a 2 mile radius of Polam Hall: Cockerton C of E Primary School and Skerne Park Primary School (now Academy) were rated as 3 satisfactory in their last OFSTED inspections; secondary school Haughton Academy as Haughton Community School was similarly rated and St Aidan's Church of England Academy was rated as requiring improvement in their January 2013 OFSTED inspection. Over 550 primary and 1450 secondary pupils are



educated in these schools. Darlington's best performers at both levels are already heavily oversubscribed and will exceed pupil capacity for three or more of the next five years.

At secondary level, performance outcomes at the end of KS4 are particularly variable, ranging from as low as 38% to 86% 5+ A\*-C GCSE measure including English and maths [average WITH equivalencies, 2009-12]. Without equivalencies, DfE tables indicate that a number of schools perform very poorly in the 20%-30% range [2012]. Polam Hall's long commitment to academic excellence for all is reflected most strikingly in the Ebacc measure, where we are the top-performing school in Darlington.

<b>% 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths (with equivalencies)</b>	<b>Average, 2009-12</b>
<b>Polam Hall</b>	<b>78%</b>
Polam Hall, taking account of IELTS	80.5%
Darlington	61%
National	55.4%

<b>% achieving Ebacc</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>Polam Hall</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>40.9%</b>
Darlington	14.9%	12.9%
National	18.4%	23%

Polam Hall is genuinely non-selective, currently supporting 38 pupils with EAL and 59 pupils identified as having a range of special needs or disabilities (SEND) – including two who have a full statement of special educational needs. Our delivery of excellent outcomes for this diverse community is reflected in our sustained place among the top performers over time. This is achieved while supporting overseas boarders to pursue enabling progression routes; many currently choose the IELTS qualification rather than GCSE English as the best preparation for their academic paths.

### **Impact of national re-alignment of qualifications for Polam Hall, 2012-13**

By continuing with a popular Cambridge IGCSE in English in line with many other independent schools, our 2013 performance will not be reflected in official tables, as this particular international English qualification was not Ofqual-accredited. In committing to the Free School route, the School will move to fully Ofqual-accredited curricula for all GCSEs or IGCSEs. **Taking actual IGCSE attainment into consideration, our 2013 score (disregarding those who took the IELTS qualification instead of GCSE English) was 71.1% A\*-C EM; or 61.4% with their inclusion. 66% of GCSE grades without IELTS were at A\*-A; 91% were at A\*-B.**

### **Key Stage 5 – excellent performance at Sixth Form**

Achievement at KS5 paints a similar picture of academic excellence in an inclusive, non-selective environment. For KS5, in 2013, 98.8% of pupils passed 3 or more A-levels at A-E; 100% achieved 2 A-levels. 53.5% of 2013 grades were at A\*-B. **The School has had the highest average point score per entry in Darlington for 4 out of the last 5 years (2013 = 226.6).** This measure reflects our support of pupils both within and outside the classroom, not entering them for more exams than appropriate, ensuring that pupils experience appropriate depth of study in their subjects. Polam Hall leads the way locally in the important measure of pupils achieving AAB in 'facilitating' A-levels. These scores reflect the long emphasis within the School on enabling the successful progression of all pupils, whatever their academic ability, by inspiring and supporting them in choosing the most rigorous and academic A-level disciplines.

## 2. THE POLAM HALL FREE SCHOOL PROPOSITION

### **Building on the past, meeting future needs**

As the oldest school in continuous existence in Darlington, Polam Hall has a long tradition of recognising individual strengths and developing young people as independent thinkers through our innovative teaching and outstanding pastoral care. We have delivered a distinctive vision of academic inclusiveness since 1848, which we now seek to develop within a new mission of social inclusion. The academic vision will draw on our strengths in the STEM and wider 'facilitating subjects', not least in maintaining high take-up of science and maths among girls at A-level, and build on our high rates of participation in sport, the performing and fine arts. Our confidence-building co-curriculum, which all staff will continue to support under our Free School proposition, will provide leadership opportunities and the resilience this develops in all pupils will lead to strong aspirations for future study and work.

As evidence of our track record of success, ISI reported in its most recent inspection (September 2012):

*In and out of lessons pupils reach excellent standards in a wide range of undertakings... Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent... Teaching is good enabling all pupils to progress well... Throughout the school the quality of pupils' personal development is excellent... Pastoral care throughout the school is excellent... outcomes for boarders are excellent... Astute and well-articulated leadership ensures that the school meets its aim of enabling pupils to reach their full potential. Excellent governance has a clear overview of the school... bringing educational, financial and legal experience to the school and well informed insight... [see Section F7].*

Most recently (December 2013), our Self Assessment Form [See Appendix 2] was externally validated by Durham Council's Education Development Service against the revised Section 5 OFSTED Framework, with the following summary of judgements:

*Evidence from work scrutiny in lessons indicates that attainment is above national norms and current pupils are making good and in some cases excellent progress over time... The quality of teaching is good, with some identified as outstanding... Pupils have very positive attitudes towards the school... A strong ethos of reward for endeavour pervades school life... School self evaluation and development planning are coherent, rigorous and accurate. The leadership of teaching is effective... The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides students with innovative opportunities to develop and apply skills and competencies, a wide range of qualifications and a quite exceptional range of extra-curricular activities. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.*

### **Mission and scale**

To deliver our commitment to increased access we propose a phased programme of growth which, at steady state, will establish Polam Hall as an all-through, co-educational Free School of 640 pupils, with boarding capacity for 10% of our intake. Pupils will be admitted into two forms from Reception and all will be able to progress to A-level if they so wish. We expect the vast majority of pupils to perform well against the new 'Attainment 8' and 'Progress 8 measures', and to attain high levels of performance in English and maths, with almost all able to achieve a minimum threshold of 6 A\*-C grades at GCSE including English and maths, with the option to transfer seamlessly to A-level study at Polam Hall, or to progress to other high quality destinations.

### **Options for growth in response to future demographic demand**

Two-form entry from Reception maintains the distinctiveness of our smaller size, giving us flexibility to respond to individual needs; it does however represent a substantial increase on the School's capacity as an Independent provider when pupil numbers were at peak (c. 450 pupils). In time (anticipated from 2019), and by working in partnership with the Borough and other secondary schools, Polam Hall will meet increased local demand for secondary places through a further modest expansion, allowing a third form of entry into Year 7.

Polam Hall will continue to serve both the immediate vicinity and a wider geographical catchment, whilst committing to closing the recognised gap in pupil attainment and progression to Russell Group Higher Education for those who attract the Pupil Premium. To this end our marketing and communications strategy has already drawn demand from postcodes where our School has been under-represented in the past [see Section E]; we will continue to work with families who may be eligible for Free School meals so that we genuinely meet our aspirations in widening access to our School for children from more deprived backgrounds.

Given our well-established boarding provision and long association with Forces families, we will continue to provide for the needs of up to 60 boarders, both in support of HM Forces families (25% of current boarders), including children who have a temporary need for boarding care and for Looked-After Children for whom a term-time boarding place is the best option, working with the Borough to support families.

### **Raising attainment through academic rigour and challenge**

A broad knowledge-rich academic curriculum will be made accessible to all pupils, based on the National Curriculum and the Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Delivery of this curriculum will see pupils motivated from an early stage through the inclusion of the Creative Curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2, which sets out a challenge-based pedagogical approach to learning. They will develop cross-disciplinary skills; develop a joy in learning; and build their capacity as independent learners. From Year 3, children will be taught by specialist staff in English, maths, French and the humanities, and will be encouraged to put their knowledge base into practice through a number of themed challenges. This enquiry-led approach underpins learning throughout the School, enabling senior pupils to engage with the higher-order thinking required across the STEM subjects in which Polam Hall pupils have had such success.

Teaching strategies which are properly tailored to the needs of pupils, across-the-curriculum approaches which reinforce high levels of literacy and numeracy, a culture of aspiration and the broad range of subjects offered at GCSE, IGCSE and A-Level will enable pupils of a range of abilities and talents to reach their potential. The vast majority of sixth-form pupils will be expected to undertake the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) to reinforce their skills in independent working and thinking. Close links with humanities and science at Durham University, and with leading providers of advanced training in the performing arts and music [see Section D], will enrich and extend the curriculum offer.

### **Sport and outdoor activities for all**

With our long tradition of sporting success and well-appointed site, sport will continue to be a powerful force for cohesion and healthy physical development, developing the teamwork of all our pupils. An impressive range will be offered, allowing pupils to find an activity in which they can shine, whether in mainstream team sports or other more

specialized activities. With a strong programme of lunchtime and after-school clubs and fixtures, the benefits of a busy sporting programme within the co-curriculum will help integrate a wider community of pupils into our School. Polam Hall's long tradition of outdoor activities, through the Duke of Edinburgh programme, visits to outdoor centres in Cumbria and Yorkshire and the parent and pupil walking club, will provide a powerful basis for developing the leadership, confidence and resilience of all our pupils.

### **A shared cultural literacy**

The Schools' White Paper *'The Importance of teaching'* and Darren Henley's Independent Review for the DCMS and DfE on music education underline the importance of all pupils receiving the highest quality cultural education in formal and informal settings. This rich cultural education is a key feature of Polam Hall's distinctive offer as a Free School.

Through their participation in our wide programmes of music, art and drama (both in the curriculum and the co-curriculum), our pupils will be introduced to the best of what has been created in literature, art and music (the knowledge base); they will be encouraged to develop analytical and critical skills which can be applied to all learning, and to create culture themselves, in drawing, composition or new art forms, including the use of digital technologies. Junior School examples will include a strong emphasis on speaking and listening skills, with all pupils in Years 5 and 6 taking part in English Speaking Board events; full school singing will continue to be a central part of the weekly round of assemblies. Senior pupils will have the opportunity to perform in the well-equipped theatre and music suite, to take part in local and national art exhibitions and participate in national orchestras and choirs.

### **Supported to achieve and aspire: the all-through approach**

As part of the Free School ethos, we will build on the strength of our 'all-through' approach to create positive role models which break cycles of low aspiration, instil high standards of attendance, punctuality and application from an early age, and build confidence and self esteem within a strong sense of community. Exchange of practice across the phases, with careful use of assessment data and close tracking of pupils across KS2/3 transition will ensure that all pupils at the end of KS2 meet and exceed the new national standards and are fully 'secondary ready', avoiding the national Year 6-7 dip. This shared cross-phase understanding will allow Polam Hall to respond effectively to the needs of individual pupils who join us at Year 7.

Our vibrant House structure will underpin our strategy, ensuring that pupils continue to be known in smaller vertical communities, building a strong sense of belonging and self esteem, encouraging healthy competition through our 'house play' season and sporting activities that encourage all to excel, while creating opportunities for leadership.

We believe in the importance of maintaining momentum in advance of key points of transition, at Year 7, Year 12 and in preparation for university. We will develop a range of summer schools that combine outdoor activities, artistic or technology clubs with support in literacy, numeracy and academic disciplines, enhancing the progress of pupils from our wider area, addressing the issue of regression. The emphasis on independent learning, vital for university, will be at the heart of the senior summer school programme.

### **Polam's living tradition of holistic education**

Underpinning all learning and success is Polam Hall's traditional strength in pastoral care and in the quality of our pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These

are manifest through the quality of our relationships, through our strong systems of rewards, and through our values framework. Pupils entering at Reception, Year 7 and Year 12 will benefit from a rigorous and well-structured programme of induction, designed to ensure that pupils from a wider range of social backgrounds settle into the positive atmosphere of full participation in the curriculum and co-curriculum.

The School's deep-rooted values will continue to be reinforced through formal experiences within the curriculum, which develop character, independence and self-confidence, and through the rich co-curricular life of the School. Programmes such as the CCF and Duke of Edinburgh's Award will be promoted further, developing invaluable skills of teamwork, leadership and responsibility, and service to others.

The boarding offer at Polam Hall benefits all children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, by giving us the facility to involve seamlessly those who need further support in breakfast and homework clubs. We will work with groups such as the Local Authority, Assisted Boarding Network and the Royal National Children's Foundation to explore how boarding could be used to benefit a wider intake.

The ethos of participation and mutual respect that is a hallmark of Polam Hall today, and which is enriched by our extensive alumni network, will be extended to all as new pupils join the School. With opportunities for leadership, sport and artistic performance genuinely accessible to all, our co-curriculum will provide the framework within which all can develop and excel.

## Section D: Education plan – part 1

	Current number of pupils (at January 2014)	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Reception</b>	13	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
<b>Year 1</b>	19	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
<b>Year 2</b>	6	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
<b>Year 3</b>	15	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
<b>Year 4</b>	13	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
<b>Year 5</b>	7	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
<b>Year 6</b>	9	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
<b>Year 7</b>	13	43	44	44	44	44	44	44
<b>Year 8</b>	14	42	43	44	44	44	44	44
<b>Year 9</b>	17	24	46	47	48	48	48	48
<b>Year 10</b>	21	30	33	46	47	48	48	48
<b>Year 11</b>	38	27	30	33	46	47	48	48
<b>Year 12</b>	17	33	50	46	53	62	66	62
<b>Year 13</b>	25	37	33	50	46	53	62	66
<b>Totals</b>	250	516	559	590	608	624	640	640

The table demonstrates projected pupil growth reaching steady state in 2020 based on two-form entry from Reception to Year 11 and a Sixth Form of 128 pupils. These numbers include both day and boarding places, with the capacity of 60 boarding pupils reached in 2017. The total of 250 includes 21 Lower Foundation pupils.

As outlined in Sections C and G2, in response to local need, Polam Hall may introduce three form entry from Year 7 in 2019. This would have the effect of increasing the projected school roll to 650 pupils in 2019, gradually increasing to capacity in 2025 at 776 pupils.

Demographic trends, increased competition from local independent schools for fewer fee payers and, most significantly, the economic downturn have adversely affected Polam Hall's school roll since 2007 – at the same time as the final pupils to have benefited from the Assisted Places scheme left the School. This mirrors the effect felt across the independent schools' sector, especially those attracting UK boarding pupils. The economies in the North East, and Darlington in particular, have been badly hit, evidenced by the data in the 2010 Indices of Deprivation. The School has endeavoured to widen access through means-tested bursary support but it has become increasingly difficult to meet the growing demand for this from both existing and prospective parents.

## Section D: Education plan – part 2

Subject/other activity (e.g. enrichment)	Hours per week	Mandatory/ Voluntary	Comments
<b>EYFS</b>			
EYFS core programme	19 hours	Mandatory	
French	30 minutes	Mandatory	
PE/games	1 hr 20	Mandatory	
Intervention and support	1 hr to 2 hrs 30	Optional / Mandatory	Structured support time available regularly every lunchtime.
Assembly	30 minutes	Mandatory	
<b>KS 1</b>			
Literacy	5 hours	Mandatory	
Numeracy	5 hours	Mandatory	
Science	1 hr 30	Mandatory	
French	40 minutes	Mandatory	
Humanities	1 hr 30	Mandatory	
Religious Studies	50 minutes	Mandatory	
Music	50 minutes	Mandatory	
Art	50 minutes	Mandatory	
Computing	50 minutes	Mandatory	
Design Technology	50 minutes	Mandatory	
PE/games	2 hours	Mandatory	
Creative Curriculum unit	1 hr 30, 1 afternoon a week	Mandatory	theme-based activities
PSHE	50 minutes lesson  1 hour tutor time	Mandatory	PSHE is delivered primarily through a timetabled lesson; but many of the themes are also supported through tutor time.
Intervention and support	1 hr to 2 hrs 30	Targeted support depending on individual circumstances	Structured support time available regularly every lunchtime for those who need intervention.
Co-curriculum (Enrichment is delivered through the co-curriculum)	45 minutes assembly  15 mins house	Mandatory  Mandatory	All pupils are involved in leading assemblies, which serve an important function building public speaking skills and teamwork.

	meeting  House activities (sport, drama, music, speaking)  Other activities: 30 minutes minimum expectation: this could be sport, ballet, Brownies, Lego, iPads, other clubs	Mandatory participation  Optional, but pupils must opt in to at least one activity a week	
Supervised care and play time	Up to 10 hours a week – or more if needed	Optional	Children will be supported as families need, with supervised play and appropriate activities up to 6 p.m. every day – and beyond if need be.
<b>KS 2</b>			
Literacy	5 hours	Mandatory	
Numeracy	5 hours	Mandatory	
Science	1 hr 30	Mandatory	
French	40 minutes	Mandatory	
Humanities	1 hr 30	Mandatory	
Religious Studies	50 minutes	Mandatory	
Music	50 minutes	Mandatory	
Computing	50 minutes	Mandatory	
Creative Curriculum – cross-disciplinary	4 hrs	Mandatory	This cross-disciplinary programme delivers Art, DT, builds further time for humanities, and gives impetus to numeracy and literacy.
PSHE	40 minutes  1 hr tutor + mentor time	Mandatory	
Co-curriculum (Enrichment is delivered through the co-curriculum)	45 minutes assembly  15 mins house meeting	Mandatory  Mandatory	All pupils are involved in leading assemblies, which serve an important function building public speaking skills and teamwork. Additional time for Junior School Council



	House activities (sport, drama, music, speaking)  1 hour optional activities (minimum expectation) : sporting, drama, music, art, dance, charities, etc.	Mandatory  Optional	Time varies through the year – with a minimum of about ½ an hour a week, rising to 5 or 6 hours in busy times (House play season). All pupils will be expected to participate.  Lunchtime or after school; the 1-hour minimum expectation is based on two ½ hour lunchtime activities or one hour after school. Many pupils will opt for the 1 hour after school activities – and if playing fixtures or in a show may commit to up to 6 hours a week for a specific burst of time
Supervised Study	Up to 5 hours after school	Optional	
Intervention and support	1 hr to 3 hrs	Targeted support depending on individual circumstances	In addition to support during main curriculum time, there will be structured support time available regularly every lunchtime, with option both before and after school for further support.
<b>KS3, KS4</b>			
English KS3	3 hr 20	Mandatory	
Maths KS3	3 hr 20	Mandatory	
Science KS3	2 hr 30 (Y7); 3 hr 20 (Y8 + Y9)	Mandatory	
French KS3	1 hr 40	Mandatory	
PE/games KS3	2 hr 30 (Y7) 1 hr 40 (Y8 + 9)	Mandatory	Supplemented through co-curriculum
PSHE KS3	50 minutes	Mandatory	
Computing KS3	50 minutes	Mandatory	
Other disciplines KS3	10 hours	Mandatory	History, geography, technology, language 2, religion ethics & philosophy, art, food technology, drama, music
English KS4	3 hr 20 (Y10); 4 hr (Y11)	Mandatory	
Maths KS4	2 hr 30	Mandatory	
Science KS4	5 hr	Mandatory	
French KS4	2 hr 30	Mandatory	
Religion, Ethics &	50 minutes	Mandatory	

Philosophy KS4			
PE/games KS4	1 hr 40	Mandatory	
PSHE KS4	50 minutes	Mandatory	
Computing (Y10)	50 minutes	Mandatory	
GCSE Options	2 hr 30 x 3	Mandatory	Pupils choose three options with small number of exceptions for personalized programmes where pupils need particular support
Supervised study	Up to 5 hours after school	Optional	
Intervention and support	1 hr to 3 hrs	Directed, targeted support depending on individual circumstances	In addition to support during main curriculum time, there will be structured support time available regularly every lunchtime, with option both before and after school for further support.
Co-curriculum (Enrichment is delivered through the co-curriculum)	30 minutes assembly	Mandatory	All pupils are involved in leading assemblies, which serve an important function building public speaking skills and teamwork. Additional time for School Council  Time varies through the year – minimum of ½ an hour a week, rising to 5 or 6 hours in busy times (House play season). All expected to participate.  Lunchtime or after school; the 1-hour minimum expectation is based on 2 lunchtime activities. Many pupils will opt for after school activities which have 1 hour each – and if playing fixtures or in a show they will commit to up to 6 hours a week
	15 mins house meeting	Mandatory	
	House activities (sport, drama, music, speaking)	Mandatory	
	1 hour optional activities (minimum expectation) : sporting, drama, music, dance, charities, etc	Optional	
<b>KS 5</b>			
A-level options	4 hr 10 per subject (Y12) 5 hr per subject (Y13)	Mandatory	

PE/games KS5	1 hr 40	Mandatory	
Co-curriculum (Enrichment is delivered through the co-curriculum)	30 minutes assembly	Mandatory	All pupils are involved in leading assemblies, which serve an important function building public speaking skills and teamwork.
	EPQ	Mandatory	Most pupils will be expected to follow the EPQ curriculum, leading to an independent project and presentation.
	15 mins house meeting	Mandatory	Additional time for school council
	House activities (sport, drama, music, etc.)	Mandatory	Time varies through the year – minimum of about ½ an hour a week, rising to 5 or 6 hours in busy times (House play season). All expected to participate.
	1 hour optional activities (minimum expectation) : this could be sporting, drama, charities, etc	Optional	Lunchtime or after school; the 1-hour minimum expectation is based on two lunchtime activities. Many will opt for after school activities which have one hour each – and if playing fixtures or in a show they will commit up to six hours a week.
Leadership - variable	Optional	In practice, most sixth-formers will take up a range of leadership opportunities, from organising the charity fashion show, to coaching or captaining sports teams.	
Supervised Study	Up to 10 hours	Optional (8 hr 30); Mandatory (1 hr 30)	1 hr 30 is compulsory supervised study during the timetabled curriculum.
Intervention and support	1 hr to 3 hrs	Optional / Mandatory	Structured support at lunchtime, or before / after school.

## **D1: EDUCATION PLAN**

### **D1: 1. THE QUAKER-INSPIRED VISION: implications for a holistic curriculum**

- D1: 1.1 The Quaker vision of inclusion: building on success
- D1: 1.2 Admissions: widening access
- D1: 1.3 Supporting the needs of a wider intake
- D1: 1.4 Meeting the needs of all and the boarding school environment
- D1: 1.5 The academic curriculum
- D1: 1.6 The Creative, Challenge-based Curriculum; the co-curriculum

### **D1: 2. CURRICULUM CONTENT: Knowledge-rich learning for all**

- D1: 2.1 Overview of curriculum and weekly timetable
- D1: 2.2 The pupil experience: two examples of a typical working day
- D1: 2.3 EYFS
- D1: 2.4 Key Stages 1 and 2
- D1: 2.5 The Senior School curriculum
- D1: 2.6 A cross-phase PSHE curriculum

### **D1: 3. THE CO-CURRICULUM: participation and aspiration for all**

- D1: 3.1 Mandatory co-curriculum
- D1: 3.2 Optional co-curriculum
- D1: 3.3 Activities for Boarders
- D1: 3.4 Music and drama
- D1: 3.5 Sport, outdoor activities and CCF
- D1: 3.6 Curriculum and co-curricular links and the wider community

### **D1: 4. ACCESSING THE CURRICULUM: Assessing and meeting the needs of all**

- D1: 4.1 Access to the curriculum: general principles and values
- D1: 4.2 SEND: the responsibility of teachers
- D1: 4.3 The role of the SENDCos
- D1: 4.4 Identifying and providing for pupils with SEND
- D1: 4.5 'Most Able' and 'Gifted and Talented' children
- D1: 4.6 English as an Additional Language
- D1: 4.7 Looked-After Children
- D1: 4.8 Pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium

### **D1: 5. INTEGRATED SUPPORT: Teachers, Pupils and Free School structures**

- D1: 5.1 The role of teachers
- D1: 5.2 Engaging pupils in supporting access

### **D1: 6. EFFECTIVE TRANSITIONS: Preparing pupils for the next stage**

- D1: 6.1 Careers education and guidance
- D1: 6.2 Preparation for university

## **D1: 1. THE QUAKER-INSPIRED VISION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR A HOLISTIC CURRICULUM**

### **D1: 1.1 The Quaker vision of inclusion: building on success**

As Polam Hall builds on its long Quaker tradition of social inclusion, our Free School curriculum will set out a broad and balanced academic programme where each individual child is able to excel, where the creative and challenge-based approach to learning enriches all academic work, and where outstanding co-curricular activities unlock talent, broaden opportunity and build confidence and self-esteem.

