



# Chair of Governors

## Appointment Brief

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The Royal Grammar School Newcastle

2026

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The School

# About RGS Newcastle

In 1525, the Mayor of Newcastle, Thomas Horsley, gifted his estate to fund a grammar school. Five centuries later, Horsley's vision lives on and RGS has flourished as the premier independent school in the North East – consistently topping the regional table for academic excellence.

Today, RGS is a fully co-educational school with over 1,300 students aged 7–18 (Years 3 to 13). The Junior School has more than 250 students, sharing the same outstanding site as the Senior School, and the Sixth Form is one of the largest in the independent sector with more than 340 students.

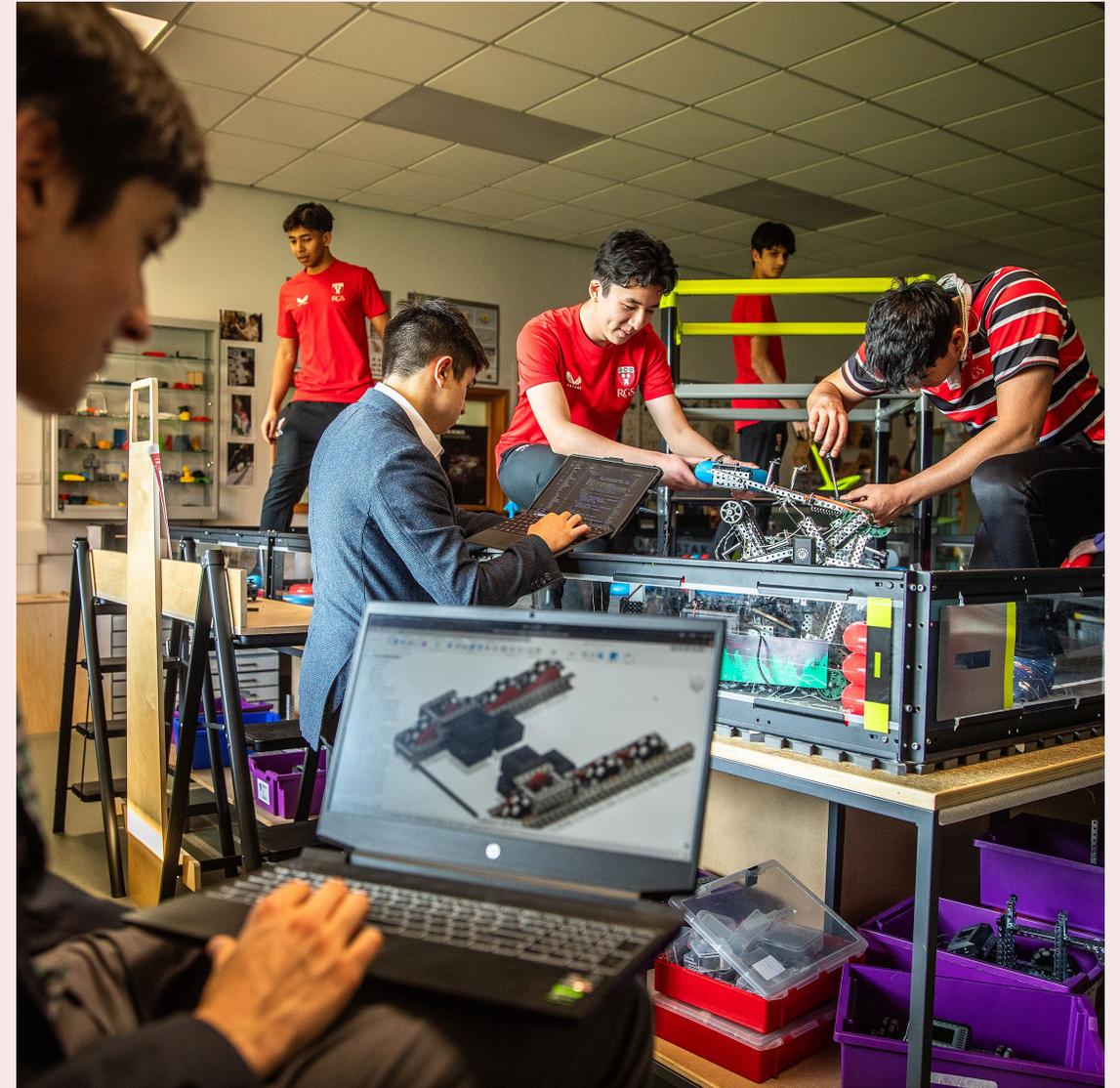
Based in Jesmond, opposite Jesmond Metro station, the School occupies over 30 acres with facilities including a modern Sixth Form Centre, a 25m swimming pool, two Sports Halls, a Performing Arts Centre, outdoor pitches at Mooracres and the former County Cricket Ground.

