



Barnard Castle School
ESTD 1883

DURHAM HOUSE

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026/2027



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Barnard Castle School,
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WELCOME FROM THE HEADMASTER

Welcome to Barnard Castle School!

Although we are formally known as Barnard Castle School, you will quickly come to know us as we know ourselves: **Barney**.

This handbook is here to help you find your way, answer questions and give you the practical information you will need day to day. Alongside this, our website and Pupil Portal will keep you up to date with events, timetables and useful links.

More importantly, though, Barney is built on people and relationships. We see education as a conversation – between pupils and teachers, between challenge and support, between learning about the world and learning about yourself. You will have many people around you who are part of that conversation and who want to see you thrive.

Your Tutor, alongside your Housemaster or Housemistress, will be one of the key people in your school life. They will get to know you well, support you in your progress and wellbeing, and help you make the most of the opportunities around you. Alongside your teachers, they are here to encourage you, guide you and challenge you to grow both in and out of the classroom.

At Barney, we believe young people grow best when they are both challenged and supported. We value effort, resilience and kindness, and we want you to develop the confidence to lead as well as the humility to listen. Our motto captures this spirit well:

Parvis imbutus tentabis grandia tutus

**When you are steeped in little things, you
shall attempt great things safely.**

As Headmaster, I am very much looking forward to getting to know you – whether at a match, a concert, a performance, in the Dining Hall or simply passing on the school drive. I always enjoy hearing how things are going, so please do come and say hello, ask a question or stop for a conversation.

With best wishes,



**David Cresswell,
Headmaster**





WELCOME TO *DURHAM HOUSE*

I have been a teacher for 11 years and a Housemaster for 5 of those. Before teaching, I worked in finance and logistics, experiences which have helped me support boys as they prepare for life in an ever-changing world. As a former international athlete, I understand the importance of hard work, resilience, and staying calm under pressure. My vision for **Durham House** is to help boys grow into both leaders and supporters, recognising that leadership is not always about having the loudest voice.

Mr Riley - Durham Housemaster



About the House

At the heart of **Durham House** are three key messages: Work Hard, Be Good and Be Kind. We encourage boys to always try their best in everything they do, to do the right thing, stand up for others, and treat both staff and peers with kindness and respect. **Durham House** is built on teamwork, collaboration, and a strong sense of loyalty to one another.

House Pride and Support



Members of Durham House proudly “bleed gold” for the House and take enormous pride in representing it. Boys are encouraged to support one another, celebrate successes together, and show resilience and humility through setbacks. Whether winning or losing, Durham boys aim to represent the House with pride, respect, and good character, whilst always striving to “nail up” at the end of term.

What You Can Expect



·A House culture built on hard work, kindness, and integrity



·Encouragement to lead by example and support others



·Strong teamwork and collaboration across all areas of school life



·Pride in representing **Durham House** in competitions and activities



·A supportive environment where every boy is encouraged to do his best

OUR HISTORY

Durham House is now a boys' day House. However, it was one of the original Boarding Houses established when the School moved into its present buildings in 1886. As a result of reorganisation, it began a new life in September 1995 as one of the three Senior Day Houses.

Durham House is currently home to around 65 boys who share four common rooms. The House colour was originally chocolate, but this was changed in 1887 to gold. **Durham House** currently uses all three of its colours; the gold of its flag, as well as the crimson and black of its shield.

A BARNEY EDUCATION

At Barney, everything we do is built on three fundamental values:

Community, Character, and Ambition:

Every small moment matters here. Through your daily acts of kindness, effort and courage, you cultivate something greater.

Barney is a community where you thrive not only academically, but also personally, socially and emotionally. Our goal is to assist you in becoming well-rounded and well-grounded, ready for whatever comes next.

We value effort, resilience and determination. Success is not about avoiding mistakes, but learning from them. We encourage all of our students to try, to fail, and to try again. Character matters as much as knowledge. It is built through kindness, respect and quiet perseverance.

We want every pupil to discover their strengths and feel supported when challenges come.

We also believe in balance. Hard work and high standards go hand in hand with laughter, friendship and fun. It is possible to aim high and enjoy the journey.

FINDING YOUR WAY

The School may seem large at first, but there will be plenty of people to help you find your way - they have also been in your shoes and will help you get to your lessons and activities.

You will be shown your House, key locations such as toilets and changing rooms, and given a tour of the School. If you join during the year, another pupil will be assigned to help you find your way to lessons and settle in.

On your first day, you will receive a personalised timetable showing where and when your lessons take place. Most lessons are held in specialist buildings around the site rather than in the main School building.