Our long experience of supporting the needs of pupils of different academic abilities will inform the way our curriculum is structured, with all children expected to make outstanding progress in core academic disciplines in which literacy, numeracy and oracy are vital components right through to GCSE and A-level. Underpinning this holistic vision is the ambition for all pupils to make confident and informed transitions both to university and to apprenticeships and vocational training post-16 or post-19.

Our commitment to our community flows out of our Quaker vision. Through our draft admissions proposals, our holistic curriculum and our wider sharing of expertise in science, sport, music, technology and leadership, our School will, in the longer term, enrich our community as a whole. Our Free School proposal encapsulates our belief that, as a school at the geographical and spiritual heart of Darlington, we have a responsibility to foster relationships across the educational landscape that could potentially benefit all children, regardless of which school they are attending.

### **D1: 1.2 Admissions: widening access**

Our Quaker-inspired vision sets out implications for our admissions and the nature of our wider cohort of pupils. In order to achieve our aims, our draft admissions policy will:

- comply with all statutory requirements;
- set out two main areas for our catchment for day pupils in the Junior and Senior School, one within urban Darlington itself, and one outside urban Darlington;
- establish Reception and the Sixth Form as the main points of entry for day pupils for the immediate future;
- set out PANs of 40 (Reception); 4 boarders (Y7); 4 boarders (Y9); 10 day pupils and 6 boarders (Y12);
- continue our commitment to families who wish to take up boarding places from across the UK, including HM Forces families, with up to 60 places available for boarders from the UK and the EU in the Senior School and Sixth Form;
- reflect our commitment to social inclusion by prioritising day pupils who receive the pupil premium, and boarding pupils with a genuine 'boarding need';
- Use random allocation, not distance, as the deciding factor in our oversubscription criteria.

In order to fulfill our core aims we will prioritise (after 'Looked-after' children) children who are likely to attract the Pupil Premium. In the first instance, this proportion is likely to be at least 20% of a year group; we will review this as the School builds capacity. As indicated in Section C, our evidence of demand process in autumn 2013 has already shown the demand from a range of different parts of Darlington, including the most deprived [see Section E]. In terms of intake, this would position us as set out below.

Top 4 academically-performing schools in Darlington (Average for 5A*-CEM, 2009-12)	% of pupils receiving FSM (DfE performance tables)	% of pupils eligible for FSM in the last 6 years
Carmel	9.5%	15%
<b>Polam Hall</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>20% proposed</b>
Hurworth	8.6%	17%
Hummersknott	11%	20%

As at present, we will cater for a significant proportion of children who have a statement of special educational needs or disability. After sibling allocation, random allocation will be used as the final deciding factor for entrance.

In order to be confident that all our sixth-formers are able to make the most of an academic A-level programme, we will set a basic minimum standard of entry to the Sixth Form, typically 6 grade Cs at GCSE and A\*/A/B in proposed A-level subjects. The admissions criteria will be the same for internal and external candidates.

Candidates for boarding places in the Senior School and Sixth Form will be assessed to determine their suitability for boarding. Priority for boarding places will be given to:

- 'Looked-after' children;
- children of members of the UK Armed Forces;
- children with a defined (and appropriately corroborated) 'boarding need'.

### **D1: 1.3 Supporting the needs of a wider intake**

The all-through and academically inclusive nature of our School mean that Junior School staff understand what is needed for pupils to be 'secondary ready', and have expertise in identifying and supporting pupils from a range of different starting points.

Close communication between Early Years staff and parents will be vital in identifying children's learning needs, particularly given the wider intake, and a process of initial screening together with monitoring will be in place to ensure that a quick response can be made to difficulties. This will be led across the Early Years and KS1 and 2 by the Junior SENDCo, in liaison with the Junior Head. All pupils with identified needs across the spectrum, including EAL and Gifted and Talented, have an Individual 'Pupil Passport', and receive the additional support required. [see Section D1: 4.1].

Careful working with parents from the earliest stage will ensure that the Free School can establish the learning habits, healthier lifestyle approaches, values and pleasure in learning which help bring about future success. A key emphasis will be placed on ensuring all pupils acquire the necessary skills in numeracy and literacy, including the successful mastery of phonic skills which underpin sound reading and writing.

Teaching group sizes will remain relatively small, with two-form entry throughout the School (and the possibility of a third form in Y7 from 2019) providing flexibility. Teaching methods in the Junior School will blend individual, group and class tuition, with additional interventions and support being available through a personalised programme at lunchtime and after school [See Section D2 below]. This will be complemented by a planned programme of summer school activity to support those transferring both internally and from outside across Years 6/7 and Years 11/12.

Underpinning our support for a wider intake are the School's increased focus on individual pupil monitoring and tracking, the use of a still wider range of standardized data, and the closer analysis of the performance of different groups of pupils, as required under the OFSTED Framework. This will be monitored through newly-established Progress groups, by newly-appointed Key Stage Progress Leaders and by the new Governors' Data and Achievement Committee [See section D2 below].

#### **D1: 1.4 Meeting the needs of all and the boarding school environment**

A key component of our holistic vision of education is the part played by the boarding school environment in providing a nurturing community, within which the full development of boarding and day pupils will be paramount. As a day and boarding school, we will provide for all pupils, as needed:

- an extended school day;
- hot meals at morning and evening;
- tutor time and supervised study after school;
- a wide range of activities after school and at weekends;
- the flexibility to adapt the structure of the day so that children access academic support through intervention, supervised homework and extra support for SEN.

#### **D1: 1.5 The academic curriculum**

Our inclusive approach sets out clear principles for the academic curriculum. Building on the strategies referred to earlier, we will exercise considerable flexibility and close understanding of each child's needs in order to personalise the curriculum within the Senior School so that all pupils make positive transitions at 16 and 18. Personalisation operates within our vision for a knowledge-rich programme in which all are supported to excel in an academic core of subjects (described below), with high levels of numeracy and literacy expected across the school.

As a Free School, Polam Hall will provide a curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual, emotional and physical development of all, engaging a wide range of pupils from different social backgrounds for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. The creative, challenge-based curriculum which underpins our knowledge-rich academic programme, will enhance the way in which all children access the academic core. Our Free School curriculum will be:

- **broad** so that it introduces each pupil to a wide range of concepts, experience, knowledge and skills;
- **balanced** so that each area of the broad curriculum is allowed sufficient time for its contribution to be effective;
- **relevant** so that all subjects contribute to a sound general education;
- **differentiated** so that what is taught and how it is taught is matched to and develops individual pupils' abilities and aptitudes;
- **flexible** so that it ensures the best opportunities for the success of each pupil at every stage of their development

All pupils will be supported to make excellent progress in the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills. They will progress to successful GCSE qualifications, and achieve good A-level qualifications through Polam Hall's academic A-Level programme, or be in a position to make effective transitions to high-quality vocational programmes at other providers. We firmly believe that all young people are entitled to find success in the hard academic subjects and our GCSE programme will focus on nurturing all pupils to

succeed in the core academic curriculum, giving them the best possible platform for the next stage of their learning, across the range of destinations.

- Pupils in the Reception classes will follow the early learning areas of experience and goals, with the addition of French
- From Y1 the programme will become more formalised, with increasing proportions of time for specific subject areas, a strong focus on literacy and numeracy, specialist teaching in French and some areas of music and a broad complementary programme including science, computing, the humanities (history, geography, citizenship), REP (religious education, ethics and philosophy), music/violin/singing, art, technology, PSHE and PE. This re-inforces the links between the academic, cultural, moral and personal development of each child. Some elements of the complementary programme will be provided within the Creative Curriculum approach at KS1 and KS2.
- At KS3 the curriculum will continue to be broad and balanced across all the areas set out in the Junior School and delivered by specialist staff, with the addition of drama, the discrete subjects of history and geography, and the introduction of a second modern foreign language from Year 8.
- At KS4 the core of English, maths, the three sciences, French, PE, PSHE, REP, (computing in Y10) will be maintained for the majority, plus three option choices.
- Our A-level curriculum will focus core academic disciplines with a good range of choice, emphasising Russell Group 'facilitating subjects' and enabling successful transitions to excellent destinations in HE, FE and the world of work.
- Alongside the formal curriculum, the extended day will support a complementary co-curricular programme, including a wide range of age related enrichment activity, and targeted support and catch up.

#### **D1: 1.6 The Creative, Challenge-based Curriculum; the co-curriculum**

As a Free School, Polam Hall's wider curriculum will have two core elements:

1. The **Creative, challenge-based curriculum**: a mandatory part of pupils' study in the Junior School. In the Senior School it defines a pedagogical approach that is cross-disciplinary and challenge-based.
2. The **co-curriculum**, which contains mandatory and optional elements, and is the chief means through which our enrichment programme is developed. In this application we will refer to enrichment and co-curriculum interchangeably. The co-curriculum's optional elements include artistic, sporting and other activities, and there is a minimum expectation on all pupils to participate.

Our vision for a Quaker-inspired curriculum aims to develop pupils' wider skills in cross-disciplinary work and involves them taking control of their own learning to pose questions and define problems. Our experience shows that this approach unlocks potential and helps young people build confidence across academic disciplines.

The Junior School Creative Curriculum will be delivered in dedicated time on specified afternoons each week, but also as a general approach that influences other learning.

- The Creative Curriculum in the Junior School will deliver humanities and art teaching in cross-disciplinary sessions on two afternoons a week (KS2).
- This will follow a different theme every half term: for example, 'Power to the People' in Y6 has involved reading Dickens, studying the Industrial Revolution, demography and the way science inspired a technological revolution.



- In the Senior School, challenge-based pedagogical approaches will develop independent thinking across the curriculum. The newly-established Teaching and Learning group, to be led by the AH for Teaching and Learning will ensure that challenge-based approaches inform all academic disciplines.
- Cross-phase activities in termly ‘challenge days’ bring KS2 and KS3 together to develop teamwork and independence; examples include “carts n’ cakes” – an inter-house challenge which involved problem-solving, design, construction and a Dragons Den-style pitch to a panel.

## D1: 2. CURRICULUM CONTENT: Knowledge-rich learning for all

### D1: 2.1 Overview of curriculum and weekly timetable

The table below sets out the framework for the working day for pupils

Junior Assemblies: Monday, Wednesday, Friday (Celebration Assembly)

Senior Assemblies: Tuesday, Thursday

School Council and House Meetings: weekly

	<b>Juniors</b>		<b>Seniors</b>
<b>Form Tutor time</b>	8.45 – 9.15	<b>Form Tutor time</b>	8.50 – 9.15
<b>1</b>	9.15 – 10.05	<b>1</b>	9.15 – 10.05
<b>2</b>	10.10 – 11.00	<b>2</b>	10.10 – 11.00
<b>Break</b>	11.00 – 11.15	<b>Break</b>	11.00 – 11.15
<b>3</b>	11.20 – 12.10	<b>3</b>	11.20 – 12.10
<b>Lunch</b>		<b>4</b>	12.15 – 13.05
<b>4</b>	13.30 – 14.10	<b>Lunch</b>	13.05 – 14.05
<b>Break</b>		<b>Registration</b>	14.10
<b>5</b>	14.15 – 14.55	<b>5</b>	14.15 – 15.05
<b>6</b>	15.00 – 15.40	<b>6</b>	15.10 – 16.00
<b>Tutor Time</b>	15.40 – 15.45		

At the key points of assessment and reporting (six times a year), tutor time is extended to a further 50-minute lesson a week, to allow Form Tutors to review individual pupil progress against targets and plan the next steps.

	UF	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11	Yr 12	Yr 13
Art <sup>1</sup>		2	1					1	1	1				
Creative Curriculum		1.5	1.5	6	6	6	6							
Drama								1	1	1				
English/Literacy		6	7	6	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	5		
EYFS	27													
Food Technology								2	1	1				
French	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	2	3	3		
History								2	2	2				
Geography								2	2	2				
Humanities		3	2	2	2	2	2							
Computing		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			

Maths/Numeracy		6	7	5	6	6	6	4	4	4	3	3		
MFL 2									2	2				
Music/Violin <sup>2</sup>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				
PE <sup>3</sup>	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	
PSHE		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Religion, Ethics, Philosophy		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Science <sup>4</sup>		2	2	2	2	2	2	3	4	4	6	6		
Singing		0.5	0.5	1	1	1	1							
Technology <sup>1</sup>		1	1					1	1	1				
Option 1											3	3	5	6
Option 2											3	3	5	6
Option 3											3	3	5	6
Option 4													5	[6]
Option 5 <sup>5</sup>													[5]	[6]
Enrichment													3	
Total	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

<sup>1</sup> The Junior curriculum for art and for technology will be delivered through the weekly, timetabled 'Creative Curriculum' from Year 3.

<sup>2</sup> Junior School music will be timetabled for one lesson a week from Y1. Full class violin is introduced in Y3.

<sup>3</sup> The timetabled PE curriculum will extend to Year 13 from 2018. The co-curriculum, in which there are basic minimum expectations for participation, will extend the PE and Games curriculum with wider opportunities for all.

<sup>4</sup> All will take general science in Y7 and Y8 and three sciences in Y9. From Y10, most will take three separate sciences; a minority will take the double-Science award.

<sup>5</sup> See below for explanation of A-level patterns of choice.

**French and Religion, Ethics and Philosophy (Junior School: Religious Studies)** are core elements of our curriculum from Reception (RS from Year 1) to Year 11, reflecting our emphasis on developing pupils' wider cultural understanding, through languages, philosophical discussion, ethical values and their cultural underpinnings.

Morning lessons in the Junior School (KS 1 and 2) will last 50 minutes and afternoon lessons 40 minutes. Lessons for KS 3, 4 & 5 will all last 50 minutes. Pupils in Y1 and Y2 will have 21.5 hours of teacher contact per week. Junior School pupils will be taught primarily in form groups by class teachers, and benefit from subject specialist teaching in PE, music and French. They will work collaboratively for one afternoon a week on the Creative Curriculum. Each pupil in KS2 will have 22.5 hours of teacher contact time per week. Children will combine across year groups (Y3 and Y4, Y5 and Y6) to work together on the Creative Curriculum for two afternoons per week.

### D1: 2.2 The pupil experience: two examples of a typical working day

	EAL Pupil in Year 5, still requiring additional support	Pupil in Year 10
8.00-8.45	Breakfast with Boarders	
8.45-9.15	Form tutor time	Form Tutor then Senior Assembly
9.15-10.05	Literacy	French

10.10-11.00	Numeracy	English
11.00-11.20	Break	Break
11.20-12.10	French	Religion, Ethics, Philosophy
12.10-13.30	Lunch followed by: Intervention in literacy: small group work with Junior SENDCo	12.10 Maths
		13.05 Lunch followed by: Charity Interact meeting planning fundraising activity
13.30-14.10	Music	14.10 Registration
14.15-14.55	Creative Curriculum: topic work with Y6 incl. art and DT	14.15-15.05 Physics
15.00-15.40	Creative Curriculum: topic work with Y6 incl. art and DT	15.10-16.00 PE/games
15.40-15.45	Tutor time	16.00 Choir practice
16.00-16.45	Computing club	16.30 Supervised study
		17.30 Tea with boarders

### **D1: 2.3 EYFS**

As a Free School, we will introduce new pupils into our reception class after establishing close links with parents, and where appropriate, Sure Start centres and nurseries to build a positive picture of each individual child and their needs. The initial screening process, and assessment and progress monitoring throughout the Junior School, is being reviewed in January 2014 with two primary heads, one a governor and one a parent, to ensure it will meet the needs of a wider intake. We will set out a revised programme of screening and assessment alongside statutory requirements in light of these reviews. Reception pupils will be assessed using PIPS Baseline tests and a range of diagnostic tools; this will inform our tracking of their achievement thereafter.

Literacy and numeracy will remain at the heart of the learning process for children in EYFS. We use the published schemes Abacus Evolve and Jolly Phonics, both excellent tools to allow the children to learn at an appropriate rate. Practical activities will provide hands-on learning experiences to develop literacy and numeracy skills. Most activities will be cross-curricular and will incorporate elements of other areas of learning which enhance the general development of all the children.

#### **EYFS Statutory Framework – 7 areas of learning**

Specific Area	Literacy
Prime Area	Communication and language
Specific Area	Mathematics
Specific Area	Understanding the World
Prime Area	Physical Development
Specific Area	Expressive Arts & Design
Prime Area	Personal Social and Emotional Development

In EYFS science will be taught within 'Understanding of the World'.

### **D1: 2.4 Key Stages 1 and 2**

Our Free School proposal emphasises the development of the following skills through our main classroom practice and through our creative curriculum: Communication; Application of number; Digital Literacy; Working with others; Improving own learning and performance; Problem solving; Thinking skills; Information processing skills; Reasoning skills; Enquiry skills; Creative thinking skills; Evaluation skills.

Assessing and reviewing Junior School pupils' progress will hinge on assessments at the

key point of entry, including statutory Phonics screening; assessment throughout their development using NC levels and a range of nationally standardised tests; and on testing at the end of Key Stage 2. We will follow national requirements, with statutory testing (up to level 5 and in some cases 6) in literacy and mathematics.

With our anticipation of a wider ability range, both at the more advanced and the less advanced ends, we will aim for all pupils to reach Level 4B or above, so that they can access the Senior School curriculum successfully, with a significant number of these achieving Level 5, and indeed Level 6 [see Section D2 below].

Building on our current success we will develop strong structures that ensure all pupils in the Junior School make expected progress, with the vast majority making better than expected progress in the key measures. Our curriculum (set out below) will ensure that all children progress from EYFS with individually-tailored support to ensure that whether graded at 'emerging' or 'exceeding' level they make the transition to Year 1 effectively, with a strong foundation for making better-than-expected progress in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2.

### Junior School: Literacy

Communication and instilling a love of reading are foundation stones of our inclusive Free School academic programme. Monitoring the gap between reading age and actual age will be led by the Key Stage leaders and Junior Head across the Junior School, so that the gap, having been quickly identified, is closed through targeted intervention.

Throughout Key Stage One, children will be taught using a range of programmes including 'Jolly Phonics' and objectives from the 'LCP Literacy Files'. These programmes reinforce the key areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening. More able children will progress to the Junior Accelerated Reading programme. Children will be encouraged to write about their experiences and introduced to different genres of writing styles. The direct teaching of oracy will continue to work through role play, class discussion, show-and-tell time, assembly and school productions. In Years 3 to 6, the aim of daily English lessons will be to encourage passionate readers, confident writers and articulate communicators. Spelling and grammar will be taught through the Big Book Spelling and Grammar programmes. Reading will be assessed and rewarded by the Accelerated Reading Star Reader programme.

Speaking and listening will be embedded in everyday school life: presenting assemblies; sharing research work; discussing a variety of issues in PSHCE lessons; preparing for English Speaking Board examinations (in which all will be expected to participate); Junior School production; speaking at Junior School Council meetings.

### Junior School: Numeracy

The Free School proposal builds on successful experience helping young children of different abilities to grasp abstract mathematical concepts through practical work. Children make progress in numeracy by handling concrete materials, using pictures and diagrams, using signs and symbols to represent the abstract. Weekly Folens Mental Maths assessment sheets will continue to be used to assess learning. Abacus Evolve will frame teachers' schemes of work. The most able will be stretched through the use of a challenge book.

All pupils from Years 1 to 6 will have a Mathletics account. The central role of Mathletics will help pupils work on their own strengths and weaknesses, allowing teachers to track

progress through the dashboard. Stretching and challenging the most able will continue; the Mathletics programme allows pupils to accelerate when ready; and their achievements are rewarded through Mathletics certificates.

#### Junior School: Science

The Science Curriculum will be organised on a topic basis within the Creative Curriculum. Science at Key Stage 1 will cover two topics each term. The syllabus will be delivered by the class teacher through two sessions per week, with emphasis placed on observational skills and on capturing a sense of wonder. Children will be encouraged to handle materials, ask questions and offer their ideas on science topics in oral, written or drawn form. At Key Stage 2, children will develop the capacity to investigate for themselves, writing up their results in scientific terms. Most of their work will be through practical investigation where careful observation is required. Mini-topics will give pupils an opportunity to dig deeper into a particular theme, sparking wider interests and building confidence in working independently. Both maths and science will benefit from cross-phase teaching, with Senior School teachers working alongside Junior classes in Y6 as timetabling permits.

#### Junior School: Digital Literacy

Digital literacy is vital to our whole approach to helping young people develop the self-motivation and skills to learn independently across the curriculum. Polam Hall is about to overhaul the computing curriculum, to be ahead of the curve as new computing KS1 and KS2 units are rolled out in 2014-15. We have ordered the Rising Stars 'Switched on Computing' scheme published in February 2014 to help our planning and will start to embed the online Espresso coding tools in our work with KS2 pupils.

Animation software has been trialled successfully as a key way of engaging younger pupils with digital literacy and computing. The Junior IT coordinators will work increasingly with iStopMotion for iPad by Boinx Software, and with CrazyTalk 5, a photo puppet Moviemaker, to create facial animation. With support from the Teesside University Animation Department, both Y6 and Y7 will begin to work with green screens, puppets and table-top studios. With these developments, we will engage a wider intake with the importance of digital literacy – above all the way it can integrate with all subjects and with a host of different creative or challenge-based themes and activities.

#### Junior School: other disciplines

French will continue to be taught by specialists, from Year 1. The emphasis on oral skills and building children's confidence and love of a foreign language will remain a vital part of our Free School delivery of French, as will the use of cross-phase expertise from members of the Senior School French Department.

In Y1 and Y2, **humanities** will be covered through Topic work and in Y3 to Y6 humanities teaching will relate to the creative curriculum and will instil strong understanding of culture, ideas, change over time, chronology and the wider world. The main areas of focus will be history, geography, citizenship and religious education.