In 2023, RGS was named national 'Independent School of the Year' by The Telegraph Group, and in 2025 was named Independent Senior School of the Year by TES. The School is consistently named North East Independent School of the Year for Academic Excellence by The Sunday Times' Parent Power Schools Guide.

## **RGS Newcastle Group of Schools**

Westfield School is joining RGS in the newly formed RGS Newcastle Group, with the merger expected to complete in Summer 2026, bringing Nursery and Pre-Prep provision into the Group. Read more here:

[rgs.newcastle.sch.uk/about-us/group](https://rgs.newcastle.sch.uk/about-us/group)



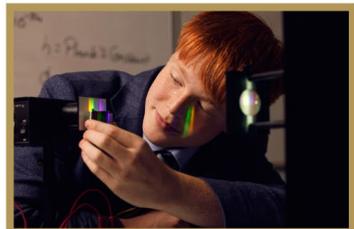


**100** students at RGS currently attended on transformational RGS Bursaries, that's 1 in every 16 students

**500** bursary students have been supported since RGS Bursaries were established in 2002.



**93.4%** average bursary awarded, focussing our finite funds where we can make the most difference.



**1,330** students attended RGS which would have cost the tax payer an annual c£10m if educated in the state system.

**Over 160** students volunteered over 7,500 hours each year in our local community.



**13** members of staff are Governors at local schools and 2 are Director/Trustee level.

**35** local community groups and organisations access RGS buildings and facilities for their events and activities.



**Over 14,000** students in local state school benefitted from RGS Partnership activities.



**105** different schools across the region were involved in RGS Partnerships activities.

**Over 445** teachers received training or collaborated on curriculum development.

**Over 88** RGS Partnerships projects have taken place across Maths, Physics, Engineering, Robotics, Computer Science, Sport, Languages, Classics, Debating, UCAS Mentoring and many more.

**3** Physics and **3** Maths trainees achieved qualified Teacher Status and PGCE through our SCITT programme, 5 gaining jobs in state schools.

## Social Impact

# Bursaries & Partnerships

A significant contributor to the ethos of the School is its commitment to supporting the education of young people across the North East through its Bursary and Partnership programmes.

There are currently 100 students at the RGS on transformational means-tested bursaries. Bursary awards support children from families facing real financial hardship. The programme has been transforming lives since 2002, with 193 donors contributing £1.3M in the last academic year alone.

In addition, through an innovative model of externally funded partnership teachers, the School runs more than 80 projects across over 100 schools in the region, engaging with well over 10,000 children each year – from Further Maths GCSE to swimming, robotics, and computer science.

## Academics

Academic success is at the heart of what RGS does. The curriculum promotes breadth of study in the early years, building strong foundations in Maths, English and Science, before offering increasing choice at GCSE and A-Level. From September 2026, the Sixth Form will offer 30 A-Level options, one of the broadest offerings in the region.

Results consistently place RGS among the country's leading schools. In 2025, A-Level results saw 86% at A\*–B, 61% at A\*–A, with five students achieving straight A\*s and nine heading to Oxbridge. At GCSE, 80.5% of grades were 7–9, with 40.7% at grade 9. In both 2024 and 2025, RGS was in the top 10% for value added nationally at A-Level and the top 1% for GCSE. Three quarters of leavers progress to Russell Group universities.

Students with special learning needs are supported through a dedicated Learning Support team led by the SENDCO, working across Years 3–13. Value added for SEND students is consistently in the top 1% nationally, with almost 90% of SEND A-Level grades at A\*–B in 2025.

**86%**

A-Level at A\*–B (2025)

**80.5%**

GCSEs at 7–9 (2025)

**Top 1%**

GCSE value added nationally

**30**

A-Level subjects from 2026





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## The School

# Pastoral & Co-Curricular

The pastoral provision at RGS is a real strength. The School holds the Wellbeing Award for Schools, with a dedicated Deputy Head (Pastoral) overseeing provision. Every student has a Form Teacher and Tutor, with access to the School Medical Team and counsellors. The four-house system – Collingwood, Eldon, Horsley and Stowell – creates smaller communities within the School, fostering belonging and friendly competition through House Dance, House Music and House Sport.

The co-curricular programme offers over 170 activities across the School. Sport follows a 'sport for all' ethos with superb facilities including two sports halls, a 25m swimming pool, an artificial turf pitch, climbing wall and outdoor pitches. Music and the Performing Arts flourish in a dedicated Performing Arts Centre with professional theatre and dance studio. Outdoor programmes include Duke of Edinburgh, World Challenge and a thriving Combined Cadet Force.

RGS firmly believes that students actively engaged outside the classroom perform better academically – and its results consistently bear this out. The Deputy Head (Co-Curricular) is further developing the sports and co-curricular provision.

