



Northumberland

County Council

Date: 01 September 2026

Dear Head teacher and Chair of Governors

I wanted to write to you to inform you that David Street Director of Education, SEND and Skills will step down from his role on 31st December 2026. David's message is included below for you to read.

Whilst we have plenty time to wish David well and say goodbye (from this role) I wanted to take the opportunity personally and publicly to say a huge thank you to David and acknowledge the impact and work that David has overseen and led across the system in Northumberland.

The planning to recruit to this role has already begun and will be live during September, with interviews planned for October. I will be asking for headteacher representation for a stakeholder group during the final recruitment days, so please let me know directly if this is something you would be interested in being a part of.

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to let you know that I will be stepping down from my substantive role as Director of Education, SEND and Skills on 31 December 2026.

After nearly 35 years working in education, including 30 years in Northumberland, I have decided that the time is right to reset my work-life balance and begin a new chapter in my career.

It has been an enormous privilege to serve as Director, and I feel incredibly fortunate to have worked alongside so many talented, dedicated and committed professionals across our schools, settings, post 16 provision, partner organisations and council directorates. Together, we have navigated challenges, embraced opportunities and remained focused on achieving the best possible outcomes for children and young people.

Audrey will now lead a thorough recruitment process to appoint my successor, and I am confident that Northumberland will attract an outstanding candidate to take this important work forward. I wanted to share this news at an early stage to allow sufficient time for that process to be completed.

In the meantime, there is still much to accomplish during the autumn term, and I remain fully committed to supporting Northumberland and ensuring a smooth and effective transition to the successful candidate.

On a semi-related note, some of you may be pleased, or perhaps disappointed, to hear that you will not be seeing the back of me just yet. Following informing Audrey about my longer-term plans, I applied for an alternative part-time role within Northumberland County Council. After a competitive recruitment process at the end of the summer term, I was delighted to be appointed as Senior Responsible Officer for SEND Reform.

This is a new statutory role highlighted in the recent education white paper. For Northumberland this is a 12-month fixed-term role, starting in February 2027 at 0.6 FTE. It will oversee the transformation and change programme required to deliver the ambitions of the Local Area SEND Reform Plan. I am excited by the opportunity to continue contributing to Northumberland's improvement journey and to support this important area of work.

Thank you for your support, friendship and professionalism over the years. While there is still plenty of time before I leave my current post, I wanted to take this opportunity to share my plans and to express my sincere gratitude for the privilege of working with you.

Many thanks,

David Street

Yours sincerely



Audrey Kingham

Executive Director of Children, Young People and Education