Whilst the main focus of humanities lessons will be on building knowledge, understanding, historical and geographical inquiry and research skills, the creative curriculum draws out the wider skills that flow from these disciplines. **Art and DT** will be taught within the Creative Curriculum during two afternoons a week. **Music** is taught by specialists. All classes will have a singing lesson and music-making lesson where rhythm, pitch, tempo and composition are introduced. Y3 will learn the violin or cello as a

class activity during their Music Making, and as our Junior School numbers expand we will aim to introduce a wind or brass instrument for full class music in Y4 or Y5.

**Religious education** will remain vital to our Free School curriculum, reflecting the emphasis on religion and ethics that flows from our Quaker vision. It will be taught as a discrete discipline throughout the School, starting from Key Stages 1 and 2 according to the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Durham.

KS 1 will have 3 timetabled **Physical Education** lessons per week and KS 2 will have 2. The different elements of sport from dance, athletics and games (rugby, football, basketball, hockey, pop lacrosse, netball, cricket and tennis) will be taught on a termly basis; Gymnastics runs throughout. All children from Y1 upwards will have swimming lessons in one term.

## **D1: 2.5 The Senior School curriculum**

### Key Stage 3

As a Free School, Polam Hall will welcome a small number of outside pupils alongside our internal transferring pupils at Year 7 through a rigorous programme of induction, where pupils are prepared for the expectations of our holistic curriculum. This programme extends across the transitional stages of pupils' education by a combination of induction procedures, taster sessions and pupil and parent information meetings open to both internal and external joiners:

- Taster sessions throughout the year;
- Experience of Senior School teaching with cross-phase teaching in Y6;
- A full day of Senior School induction for Y6 in the Summer Term;
- An informal parents' meeting early in the Autumn Term of Y7;
- Drop-In sessions with the Form Tutor in the Autumn Term;
- Challenge days with KS2 and KS3 working together in team-based activities.

Junior-based subject coordinators will liaise with Senior School subject leads to ensure a smooth transition from Y6 to Y7. At the end of Y6 there will be a careful handover of Y6 data, and a briefing by the Junior SENDCo to Senior SENDCo and staff at the start of the Autumn term of Y7. This transition will be a particular point of focus for the newly-established KS3 Progress group, with SLT representation [see Section D2].

The curriculum will deliver a knowledge-rich programme with strong emphasis on mainstream academic disciplines. Core disciplines include English, maths and French, with a second foreign language introduced in Y8. Maths and English will be set on ability in Y8 and Y9. We propose to have 3 sets (from 2 forms) for English, maths, science and French from Y10 from 2017-18; setting will still be in place if the School is operating on the 70% model, by combining Y7 and Y8 in 3 sets. These arrangements also allow for considerable flexibility in the deployment of individual support.

Pupils will be given an early taste of the three different scientific disciplines – delivered as separate subjects by our well-qualified biologists, physicists and chemists at KS4.

Pupils will have an opportunity to study a wider range of subjects that connect clearly to the School's co-curriculum, inspiring them to develop participation in drama, music, art and sport, and helping them to see their academic growth in wider terms. The technology curriculum allows pupils to access a carousel of subjects, including food technology (cooking and life-skills), textiles, computer-aided design and programming.

In Y7 pupils will be taught a core curriculum of English, maths, science, French, geography, history, art, technology, food technology, drama, music, computing, PE, REP (Religion, Ethics and Philosophy) and PSHE. We will not apply setting in Y7, but will provide nurture groups to improve the outcomes in numeracy and literacy for pupils whose KS2 assessments show clear need for intervention and support.

In Y8 this will be developed with a second modern foreign language, currently German. From 2018, we hope to offer a choice between German and Spanish.

#### Key Stage 4

Pupils will study PSHE, PE/games and REP in addition to the GCSE core of two English awards, maths, three separate sciences and French, and a range of wider academic options, with the expectation that at least two thirds of pupils will take nine GCSEs through a mix of core and options. At least 50% of pupils in the Free School will be prepared for the EBacc; a minority who need a more personalised curriculum will still take a minimum of six GCSEs, with the double science award.

Where the curriculum may be varied on a case-by-case basis, this will be on the advice of the SENDCo and the KS4 Progress Leader who will develop individual programmes as necessary in discussion with the AH Teaching and Learning. Our key aim, however, is to support all pupils in taking up their entitlement to a strongly academic GCSE programme, that builds on our traditional strengths in STEM subjects, languages and humanities. Over time, we propose as a Free School to ensure that an increasing number if not most pupils will be able to achieve the English Baccalaureate.

As a Free School we will construct GCSE option blocks flexibly to take account of pupils' views during the options process. Optional subjects offered as a Free School will be based on this list: art and design, business studies, computing, DT, food technology, drama, geography, German, history, music, PE and RE. We hope to offer a third foreign language, most likely Spanish, as soon as staffing allows. In keeping with our emphasis on individual pathways for all pupils, we will support the acquisition of a further language qualification for EAL pupils who are fluent in a home language.

#### Key Stage 5

The majority of our pupils will be expected to progress to studying the academic A-level programme at Polam Hall, having achieved six C-grades including maths and English at GCSE, although a small number will have chosen to secure high quality places in other appropriate settings post-16, through relationships which we are building with Darlington College, the Sixth-Form College and the new UTC at Newton Aycliffe.

Y12 will be one of our key entry points. Our induction programme for the sixth form will be structured rigorously, with new entrants taking ALIS tests that will allow their progress to be benchmarked, enabling targeted support from the earliest opportunity. Preparation for Sixth Form for internal pupils begins during Y10 and Y11, and both new and existing pupils will benefit from a summer school that develops key skills of independent learning and emphasises the importance of wider reading and self-motivation; we hope to have this in place for Summer 2015 so that our first intake of new Y12 pupils is ready to make the step up to A-level successfully.

In Y12, pupils will typically choose four AS level subjects, reducing this to three A2 subjects in the Upper Sixth. The opportunity to study five subjects in Y12 and continue four to A2 level will remain open for the pathway in maths and sciences that draws on

Polam Hall's long strength in this area; it will also be open to other pupils (for example dual linguists) who require a still broader academic programme.

Polam Hall has a long tradition of success in STEM subjects, in enabling the core academic curriculum to be accessed by pupils of all abilities, and in encouraging girls to take science and maths at A-level. A significant percentage of all pupils follow two or three sciences at A-level, and there is very strong take-up of maths. As we widen our intake we will build our commitment to ensuring all pupils succeed in STEM subjects.

A-level blocks will be constructed drawing on pupils' views during the selection process. Options for 2015 and beyond will be based on the following programme:

Art and design (including photography)	English literature	Mathematics
Biology	Food technology	Music
Business Studies	French	PE
Chemistry	Further Maths	Physics
Computing	Geography	Psychology
Drama and theatre studies	German	Religious studies
Economics	Government and politics	Statistics
English Language	History	

While most pupils will have been required to meet our Y12 entry requirements, some pupils may have a very strong case for continuing to study within a small-school setting for Sixth Form, in spite of failing to secure 6 A\*-C GCSEs including English and maths. In these cases, we will support their progress to Level 5, ensuring that they achieve a pass in English or maths GCSE. We will offer pupils the opportunity to take advanced maths qualifications that complement different routes of study, alongside core A-level subjects; these are increasingly in demand for a range of career choices

As a Free School, we will build on the widely-held understanding that the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) gives young people a real sense of ownership and academic authority that is almost essential to confident, happy progression to university study. It is our aspiration that the vast majority of sixth-form pupils will take the EPQ in time. The School will reward pupils' project work with public acknowledgement through a special ceremony at which pupils present their work.

#### **D1: 2.6 A cross-phase PSHE curriculum**

Polam Hall's strong values will be developed from the very beginning of our pupils' careers in the School. These values will be set out clearly in order to help a wider spectrum of pupils build their own sense of the School's ethos, through PSHE. Our PSHE co-ordinator is a member of the accredited PSHE Association, and is supported by a dedicated team complemented by external experts. All pupils will receive 50 minutes of PSHE each week, while core themes from the programme will also be picked up in Assemblies and other parts of the curriculum.

PSHE will give children the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active, responsible citizens in a rapidly changing world. The programme requires pupils to learn to consider and empathise with other people on a daily basis, as a way of life. The Junior School PSHE curriculum will address the following themes:

- Developing confidence and responsibility, making the most of children's abilities;



- Preparing all children to play an active role as citizens;
- Developing a healthy, safe lifestyle and developing self-discipline;
- Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people.

The Senior School curriculum will develop individual learning and thinking skills. Visiting speakers will cover topics such as Sex and Relationships Education, Drugs and Alcohol awareness and Economic Wellbeing and Financial Capability. The programme focuses on the following themes:

- Personal well-being: safety; assessing/managing risk; how to ask for help
- Exploring healthy lifestyle choices
- Finance and the world of work
- Citizenship: rights, responsibilities and issues relating to diversity and prejudice
- Study skills and revision techniques

### **D1: 3. THE CO-CURRICULUM: participation and aspiration for all**

Our Free School proposals build our vision as a school community in which all young people are inspired to participate and learn to work together successfully in co-curricular activities. The mandatory co-curriculum delivers enrichment through the participation of pupils in leading assemblies, participating in cross-age group House meetings and activities, or activities that are mandatory for particular year groups such as the English Speaking Board programme for Y5 and Y6. The rich optional co-curriculum is set out for pupils to find activities that develop their teamwork and wider interests. All are required to take a minimum of activities within this co-curriculum.

#### **D1: 3.1 Mandatory co-curriculum**

The mandatory co-curriculum will include:

- House meetings from Y3, where the School's core values and community ethos are reinforced;
- House activities in which all pupils are required to take part, including the biennial House singing contest, and the Junior House talent competition;
- pupil-led 'Readings' (assemblies – 'Readings' is the original term used in Quaker schools); in a given term most senior pupils will participate in shaping the delivery of one of these formal meetings of the whole Senior School;
- Junior School assemblies with a strong emphasis on whole-school singing;
- Archbishop of York Young Leaders Challenge (Y9) where pupils complete three areas of community action: a Group Community Project, a School Community Project and a Personal Volunteering Challenge;
- Sixth Form enrichment includes directing and producing House plays;
- visiting speakers for different themes at different ages;
- Extended Project Qualification for all in Sixth Form [see above].

#### **D1: 3.2 Optional Co-Curriculum**

Our vision for the optional co-curriculum is genuinely inclusive. With a school day finishing at 4.00 p.m., activities, creative arts and sports clubs will be scheduled through lunchtime but also after school. As a Free School, we will not charge for activities between 4.00 p.m. and 5.30 p.m., and will use a 'cashless' system to ensure that children who attract the pupil premium can participate in activities beyond that time seamlessly, receiving homework support and a hot meal if needed.

All pupils will be required to take up a basic minimum of optional activities (set out in the table at the start of section D1), but many will take far more, and will (if involved in a

production or a school team) devote many hours to their participation in the co-curriculum. Participation in the co-curriculum will be reviewed by form tutors.

In addition to Polam Hall's major emphasis on sport and outdoor activities, and on music and the arts, a wide range of other activities will be available:

- Voluntary service (e.g. support of Darlington Town Mission and local churches);
- charity fundraising, including a thriving Interact Club (Junior Rotary), and many successful fundraising events (Fashion Show; Jeans for Genes; Comic Relief);
- Y5 and Y6: a weekend at an outdoor centre in North Yorkshire or Cumbria. Activities include Team Building, canoeing, rock climbing, abseiling, orienteering.
- further House activities (optional), including the 'House plays' competition (every November), and House sports, which run throughout the year;
- 3D modelling club; pupils across the Senior School work with CAD software and the 3D printer;
- Raspberry Pi Club engages all year groups with fundamental concepts of computing, connecting the Pi to real world devices;
- Debating Club (Polam Hall regularly hosts the ESU Schools Mace Competition).

### **D1: 3.3 Activities for Boarders**

The Polam Hall boarding community will benefit as now from a wide range of weekend activities, while also having time set aside to share social time cooking or playing sport. The building of strong social relationships through these boarding weekends will be vital to building our strong ethos as a Free School, with a wider intake of day pupils. Boarders in particular will benefit from having one off-site activity scheduled each weekend, for example: swimming, ice-skating, hill-walking, meal for Chinese New Year. Basketball will continue to take place every Sunday evening and pupils will make use of exercise machines, table tennis, pool table, and the School's sports grounds. Boarders will also be able to participate in outside clubs that run in School or in the town.

Boarders will have access to School and boarding facilities to engage in private study after school, and there is monitored 'prep' time in Houses between tea and bedtime, appropriate to the age of the children; this time will be available to some older day pupils whose home lives do not support home working. Weekly boarders will work under parental supervision at weekends, with the usual mechanism of school planners in place for communication with teachers.

### **D1: 3.4 Music and drama**

It is widely acknowledged (Henley Report into music education, 2010) that music education relies heavily on confident, well-trained practitioners who have the inspiration and professional competence to lead in their local areas, setting out a vision for musical education that builds on the widespread excellent practice at the basic entry level, in evidence across the country.

Our pupils will be introduced to music making from an early age, through whole-class violin lessons in Year 3 and whole-school singing throughout the Junior School. Concerts will range from full-length concerts to informal Coffee Concerts that give musicians a chance to perform in a more relaxed setting, encouraging participation.

As part of our Free School vision, the musical life at Polam Hall is being further developed as a wider offer in Darlington. The facilities and expertise of our music department will be placed at the disposal of the community, and will benefit from our

recent appointment of an outstanding music leader [REDACTED]. Her leadership will mean that Polam Hall can make plans to work with partners across the region to develop the bridge through the 'intermediate' stage of musical education, preparing young musicians for the major music schools and the National Youth Orchestras and Choirs.

The participation of a high proportion of our pupils in the co-curricular aspects of drama is also one of Polam Hall's outstanding strengths, connecting pupils in different age groups. Polam Hall benefits from a well-equipped theatre with a large backstage area that allows for productions of considerable complexity.

A Junior School production is held annually at the end of the Autumn Term, involving children in Y1 to Y6. The main Senior School production involves pupils of all ages; the 'House plays' competition involves most of the Senior School, and Junior pupils attend the performances. In addition, drama clubs build participation and involvement among all pupils, building on our long tradition of enabling access to high-quality dramatic performance opportunities for all pupils. The drama curriculum nurtures the talent of many of our young people and will remain a key element of our offering.

### **D1: 3.5 Sport, outdoor activities and CCF**

Sport and outdoor activities are essential parts of our vision of inclusion and integration. With strong leadership from our present Head who has competed at elite athletic level, and making full use of our extensive grounds, we see Sport as an exceptional way of ensuring that all pupils build confidence, teamwork and healthy lifestyles. As the School grows in size and draws on a wider range of pupils, we will be able to build on the already extensive range of inclusive sporting opportunities, competitive and non-competitive, within the curriculum and the co-curriculum, catering for all abilities up to and including elite. Clubs currently run before school, at lunchtimes and after school, with fixtures taking place regularly after school and on occasional Saturdays.

The range of sports and clubs includes badminton, basketball, golf, netball, football, hockey, rugby football, tennis, rounders, trampolining and athletics. This range allows pupils to find their own niche and their own level of participation. Many sports are already supported with excellent participation, such as our well-attended Badminton club, with training starting as early as 8.15 am in school. Basketball and trampolining are equally popular and provide coaching opportunities for older pupils; many pursue this as preparation for GCSE PE.

Polam Hall will build its mission for inclusion and participation on a strong outdoor programme that involves young people in the School attending outdoor activity centres, or participating in clubs such as the Forest Club (Juniors), Orienteering or the Walking Club. Pupils from Y9 and above will be invited to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme up to Gold level. Currently more than half of Y10 take the Bronze Award, and a good proportion typically proceed to Silver and Gold.

Pupils from Y8 upwards will be encouraged to join our CCF, which provides outstanding opportunities for team working and leadership both during term time and in the holidays by means of participation in CCF camps. The popularity of CCF reflects our pupils' desire to develop self-discipline, teamwork and community service and will be vital to our co-curriculum as a Free School.

### **D1: 3.6 Curriculum and co-curricular links and the wider community**

Polam Hall has established a programme of collaboration in science with a local primary school, and pupils from that school will continue to be welcomed at Polam Hall to share our laboratory facilities and our passion for science. As a Free School, our 'Raspberry Pi' club will engage a wide cross-section of young people with this fascinating technological tool, which develops mathematical and computing skills, and which is raising awareness of skills that can be developed through technologically forward-thinking teaching. Our Raspberry Pi club is a Darlington-wide venture, set up in 2013, and we hope to build partnerships around technology and teaching.

With music and the performing arts a strong feature of our proposal as a Free School, we want to support other artistic ventures in Darlington. We will share facilities and expertise with local groups such as the North East Youth Chorale to inspire a wider range of young people to access the more advanced levels of musical participation. Our relationship with schools such as Hummersknott, Darlington School of Maths and Science and neighbouring primary schools has already seen several specific, concrete plans put in place for Polam Hall to share the expertise of others, and to give back to the community our own passions and expertise where others can most benefit.

Polam Hall has had a long tradition of charity fundraising. Our pupils raise funds for the local hospice, Help for Heroes and other charities. This will continue with a teacher nominated to co-ordinate charity and community action in school, while encouraging Sixth-Formers to take the lead, as they do now, in setting out their own vision for community engagement, instilling younger pupils from a wide range of backgrounds with this vision that drives back to the very heart of our Quaker foundation.

## **D1: 4. ACCESSING THE CURRICULUM: Assessing and meeting the needs of all**

### **D1: 4.1 Access to the curriculum: general principles and values**

As an all-through school, our values of community, inclusion and social justice will continue to underpin the way our School cooperates and learns together, from Reception to Sixth Form. With expertise shared across Junior and Senior School [as set out in D1:1.3], challenges such as the 'Year 7 dip' will be addressed through cross-phase teaching and activities.

All will benefit from targeted interventions that draw on the knowledge of staff in both parts of the School. We will develop structures that embed our ethos of respect and love of learning through induction programmes that develop a cohesive working environment at key points of entry (Reception, Y7, Y12).

Our House system, which includes all staff and pupils from Y3 upwards, gives Polam Hall a distinctive, cross-age sense of community, helping younger pupils to model success and behaviour through their participation with their older peers. The House system works alongside the Form Tutor system (year-group based) to provide a 'vertical' model of support for pupils' wider co-curricular activities and enrichment, ensuring that the wider Free School intake will be part of a house community that nurtures their confidence and self-esteem throughout their time at Polam Hall.

All pupils, regardless of ability or disability, will be expected and supported to participate in all aspects of School life. Their progress and participation within both the formal curriculum and co-curriculum will be monitored; we will analyse difficulties and put in place strategies, as required, to meet the needs of all pupils including those who are

EAL, children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities, Gifted and Talented children, Looked-after children, children on Free School Meals, and those who need literacy recovery or any other form of intervention.

#### **D1: 4.2 SEND: the responsibility of teachers**

As part of the School's approach to teaching and learning, teaching staff will be expected to meet the needs of pupils with SEN through lesson planning, target setting, assessment for learning and differentiation. Teachers will be expected to set targets through subject-specific objectives on Pupil Passports. Teaching Assistants will be deployed strategically to support individual pupils and specific groups who need intervention, and will be trained to support all teachers.

The School trains its teachers to differentiate within the curriculum and to take into account pupils' individual starting points, learning difficulties, as well as the needs of gifted and talented pupils. Pupil Passports and regularly-planned INSET provided by the SENDCos give teaching staff strategies and an understanding of the next steps that will be an appropriate means of meeting the needs of pupils with SEND; these processes and individual pupils' progress will be kept under review week by week by Key Stage Progress Groups [see D2 and D3 below].

#### **D1: 4.3 The role of the SENDCos**

Our Junior and Senior SENDCos work closely together to ensure that the School has a strategic view of policy in meeting the needs of children with SEND. They ensure smooth transitions between Y6 and Y7 and share best practice across different stages of a pupils' career, ensuring that consistent approaches are taken throughout. Both SENDCos ensure consistency of approach by teachers in providing access to learning materials that are accessible; when appropriate the effectiveness of these will form part of individual teacher's performance reviews.

The SENDCos co-ordinate annual reviews for pupils with Statements, to which parents and outside agencies attend. The pupils will be encouraged to take an active part in the Reviews. All pupils on the School's SEN Register will be reviewed according to their needs, with their targets reviewed termly, through liaison with Key Stage Progress Leaders, subject teachers, outside agencies and progress reviews with pupils.

The process for contact with parents in respect of pupils with SEND will be:

- Part of the cycle of reviews to take place at scheduled Parents Evenings.
- The SENDCo meets regularly with parents and pupils to evaluate the effectiveness of any strategies currently being employed.
- The SENDCo meets parents where a request for formal assessment is made.

As indicated earlier, SENDCos will advise the Head on INSET training for SEND and will report to the AH Teaching and Learning (once appointed) on the strategic development of a training programme that ensures all teachers are supported in living out their responsibilities to pupils of all backgrounds and learning styles.

#### **D1: 4.4 Identifying and providing for pupils with SEND**

Our SENDCos play a key role identifying pupils with SEND, and advising their teaching colleagues in identifying such pupils. They will draw on a range of information:

- referrals from staff, parents, pupil self-referral and outside agencies;
- Primary transfer documents and Primary liaison for pupils joining at Y7;

- monitoring procedures within the School;
- assessment procedures within the School;
- admission and screening arrangements for pupils new to the School.

The type of assessments used will vary in response to need, but may include information gathering, diagnostic assessments, National Curriculum Attainments, or assessments by outside agencies. These assessments will inform the type of provision required. A focused transfer process with feeder nurseries, Primary schools and Secondary schools, parents and outside agencies will enable pupils with SEN who are transferring into the School at Reception, Y7 and Y12 to be successful in their Key Stage move. The SENDCos also undertake a complete review of pupils' needs when the internal transition is made from Primary to Secondary.

Every pupil who has been identified as having Special Educational Needs has a record according to their place on the SEN Register. Every statemented pupil on the SEN Register will have a Pupil Passport which indicates the support needed.

The School aims to include pupils with special needs in all areas of the curriculum and co-curriculum as far as is appropriate. However, in the best interests of the child, there may be occasions when the best solution is withdrawal for individualised programmes. Parents and pupils will be involved in discussion and the pupil's welfare will be considered. The types of provision available in school will be:

- withdrawal for individual structured literacy, numeracy or other programmes;
- in-class support for learning;
- booster sessions;
- 1: 1 support;
- counselling for behaviour and learning difficulties;
- Information and Communication Technology to aid learning;
- differentiated work provided by Departments;
- dedicated support from a Classroom Assistant;
- alternative Curriculum/part-time timetable;
- tailored support for children with SEND on work placements.

As Polam Hall builds on its existing strong practice in this area, the School will look to:

- further develop early intervention language assessments at Key Stage 1;
- continue the use of MidYIS(as at present) to set targets, monitor progress and identify possible difficulties;
- develop relationships with the LA to follow procedures on Looked after Children;
- continue to work with CAMHS to support staff and pupils;
- focus further on differentiation strategies to ensure progress for all pupils;
- use nurture groups where appropriate in maths and English.