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## The Opportunity

# A School on the Move

RGS Newcastle is at an inflection point. Already the North East's leading independent school, the merger with Westfield School which brings Nursery and Pre-Prep into the family marks the beginning of a new chapter as the RGS Newcastle Group. In line with its charitable objectives to support the education of young people across the North East, the School is open to further opportunities to broaden independent education provision in the region.

Under the leadership of Geoffrey Stanford, the School exudes dynamism and a keenness to move forward at pace. The Board is equally ambitious. It sees the Chair role as central to providing professional, rigorous governance: acting as a strategic sounding board for the Executive Head, a check and balance on decision-making, and a champion of the Group's long-term development. The new Chair will help shape the strategic direction at an exciting moment in the School's 500-year history.

### **The Board & Leadership**

The Board comprises experienced professionals from law, finance, education and business. Two governors from Westfield School will join the Board upon completion of the merger. Geoffrey Stanford serves as Head and will become Executive Head of the RGS Newcastle Group. The School employs c.250 staff, has annual income of c.£20m (excluding VAT) and is a registered charity (no. 1114424).

Read more about the current Board members [here](#).

The annual accounts can be found [here](#).



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## Main Duties

# Key Responsibilities

The Chair's responsibilities will be to:

- Provide strategic leadership and direction for the RGS Newcastle Group, working closely with the Executive Head, his team and the Board to shape the long-term vision, including growth and development opportunities
- Ensure the necessary governance structures, checks and balances are in place to support delivery of the strategic development plan
- Maintain oversight of the School's performance, ensuring it continues to be exceptional
- Act as guardian of the School's assets, both tangible and intangible
- Ensure oversight of compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements
- Ensure robust safeguarding procedures, training and oversight are in place
- Build consensus and manage Board dynamics effectively
- Represent the School externally as an ambassador for RGS
- Oversee succession planning and Board composition
- Conduct the Executive Head's appraisal and support their development

*Governors act as trustees of the School for charity law and directors for company law.*





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## Candidate Profile

# Person Specification

The Chair should demonstrate most or all of the following:

- Strategic mindset with experience of growth and organisational development
- Prior board-level experience (prior Chair experience is desirable)
- Track record of leading through change and transformation, including experience of M&A
- Outstanding relationship-building, communication and people skills
- Resilience, the ability to make difficult decisions and excellent judgement
- Financial literacy and the ability to interpret and interrogate financial information
- Undoubted personal integrity (including clean DBS check)
- Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Commitment to the School and its charitable objectives
- Understanding of (or ability to learn quickly) independent education and wider education policy and a genuine interest in the development of children and young people
- Understanding of the legal responsibilities of Governors as individuals and a corporate entity

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## Terms

# Terms of Appointment

The role of Chair is not remunerated, although travel and other reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

The Chair is required to attend all termly meetings of the Governing Board, and relevant committee or working group meetings. A time commitment of approximately 5–6 days per term can be expected, plus weekly discussions with the Executive Head.

Becoming Chair of Governors is a rewarding opportunity to help shape the future of a school and support the success of its pupils. The role offers valuable opportunities for personal and professional development, including experience in leadership, strategic planning, and governance, and working with a strong team of successful national leaders in their fields.

### Equal Opportunities

We are looking to appoint from a wide variety of backgrounds. Not just because it is the right thing to do but because at the RGS we recognise that different experiences provide fresh perspectives, opportunities to challenge existing beliefs and provide opportunities to act as excellent role models for our diverse student body. We are committed to creating an inclusive and diverse school culture. We are proud to be an equal opportunities employer, and all qualified applicants will receive consideration regardless of neurodivergence, age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships.





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## Next Steps

# How to Apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to RGS Newcastle on this appointment. Candidates should apply through our website at [roles.saxbam.com](https://roles.saxbam.com) using code **TBYKA**. Click 'apply' and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter, addressed to Jasan Fitzpatrick, Chair of the Nominations Committee, and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring form.

**Closing date: Noon Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> April**

### Key Dates

- First round panels: Week commencing 18<sup>th</sup> May
- Tour of the School and opportunity to meet the Executive Head prior to second round panels
- Final round panels: Week commencing 1<sup>st</sup> June

### Important Information

The equal opportunities monitoring form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. An application form will be required for all shortlisted candidates.

### GDPR Personal Data Notice

We are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data with your express consent. Please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV, and do not include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

### Due Diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches via internet search engines and public social media accounts.

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# Royal Grammar School

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NE2 4DX

[www.rgs.newcastle.sch.uk](http://www.rgs.newcastle.sch.uk)

## **Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment**

RGS is committed to the safeguarding of children and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers and those working in school to share this commitment. The school applies the Government's Keeping Children Safe in Education Safer Recruitment procedures to all candidates including appropriate pre-interview checks on shortlisted candidates and pre-employment checks pending any offer.