If you get lost, don't panic! It happens to everyone, even new teachers! Simply make your way to Central Hall in the main building. Here you will find the Staff Workroom, Headmaster's Office and General Office. Someone will always be able to help.





CHAPEL

Chapel is a distinctive building at the heart of the School community.

It is where we begin each week together for Headmaster's Assembly.

It is also where we all gather throughout the year for services, Congregational practice, and the famous Nailing Up ceremony.

DINING HALL

The Dining Hall is located on the ground floor of the main school building. Boarders have breakfast and dinner there and are joined by Day Pupils for break-time refreshments and lunch.

Meals are self-service, with a choice of hot, cold and vegetarian dishes, alongside a salad bar and soup option. Attendance at meals is compulsory and the range of menus means there is something to appeal to everyone. The School promotes healthy eating and living.

CENTRAL HALL

Central Hall is the heart of the main School building. From here, you can access the Dining Hall, Big School and the General Office. It is also a popular meeting place where pupils and teachers come together during break and lunchtime.

It is also home to one of the School's favourite traditions. After an away sports victory, teams gather on the Central Hall table to celebrate.



SIXTH FORM CENTRE

The Sixth Form Centre is a modern building located between the Dining Hall and the Boilerhouse in an area once known as “The Yard”.

It is exclusively for the use of the Sixth Form, although younger pupils may access it when meeting staff based there or taking part in activities, House Competitions and the odd lesson.

THE WELLBEING CENTRE

The School Nurses and Counsellor are based in the Wellbeing Centre. It is well signposted and available to both Boarders and Day Pupils.

There are daily surgeries in the morning when the School Doctor or one of the partners attends to see Boarders. There are also drop-in clinics to see the School Nurse at break and lunchtime each day.

If you feel unwell or receive an injury, you will be given permission by a teacher to go to the Wellbeing Centre. Appointments are also available with the School Nurse after lessons each day for Boarders.

In the evenings, Matrons and other staff are available for Boarders. If you feel ill during the night, they should wake one of the Matrons or a member of staff living in the building.

THE HOUSE SYSTEM



The boys' day Houses, Dale, **Durham** and Tees, are on the upper floors at the back of the main building towards the games fields

Your House is where you will have your locker for books and kit, your Common Room for relaxing in free time, register with your tutor and spend time with your friends.

You will be able to compete for your House in competitions. These House competitions cover a vast array of interests. There really is something for everyone!

Many House competitions take place on Wednesday afternoons throughout the year, while larger events such as House Singing, the Barney Run and Sports Day are major highlights of the School calendar.

YOUR HOUSE STAFF

Mr D Riley
Housemaster

Miss A Alderdice
Assistant Housemistress



HOUSEMASTER (HSM) & ASSISTANT HSM (AHSM)

Your HSM (**Housemaster** or **Housemistress**), and Assistant HSM are there for all manner of things. If in doubt, you and your parents should take any query, request, concern or complaint to them first.

TUTORS



Your tutor maintains regular contact with your home through phone calls, emails, and parents' evenings. At strategic points in the year, there are regular target-setting sessions and reviews with your tutor. They work closely with the HSM to raise and resolve any issues relating to your pastoral or academic performance. Any repetitive or significant pastoral, behavioral, or academic concerns will be handled by the HSM.

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PUPILS OF RESPONSIBILITY



HEAD OF HOUSE

Each year, a member of the Upper Sixth is selected as the **Head of House**, supported by a **Deputy (or Deputies)**. Additionally, the

Sixth Formers within the House play a crucial role in setting a positive example as well.



DEPUTY

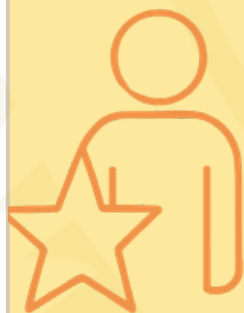
As experienced members of the House, those in positions of responsibility have a varied role; from being on duty in the House and sharing information, to being the first point of contact for a pupil who has an opinion they wish to channel.



SIXTH FORMERS

These positions go to pupils who are wholehearted, trustworthy, and approachable. They take responsibility for organising House activities and are role models for younger pupils.

WIDER SIXTH FORM LEADERSHIP



There are also other members of the Upper Sixth (across different Houses) who hold key leadership roles. including Head Boy and Head Girl, Deputy Heads of Pastoral, Academic, Co-curricular and Boarding, among others.

They are all ready to help - that is the Barney Way!