#### **D1: 4.6 'Most Able' and 'Gifted and Talented' children**

As a Free School, Polam Hall will make particular provision both for Gifted and Talented pupils and for those who are identified as Most Able. We will establish clear policies to support and enhance the learning of these children. Our enrichment programme will provide opportunities within the academic curriculum and the co-curriculum for children of exceptional ability in academic disciplines, sport or the arts.

The School will build on current strategies in supporting the needs of Most Able and Gifted and Talented pupils, which include:

- The provision of opportunities for more able, gifted and talented pupils to work with pupils of similar ability in other year groups;
- Mentoring and additional provision for pupils of exceptional ability;
- The provision of enrichment/extension activities and tasks;
- Differentiation within subject areas, staff should be accounting for pupil progress for all pupils, including those in the School's top 2%. Teachers will be trained to use differentiation as a vital means of working with Most Able pupils;
- The development of independent learning by allowing pupils to organise their own work, carry out tasks unaided, evaluate their work and become self-critical (which is strongly reinforced through the Creative Challenge Pedagogy).

Additionally, as a Free School:

- the AH Teaching and Learning will co-ordinate the work of Form Tutors and Key Stage Progress leaders to develop opportunities for accelerating their progress;
- in advance of this appointment, the Teaching and Learning group will create a register and a programme of additional enrichment opportunities;
- the Teaching and Learning group will promote and monitor the use of T & L Strategies in the classroom that encourages the most able to push forward.

#### **D1: 4.7 English as an Additional Language**

As a Free School, Polam Hall will attract a number of pupils for whom English is not the first language. Our School will continue to draw real benefit from the linguistic and cultural richness which this brings, and we will develop speaking groups and language peer-to-peer mentoring using the skills of pupils whose first language is not English.

The main aim of the EAL Department is to increase linguistic proficiency in English in reading, listening, writing and speaking so that these pupils will be better equipped to access mainstream subjects and entry to Higher Education. Assistance to teaching staff will include providing language assessments of pupils attending EAL, supporting better understanding of their competence in working in English. These will be based on results gained in the Placement Test and observations in the EAL lessons. The EAL department will continue to provide support that is responsive to a wide variety of individual needs, applying strategies that best enable the learner to access the curriculum effectively. This includes helping young people deal with personal, organisational and cultural matters.

#### **D1: 4.8 Looked-After Children**

As indicated above [Section C and D1:1.2 Admissions], supporting the needs of Looked-After Children will be a high priority, not simply fulfilling our statutory requirements in prioritising these children in our admissions criteria but in working pro-actively with the LA to identify children of a range of different pastoral and academic needs, and tailoring their programme of activities, meals, support and intervention as appropriate. The Deputy Head will have overall responsibility for Looked-After Children and will liaise closely with the SENDCos and Key Stage Progress Leaders, who will in turn have weekly insight into the progress of these children through the meetings of Key Stage Progress Groups. The Deputy Head will ensure that close working with the LA is maintained and that our approach is kept under review, with reports to Governing Body and the LA regularly on the academic and pastoral outcomes of our support for Looked-After Children. As a Free School, Polam Hall's vision emphasises our belief that all children, whatever their home circumstances and background, should achieve and learn to aspire to the best destinations in HE, FE or the world of work, and our support systems will ensure that we monitor the progress of these children rigorously.

#### **D1: 4.9 Pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium**

Our vision for embracing a wider community of children in receipt of the Pupil Premium is set out in C above. As with Looked-After Children, the Deputy Head will have oversight of all children registered as being eligible to attract the Pupil Premium. The School will work closely with the Borough and other providers in Darlington to ensure that we are following the best practice in communicating with parents and families who may be eligible to attract this funding, but who may be reticent in registering for this. The progress of pupils who attract the pupil premium will be monitored through the School's tracking systems, with reports regularly provided through Key Stage Progress meetings and reviewed by SLT, with Governor scrutiny six times a year through the Data and Achievement Committee.

All pupils will benefit from the curriculum and co-curriculum and to that end cashless systems will be in place so that children can access the provision that is already available to participate in boarders' breakfast or supper. The Deputy Head will have responsibility for ensuring that children who receive the pupil premium benefit from as much of the wrap-around care on offer as they need. The School will report on the uses to which Pupil Premium funding is put to close the gap in achievement and to improve outcomes through all of the curriculum and co-curriculum.

### **D1: 5. INTEGRATED SUPPORT: Teachers, Pupils and Free School structures**

#### **D1: 5.1 The role of Teachers**

It is fundamental to our vision that teachers are valued and supported in the work that they do, because we believe that pupil outcomes are greatly improved when the wide range of skills and aptitudes of all our teaching staff are used to the full. All teachers as part of their formal duties will play a full part in supporting the wider pastoral needs of all pupils, as well as the artistic, sporting and leadership activities in our co-curriculum, in addition to their academic duties. All our teaching staff are university graduates; all hold QTS; and our Head holds the NPQH. We will use our Academy freedoms to set out our expectations for teaching staff through our recruitment procedures.

#### Form tutors, pastoral care and monitoring pupil progress

As a Free School, our holistic approach to pastoral care and supporting pupil progress will develop, ensuring that the wider cohort that will join the School will benefit from close monitoring of their progress and strong structures to deliver intervention and academic support. This will be driven by newly appointed Key Stage Progress leaders who will lead teams of Form Teachers, working with SLT to ensure that all categories of pupils are appropriately supported, nurtured and stretched to achieve their goals. Academic and pastoral support and monitoring will be channelled at the most immediate level through our Form system. This will deliver effective, regular and targeted support for pupils who will have a wide range of academic needs.

All staff, whether as tutor or in their subject role, will be expected to take full ownership of their pupil data, and to present their findings, ways forward, interventions and how they intend to assess impact to the relevant progress meetings.

Key Stage Progress Leaders will target the most needy groups, co-ordinating interventions and ensuring that support is delivered effectively, pre-empting problems in pupils' progress. Our remodelled SLT [set out in D3 below] will drive forward new processes in tracking individuals and different groups of pupils.



## **D1: 5.2 Engaging pupils in supporting access**

All pupils at Polam Hall help to strengthen and perpetuate the School's powerful Quaker-inspired ethos of community and compassion. This further underpins our School's long emphasis on immaculate, respectful behaviour in the classroom and in other parts of school life. Our framework for behaviour praises effort and attainment, and inspires a sense of collective responsibility for the academic, sporting and cultural achievements of all. Our ambitious targets in this area are set out in Section D2 below.

The Junior and Senior School Councils will be used as vehicles for discussion, debate and decision-making. Our pupils have a powerful system of peer-to-peer pastoral mentoring, with older pupils seeking out introductory courses in listening. This community-minded approach will be strongly reinforced as we embrace a wider intake of pupils, ensuring that pupils take responsibility for nurturing the School's positive environment, in which all are made welcome and encouraged to aspire to success.

## **D1: 6. EFFECTIVE TRANSITIONS: Preparing pupils for the next stage**

Central to our inclusive vision for education is the determination to ensure that all pupils in our Free School are able and equipped to aspire to high quality destinations, including Russell Group Universities, and in this, we will build on our current expertise in helping young people make positive transitions to HE, FE and the world of work. To facilitate this, our staffing proposals include a leadership role for an AH Co-curriculum and 14-19 Transitions, who will manage a team of colleagues delivering university advice, work experience, alumni liaison and careers guidance. This team will help all pupils make connections with a range of providers, including the local College for those who want to pursue vocational programmes post-16, with local and national figures across a range of businesses and professions, and will help prepare pupils for apprenticeships and training post-18, for those not progressing to further full time study.

### **D1: 6.1 Careers education and guidance**

This process will start in Y8 and Y9, when pupils begin discussions through specific, specialist-supported units within PSHE about the implications of different academic pathways, including vocational courses and providers if appropriate. The Careers Advisor will manage a process through which all pupils are interviewed in Y11, and we will explore the possibility of cognitive testing at this point, to help pupils refine career and university aspirations. Pupils will also be supported through the curriculum and wider co-curriculum to develop the independent thinking, resilience, self-motivation, reflection, creativity and cultural understanding of the global economy needed to succeed both in further study and in the world of work.

Advice and guidance in understanding the world of work will be targeted at all pupils, and close monitoring of take-up and success among pupils identified as 'disadvantaged' will ensure that this programme of guidance and support is genuinely making an impact on the aspirations of all groups of children. This will be complemented by close monitoring of destinations over time:

- From Y8, guidance will be offered through PSHE and the 'Careers Convention' in the Spring Term.
- A successful programme of work placement for Y10 pupils, run with the Durham Education Business Partnership (with a database of over 4000 employers) will be extended to meet the needs of the Free School.

- We will build new links with the Darlington 'Foundation for Jobs' programme that will extend these opportunities within our local area.
- In January of Y12 pupils will complete the 'Centigrade questionnaire', run by Cambridge Occupational Analysts, which provides advice on Higher Education courses. Pupils will discuss these with Personal Tutors and the Careers Advisor.
- Pupils will continue to be encouraged to attend 'taster sessions' in such subjects as Law, Medicine and Forensics, run at universities.
- Alumni and other expert speakers will provide a range of 'master classes' introducing pupils to key occupations and fields of work, and further support the Free School Programme by developing work-shadowing schemes.
- Our Careers Advisor will identify a range of high-quality apprenticeships and bring business leaders in to school to help our pupils understand the diverse offers that are available to well-qualified and highly motivated young people.

### **D1: 6.2 Preparation for University**

Polam Hall will build on links with Durham and Teesside Universities to instil a sense of understanding of what university can offer to all, from as early as Y8. A close connection already exists with the History Department at Durham University, where a programme of schools outreach has started to explore the issue of independent thinking in the history syllabus from Sixth Form through to degree level. Durham University also has a well-established science outreach programme, with 'Science into Schools' operating in other parts of the North East, but not yet in Darlington. The growing relationship with Darlington School of Mathematics and Science, where both schools are sharing ideas, lays the ground for further work with Durham University's science outreach programme.

Specific preparation for University application will ensure that a wide range of different pupils can plan positively and with real aspiration for successful transitions to high-ranking degree courses. This programme includes:

- Summer Term of Y12: pupils and their parents attend a school Higher Education Evening, where an Admissions Officer from a local university addresses them on such issues as choosing courses and the UCAS procedure.
- The Higher Education Convention at Spennymoor (part of the National scheme of HE conventions) where pupils and parents meet a range of University staff.
- One-to-one support from Personal Tutors throughout the Sixth Form, helping pupils to shape their UCAS statement to reflect their own individual aspirations.
- A second visit from a local university, focussing on final stages of UCAS.

## **Section D2**

### **Measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets**

#### **D2: 1. Summary of performance aims**

Through its Free School curriculum and co-curriculum, underpinned by the creative challenge-based pedagogy, Quaker values framework and 4-19 context, Polam Hall will open up the very best of an independent education to the local and wider community. This Free School vision will:

- Enable all pupils to excel and to live up to their potential, in terms of academic success and a wider range of talents, developing character and intellect, and instilling a sense of responsibility and service to the wider community;
- Challenge trends in the performance of pupils identified as 'disadvantaged';

- Increase aspiration and successful progression to high quality destinations such as Russell Group Universities, other Further/Higher Education settings, and high-quality training and apprenticeships routes into the workplace.

In order to assess and monitor the successful delivery of our vision, Polam Hall's SLT and Governors will set out ambitious but achievable KPIs to inform progress. Strategy will be adapted in relation to the Route Map being developed with Durham's Educational Development Service, to support the School's journey from 'good with outstanding features' to 'outstanding' under the revised OFSTED criteria.

KPIs are grouped here and incorporate both hard and soft targets. They are amplified later in this section in terms of strategies and monitoring progress.

**Academic achievement, including take up and qualifications, demonstrated by:**

- nationally accredited outcomes at the end of KS2, KS4, and KS5, with the expectation that the Free School will outperform updated national expectations;
- outperforming value-added predictions across the Key Stages;
- achieving at least expected levels of progress by the end of Key Stages 2 and 4, and exceeding these for a substantial proportion of pupils;
- high levels of numeracy and literacy for all pupils;
- closing any attainment gap in performance between groups of pupils, including groups defined by gender, ethnicity, and those identified as 'disadvantaged';
- continued success in and take up of Russell Group 'facilitating subjects';
- OFSTED evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning.

**Achievement of a genuinely inclusive Free School Community, demonstrated by:**

- an intake which increasingly reflects our published Admissions criteria, building capacity in supporting children in receipt of the Pupil Premium;
- the continuing quality of Pastoral care and pupil well-being, currently assessed as 'outstanding', with no permanent exclusions;
- high levels of attendance and behaviour, including behaviour for learning;
- the quality of Boarding, and its contribution towards an inclusive community;
- viewed as provider of first choice by parents, and oversubscribed;
- high levels of staff morale, engagement and development;
- adding value more widely as part of the local network of schools.

**Achievement of pupils' personal development and goals, demonstrated through:**

- pupil participation in the co-curricular, creative and sporting life of the School;
- pupil engagement in leadership and mentoring, and service to the community;
- pupil and parental satisfaction;
- well
- well-informed progression to high quality destinations across a range of routes whether at KS4 or KS5, including access to Russell Group Universities.

**D2: 2. Academic achievement**

Polam Hall has in place a rigorous process for pupil monitoring and tracking against academic and personal targets. The School provides regular, detailed feedback to pupils and parents, underpinned by nationally standardised assessment systems. These include formative and summative assessments at the end of the EYFS and Key Stages 2, 4 and 5, with externally standardised data, including predictions derived through MidYIS/Yellis and ALIS in the Senior School, and GL Assessments and PIPS in the primary. Data are used as a driver for raising achievement and are central to teaching

and learning practice, school self evaluation and professional development. The School has introduced assessment against national curriculum levels. All statutory assessments will be in place for 2015.

Attainment overall for a non-selective intake is currently above average in all areas where national comparison can be made [see the validated SEF]. The School will continue to set aspirational targets, which it believes can be delivered through high-quality teaching and intervention strategies, and rigorous use of data at the level of individual pupils, departments and Key Stages, and at whole-school level.

#### Targets for end of the EYFS

Data for 2012-13 show that the percentage of pupils at Polam Hall achieving or exceeding expected early learning goals at the end of EYFS is well above the national average and outperforms other settings in the local authority. This builds on work undertaken in the Lower Foundation Stage, which is not part of the Free School model.

**On becoming a Free School in 2015, the School will continue to meet and exceed national and local norms, working with pupils, parents and, where appropriate, early years providers to ensure that pupils are well placed to begin KS1.**

#### Targets for the end of KS2

Polam Hall will introduce KS2 SATS for the first time in summer 2015, and we are currently working with our Durham Education Development Partner to plan the transition to KS2 SATS. In the immediate short term, we will monitor pupil progress using our existing GL Assessment process, and CEM data (PIPS) to enable us to set and track challenging targets for all learners and to measure achievement in literacy, reading, spelling and numeracy across KS1 and 2.

For 2015 as we implement KS2 SATS, with a pupil intake many of whom will have joined the School recently, we will aim to:

- Both meet and exceed national percentages for all pupils achieving Level 4+, and Level 4B or above;
- Both meet and exceed national percentages for those achieving Level 5 or above, with a significant proportion of those achieving Level 6;
- Be amongst the top performers locally.

Thereafter, we will aim for:

- 100% to achieve Level 4+, with no percentage gap between 'disadvantaged' and 'other' pupils (to be adjusted where a pupil is admitted with a Statement of SEND that shows they are working well below NC levels on the P Scale);
- The vast majority of pupils to achieve Level 4B or above;
- To outperform the national and local percentage achieving Level 5 or above.

We will expect all pupils to make at least expected progress across reading, writing and maths, with a significant proportion making 3 levels of progress.

#### Targets for end of Key Stage 4

As summarized in Section C, performance at GCSE has consistently exceeded national percentages for pupils achieving 5 or more A\*-C EM, with the proportion of A\*/A grades significantly above the national average. The School also significantly outperforms national and local percentages of pupils achieving the EBacc. Given the expectations for

end of KS2 outcomes, we will expect pupils transferring from the Junior School at level 4+ to achieve a minimum of 5/6 A\*-C GCSEs EM.

KPI	Target 2014	2015	2016	2017
Percentage achieving 5 or more A*-C GCSEs incl. English & mathematics	65% (with 4 out of 38 candidates not taking English GCSE* at all: 3 EAL taking IELTS, 1 Statement)	68%**	70%	75%
Percentage achieving the English Baccalaureate	42% (65% of cohort doing EB courses in full*)	45%	50%	55%
<b>Percentage of all grades at A*-A</b>	34%	<b>40%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>Percentage of all grades at A*-C</b>	80%	<b>85%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>90%</b>

\* Cambridge IGCSE is no longer on the DfE accredited list, so performance in 2014 will not appear on the official Tables

\*\* First Year of new OFQUAL-accredited IGCSE English

Further targets are as follows:

- Value-added will remain positive across all areas using CEM data, with appropriate targets for those achieving expected progress from KS2-4 in English and maths.
- There should be no or minimal difference in the performance of different groups of pupils, including between those identified as 'disadvantaged' and 'others'.
- Additional targets will be set to reduce any chronological reading age gap.
- Specific targets for take-up and outcomes in STEM and the perceived 'hard' subjects at KS4 and KS5 will be established, against a 2014 baseline.
- Aspirational targets will also be set in relation to Attainment 8 and Progress 8.
- Targets will be set for retention into the Sixth Form, initially 65%, rising to 75%+ as the Free School model becomes established.

### Targets at the end of Key Stage 5

Given the intended focus on a rich academic curriculum at KS5, pupils' starting points on entry to an A-level programme, and Polam Hall's continuing performance at well above national averages, the specific KPIs that will be prioritised at KS5 are:

- Percentage of KS 5 pupils achieving 3 or more A-levels at A\*-E
- Percentage of KS 5 pupils achieving 2 or more A-levels at A\*-E
- Percentage of KS 5 pupils achieving 3 A-levels at AAB in 'facilitating' subjects
- Percentage of KS 5 pupils achieving 3 A-levels at AAB or higher, of which at least 2 are in facilitating subjects
- Percentage of Key Stage 5 pupils that go onto HE/Russell Group universities

**In all of these, we will expect to be amongst the top performers nationally and locally, with targets that build on the starting points of our pupils, once known.**

Additional KPIs will include:

- At least 75% of sixth-formers taking the EPQ by 2017.
- Appropriate targets in relation to average point scores per A-Level entry which ensure a continuing commitment to balancing breadth and depth.
- Positive value-added being maintained across all subject areas, with no significant differences in the performance of different groups of pupils.

### Overall quality of teaching

Over the last 2 years, using ISI criteria, 90% of lessons have been graded at 2 or better. There have been no inadequate lessons seen, but 10% were graded a 3 (satisfactory).

Recent external validation of the SEF against the OFSTED Framework supports these overall judgements. **Polam Hall will set a target for 100% of teaching to be good or better, with 40% to be outstanding (OFSTED criteria) within the first 2 years of opening, with the School expected to achieve at least 'good with some outstanding features' in its first OFSTED inspection, and 'outstanding' thereafter.**

### **D2: 3. Achievement of a genuinely inclusive Free School community**

#### Intake data

A baseline will be established following analysis of actual admissions against our published criteria. This baseline will enable us to assess our success in recruiting Looked-After Children and children who receive the Pupil Premium. Targets will be set for the percentage of parents who make our Free School their first choice.

#### Behaviour and safety of pupils

Currently we are judged to be 'outstanding' in this key area against ISI criteria (confirmed as part of the recent SEF validation). **The overall target is to remain outstanding under a Section 5 Inspection.**

- Comprehensive systems already exist for behaviour management, with rewards and sanctions recorded at an individual pupil level on the MIS system and followed up by Form Tutors in their mentoring role. The system emphasises whole-school cohesion and collective responsibility, with House points awarded for good work, effort and behaviour, and participation in events throughout the School.
- Existing reporting systems also monitor attitude to learning in the Juniors, and effort, homework and behaviour in the Seniors, against specific criteria. As the School expands, further analysis will be undertaken to ensure that the performance of specific groups of pupils is commensurate with their peers.
- Exclusions are extremely rare; we aim to have lower levels for fixed term and permanent exclusions than nationally reported data, aspiring to achieve zero for both.
- Instances of bullying are extremely rare, with pupils aware of who to go to in the event that they feel at risk. Given our House and Year group structure, and strong systems for behaviour management, we aim for this to continue to be the case.

As part of our monitoring of outcomes in this area, we will seek a range of views from:

- The pupil voice, through House fora, School Councils, peer mentors, etc.
- Periodic questionnaires and audits used with pupils, parents and staff.
- SLT learning walks.

#### Continuing quality of pastoral care and pupil well being

This target is closely interlinked with 3.2 above. It is a vital part of our holistic approach to education that key targets in pastoral care and pupil well being are met, and that we continue to be viewed as outstanding in this area under Section 5 OFSTED Framework, including Behaviour and SMSC. Targets will include:

- Strategies for ascertaining the range of views of pupils, parents, staff;
- Maintenance of current excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Boarding provision which continues to be judged as at least 'good' under external inspection, and by those Boarders and day pupils who benefit from the range of resources for extended day care.

#### Staff morale and development

As part of ensuring that Polam Hall can continue to attract and retain a well qualified and fully engaged staff, key measures will be established to ensure:

- regular communication channels during transition to Free School status;
- transparent internal/external appointment processes with clear quality criteria;
- all staff have training needs assessed and have access to CPD to meet any requirements arising through the School's move to Free School status;
- arrangements for Performance Review reflect the changes being made.

#### Adding value locally through collaboration

Clear measures and timescales will be established to inform the development and successful impact of a number of collaborations which are already in train, or at an early stage of discussion, including:

- Development of Raspberry Pi club, open to local primaries;
- An HE-led destinations programme, to raise aspiration, provide master classing and develop interview technique, which will be available to local 11-16 schools;
- A programme of summer school activity aimed to support increased literacy and numeracy across primary/secondary transition, open to local primaries, and a programme of sporting activity pitched at a range of ages;
- Early discussion on possible areas of collaboration across 14-19, which include the local Sixth Form College and FE provider;
- A programme of musical outreach raising participation across Darlington.

#### **D2: 4. Indicators for pupils' personal development and goals**

An intrinsic part of the Polam Hall Free School vision is the contribution that a confidence-building co-curricular programme can have in unlocking student talent, developing leadership and team skills, creating a strong sense of identity, community, loyalty and responsibility, and providing motivation to excel. Pupils' participation will be logged by Form teachers through the MIS.

Our aim as a Free School is to be confident at all times that the majority of pupils and parents are satisfied that they are:

- receiving a good education, which enables pupils to progress successfully;
- able to develop their potential as individuals and members of a community;
- being set appropriate homework which is carefully monitored;
- benefiting from a good range of co-curricular activities;
- thriving in a context where relationships are positive and pupils feel safe (with bullying rare, but picked up quickly and acted upon appropriately).