PASTORAL SUPPORT



THE 12 TO TURN TO

In addition to your parents or family, there are twelve different routes you can turn to if you have concerns or need support:

1



A FRIEND

2



YOUR HEAD OF HOUSE

3



A PEER SUPPORTER

4



**AN ANTI-BULLYING
AMBASSADOR**

5



A TEACHER

6



YOUR TUTOR

7



YOUR HSM

8



**A MEMBER OF THE SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

9



**THE SCHOOL
COUNSELLOR**

10



**THE INDEPENDENT
LISTENER**

11



**THE SCHOOL
NURSE**

12



**MICROSOFT
TEAMS CHAT**

THE SCHOOL DAY

HOUSE REGISTRATION

Morning attendance is recorded by House tutors. It is recorded in a central school database, generating an absentee list after registration which closes at 8:50 am. Late arrivals must register at the General Office.

8.30am and 8.45am

LESSONS BEGIN

9:00am

A bell signals the end of lessons and the start of the next. Students have five minutes to move quickly between classrooms.

MORNING BREAK

11:10am-11:25am

(10:20am-10:30am on Saturdays)

LUNCH

12:55-1:50pm

Rotational system for Years 7-13

LESSONS END

4:05pm

(12:00pm on Saturdays)

SCHOOL BUSES DEPART

5:10pm

(12:10pm on Saturdays)



AFTERNOON REGISTRATION

1:50pm

You must register with a House tutor at the end of lunch. You will be marked as absent if this is not complete by 1:50pm.

ACTIVITIES

4:05pm - 5:00pm

Every weekday

KEY WEEKLY EVENT



HOUSE MEETINGS

Monday 9:00am
Led by the HSM



HOUSE COMPETITIONS & ACTIVITIES

**Wednesday
Afternoons**



CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

4:05pm - 5:00pm
Every Weekday



BRUNCH
SUNDAY 10:30am

LUNCH TIME

You can enter the Dining Hall by joining the queue for your year group via Chapel Corridor. Years 7-13 follow a rotational system. If there is a long queue, it is often best simply to return a few minutes later.

Once you have collected your meal you may sit where you like, apart from at staff tables, and remain there within reason for as long as you wish.

When you have finished eating, you should take your tray and dishes to the cleaning station outside the Dining Hall before leaving by the corner door.

FOOD COMMITTEES

There are two Food Committees, one for day pupils and one for boarders, who meet regularly with the Catering Manager and Second Master. Representatives from Houses discuss catering arrangements and make requests or suggestions. If you have dietary requirements or particular requests, you can raise them with the Catering Manager, your Tutor or your House Food Committee Representative.

MONDAY HOUSE MEETINGS

House meetings are held each Monday at 9am. The HSM leads the meeting. During the meeting HSMs celebrate successes with their Houses and pupils are given any pertinent notices, as well as a message in line with our character education virtues.

LESSONS

You will receive your timetable on your first full day in School. This shows the order of lessons, your teachers and classroom locations. Your Tutor will help you interpret it if necessary.

There are eight lessons each day, lasting forty minutes, except on Saturdays when there are four.

HOUSEKEEPING

House Area

Your House area is your base during the school day. You come straight to your common room in the morning, return at morning break, before and after lunch, at the end of lessons at 4:05 PM, and finally, to collect your belongings before going home at the end of the day. You are free to visit your House area at any time during the day, except during lessons. You may visit other common rooms in Tees, **Durham** and Dale. You are expected to keep your common room tidy. You can decorate your common room with posters and artwork.



House Funding



Each pupil is charged £5 a term. This is added to the School bill. The money is used to help make the common room a more homely environment. It is also used for awards, tutor group activities and to help provide additional material for House activities.

Security

You are allocated a locker space and encouraged to use it to keep your property secure. You can keep valuable items here or give them to the HSM for safekeeping in her office. The HSM or the maintenance staff locks **Durham House** each evening.



Fire



- The fire and invacuation alarms are tested weekly on a Wednesday morning at **9:10am**.
- At any other time, the sounding of the fire or invacuation alarms must always be treated as an emergency situation.
- If anyone encounters a fire, they should break a fire panel immediately.
- The fire assembly during the school day is on the grass outside A Block; after 5pm it is in Chapel, unless the red light above the door is on. Invacuation procedures are made clear through the start of year induction process to all pupils.

Lost Property



All items brought to School should be clearly named. If you have lost something, please check lost property in General Office!

Valuable Items

Expensive or fragile items and large sums of money should not normally be brought to School. If necessary, they should be handed to House staff for safekeeping.