Pupil and parent questionnaires will be used to monitor levels of satisfaction and may include commercially produced or Ofsted produced questionnaires, the use of attitudinal surveys alongside MidYIS in Y7 and Y9. Boarding Staff, School Nurse and Boarding Council and the pupil-led Peer Mentoring system are further avenues for keeping lines of communication open.

#### **D2: 5. Whole-school assessment of performance**

Polam Hall will have an all-through monitoring and assessment framework from the EYFS to the Sixth Form that delivers our inclusive ethos and supports a wider intake of pupils in achieving ambitious targets at every Key Stage. The School benefits from rich data on performance, though this does not yet include statutory and non-statutory assessment data and processes. Our preparations for conversion will therefore involve:

- training for staff, TAs and Governors to ensure all are up to speed with assessment requirements and data sets (including FFT data, RAISE and the OFSTED Data Dashboard); training to inform support and intervention across the School;

- systems and strategies to ensure that there is appropriate consistency in assessment practice, including joint moderation of marking and assessment;
- a review of the current MIS (ISAMS) to ensure that it has the capacity to manage the analysis and reporting of a wide range of data on pupil attainment, progress and well being, with clarity about how data will be delivered;
- a revised SLT structure, as set out under D3, which sees the appointment of an Assistant Head with overview of Data and Tracking Systems.

#### Assessment and data tracking: current and emerging practice

Whilst our aim is to appoint as soon as possible to the new Assistant Head of Data and Systems post, in the interim, this role will be shared between the Head, Curriculum Manager, Examinations Officer and SENDCo in the Senior School; KS1 and 2 coordinators, Junior SENDCo and Head in the Juniors.

Present practice provides a basis for developing tracking procedures and applying intervention strategies, with all teachers using formative and summative assessment to track the progress of pupils over time, including work scrutiny, lesson observations, class portfolios, homework, tests and internal examinations, and externally validated assessments to build appropriate pupil profiles and guide learning steps.

Pupils are already closely involved in self and peer assessment. This begins in Foundation and continues throughout the Junior years, developed through the Creative Curriculum in the Junior School. Throughout the year, children maintain their own Record of Achievement, and reflect on their progress.

#### Liaising with and reporting to families, guardians and carers

As the key point of entry for the immediate future is at Reception, where parents feel more comfortable in a school setting, we will take every opportunity to build close working partnerships with parents, and to empower them so that they can take advantage of the opportunities offered. Parents will be invited to Reward assemblies and other activities which recognize achievement.

There will be six key internal assessment points across the year, with outcomes reported to pupils, the Data and Achievement Committee, and to parents through a password protected intranet. Formal reporting to parents will take place termly across the School and through related parent meetings. Reporting will include attitude to learning and attainment, progress towards targets, behaviour and wider achievement.

#### **D2: 6. Whole-school evaluation of pupil performance**

The School has already begun to review its systems and processes for collecting and analysing data, identifying what works well, and creating an action plan for what is needed. The whole-school approach to evaluating data which drives up aspirations and outcomes will be underpinned by the revised SLT structure set out under D3.

A Data and Achievement Committee, led by the Deputy Chair of Governors in liaison with the Head, has been delegated to lead in the critical area of monitoring pupil performance. This Committee meets half termly, following key assessment points, to ascertain whether pupils are on track. This group is receiving training and will review:

- Overall standards and the relative performance of different groups of pupils, within and across subjects, and over time against school trends and appropriately challenging national norms, including low, middle and high achievers, those



characterised as 'disadvantaged' under OFSTED, EAL and pupil outcomes in relation to ethnicity and gender.

- The impact of strategies funded through the Pupil Premium to close any attainment gap.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teachers, along with the impact of professional development strategies, and, longer term, the link between performance management, appraisal, standards and salary progression.

## **D2: 7. Monitoring the quality of teaching**

The monitoring of teaching is critical to the success of the School in meeting its aspirational targets. It will be closely linked to a strategic analysis of needs and tightly focused INSET and CPD programmes. The monitoring of teaching, attainment, progress and other targets will be a key element in the School Self Evaluation Process and this will be carried out on an annual basis, with full Governing Body involvement.

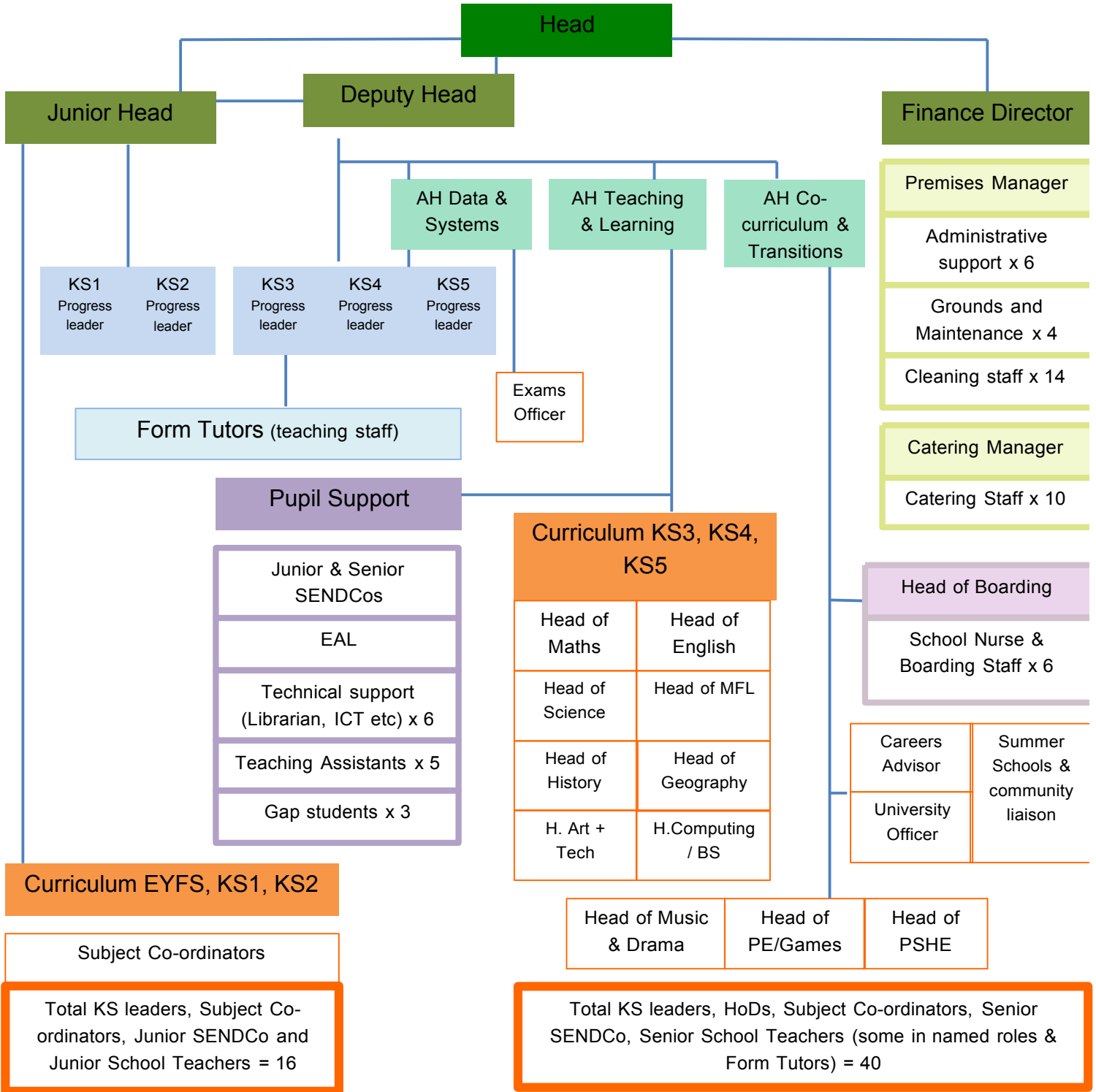
Polam Hall aims to ensure that all staff are delivering teaching at good or better, with 40% judged as outstanding against OFSTED criteria within 2 years of opening. An enhanced programme of lesson observation against revised proforma, which include pupil attainment and progress more overtly, will be implemented. The programme will include work scrutiny, paired observations, learning walks and pupil voice.

# Section D3

**D3 Show how your staffing structure will deliver the planned curriculum.**

## D3: 1. Staffing Structure

Figures below are for actual members of staff, not staff FTE. The financial template in G shows actual staffing in FTE terms.



As a Free School, Polam Hall will set out a staffing structure that delivers:

- a sense of responsibility for each teacher in the School; all staff will take ownership of ensuring that pupils in their care make at least expected progress, whatever their background (See D1, section 3.2 above);
- highly academically qualified staff who have the academic inspiration to deliver a knowledge-rich curriculum through all phases;
- a sense of ownership for pastoral support among all academic staff, where each and every teacher in the School has responsibility for the wellbeing of all pupils;
- a staff that is committed to the wider holistic, sporting and creative elements of our curriculum, and that commits to delivering this through our extended day;
- a school leadership structure that is fit for purpose and that holds to account and supports all staff, including Form Tutors, in delivering their responsibilities for assessing, tracking, support and intervention;
- an SLT structure that allows school leaders to report effectively and rigorously on pupil and teacher performance, allowing the Governing Body to hold school leaders to account for their delivery against our agreed vision and targets.

Our proposals for a revised SLT structure build on recent success in change management (successful assimilation of boys into the School since 2010; setting out new reporting and tracking systems, etc.) while advancing new systems to deliver the vision for inclusive, whole-school achievement, in which all pupils are supported to excel, their progress monitored, and in which the attainment gap is effectively closed. These structures will ensure that Governors and school leaders have the tools at their disposal to evaluate the School's performance in meeting the targets set out in D2 above, and to respond pro-actively to enhance performance where necessary.

### **D3: 2. Outline of Leadership roles**

The Polam Hall SLT will consist of the Head, to whom the Junior School Head, the Deputy Head and the Finance Director will be directly responsible. As we move towards capacity, the School will progressively appoint three Assistant Heads, for Data and Systems; Teaching and Learning; and the Co-curriculum and 14-19 Transitions.

The points below focus on roles related to the Free School proposal; other day-to-day management functions are not listed here.

**The Polam Hall School Head** will be the inspiration for the Free School and set its tone, ethos and vision. The key aspects of the **Head's** role will include:

- establishing the Free School ethos and setting out the vision for Free School policies within the School and in the wider community;
- overall strategic leadership of the Free School, self-evaluation and the whole School Development Plan;
- being accountable for the delivery of the Free School vision to Governors and other stakeholders (parents, pupils, community, SOS/Department);
- leading delivery of the road map to Outstanding OFSTED;
- financial accountability, as the Chief Accounting Officer;
- setting standards of professional management, teaching and pupil monitoring;
- line manager of the other members of the SLT, and ensuring a consistent application of Free School policy across all areas of work;
- ensuring governors have the right information to support and challenge the SLT;
- responsible for meeting agreed targets for the whole Free School;
- oversight of performance management;

- promoting collaboration at classroom, leadership and governor level;
- building strong links in the community and working with the AH Co-Curriculum and Transitions to ensure that positive professional relationships are in place with all stakeholders.

The **Junior School Head** and **Deputy Head** both hold delegated responsibility from the Head for pupil well being across the School and have day-to-day oversight of the running of the School. In the immediate short-term, prior to the appointment of the full complement of 3 Assistant Heads, both Junior School Head and Deputy Head will take responsibility for ensuring the effectiveness of the new working groups that deliver robust reports on the pupil progress (see below).

The key aspects of the **Deputy Head's** role will include:

**Whole-school responsibilities include:**

- pupil well being and progress;
- oversight of assistant heads and Senior SENDCo;
- oversight of KS3, KS4 and KS5 Progress leaders, ensuring effectiveness of their weekly Progress group meetings, which devise strategies to meet pupil needs;
- holding all staff to account for ensuring that those categories of pupils who may be most in need of intervention are being monitored and supported;
- ensuring that intervention, support and care outside the academic timetable is structured and working effectively in support of different categories of pupils;
- responsibility for Looked-After Children and liaison with Local Authority and SENDCos as regards these pupils;
- responsibility for ensuring that structures which support children who attract the Pupil Premium are delivering effectively; liaison with LA and other agencies to build stronger links with families in support of children who attract the Pupil Premium.

**Senior School Responsibilities**

- Holding responsibility for the targets set by Governors and SLT for the overall ethos, positive atmosphere and excellent behaviour throughout the School;
- Induction arrangements for new teaching staff and new pupils;
- Overseeing the Senior School staff Inset programme of professional development, and Junior/Senior liaison sessions;
- line managing the three Assistant Heads and supporting them in their duties.

The key aspects of the **Junior Head's** role will include:

- pupil well being and progress in the Junior School;
- successfully inducting the Free School intake from Reception upwards;
- reviewing and updating those Free School policies which are specific to the Junior School;
- oversight of KS1 and KS2 Progress leaders, ensuring effectiveness of their weekly Progress group meetings, which devise strategies to meet pupil needs;
- oversight of the Junior SENDCo;
- overseeing Junior School curriculum policy to ensure that a full and up-to-date curriculum is in place, that meets statutory requirements and delivers outstanding progress for all groups of pupils within our Free School vision;
- ensuring that the Junior School continues to offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities and a high standard of pastoral care;
- maintaining appropriate communications with parents of pupils in the Junior School and supporting parents of pupils who are new to the School in helping their

- pupils access the curriculum and make at least good progress;
- reporting to the Governing Body on matters affecting the Junior School.

The key aspects of the **Finance Director's** role will include :

- providing strategic guidance, leadership and management of the School's finances, supporting and developing its educational aims and ethos;
- overall responsibility for the preparation and monitoring of the annual budget for approval by the Governing Body;
- benchmarking the School's financial performance against other academies;
- ensuring compliance with current legislation, the Academies Financial Handbook and the requirements of the relevant regulatory bodies;
- procurement – ensuring that 'best value' principles are applied to all appropriate purchasing decisions;
- preparation and maintaining the School Risk Register;
- leading and monitoring all the school's personnel matters;
- income generation – showing entrepreneurship in maximizing income; researching and advising on fund raising, grants and sponsorship;
- management of facilities and premises, a strategic role in developing, supporting and monitoring the work of the premises, catering and administrative teams.

The **AH Data and Systems** will hold overall responsibility for ensuring that SLT and Governors are able to interrogate the School's rich data on pupil performance, not just at the 6 main assessment points, but throughout the year. S/he will hold Key Stage Progress leaders and Form tutors to account for delivering effective oversight of the progress of individual pupils and different groups of pupils in their care, supporting the Deputy Head in setting out strategies to ensure that appropriate support and interventions are in place. S/he will further:

- report to the Progress agenda of the SLT on overall patterns of achievement, fluctuations in data and areas where support or intervention are needed;
- ensure a consistent and rigorous approach to data monitoring throughout the School;
- set out the whole school timetable;
- have oversight of GCSE and A-level options processes;
- have academic oversight of the School's Management Information System;
- line-manage the School's examinations officer.

The **AH Teaching and Learning** will have oversight of the work of Heads of Department, and will in practice work closely with the AH Data and Tracking and the 3 Senior School Key Stage leaders to deliver excellent outcomes through robust curriculum and assessment processes. The AH Teaching and Learning will work closely with the SENDCos (Senior and Junior) to ensure that the best practice in supporting pupils of diverse needs is in place, and that staff are delivering their responsibilities to all groups of pupils. The AH Teaching and Learning will develop the challenge-based pedagogical approach across the Senior School and will work closely with the Junior School Head to ensure that the creative, cross-disciplinary approach continues to support and invigorate the knowledge-led curriculum, across the Junior-Senior transition through to Sixth Form. Working with the KS5 Progress Leader, the AH Teaching and Learning will have overall responsibility for the EPQ, ensuring that take-up meets our target of most pupils in the Sixth Form benefiting from this qualification. The AH Teaching and Learning will lead the School's developing policy on Gifted and Talented children, rolling out a challenge

programme that stretches the most able and enriches the work of all young people in the School through a wide range of intellectually-driven activities.

The **AH Co-Curriculum and 14-19 Transitions** will hold overall responsibility for the School's wider vision for enabling all pupils to make informed and positive transitions, whether to other providers after 16, to Russell Group universities, to apprenticeships at 18, or to FE. He or she will be lead a team consisting of Careers Advisor, University Entrance officer, Community Liaison officer and the member of staff responsible for our new programme of summer schools. This Assistant Head will also have oversight of the whole school co-curriculum ensuring that the programme is kept up to date, is appropriate for a wider range of pupils, and that it is being both staffed and attended at high levels. They will be responsible for the work of co-curriculum leaders in the arts, sport, charity and volunteering, outdoor activities, CCF, and other activities.

At middle management level, **Key Stage Progress Leaders** will be appointed. These middle leaders will each manage a team of Form Tutors who have day-to-day responsibility for these processes with each class of pupils. Weekly meetings of Key Stage form tutors, led by Key Stage Progress leaders, and each attended by a member of the SLT and the SENDCos in rotation, will provide the core of the School's tracking and monitoring system. The SLT will receive reports from each of these five meetings in the following week. The work of these Progress meetings, led by Key Stage Progress Leaders, will provide the basis for intervention and support as well as pastoral work on a broader more holistic scale and will effectively provide the nub of the day-to-day running of the School's support structures for all groups of pupils and individuals.

As well as being in significant strategic roles, therefore, senior leadership will be high level operational practitioners. They will be the core of the Free School and will be the main vehicle for its continued success. The team will be responsible for monitoring and reporting on progress towards targets as well as agreeing the best ways to share practice within the Free School and promote collaboration across the LA.

### **D3: 3. Progress Groups**

In order to ensure a fully joined-up approach, five new 'Progress groups' will be set up, meeting weekly, under the general oversight of the Junior Head and Deputy Head. Each Progress Group will be led by a Key Stage Progress Leader and will be attended by form tutors in each Key Stage. One member of the SLT will attend each group meeting, enabling a full-school awareness of detailed issues affecting different pupils and groups of pupils at each Key Stage to be shared across the whole SLT.

The SLT will have as a standing item at its own weekly meetings a Progress Review agenda, which will receive focused reports from these Progress groups. This Progress agenda will be attended by the Senior SENDCo and will allow School leaders to make weekly observations and whole-school decisions based on the data and information presented through Key Stage Leaders. Once in post, the AH Data and Systems and the AH Teaching and Learning will assure the work of the 5 Key Stage Leaders feeding up to SLT; until that point, the channels between Progress groups and SLT will be maintained by the Deputy Head, Junior Head, Senior SENDCo and Head.

The five Progress Groups will receive periodic visits from members of the Governor-led Data and Achievement Committee, which holds delegated responsibility for keeping the performance of all groups of pupils under review. Thus the Data and Achievement Committee will have close insight into the way in which the School is meeting targets in

tracking, monitoring, supporting and evaluating pupil progress, as well as receiving twice-termly reports from the School's data systems and SLT.

#### **D3: 4. Lead Practitioner Group**

A new Lead Practitioner Group, led (when appointed) by the AH Teaching and Learning, will be established to share innovative practice in the support and extension of pupils and sharing of best practice in teaching. As part of this process, outstanding teachers will be assigned as mentors to existing staff in need of further development, and middle leaders will be trained to observe, support and where necessary, coach staff within their area in need of further development, as well as to implement induction programmes for new staff.

#### **D3: 5. Staff development and training**

The Head and SLT understand the need for a considerable amount of professional development to ensure that the whole School is confident in facing the challenges ahead. Accordingly a Service Level Agreement has been taken out with County Durham's Educational Development Service in order to provide specialist advice at a variety of levels, to help devise a roadmap to OFSTED readiness and in the short term to validate our Section 5 SEF. Throughout our relationship with EDS we will have a single Education Development Partner as our first port of call, [REDACTED]

The Professional Development Policy will be an essential part of the Free School's Improvement Plan serving its main objectives. The overall aim of Free School CPD will be to support all Free School staff to continue to support and challenge learners ensuring continued high standards of attainment across all groups, with growing awareness of different needs, and a sense of how the curriculum and co-curriculum can be adapted and enhanced strategically in response to the School's growing capacity. Staff may also have access to a wide range of internal and external development opportunities, including networking opportunities presented by the EDS programme.

We have identified the following areas where we need to enhance our own teaching and support capacity, building on current good practice:

- preparation for the transition to Free School status;
- target setting: whole-school, cohorts, departments and individual pupils;
- using pupil data to monitor pupil progress;
- further differentiation in planning and delivering lessons;
- performance management in an Academy;
- inclusion and managing a broad range of student needs;
- understanding the OFSTED school inspection process.

#### **D3: 6. Phased Growth**

This table shows proposed growth to steady state, in 2020-21. Full costings and the 70% model (and its rationale) are set out in section G below. The growth in teaching staff from 2015 to 2020-21 reflects the working through of full year groups, with need to add extra teaching in subjects such as science, as the School moves to its full capacity.

The Head will line-manage Heads of Departments prior to the appointment of AH Teaching and Learning; Data and Systems will be managed day-to-day by the Curriculum Manager (also covering boarding until 2017). Boarding management will be restructured in September 2017 under a dedicated member of non-teaching staff.

	Sept 15	Sept 16	Sept 17	Sept 18	Sept 19	Sept 20	Sept 21
Number of pupils on roll	<b>516</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>624</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>640</b>
<b>SLT role</b>							
Head	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Head of Junior School	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Deputy Head	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Finance Director	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
AH Teaching & Learning				1	1	1	1
AH Data & Systems			1	1	1	1	1
AH Co-curr & Transitions					1	1	1
Curriculum Manager (covering H of Boarding)	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL SLT</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
Total teachers including Heads of Department, and with timetable reduction taken into account for specific responsibilities/roles	42.7	44.8	47.3	47.1	46.9	47.5	47.7
Pupil support	12	12.3	14.4	13.8	14	14	14
Administrative	4.5	5.8	7	7	7	7	7
Premises	18.5	18.5	19	19	19	19	19
Catering	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
Other	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>101.7</b>	<b>105.4</b>	<b>111.7</b>	<b>111.9</b>	<b>112.9</b>	<b>113.5</b>	<b>113.7</b>



## Section E: Evidence of need

### E1 Valid evidence that there is a need for this school in the area

#### E1: 1 Data Analysis

The total number of completed Evidence of Demand Questionnaires received from the date of announcement, 8 October 2013, until 13 December 2013 is 613, accounting for 872 children, 59% girls and 37% boys (4% not declared gender on submission). Full birth date data was received for 818 children enabling analysis by year group. Polam Hall is the first choice of school for 765 children, with 582 (76%) not currently on roll and eligible to attend Polam Hall as a Free School. These are shown as prospective pupils in Column C in Fig 1. below), with demand from current pupils' families shown separately.

	2015					2016				
	A	B	C current	C prospective	D	A	B	C current	C prospective	D
<b>Reception</b>	40	13	12	71	210%	40	13	0	46	148%
<b>Year 1</b>	40	18	11	62	200%	40	18	12	71	223%
<b>Year 2</b>	40	6	10	42	120%	40	6	11	62	170%
<b>Year 3</b>	40	15	14	48	158%	40	15	10	43	145%
<b>Year 4</b>	40	12	5	47	148%	40	12	14	53	163%
<b>Year 5</b>	40	7	14	47	135%	40	7	5	49	140%
<b>Year 6</b>	40	10	8	37	118%	40	10	14	56	165%
<b>Year 7</b>	43	14	9	73	202%	44	14	8	39	120%
<b>Year 8</b>	42	15	6	39	129%	43	15	9	76	212%
<b>Year 9</b>	24	18	8	8	108%	46	18	6	39	124%
<b>Year 10</b>	30	21	15	18	130%	33	21	8	8	88%
<b>Year 11</b>	27	38	6	0	22%	30	38	15	18	187%
<b>Year 12</b>	33	17	32	9	79%	50	17	23	7	50%
<b>Year 13</b>	37	25	16	6	84%	33	25	32	9	103%
<b>Totals</b>	516	250	166	507	147%	559	250	167	576	148%

**Key Fig1. Evidence of Demand – Data Analysis as at 6/1/14**

Column	Description
A	Proposed number of places in each year group in 2015 and 2016.
B	Number of children already on roll – January 2014 [NB the total includes 21 children currently in Lower Foundation]
C current	Number of children of relevant age currently on roll whose parents have indicated they will choose Polam Hall as <b>first choice</b> .
C prospective	Number of children not on roll whose parents have indicated they will choose Polam Hall as <b>first choice</b>
D	Total demand as a percentage of places available i.e. B+C (prospective)/Ax100

- Under the current draft Admissions policy (with two forms per year group [see synopsis in Section D1.2]), the main points of entry are:
  - Reception: PAN of 20 day pupils.
  - Y7: PAN of 4 boarding pupils; capacity for 40 day pupils, including those transferring from the Junior School
  - Y9: PAN of 4 boarding pupils.

- Y12: PAN of 10 day places and 6 boarding places; capacity for 50 day pupils and 14 boarding pupils, including those transferring from Year 11.
- The overwhelming demand for places in the Junior School indicates that the Junior School will be at capacity from opening in 2015, providing an additional 200 places.
- The indicated demand for places in the Senior School will enable controlled growth from Year 7 to enable the School to reach capacity of 640 pupils in 2019.
- Expansion to three forms per year group from Y7 may be considered from 2019, in response to the need for local secondary places in Darlington. This forecast follows demographic trends and housing development planned [see Section C].
- Evidence of Demand for 24 boarding places (2015) and 6 (2016) are included.
- Online submissions represented 43% and 57% were submitted in hard copy.

**E1: 2. Respondents and their Location**

The 459 replies representing 674 prospective school age children eligible to attend the proposed Free School are from the following postcodes.

Postcode	Number	Percentage %	Postcode	Number	Percentage %
DL1	93	20%	DL13	18	4%
DL2	68	15%	DL14	9	1.5%
DL3	160	35%	DL15/16/17	8	1.5%
DL4	4	1%	DH postcodes	6	1%
DL5	27	6%	TS postcodes	21	5%
DL6/7/8	12	3%	Other	12	3%
DL9/10/11/12	14	3%	Boarding	7	1%

*Fig 2. Evidence of Demand - Postcode Percentage Analysis.*

- This interest endorses the rationale determining the oversubscription criteria to the Junior School in the draft Admissions Policy [see Section D1], which sets out a commitment to serving the local community and children in receipt of the pupil premium, with a modest amount of places for children from the wider region.
- The postcode for Polam Hall School is DL1 5PA. The largest number of Evidence of Demand questionnaires came from prospective families in DL1, DL2 and DL3 – all within a 3 mile radius of the proposed Free School.
- In the last Child Protection Poverty Strategy, published by the Darlington Partnership in October 2011, the data from the draft Assessment showed that need is concentrated within the following 10 wards, which have been related to postcodes in the table below. This table also records the number of responses from these postcodes, 62% of the total received from prospective parents.

Wards – see Key below.												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Number of responses	% of total responses
Postcodes												
DL1 - 1	X	X		X			X	X	X		9	2.0%
DL1 - 2		X			X				X		16	3.5%
DL1 - 3		X			X						21	4.5%
DL1 - 4	X	X		X		X	X			X	24	5.0%
DL1 - 5		X								X	21	4.5%
DL1 - 9		X									0	0.0%
DL2 - 1		X		X							12	2.5%
DL2 - 2		X								X	35	7.5%

DL2 - 3		X									7	1.0%
DL3 - 0		X	X						X		29	6.0%
DL3 - 6		X						X			19	4.5%
DL3 - 7		X						X		X	27	6.0%
DL3 - 8		X									46	10%
DL3 - 9		X	X								20	4.5%
DL8 - 9		X									0	0%
DL98 - 1								X			0	0%
											286	62.5%

*Fig 3. Evidence of Demand - Postcode Analysis of Wards.*

Key:

1. Bank Top
2. Central
3. Cockerton West
4. Eastbourne
5. Haughton East
6. Lascelles
7. Lingfield
8. Northgate
9. North Road
10. Park East.



*Fig. 4 Postcode analysis of prospective pupils within 3-mile radius*

The map shows the number of prospective pupils who live within commuting distance of the proposed Free School (inner circle: 1-mile radius; outer: 3-mile radius).

### **E1: 3. Prospective Parents – Making an Informed Decision**

Polam Hall’s communication plan continues to broadcast our vision as a Free School to the widest audience, engaging those in the community who would not have had the choice of Polam Hall as an independent fee-paying school. Multi-media channels have been used to reach the widest audience, including printed materials, editorials and advertising in a local and regional press and magazines, radio interviews, participation in events across the local community, open days and social media. The school website is pivotal: it is accessible to all, any time and from anywhere. Information is kept up to date and all published materials are available to download. Posters and leaflets have been placed in places where there are computers for community use, to ensure that lack of access to a computer is not a barrier.

#### **E1: 3.1 The Brochure**

At the heart of the published literature is the brochure: Polam Hall School 2015 The Free School Vision – Independent Education For All – Confidence, Creativity, Compassion and Community. There is a downloadable version on the website which can be accessed from [www.polamhall.com/free-school-2015-brochure](http://www.polamhall.com/free-school-2015-brochure).

#### **E1: 3.2 The Leaflet**

Alongside this, a leaflet has been published which encapsulates the key messages, incorporates the Evidence of Demand questionnaire and invites prospective parents to a series of open events at the School to see it in action. The text captures the essence of the brochure and the Evidence of Demand questionnaire can be viewed on [www.polamhall.com/expression-interest/](http://www.polamhall.com/expression-interest/). A leaflet specifically for prospective sixth form pupils and parents has also been published.

#### **E1: 3.3 The Evidence of Demand Questionnaire**

Included in the leaflet and available online via the website, the Evidence of Demand Questionnaire asks four questions of current and prospective parents and provides space for comment. These questions were supported by a short description of what Polam Hall as a Free School offers to pupils.

From 8 October 2013 to 20 December 2013 we received 613 responses from families.

1. Would you consider sending your child to Polam Hall School as a Free School?	Yes definitely 552(90%)	No 0 (0%)	Not sure 25(4%)	further info 36(6%)
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2. If you ticked ‘yes’ to question, what sort of provision are you interested in? (Please tick the appropriate box)	Day 583 (95%)	Weekly Boarding 12(2%)	Termly Boarding 18(3%)
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3. Please tell us about your children:	Year of Entry 2015	Year of Entry 2016	Date of Birth	Boy or Girl
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4. Is your child already at Polam Hall School?	Yes 154	No 459
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5. If you would like to provide any comments about Polam Hall School becoming a free school, please do so here:

Respondent from DL3 [redacted]  
Respondent from DL3 [redacted] Respondent from DL2  
Respondent from DL1 [redacted] Respondent from DL1  
Respondent from DL3 [redacted]  
Respondent from DL1 [redacted]  
Respondent DL1 [redacted]  
Respondent DL1 [redacted]

**E1: 4. Forecast shortage of places; need for choice and diversity**

Details of the shortage of places in primary settings from 2015 and the subsequent shortage of secondary places are set out in Section C: Working in partnership to meet basic need and parental demand. Pupil Projections for Darlington have been produced by Tees Valley Unlimited, commissioned by Darlington Children’s Services and submitted to the DfE as part of the School Capacity Collection submission 2013.

## **E1: 5. Summary of the Standard of Schools in Darlington**

The performance of schools in Darlington is covered in Section C Raising standards and Section F7 below.

## **Section E: Evidence of need – part 2**

### **E2: Successful engagement with the local community**

#### **E2: 1. Communications Activity**

A detailed communications plan has ensured that all stakeholder groups were identified, prioritised and informed about Polam Hall's application for Free School status. Activity continues within the local community, engaging with families from more disadvantaged backgrounds. A boarding school requires engagement with a wider audience, and activity continues across the region with a focus on military families.

Prior to the public announcement, prospective questions about the move to Free School were considered and addressed, ensuring that SLT and governors at Polam Hall were well prepared to answer questions. Frequently asked questions are updated on the website to address questions asked specifically to the Polam Hall staff.

A strong marketing plan has set out clear communications for different stakeholders, including present and prospective parents and pupils, local politicians and community leaders and prospective and potential parents and pupils, using our brochure, leaflets, advertising and social media. This marketing campaign has focused in particular on parents whose financial circumstances would have precluded them from coming to Polam Hall in the past – as shown below [Section E2:2].

The response has been extremely encouraging as demonstrated in the Evidence of Demand *Fig.1* in Section E 1.1. In 10 weeks, 459 questionnaires (representing 872 children) were received from families without children at the School, indicating their interest in sending their children to Polam Hall. This has been mirrored by a very significant increase in the registrations for places at the School from September 2014.

#### **E2: 2. Focus on Children from More Disadvantaged Backgrounds**

##### Bursaries

True to its Quaker roots and commitment to inclusion and, the School has a means-tested bursary scheme, which currently benefits nearly 20% of pupils. In 2013, 7 pupils were awarded means-tested bursaries of 90% or more. A 100% bursary was awarded to a Y7 pupil from one of the identified areas of deprivation in Darlington, through the School's links to the primary schools. This scheme will be developed further in 2014.

##### Engagement with Darlington Education Authority, socially disadvantaged communities and the local business community.

The Head attends Park East Ward meetings at the Dolphin Community Centre to engage with local community interest in one of Darlington's most deprived wards.

The School has had extensive dialogue with Darlington Borough Council, especially the Director of People and Head of School and Children Support Services. We have discussed our commitment to social inclusion, building relationships with families from non-traditional backgrounds and have received encouraging support from them.

We have held meetings with our local MP, Jenny Chapman, who met our support staff and opened our new food technology facility in the weeks after the launch of the Free School bid. We maintain regular communications with her public relations team and with the local councillor who is responsible for children's services.

We have engaged extensively with the local business community. We have formal endorsement in our publicity from local business leader, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] who has helped to build relationships as we reach out to new communities. He says 'I warmly welcome Polam Hall's partnership as they offer their educational vision to our whole community'. The Chair and Deputy Chair of Governors will present the Free School Vision to local business organisations like the Rotary and Chamber of Commerce.

Links with local schools – recent partnerships include:

- Pupils from Skerne Park Primary School, a school with 77% of children eligible for Free School Meals, visit for science lessons.
- A joint art project with High Conniscliffe CE Primary School.
- Pupils from local schools have visited for a Raspberry Pi road show.
- We have used existing links with local Nurseries and Surestart Centres to promote the Polam Hall Free School Vision.
- We plan to offer a programme of structured holiday activities open to all, using our campus, sports pitches and grounds [see Section D above].

#### 16–19 Partnerships

We are developing further links with Darlington College and with key local secondary schools, building on our strengths in STEM subjects [see E2: 3.2, Moving Forward].

#### Community and Charity Activities

The pupils at Polam Hall already contribute widely to the local community.

- The Interact Club, the biggest extra-curricular club in School, is affiliated to the Darlington Rotary Club and is our major fundraising body; pupils have raised thousands of pounds over the years for local, national and international causes.
- Sixth Formers run an annual Jack Frost Tea Party in December and a Sunshine Party in June for members of the Darlington Town Mission.
- Every year pupils organise a charity fashion show, which regularly raises over [REDACTED]. All the clothes come from local retailers and the Sixth Formers write to hair and beauty outlets to seek their support.
- Through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award significant numbers of our pupils engage in community service.

### **E2: 3. Admission of children attracting pupil premium to the Free School**

Building on the commitment to this inclusive vision of education, children who are eligible for Free School Meals will be prioritised within Polam's oversubscription criteria in the draft Admissions Policy. 20% of school admissions have currently been allocated but it is expected that this will increase, as the School builds its expertise and experience in closing the gap of attainment for these children.

#### **E2: 3.1 Communications Activity**

This has been focused on children from more disadvantaged backgrounds:

- Editorial and advertisement in The Northern Echo (daily readership 115,000) education supplement with Evidence of Demand Questionnaire attached. 3 x 1/4

page adverts in Darlington & Stockton Times (weekly readership 70,000), The Northern Echo and The Darlington Advertiser (weekly readership 78,000).

- An advertisement campaign in Darlington Together, posted through doors in selected postcodes in DL1, 2 and 3.
- Advertisement and editorial campaign in Raring 2 Go magazine – Teesside edition (readership 12,000)
- An advert and editorial contribution in Darlington Today December edition.
- Exhibition stand at Children & Parents exhibition held at the Riverside Stadium.
- Radio interviews with Deputy Chair of Governors broadcast on local radio stations, Star Radio, TFM and BBC Radio Tees.
- 10,000 leaflets, 3,000 brochures and 100 posters printed. Circulated by staff to supermarkets, doctors, dentists, sports centres and local shops in key areas.
- Brochures, leaflets and a covering letter sent to Children’s Centres and nurseries, all primary and secondary schools and FE colleges in Darlington.
- A Free School section of the school website explains the vision, ethos and aims of Polam Hall as a Free School. Visitors are also encouraged to support the application by completing the online Evidence of Demand Questionnaire.
- Social networking: Facebook (724 followers); Twitter (1834); after 8 weeks.
- Seven local nurseries in areas recognised as socially deprived have been visited by members of Junior School staff, leaving brochures and leaflets for parents.
- Three Open Day and Open Evenings have been held, together with a Sixth Form Information Evening. These events have been extremely well attended.
- Performances by the School choir at St Theresa’s Church, the Christmas Cracker concert at the Dolphin Centre and town performances at the School. The Darlington Ice Rink has a Christmas message advert.
- Pupils have been raising funds for local charities by packing [REDACTED]

**The positive result from these activities is that 62.5% of the Evidence of Demand Questionnaires come from postcode addresses in the ten wards that the Child Protection Poverty Strategy 2011 identified as being where need is concentrated [see Section E1 Fig 3. Evidence of Demand - Postcode Analysis of Wards].**

## **E2: 3.2 Moving Forward**

The planned programme of activities and events continues with:

- open Days, the next is scheduled for 11 January 2014;
- motivation lecture planned for January 2014 with [REDACTED]. In addition to Polam Hall School, Hurworth and Darlington School of Maths and Science will be attending;
- Careers Fair in March to which local all secondary schools will be invited;
- meeting with Cllr Landers to identify school projects at Firth Moor Community Centre, Red Hall Community Centre and Skerne Park Community Centre;
- building relationship with Darlington Cares, a project that matches the skills and resources of local employers to opportunities where they can have a positive impact on the community.
- visits to Surestart Centres and playgroups in targeted areas of social deprivation.

As a member of the Darlington Partnership we will work collaboratively with all other schools and further develop the links already established, to provide the best opportunities for the children of Darlington and the surrounding areas.



## **E2.4 Focus on Boarding Pupils**

Communicating the vision of Polam Hall as a Free School boarding school requires a sustained campaign in order to generate formal evidence of demand as pupils will be recruited nationally. Activity has been focussed on three areas:

### HM Forces

- advertising in a range of Forces publications;
- meeting with Garrison Commander at Catterick in early December to set up attendance at Catterick Garrison events; posters and leaflets in the library and sports centre and at Army Wives events; banner placed near to the base;
- similar activity at other identified military bases in Yorkshire;
- events at the Bivouac Café in North Yorkshire, meeting place for Army Wives;
- attend and share information at Forces Family Stay and Play

### sessions. Children in remote rural areas in the north of England

- attending identified events in selected areas in order to promote the Free School;
- editorial in Living North special education edition in January, North East and Yorkshire publications, with a readership of

### 100,000. Children with a defined boarding need

- Early discussions with Darlington Council on the possibility of boarding by children in the care of the Local Authority [see Section C, statement from LA].
- News items have been submitted to the State Boarding Schools' Association website. All boarding agents have been sent brochures and leaflets as well as grant making educational charities who finance boarding for needy children.

We will provide regular updates on the Evidence of Demand Questionnaires received for boarding places after the submission of our application.

## Section F: Capacity and capability

### F1 (a) Pre-opening skills and experience

Name	Member of core applicant group (Y or N)	Role in pre-opening by area(s) of expertise (e.g. educational, financial, etc.)	Other relevant area(s) of expertise	Available Time (hours per week)
[REDACTED]	Y	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	2 days per week, voluntary**
[REDACTED]	Y	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	6 hours, voluntary**
[REDACTED]	N	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1 hour, voluntary
[REDACTED]	Y	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	2 days voluntary**
[REDACTED]	Y	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	2 hours per week**
[REDACTED]	Y	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Full time employee
[REDACTED]	Y	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	As much as required, paid consultant

[REDACTED]	Y	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	2 hours, voluntary
[REDACTED]	Y	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Full time employee

**Notes:**

1. \* **A Free School Steering Committee:** the Governing Body of the existing school has set up a Steering Group to pursue and oversee all aspects of the Free School application and, if successful, to manage the transition to free status and to secure the funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education. The Group is made up of 4 governors, 2 SLT members, a project manager and a co-opted marketing expert who bring a broad range of skills, professional, business and financial acumen and educational expertise. Additional members may be co-opted as a need for additional expertise is identified.
2. \*\* The governor members of the Steering Group have a proven track record of commitment to the School and give freely of their time and expertise. They are aware that the demands on their time may increase further during the transition process. They are 100% committed to the Free School vision.
3. \*\*\* [REDACTED] is a [REDACTED], [REDACTED]
4. **Notes on members of Steering Committee:**
  - a. [REDACTED]
  - b. **PHOSA member:** we are proposing to appoint a member of our old pupils' association, PHOSA to be a fourth Member of the academy trust. We are currently in discussions with the PHOSA Trustees about this appointment.

Full CVs of all the individuals listed are included in Appendix 1.

**F1 (b) Skills gap in pre-opening**

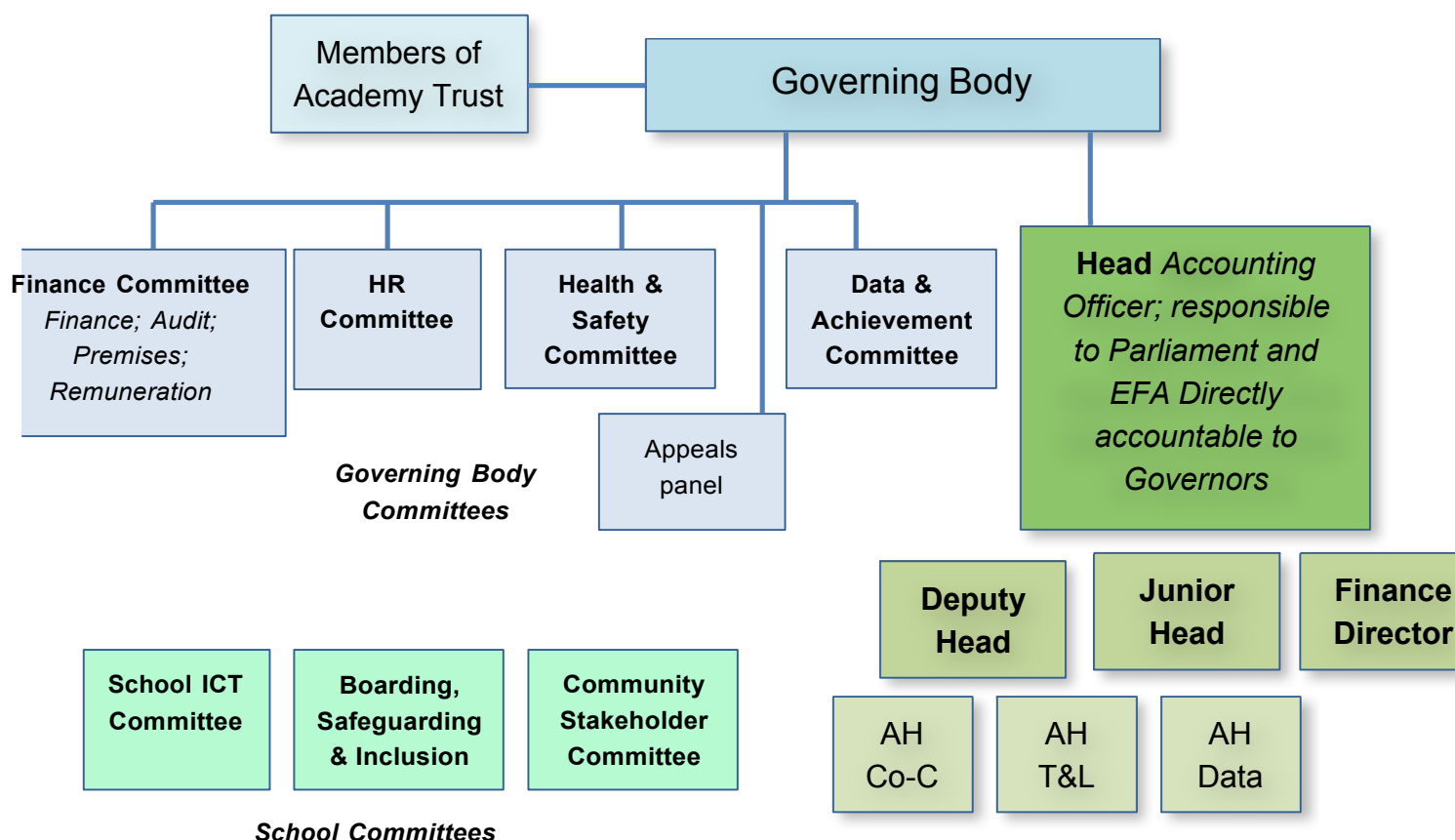
<b>Skills/experience missing</b>	<b>How you plan to fill the gap</b>
Finance Director	The School currently has strong financial management as an independent school [Section F8]. However, we recognise that our current Bursar's office will need to be restructured to meet the different funding, audit and reporting requirements of a Free School. We propose creating a new role of Finance Director and will look to recruit a qualified accountant to this position during the pre-opening phase. The Finance Director will be responsible for finance, HR, estates, H&S, Risk management, and catering/cleaning. [Costs: Section G; SLT structure: Section D3].
Education validation and coaching	To support and advise governors and SLT in preparation for Free School status and provide further 'external challenge' we have recently engaged Durham County Council's Educational Development Service to help devise a roadmap to OFSTED-readiness [see Section D3].