Every pupil is provided with a lockable locker, but the School cannot accept responsibility for personal property.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMME

School Work



Years 7–9 study a broad range of subjects including English, Maths, Sciences, Languages, Humanities, Art, Music, Technology, IT, PE and Games. You may also begin Latin or Classical Civilisation.

At GCSE and Sixth Form level, you will make subject choices with support from staff including the Deputy Head (Academic), Director of Sixth Form and Headmaster.

In the Sixth Form the programme also focuses on leadership, university preparation and employability skills.

Headspace

You will follow the HeadSpace programme covering areas such as wellbeing, citizenship, relationships, study skills and future planning.

Sets & Examinations

- School examinations take place in Trinity Term for Years 7–10, building towards GCSEs and A Levels.
- You will be placed into sets in subjects such as Maths, English, Sciences and Languages to ensure you are working in an environment where you can make the best progress.

Prep

- Homework is normally set in two subjects each weekday, or three from Year 9 onwards.
- In the Sixth Form, work is often set over longer periods and you are expected to manage private study time independently.

Contact with Home

- Routine contact with home will happen via assessments, reports and parents' evenings. The HSM or Tutor may make phone calls to address any other issues as they arise. If there are any immediate concerns about attendance, lateness or academic progress, the House team will contact parents/guardians.
- There is a direct telephone line to the HSM's study, which your parents and/or guardians are encouraged to use to discuss any aspect of your education and welfare. The HSM can also be contacted by email. Your parents and guardians are welcome to arrange meetings with the HSM and/or your Tutor at any point throughout the term.



EXPECTATIONS & CONDUCT

UNIFORM



- You are required to wear School uniform throughout the day.
- Games kit requirements vary depending on season and sport.
- You should bring pens, pencils and may wish to bring a scientific calculator and geometry set. These can also be purchased from General Office.
- All textbooks, exercise books and folders are provided by School

MOBILE PHONES

- In Years 7–11, you may not use mobile phones during the school day. If phones are needed during the day, they must be kept in House.
- In Sixth Form, you may use mobile phones responsibly during the school day.



TOWN



- In Years 7–9, you may not go into town unless accompanied by an adult.
- In Years 10 and 11, you may request permission from your HSM.
- Sixth Formers must inform House staff and sign out at General Office.

When visiting town you should:

- Travel via Newgate and the School drive
- Visit in small groups
- Go with a purpose rather than loitering
- Remember you represent the School through your behaviour and appearance

OUT OF BOUNDS



It is important that everyone stays within the School grounds unless they have the permission of the HSM or they are on a supervised trip or fixture.

As part of induction, pupils will be informed about the areas of the school site to which they will have access after 5:15pm.

REWARDS & SANCTIONS



You are awarded merits for excellent work, and these are celebrated in House meetings.

If your academic progress is below a satisfactory standard, your Tutor or HSM may support you with an academic boost plan for a short period, tailored to your individual needs.

For infringements of House expectations, your HSM may impose an appropriate and proportionate sanction to help you reflect on how your behaviour can change in the future.

More serious infringements of school rules would be referred to the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

CO-CURRICULAR LIFE

GAMES



At Barney, everyone is expected to take part in regular physical activity.

In Years 7 and 8, Physical Education will be part of your academic timetable. Throughout your time at the School, you will also have Games lessons each week.

You will find many opportunities for Games during Activity Time, and many teams practice then for inter-school fixtures.

The range of sports offered to you includes rugby, hockey, netball, squash, swimming, football, basketball, cricket, tennis, athletics, golf, and rounders.

If you are selected to represent the School, you are expected to attend fixtures and support your team fully.

SPORTS ACCESSORIES GUIDANCE



- The School strongly recommends gum shields for rugby and hockey.
- Shin pads must be worn for hockey and football.
- Squash players should wear eye protection
- Cricketers must wear protective equipment including helmets when appropriate.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

Each year, two elected representatives from each year group, together with the Head Girl and Head Boy, form the School Council.

The Council meets regularly throughout the term with the Headmaster and Second Master to discuss school matters. Recent topics have included the mobile phone policy, marketing campaigns and projects relating to donations to the School.

Pupils from across all year groups can volunteer for different committees. These include Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, Peer Supporters (Sixth Form), Diversity Focus Group and Food Committee. Each September hustings are held for pupils who wish to represent their year group on the School Council. A whole School election takes place.

LEADERSHIP & PUPIL VOICE

COMMITTEES & REPRESENTATION



*We hope you have found this handbook useful
and excites you as you prepare for life in
Durham at Barney*

*The key thing to remember is that there is
always someone on hand to help –
that is very important to us!*

WELCOME TO DURHAM