## Section F2: ACCOUNTABILITY AND DECISION MAKING (POST OPENING)

The corporate structure of the existing independent school is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity (Polam Hall Darlington Limited). A new company limited by guarantee, Polam Hall Educational Trust Ltd, was registered on 2 January 2014, company number 8829554 (the Academy Trust). We propose, subject to further legal advice and agreement with the Department, that the business of the existing school transfers, as a going concern, to the Academy Trust at 1 September 2015.

We will harness the wide range of expertise, experience, commitment and loyalty of existing governors and the SLT in the Free School. We will augment this with the recruitment of additional governors to broaden our experience [see F3] and at senior and middle management levels as the School expands and new posts are created [see D3]. Our experience of governing an independent school (whose governance was ranked 'excellent' by ISI in September 2012) has informed the proposed governance and accountability structure set out below, whilst taking into account the requirements of being a publically funded Free School and compliance with the Academies Financial Handbook.

### F2: 1. Proposed Governance Structure



School Committees report to the Governors and Head and have Governor representation.

Please note that 'Head' is used throughout; we intend to continue to use this term after conversion to a Free School.

## **F2: 2. Members of the Academy Trust**

There will be four members of the new Academy Trust ('the Members'): two who are also governors (including the proposed Chair of Governors) and two externals with strong links to the School [See F1a]. The Members will be responsible for the strategic oversight of the Free School and its underpinning vision. They will appoint the governors (with the exception of the Head, who is a governor *ex officio*, and the parent governors), sign off the financial accounts and audited reports, take part in annual and general meetings, and oversee the achievement of the School's objectives. The Members have the power to amend the articles of association and ultimately to remove governors. In order to ensure they have the information and skills required to discharge their responsibilities at a strategic level, all Members will receive copies of governor minutes and papers and have an open invitation to attend governor meetings.

## **F2: 3. The Governing Body**

It is our intention that the Governing Body will generally operate with 12 or 13 members including two parent governors elected by the parent body, one staff member, and the Head. However, to allow for effective succession planning the articles provide for a maximum of 15 governors. In accordance with the Nolan Principles of Public life, governors (with the exception of the Head) will serve a maximum of three three-year terms, although the articles allow for this to be extended in exceptional circumstances. Details of proposed governors, and the skills we are looking to fill are set out in F3. Six are governors of the existing independent school who will bring with them their considerable knowledge and experience of the School, its current stakeholders and the Darlington community. We are looking to appoint three new governors in addition to the elected parent governors, the staff governor and Head.

The Governing Body will:

- Determine the strategic direction of the School and ensure clarity of vision about the Free School vision, its ethos and values, emphasising the mission to widen access and close the education gap for children perceived as 'disadvantaged';
- Closely monitor and oversee standards and provide rigorous challenge and hold the Head and SLT to account for improving the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement, behaviour and safety, and delivering against agreed KPIs;
- Commission action, agree improvement targets and strategies, allocation of resources, and the process for assessing impact, where this is necessary;
- Ensure solvency, probity and the effective management of financial resources;
- Ensure pupil premium and other resources are used to overcome barriers to learning;
- Ensure that statutory duties, legal and regulatory requirements are met and the funding agreement complied with;
- Put in place controls to ensure effective delegation and accountability;
- Engage with key stakeholders;
- Performance manage school leaders.

## **4. The Head**

The Head will be the Academy Trust's accounting officer, responsible to Parliament and the accounting officer of the EFA for the resources under their control. The Governing Body will delegate to the Head the responsibility for the day-to-day management of the School and its staffing. Details of the Head's and SLT's roles are set out in D3.

## **F2: 5. Governor Committees**

To enable governors to discharge their responsibilities, we propose governor-led committees in the four areas below. Unless stated otherwise, these committees will:

- Have an advisory and monitoring role, decisions being taken only where in accordance with an existing policy and/or strategic plan objective and where there are no financial implications outside approved budget provision, OR where the Governing Body has delegated specific authority to the committee;
- Have a membership of two to three governors together with the Head; additional non governors may be co-opted and staff will be invited to attend as appropriate;
- Meet at least termly prior to the full Governing Body meeting and provide a written report to be circulated with the board papers.

**The Data and Achievement Committee** will keep under review and advise the full GB on the impact of the School's academic, curricular and co-curricular provision and will monitor pupil performance and standards, including the performance of specific groups of pupils, as set out under the Section 5 Criteria. Key elements of this role include curriculum strategy and programme; setting KPIs and targets to be attained; assessment, reporting and monitoring of different groups of pupils within and across subjects and over time against school and national trends; monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and performance management; the staffing structure for academic staff. This committee will meet **twice** a term following each key assessment point.

**The Finance Committee** will monitor and advise on the School's financial health, accounting compliance and staff levels of remuneration as well as on the School's external audit, internal management systems and mitigation of risk. This includes adopting strategic financial targets (cash reserves, levels of surplus, percentage of staff costs to gross fees), advising on revenue and capital budgets and cash flow forecasts, reviewing financial performance against targets and budget, ensuring procurement processes achieve value for money, and receiving reports from other committees and reviewing financial implications. The Finance Committee advises on the School's premises and estate.

**The Health & Safety Committee** will advise on the School's health & safety arrangements including its educational provision, buildings, plant, vehicles and grounds. **The Human Resources Committee** will advise on the School's staff establishment and appointment procedures, terms and conditions of employment, all employment-related policies and the School's performance management system and its implementation. Its recommendations on pay will be taken, in the first instance, to the Finance Committee. Both committees will meet at least twice a year.

In addition to the above committee, four governors will be identified (and given appropriate training), to be called upon, as and when required, to sit on an **appeals panel** in accordance with the capability procedure for staff; a **disciplinary panel** and/or appeal panel in accordance with the disciplinary procedure for staff; and/or a **complaints panel** in accordance with the complaints policy Exclusions appeals. The Governing Body will also set up **Ad Hoc committees**, as and when required.

### **Governor representation on School Committees**

The Governing Body will be represented on three school-wide committees which will play an important role in the transition to Free School status. These committees will meet termly, prior to the full Governing Body meeting, and will provide a full written report for

the governors (with the exception of the Community and Stakeholder Committee which will meet twice a year):

**Boarding, Safeguarding and Inclusion Committee**  
**ICT Strategy Committee**  
**Community Stakeholder Committee**

## **F2: 6. Governing Body performance review**

The Governing Body will look to improve its own performance through:

- a programme of induction and training, including online training and support from Durham County Council's Educational Development Service;
- closer links and shared best practice with other schools within the schools@onedarlington partnership and the State Boarding School's Association and with Darlington Borough Council;
- membership of the National Governors' Association and other relevant bodies, as well as staying as an affiliated member of AGBIS;
- regular self-evaluation of performance to understand strengths and weaknesses and establish where change is needed; periodically commissioning an external element to this review.

The Governing Body will manage change through:

- clear communication to individual governors of their responsibilities from the outset of their appointment;
- self-evaluation and the audit report to identify where change is needed;
- promoting open discussion and agreement on future practice; and
- the use of professional advisers and/or the co-opting of external expertise where necessary to drive the change process and ensure its success.

## **F2: 7. Holding the Head and Senior Leadership to account**

Governors of the existing school have a productive and supportive relationship with the Head. They are well aware of the importance of holding him and the SLT fully to account.

They have identified a number of ways to achieve this, including:

- A committee structure devised to ensure the full engagement of governors in their areas of expertise, with clear lines of report to the full Governing Body, providing challenge to those with executive functions. Where required, external expertise will be co-opted, providing further rigour;
- Further monitoring and evaluation to take place through the externally commissioned Route Map during transition and the initial years of the Free School. Thereafter, through annual review of the School's development plan, self evaluation process and regular meetings between the Chair and the Head;
- A revised performance management system to improve teaching, leadership and management, with the Head appraised annually against agreed objectives and KPIs through a process which includes support from an external adviser, and governors keeping under review the relationship between salary progression and the School's performance outcomes The HR Committee will review the School's performance management policy annually and the governors will hold the Head and Finance Director to account for its implementation;
- The use of robust and objective data on the School's finances; pupil learning and progress; pupil applications/admissions, attendance and exclusions; staff absences, recruitment, retention and performance; quality of teaching. This will include full use of benchmarking and external sources of data including school

performance tables, RAISEonline, and, in due course, OFSTED's performance dashboard;

- By ensuring that all governors fully understand their roles and responsibilities, through well focused induction and on-going training, and know their School.

**F2: 8. Conflicts of Interest**

The Governing Body of the existing school has a clear and robust conflict of interest policy. As a recipient of public funds the business of the Free School must be managed in a transparent way that provides assurance to the DfE, EFA and the public of the correct stewardship of that money. We will achieve this through:

- A conflict of interest policy which clearly addresses how any such conflict, whether actual, potential or perceived will be dealt with, and which provides guidance for governors on related procedures. The policy will be reviewed annually;
- Spelling out clearly the 'not-for-profit' principle that applies to the supply of goods and services to the School by a connected person. This includes Members, governors, connected individuals (e.g. relatives) & organisations (e.g. businesses);
- Holding an up-to-date register of financial and other interests. All governors will be asked to declare (at least annually) any pecuniary, personal or business interest that they might have any connection with the Governing Body's/School's business.
- Conflicts of interest appearing as a standing item on the agenda at the start of every full governor or sub-committee meeting; and
- Effective management of actual, potential or perceived conflicts by the Chair of Governors and/or committee chairs.

**F3 (a) Proposed governors**

Name	Role on Governing Body	Area(s) of expertise (e.g. educational, financial, etc.)	Other relevant area(s) of expertise	Available Time (hours per week)
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
██████████		██████████	██████████	██████████



██████████		██████████	██████████	██████████
██████████		██████████	██████████	██████████

**Notes:**

**1. Scoring of areas of expertise:**

- a. 1= current, extensive and relevant experience
- b. 2=good understanding
- c. 3=basic understanding

**2.** \*The proposed governors, as existing governors, have a proven track record of commitment and loyalty to the School and have given freely of their time and expertise, and will continue to do so. They are aware that the demands on their time may increase further during the transition process.

**3. Notes on proposed governors:**

- a. ██████████: summary notes can be found in F1a.
- b. ██████████  
Full CVs of all proposed governors are included in Appendix 1.

## F3 (b) Skills gap for Governing Body

Skills/experience missing	How you plan to fill the gap
Qualified accountant – to provide additional specialist advice on finance and strategic planning	We have already identified a number of potential candidates from our professional networks in Darlington and the surrounding area. If this is not successful, we will contact the School Governors One Stop Shop, who hold a database of skilled volunteers wishing to become governors. They are able to use their network of business connections to market vacancies should a database search prove unsuccessful. We will advertise in the local media as appropriate.
Secondary school – state funded (current or recently retired Head or Deputy Head preferably of an outstanding school)	We are using our extensive professional educational networks to find a suitable individual. If this is not successful we will contact the Governors One Stop Shop and, if necessary, advertise.
Chartered surveyor or considerable property Experience	We will use our professional networks in the first instance and then the Governors One Shop Stop. This may not be a full governor role, but we would co-opt someone with this experience onto the Finance committee and/or any ad-hoc committee set up to deal with specific property or project issues. See F2.
Recent Human Resources expertise	We will use our professional networks in the first instance and then the Governors One Shop Stop as above.
Procurement/service contract specialist	We will use our professional networks in the first instance and then the Governors One Shop Stop as above. This may not be a full governor role in the short term – but we would look to co-opt someone with this experience onto the Finance Committee.
ICT	We intend to co-opt an ICT expert onto the relevant sub-committee as and when required. Andrew Atkins, the Director of the Centre for Digital Business who has extensive ICT experience, was recently co-opted to oversee and advise on the School's new website.
Marketing and communications	A number of governors have marketing experience. Charlotte Nichols, MD of a PR and Marketing Agency, will be co-opted onto the School's Community Stakeholder Group and is a co-opted member of the Steering Group [see F1 above]

## Section F4 Recruiting a high quality Principal

Polam Hall School has [REDACTED]. We believe that he has the appropriate qualifications, experience and ability to undertake the role of Principal in the Free School and to successfully lead the School through the transition from Independent to Free School status.

The Governing Body has decided unanimously to appoint [REDACTED] as Principal Designate of the Free School. (It is the intension that he continues to be known as the Head (as opposed to Principal) after the conversion to Free School status. Therefore the references in this section are to 'Head Designate'.) The proposed salary for [REDACTED]

as Head Designate has been included in the School's budget and staffing plan set out in section G and is affordable. [REDACTED] CV is included in Appendix 1.

## **Appointment Process of Head in 2011**

### **A Suitable Head Designate**

[REDACTED] The Governing Body, led by the Chair of Governors, [REDACTED], is unanimously of the view that [REDACTED] has the skills, experience, vision and leadership qualities necessary to lead the Free School to success, and to make a significant contribution to education in the wider Darlington community.

## **F7: Educational track record (existing Independent Schools converting to Free School status)**

Polam Hall's track record of excellence, in terms of quality of experience and outcomes, is evidenced by:

- The external report validating our SEF (December 2013);
- Our recent ISI report (September 2012);
- The level of demand shown by parents wanting their children to join the School since we announced our Free School vision, and wider local support;
- The School's results;
- The destinations of our leavers.

Polam Hall is a non-selective school with an above national average proportion of pupils with SEN (19.2% at January 2014) and significant numbers with EAL at different entry points in the School (11.1% of the Seniors take EAL).

### **F7: 1. External report and validation of our SEF, December 2013**

Our SEF (assessed against OFSTED's section 5 criteria) has been externally validated by [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. A copy of the SEF and of [REDACTED] report can be found at Appendix 2 and 3.

Her summary sets out the following judgements:

- Overall attainment is above average and progress, where identified using standardised value added information, is at least in line with expectations and sometimes good. Evidence from work scrutiny in lessons indicates that attainment is above national norms and current pupils are making good and in some cases excellent progress over time.
- The quality of teaching is good, with some identified as outstanding. Teaching assistant support is well targeted and ensures pupils with particular needs make good progress in learning.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards the School. Attendance is good and pupils are punctual. They enjoy school and appreciate the opportunities it provides for them both academically and in developing themselves. A strong ethos of reward for endeavour pervades school life. Behaviour in and around the school is excellent. Pupils are polite and show mutual respect for each other.

### **F7: 2. ISI Findings, September 2012**

A copy of the full ISI inspection report is provided through the link in section A. There were no compliance issues raised in the inspection. ISI inspectors found that:

- pupils' achievements and learning are good;
- the quality of pupils' personal development is excellent;
- pastoral care throughout the School is excellent;
- pupils achieve excellent standards in a wide range of activities;
- pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent.
- the contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent;
- the range of extra-curricular activities is excellent;
- pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education and adult life.
- the quality of the pupils' SMSC development is excellent;
- spiritual awareness is very strong;
- pupils have excellent social awareness;
- the School is extremely effective in promoting good behaviour and guarding against harassment and bullying. Behaviour is excellent.

### **F7: 3. Level of demand for Polam Hall as a Free School**

Section E relates the overwhelming support shown by parents since public announcement of our intention to apply for Free School status and includes a number of statements that reflect how parents have welcomed our offer.

In addition to the overwhelming evidence of demand for places in 2015 and 2016, a large number of parents have sought to place their children at the School prior to conversion. Together with the positive response our vision has received from the LA and local schools, this is compelling evidence of the esteem in which the School, with its high standards and qualities, is held locally.

### **F7: 4. The School's results**

#### Junior School

We assess the performance of our Junior School using data for Early Learning Goals and for GL Assessments, as well as data from PIPS tests:

	% exceeding or achieving expected levels	
	Polam Hall	Local Maintained Schools
Early Learning Goals 2012-13		
Reading	83	66
Number	89	60

Junior pupils in years 1-6 take a range of GL Assessments and PIPS to assess their Literacy and Numeracy and progress monitoring is always in relation to each child's ability and potential as indicated by these assessments:

GL Assessments Results 2012-13	% achieving average or higher	
	Polam Hall	England
KS1 Literacy	85	77
KS1 Reading	86.7	77
KS1 Numeracy	96.7	77
Y3-4 Literacy	92.8	77
Y3-4 Reading	100	77
Y3-4 Spelling	91.7	77
Y3-4 Numeracy	93.8	77
Y5-6 Literacy	89.7	77
Y5-6 Reading	80.3	77
Y5-6 Spelling	96.2	77

Y5-6 Numeracy	96.7	77
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PIPS tests taken in Y2 in 2012 indicate that at the end of KS1 97% of pupils would have potentially achieved Level 2 or above in maths, 51% at Level 3.

PIPS tests taken in Y6 in 2012 can be compared to national data available for that year. At Polam Hall, 89.5% of pupils achieved Level 4+ in English and Maths (England: 79%).

### Secondary: literacy and numeracy

High standards of literacy and numeracy in the Senior School are demonstrated by our GCSE results in English and Maths:

### **English IGCSE 2013**

**Language** 52.1% A\* or A; **Literature** 75.6% A\* or A.

**Language** 97.8% A\*-C; **Literature** 100% A\*-C.

This compares with 63.6% nationally for A\*-C in English Language.

### **Maths GCSE 2013**

46% A\*-A; 63% A\*-B; 80% A\*-C. This compares with the national figure for 2013 reported in the BBC website as 0.8% lower than the 2012 figure which was 58.4%.

### GCSE results

#### **2013 overview**

35.6% A\*-A; 81.3% A\*-C

61.4% 5 A\*-C including Maths and English (71.1% without our Chinese pupils)

40.9% English Baccalaureate

As our candidates took a Cambridge IGCSE English course, rather than a level 1/2 certificate our 2013 results in the DFE performance tables due to be published in January 2014 will show 0% in 5A\*-C including Maths and English, similarly 0% for the EBacc. The calculations above show what we would achieve including the IGCSE results.

At the top end of the ability range, 21 pupils in Year 11 scored 100% for 5 A\*-Cs including Maths and English, 81% for the Ebacc; they gained 55.2% of their grades at A\*-A, 78.1% at A\*-B and 98.1% at A\*-C.

#### **2012 overview**

38.8% A\*-A; 60.9% A\*-B; 80.8% A\*-C.

63% 5 A\*-C including Maths and English (71% without our Chinese pupils who did not take English GCSE).

33% English Baccalaureate (highest in Darlington), 38% discounting Chinese pupils.

The highest performing 23 pupils achieved 66% of their grades at A\*-A, 91% at A\*-B and 100% at A\*-C. 67% of candidates gained the EBacc. (Five of the top 23 pupils were Chinese boarders and only one of these took English GCSE.)

### **GCSE Comparison over time within the Local Authority**

School name	% 5+ A*-C GCSEs incl E & M					% English Bacc		% A*-C E & M
	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2013	2012	2012
<b>England - all schools</b>		59.4%	59.0%	53.5%	49.8%		18.4%	60%
<b>Polam Hall School</b>	<b>61.2%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>67%</b>

Carmel	90%	95%	89%	80%	80%		23%	95%
Hummersknott	71%	79%	78%	62%	60%	26%	29%	79%
Hurworth School	83%	75%	82%	77%	73%		7%	75%
DSMS		55%	50%	35%	38%		4%	55%
Longfield School	52%	48%	60%	51%	34%		11%	48%
Haughton Community School		43%	49%	41%	42%		1%	43%
St Aidan's	44%	35%	44%	34%	39%		0%	35%

fig. 1: DfE Performance Tables

Figures for 2009 to 2012 are taken directly from DfE performance tables, without equivalencies. Over this period of time we have been in the top four performing schools in Darlington.

As stated above, if Chinese pupils are discounted from our 2013 figures our 5A\*-C figure rises to 71.1%. In the summer of 2012 for example we had one Chinese student from Hong Kong who gained 7A\* grades at GCSE but who did not take English. The same student gained 5 A grades in AS levels in the summer of 2013 and is now studying at Hong Kong university under the scheme which allows exceptional pupils educated in the UK to go to university on the basis of excellent AS grades.

### A-level results

At A-level we lead the way locally in terms of the proportion of pupils taking the hard academic disciplines and in our overall performance, balancing depth and breadth. Maths and the Sciences are the most popular subjects at A level and have been for a number of years. In 2013 at AS Level these subjects were also the most popular: of 25 candidates (6 boys and 19 girls), 14 took Biology, 10 took Chemistry and 13 took Maths.

### **2013 overview**

27.9% A\*-A; 53.5% A\*-B

8 out of 26 pupils achieved at least 3 A\*-B.

In 2012, Polam Hall led the way in our area by some margin as the most successful school for pupils achieving AAB in A-level subjects deemed as 'facilitating' by Russell Group universities. Polam Hall has had the highest 'points score per entry' in Darlington for four of the last five years.

### **F7: 6. Progression to Higher Education**

Polam Hall has a long tradition of successful transitions to Higher Education, Further Education and excellent training and apprenticeship programmes. The vast majority of pupils in each year in recent cycles have progressed to their first choice university, and we have excellent records of success. Typically, since 2008, only 1 or 2 pupils per year have had to seek places through clearing, though all those who have used clearing have made happy and successful transitions. With recent cohort sizes in the low twenties and our emphasis on academic inclusivity, not every year has seen Oxbridge applications but over a cycle of 4-5 years Polam Hall's track record here is also excellent, with pupils progressing to read subjects such as Theology, Politics, Psychology and Sociology. In recent years, 2 pupils have progressed to study in the US on golf scholarships.

**Section F8 (Independent schools)**  
**FINANCIAL TRACK RECORD (EXISTING INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS  
CONVERTING TO FREE SCHOOL STATUS)**

Recent financial history of Polam Hall  
School [REDACTED]

Table 1

[REDACTED]

Table 2

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]





## **Section G: Budget planning and affordability**

**G1: 1. Development of plans and their strategic rationale**



- *Fig 3.5 Description of modification to expenditure 2015–21*



1. Please fill in details for each of your preferred sites, taking care to complete every section.
2. The text boxes can be made bigger by increasing the row height.
3. To insert a new line in a text box, press alt + enter.
4. Please do not put any site information in the Word form. Additional information about sites should not be attached to your main application. Instead it should be sent to [premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk). Please put the name of your proposed free school in the subject line.

[Jump to second choice site](#)

[Jump to third choice site](#)

[Jump to fourth choice site](#)

[Jump to section for independent schools](#)

Please describe the location in which you propose to set up your school being as specific as possible. This could include the name of the area in which you would like to put the school, the part of a city, town or suburb. Please also consider how flexible you are - how far from your preferred location are you willing to go? Please include an annotated map as an additional file and send it to <a href="mailto:premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk">premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk</a> if possible.	The school would remain at its current location, a long established school campus of currently approximately 22 acres developed in stages over the last 150 years and currently operating as the Darlington area's only independent boarding school.
--	--

If you have not identified a site yet, please tell us the postcode of a central location in the your preferred area. It must be a full postcode e.g. SW1P 3BT, <i>not</i> SW1:	
--	--

**Preferred site**

Full address and postcode. It must be a full postcode e.g. SW1P 3BT, <i>not</i> SW1:	Grange Road, Darlington , County Durham DL1 5PA
--	---

In which local authority is the site?	Darlington
---------------------------------------	------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with another local authority, please say which:	No - but it is proposed that we keep a wide catchment area covering
---	---

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with a third local authority, please say which:	No
---	----

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with a fourth local authority, please say which:	No
--	----

Please tell us how you found the site:	Existing location
--	-------------------

Please confirm the tenure:	Freehold
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If other, please explain further:	
-----------------------------------	--

Please Include information on purchase or lease price if known:	The proposal is for the property and assets to be transferred to the new academy trust for the Free School upon discharge of the existing school's liabilities by the DfE.
---	--

Who owns the site?	Freehold is held by Polam Hall Darlington Ltd, the registered charitable company for Polam Hall
--------------------	---

Is the site available/on the market? (please attach agents' particulars as an additional file and send it to <a href="mailto:premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk">premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk</a> if available)	N/A
---	-----

Name and contact details of owner:	N/A
------------------------------------	-----

Name and contact details of agent or local authority representative where available:	N/A
--	-----

If your site is local authority owned, please state if the local authority have confirmed that your free school may use it if you are successful:	N/A
---	-----

What kind of site is it?	Existing building
--------------------------	-------------------

What is the current use?	Independent school
--------------------------	--------------------

If government building or 'other' - please describe:	
--	--

Why have you chosen this site? What makes it suitable for your free school?	Its geographical location near to the town centre of Darlington makes it easily accessible to a high density of the local population and includes the ten wards identified by Darlington Borough Council as having the highest rates of child poverty
---	---

If known, how big is the building and the site? Please attach any site and building plans as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk:	Currently 22 acres, the school has an offer from Persimmon Homes for 2.15 acres of unused land. If this sale goes ahead, the proceeds of which would be used to enhance the current sporting and changing facilities and provide improvements to prepare for the increased number of pupils on roll. Full details can be found in Section F8 under Proposed sale of land.
---	---

Please comment on the condition of the building. Please attach photos if available as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk:	Generally well maintained - some deferment of refurbishment in recent years due to lack of finance. Plans are in place to carry out essential work in academic year 2014 - 2015
--	---

**Second choice site**

Full address and postcode of your second choice site. It must be a full postcode e.g. SW1P 3BT, not SW1:	
--	--

In which local authority is the site?	Please select
---------------------------------------	---------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with another local authority, please say which:	Please select
---	---------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with a third local authority, please say which:	Please select
---	---------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with a fourth local authority, please say which:	Please select
--	---------------

Please tell us how you found the site:	
--	--

Please confirm the tenure:	Please select
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If other, please explain further:	
-----------------------------------	--

Who owns the site?	Please select
--------------------	---------------

Please include information on purchase or lease price if known:	
---	--

Is the site available/on the market? Please attach agents' particulars as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk if available:	Please select
---	---------------

Name and contact details of owner:	
------------------------------------	--

Name and contact details of agent or local authority representative where available:	
--	--

If your site is local authority owned, please state if the local authority have confirmed that your free school may use it if you are successful:	Please select
---	---------------

What kind of site is it?	Please select
--------------------------	---------------

What is the current use?	Please select
--------------------------	---------------

If government building or 'other' - please describe:	
--	--

Why have you chosen this site? What makes it suitable for your free school?	
---	--

If known, how big is the building and the site? Please attach any site and building plans as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk:	
---	--

Please comment on the condition of the building. Please attach photos if available as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk:	
--	--

**Third choice site**

Full address and postcode of your third choice site. It must be a full postcode e.g. SW1P 3BT, not SW1:	
---	--

In which local authority is the site?	Please select
---------------------------------------	---------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with another local authority, please say which:	Please select
---	---------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with a third local authority, please say which:	Please select
---	---------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with a fourth local authority, please say which:	Please select
--	---------------

Please tell us how you found the site:	
--	--

Please confirm the tenure:	Please select
----------------------------	---------------

If other, please explain further:	
-----------------------------------	--

Please include information on purchase or lease price if known:	
---	--

Who owns the site?	Please select
--------------------	---------------

Is the site available/on the market? Please attach agents' particulars as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk if available:	Please select
---	---------------

Name and contact details of owner:	
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Name and contact details of agent or local authority representative where available:	
--	--

If your site is local authority owned, please state if the local authority have confirmed that your free school may use it if you are successful:	Please select
---	---------------

What kind of site is it?	Please select
--------------------------	---------------

What is the current use?	Please select
--------------------------	---------------

If government building or 'other' - please describe:	
--	--

Why have you chosen this site? What makes it suitable for your free school?	
---	--

If known, how big is the building and the site? Please attach any site and building plans as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk:	
---	--

Please comment on the condition of the building. Please attach photos if available as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk:	
--	--

**Fourth choice site**

Full address and postcode of your fourth choice site. It must be a full postcode e.g. SW1P 3BT, not SW1:	
--	--

In which local authority is the site?	Please select
---------------------------------------	---------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with another local authority, please say which:	Please select
---	---------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with a third local authority, please say which:	Please select
---	---------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with a fourth local authority, please say which:	Please select
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Please tell us how you found the site:	
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Please confirm the tenure:	Please select
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If other, please explain further:	
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Please include information on purchase or lease price if known:	
---	--

Who owns the site?	Please select
--------------------	---------------

Is the site available/on the market? Please attach agents' particulars as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk if available:	Please select
---	---------------

Name and contact details of owner:	
------------------------------------	--

Name and contact details of agent or local authority representative where available:	
--	--

If your site is local authority owned, please state if the local authority have confirmed that your free school may use it if you are successful:	Please select
---	---------------

What kind of site is it?	Please select
What is the current use?	Please select
If government building or 'other' - please describe:	
Why have you chosen this site? What makes it suitable for your free school?	
If known, how big is the building and the site? Please attach any site and building plans as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk:	
Please comment on the condition of the building. Please attach photos if available as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk:	

**For independent school convertors**

Please say whether you will be increasing PAN when becoming a free school:	Yes
if yes, from what to what?	The school roll will increase from 250 pupils aged from 4 - 19 in January 2014 to 640 pupils at capacity by 2020 - 2021
Please confirm the size of your existing site:	Currently 22 acres - 19.85 acres after possible sale of unused land to Persimmon Homes.
Please confirm the size of your existing buildings:	Currently covering 22 acres with a frontage on Grange Road, the site comprises Polam Hall, the main school building (teaching space including food tech, dance studio and gym 1210m <sup>2</sup> ); Mounsey, a modern three storey purpose built classroom block (teaching space 475 m <sup>2</sup> ); Liddiard comprising
Please confirm the tenure of your site/buildings including details of any loans or mortgages:	Freehold. <Redacted>

## LINKS

1. ISI report (September 2012):

[www.isi.net/schools/6786](http://www.isi.net/schools/6786)

2. Performance data:

[www.education.gov.uk/cgi-bin/schools/performance/search.pl?location=polam+hall&phase=all&searchType=location](http://www.education.gov.uk/cgi-bin/schools/performance/search.pl?location=polam+hall&phase=all&searchType=location)

## APPENDICES

1. CVs of Members of the Academy Trust, Steering Group, and proposed governors.
2. **[NB: in separate attachment]** School Self-Evaluation Form ( [REDACTED] )
3. External Validation Report [REDACTED]
4. **[NB: in two separate attachments]** Copies of audited accounts for 2011/12 and 2012/13
5. [REDACTED]
6. [REDACTED]

### Appendix 1. CVs of individual governors

Proposed governors (\*= also Member of Academy Trust)

1. [REDACTED]



CV for [REDACTED]		
1.	Name	[REDACTED]
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	[REDACTED]
3.	Details of your last three roles including:  § name of school/ organisation  § position and responsibilities held  § length of time in position  This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles	[REDACTED]
		[REDACTED]
		[REDACTED]
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to	[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]

	the new school	[REDACTED]
7.	<b>Optional:</b> brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.	[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]		
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]		
1.	Name	[REDACTED]
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	[REDACTED]
3.	Details of your last three roles including:  § name of school/ organisation  § position and responsibilities held  § length of time in position  This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles	[REDACTED]
		[REDACTED]
		[REDACTED]
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]

		[REDACTED]
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]		
1.	Name	[REDACTED]
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	[REDACTED]
3.	Details of your last three roles including:  § name of school/organisation  § position and responsibilities held  § length of time in position  This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles	[REDACTED]
		Name: N/A
		Name: N/A
4.	<b>For finance only:</b> details of professional qualifications, including:  § date of qualification  § professional body membership number  § how your qualifications are maintained	[REDACTED]
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]		
		[REDACTED]
7.	<b>Optional:</b> brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.	[REDACTED]
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]		
1.	Name	[REDACTED]
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	[REDACTED]
3.	<p>Details of your last three roles including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ <input type="checkbox"/> name of school/organisation</li> <li>§ <input type="checkbox"/> position and responsibilities held</li> <li>§ <input type="checkbox"/> length of time in position</li> </ul> <p>This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles</p>	[REDACTED]

		[REDACTED]
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]		
		[REDACTED]
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]		
1.	Name	[REDACTED]
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	[REDACTED]
3.	Details of your last three roles including:  § name of school/organisation  § position and responsibilities held  § length of time in position  This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles	[REDACTED]
		[REDACTED]
		[REDACTED]



CV for [REDACTED]

		[REDACTED]
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	[REDACTED]
7.	<b>Optional:</b> brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.	[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]		
		[REDACTED]
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]		
1.	Name	[REDACTED]
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	[REDACTED]
3.	Details of your last three roles including:  § name of school/ organisation  § position and responsibilities held  § length of time in position  This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles	[REDACTED]
		[REDACTED]
		[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]	
5.a	<p><b>For education only:</b> if you are in a leadership position in your latest school (where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ The school's results for the years you were in post – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for <b>16 to 19</b>, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</li> <li>§ School's best 8 value added scores for the years you were in post, if applicable</li> </ul>
5.b	<p><b>For education only:</b> if you are in a teaching or head of department role in your latest school (where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Your subject/department's results for the years you were in post, compared to your school's averages – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for <b>16 to 19</b>, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</li> </ul>

CV for [REDACTED]		
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	[REDACTED]
7.	<b>Optional:</b> brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.	[REDACTED]
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	[REDACTED]

CV [REDACTED]		
1.	Name	[REDACTED]
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	[REDACTED]
3.	Details of your last three roles	[REDACTED]

CV [REDACTED]	
	<p>including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ name of school/organisation</li> <li>§ position and responsibilities held</li> <li>§ length of time in position</li> </ul> <p>This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles</p>
5.a	<p><b>For education only:</b> if you are in a leadership position in your latest school (where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ the school's results for the years you were in post – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for <b>16 to 19</b>, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</li> <li>§ school's best 8 value added scores for the years you were in post, if applicable</li> </ul>
6.	<p>Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school</p>

**CV John Moreland**

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CV [REDACTED]		
7.	<p><b>Optional:</b> brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.</p>	[REDACTED]
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]		
1.	Name	[REDACTED]
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	[REDACTED]
3.	<p>Details of your last three roles including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ name of school/organisation</li> <li>§ position and responsibilities held</li> <li>§ length of time in position</li> </ul> <p>This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <hr/> <p>Name:</p> <p>Position:</p> <p>Time period:</p> <hr/> <p>Name:</p> <p>Position:</p> <p>Time Period:</p>

CV for [REDACTED]	
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details

CV for [REDACTED]	
1.	Name
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)
3.	<p>Details of your last three roles including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ name of school/organisation</li> <li>§ position and responsibilities held</li> <li>§ length of time in position</li> </ul> <p>This should cover the last four</p>



CV for [REDACTED]		
	years. If not, please include additional roles	[REDACTED]
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	[REDACTED]
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]		
1.	Name	[REDACTED]
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	[REDACTED]
3.	Details of your last three roles including:	[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]		
	<p>§ [REDACTED] name of school/organisation</p> <p>§ [REDACTED] position and responsibilities held</p> <p>§ [REDACTED] length of time in position</p> <p>This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
5.b	<p><b>For education only:</b> if you are in a teaching or head of department role in your latest school (where available):</p> <p>§ [REDACTED] Your subject/department's results for the years you were in post, compared to your school's averages – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for <b>16 to 19</b>, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p>
6.	<p>Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p>

CV for [REDACTED]		
		[REDACTED]
7.	<b>Optional:</b> brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.	[REDACTED]
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]		
1.	Name	[REDACTED]
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	[REDACTED]
3.	<p>Details of your last three roles including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ name of school/organisation</li> <li>§ position and responsibilities held</li> <li>§ length of time in position</li> </ul> <p>This should cover the last four years. If not, please include</p>	[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]

additional roles

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

CV for [REDACTED]		
		[REDACTED]
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	[REDACTED]
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	[REDACTED]

## Appendix 2. Self-assessment form for independent schools

Please see separate file: [Polam Hall Section 5 SEF Dec 2013](#)

## Appendix 3. External validation report on SEF by [REDACTED]

<b>County Council - Children and Adults Services</b>	
<b>Education Development Service</b>	
	Head of Education: [REDACTED]
	<b>School Self-Evaluation Review</b>
	Visited by [REDACTED] 6 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> December 2013
	

[REDACTED] to conduct a school review to support school self evaluation. The review covered aspects of the key judgements within the Ofsted S5 maintained schools framework and evaluation schedule.

### Context

- Polam Hall School a small all age (3-18) independent school with 245 pupils on roll.
- The school became co-educational in 2010 and has boarding provision.
- 24% of pupils are currently identified as having special educational needs.
- In September 2013, 26 students attended EFL lessons.
- The school has previously been inspected under the Independent Schools Inspectorate framework in September 2012 and although there is no overall effectiveness grading within this particular framework, the school was identified as having good provision with outstanding features.
- The purpose of the visit was to support the school self- evaluation leading prior to an application to become a free school.
- Judgements provided within the body of this report relate only to those activities undertaken on the visit which may contribute to each key aspect of the Ofsted S5 framework and evaluation schedule and are to assist the school in self evaluation.

### Activities undertaken

- Discussions were held with the Headteacher, senior leaders and pupils.
- A range of documents were examined including those relating to achievement, school self-evaluation, development planning, the monitoring of the quality of teaching and the curriculum.
- A learning walk which included a tour of the school, visits to lessons to observe the quality of teaching and conduct work scrutiny across the primary and secondary phases.
- Attendance at a staff briefing.
- A telephone discussion with the Chair of Governors.

### Achievement

### School Self evaluation: 2

- Attainment overall is above average in 2013.
- The school has not routinely tracked the progress of individual cohorts of pupils over time against NC levels and it is therefore not possible to comment on progress in relation to national norms. Pupil progress has been monitored and

evaluated at individual pupil level with regular detailed reporting to parents about attainment and progress in knowledge gains and the development of subject specific skills.

- The percentage of pupils exceeding or achieving expected early learning goals at EYFS is above average in 2013.
- GL assessment for pupils Y1-Y6 in 2013 is well above the England average. When comparison is drawn with NC levels. PIPS tests in both English and mathematics 2012 indicate that attainment in Y2 is well above average.
- Evidence from work scrutiny in lessons indicates that attainment is above national norms and current pupils are making good and in some cases excellent progress over time. The school has recently introduced NC levels into its assessment methodology and early indications are that almost all pupils are making at least expected progress.
- 5A\*-CEM is above national with a declining trend over 4 years; EBACC well above national in 2012 and 2013.
- Overall value added in the form of standardised residuals (YELLIS/ MIDYS) is positive in 2012 and 2013 for all groups of pupils (higher ability, middle ability, least able, boys, girls, SEND, EAL and boarders).
- There is some in school variation in value added between subject areas at KS4. The school is aware of this and through robust action is tackling underperformance in these subjects.
- Attainment at KS4 in English and mathematics at A\*/A and A\*-C is well above national.
- At KS5 Average Point Score has fluctuated over the last 5 years but has remained consistently above national.
- Points per entry have been well above national average in the last 5 years except for 2011.
- Performance at KS5, as measured by standardised residuals, is broadly in line with expectations, except for Music. The school has a robust plan to address underperformance in Music. There are no significant differences between the performances of pupil groups.

### **Quality of teaching**

### **School Self evaluation: 2**

- The quality of teaching observed across each phase during the learning walk is good. Pupils make good progress because teaching is typically characterised by high expectations, quality relationships between pupils and adults, secure subject knowledge and interesting lessons that sustain pupil interest and engagement.
- School records indicate that almost all teaching is at least good with some outstanding.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, those who speak English as an additional language and SEN pupils were seen making good progress in lessons because they responded well to the teaching they receive and well targeted support of teaching assistants.
- In a French lesson the teacher made very good use of their knowledge of pupils' prior learning to set just the right level of challenge. This allowed pupils of differing abilities to make rapid progress because the tasks set challenged them to make the best possible progress.
- Pupils make the greatest progress where teachers monitor pupils' progress in lessons through careful observation and questioning and adjust their planning to meet individual needs as the lesson proceeds.
- In an English lesson, pupils confidently offered their own opinion on an authors'

use of language to depict the passage of time and inquisitively asked further questions to develop their own understanding of the text.

- The ability of teachers to ask probing questions in order to identify misconceptions is not yet at a consistently high quality across the school. This can sometimes inhibit good progress.
- There is a strong focus on literacy development and students develop good writing and speaking skills as a result. They read regularly and to a good standard in class.
- All pupils take pride in their work. Presentation of pupil work is very good in each phase.
- Marking and feedback is not yet consistent across the school. It typically provides evaluative comments and in some cases helpful direction about how work might be improved. Pupils do not yet consistently respond in a timely manner to the marking and feedback they receive in order to improve their work. In both the primary and secondary phases there is existing exemplary practice which can be used to model good practice and ensure greater consistency.

### **Behaviour & Safety**

### **School Self evaluation: 1**

- The school reports exclusions are almost non-existent.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards the school. They enjoy school and appreciate the opportunities it provides for them both academically and in developing themselves. Behaviour in and around the school is very good. Pupils are polite and show mutual respect for each other. They mix freely and socialise in a very mature manner.
- Pupils are encouraged and many take every opportunity to participate in an impressive range of creative, technical, and sporting activities outside of the classroom. Many of the activities are arranged around House competitions which further foster a sense of community and provide for many, an opportunity to develop leadership skills.
- The school reports and evidence from the learning walk suggests that pupils are punctual to school and to lessons.
- There is a strong system for rewards throughout the school which is valued by the pupils and encompasses both academic and wider educational and social endeavour. It reinforces expectations and increases motivation.
- Regular, weekly pastoral meetings ensure that emerging individual pupils' needs are identified quickly and responses monitored and evaluated to ensure pupils are well supported.
- A minority of pupils are sometimes passive learners and this inhibits their opportunities to practice and develop strategies for managing their own learning.
- The school reports that it offers a safe environment.
- Rare instances of bullying are dealt with effectively and pupils know to whom they can speak if they have concerns.
- Peer mentoring is well established and valued by the pupils.
- The school provides a vibrant learning environment for the pupils where pupils' own work is widely displayed as both learning resource and celebration of achievement.
- Evidence in relation to safeguarding was not evaluated during the visit. This will be the subject of a subsequent visit.

### **Leadership & Management**

### **School Self evaluation: 2/1**

- Leadership and management of the school are good.



- The headteacher has a very clear view about what constitutes a high quality educational experience. It not only enables the students to achieve good examination results, but also gives them great confidence, gained through success in a wide range of activities, particularly music, drama and sport.
- School self evaluation and development planning are coherent and rigorous. The school recognises the need for a greater focus in self evaluation and planning at all levels, on improving attainment and progress of learners across all pupil groups and phases, in order to improve overall effectiveness.
- There are clear links between school wide priorities and those set for all teachers as part of the performance management process. Performance management arrangements link to professional development opportunities and the school recognises the need to further develop this to include greater emphasis on developing the quality of teaching, middle leaders and individual target setting linked to pupil attainment and progress.
- The leadership of teaching is effective and reflected in good and sometimes outstanding quality of teachers' performance in the classroom. The school has initiated a teaching and learning group to develop more outstanding practice.
- The school evaluation on how well it is doing is accurate so managers and governors have a clear idea of the school's continuing strengths and where improvements are necessary. Any dips in examination performance are taken seriously and acted upon.
- Leaders have designed a broad and balanced curriculum which provides students with a wide range of GCSE, AS and A-level courses and a quite exceptional range of extra-curricular activities. At primary level, the challenge based Creative Curriculum which provides for the innovative development and application of skills and competencies across thematic areas provides challenge for all pupils.
- Pupils are well informed about how to take the next steps in their education, training or employment. Sixth formers were particularly grateful for the support they receive in making applications to universities and colleges. Pupil destinations compare favourably with national averages.
- The school aims to develop students as rounded people. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and is promoted very well in lessons, out-of-school/ non academic activities, support for charities and in displays around the school.
- All students, including disabled students and those with special educational needs, are thoughtfully included in all aspects of school life.
- The school engages exceptionally well with parents. Parents meetings and school extra-curricular activities such as drama productions and sports days are well attended.
- The school has developed good links with other schools, colleges and HE providers to develop curriculum provision and to support transition.
- Governors have a good strategic overview of the school's work and are instrumental in bringing about improvement. They provide focused support and challenge to the Headteacher and staff.

## Summary

- Overall attainment is above average and progress, where identified using standardised value added information, is at least in line with expectations and sometimes good. Evidence from work scrutiny in lessons indicates that attainment is above national norms and current pupils are making good and in some cases excellent progress over time.

- The quality of teaching is good, with some identified as outstanding. Teaching assistant support is well targeted and ensures pupils with particular needs make good progress in learning. The quality of marking and feedback is improving and there is some exemplary practice.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards the school. Attendance is good and pupils are punctual. They enjoy school and appreciate the opportunities it provides for them both academically and in developing themselves. A strong ethos of reward for endeavour pervades school life. Behaviour in and around the school is very good. Pupils are polite and show mutual respect for each other.
- Leadership and management are good with capacity to improve. School self evaluation and development planning are coherent, rigorous and accurate. The leadership of teaching is effective with stronger links to performance management emerging. The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides students with innovative opportunities to develop and apply skills and competencies, a wide range of qualifications and a quite exceptional range of extra-curricular activities. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.

#### **Appendix 4. Audited accounts (2011-12; 2012-13)**

Please see two attached files:

[Polam Hall 2011-12 Audited accounts.pdf](#)

[Polam Hall 2012-13 Audited accounts.pdf](#)

**Appendix 5. Letter from Barclays Bank 6 January 2014**

[REDACTED]

**Appendix 6. Letter from Persimmon Homes**

