

DAME ALLAN'S Digest

FEBRUARY 2015



A great debate

This year Dame Allan's hosted the regional round of the Oxford Schools Debating Competition in our Sixth Form Centre. Oxford Schools is the biggest schools debating competition in the UK, with the final held at the Oxford Union. We entered two teams of Sixth Form students and they debated the topics of organ donation and religion with enthusiasm and poise.

A warm welcome from the Principal - Dr Hind



As always we started the new year with much success and hard work at Dame Allan's. For pupils in Years 11-13 this meant trial examinations and I have been pleased to note the hard work which went in to producing many pleasing results. Examination results were also brought to mind when the Department for Education

published its league tables in January. Whilst we welcome the opportunity to highlight our results, league tables should always form part of an informed view. We certainly feel that the GCSE information published does not provide an accurate picture of our performance and the hard work of our pupils and staff as the table does not include Dame Allan's chosen IGCSE qualifications in Maths, English, German and History. This meant that, in the year when our GCSE results were the best in the Schools' history, an obviously skewed result of zero per cent of our pupils achieving five or more A* - C grades was recorded.

Similarly, whilst we were delighted that the A Level tables, which do include our chosen qualifications, placed us second amongst the schools in the city based on the average point score per pupil, we always recognise that many of our students worked exceptionally hard to achieve grades which were not so high in absolute terms, but which represented a great achievement for them as individuals. We are as keen to celebrate their achievements as we are to celebrate those of pupils with the highest exam grades. A league table of another sort saw Dame Allan's placed 12th in the list of the top thirty independent

schools in the country for sporting success published by School Sport magazine. We were thrilled by this placing which takes into account a range of sports in national competitions throughout the year. The result is testament to the hard work of all of our students and their teachers. This half term was rounded off with a very impressive school dance show at Dance City. The standard was, as ever, breath-taking: well done to everyone who took part. Over the half term break we have pupils and staff heading off on a ski trip to Austria, we hope you all have a brilliant and safe trip.



Dance stance

The Schools' dance show '45 RPM' was a show stopper as always, involving nearly 100 students from Year 7 up to the Sixth Form. The Schools' dance companies Rogue, Jeune and Viz a Vis performed some

excellent pieces including 'Birds of Paradise' which will be entered into the U.Dance New Dimensions Festival by Youth Dance England. There was also a guest performance by the Gateway Studio Project.

Masterchefs!

Year 8 and 9 students cooked up a storm in the annual Masterchef competition this half term. The brief was to create a dish for someone who has been inspirational and students created dishes such as smoked haddock chowder inspired by pescatarian Steve Jobs and minted lamb with parsnip gratin inspired by author

Patrick Ness. The winning dish was a chicken, ham and leek pie by Year 8 student Samuel Cook who was inspired by Katniss Everdeen, a character from The Hunger Games. Thanks to Mrs Susan Justice of Bidvest 3663, Dr Hind and Mr Keith Fraklin, Head Chef at Dame Allan's for judging the competition and well done to everyone who took part!



Champion fundraisers

Two inspiring alumnae of Dame Allan's Schools have been recognised for their charity work during their time at Dame Allan's.

Amy Grounsell and Amy Shaw were presented with the Champion Fundraiser Diana Award at a star-studded ceremony in Leeds, which highlighted the work of young fundraisers.

The Diana Award is a legacy of Princess Diana's belief that young people have the power to change the world for the better.

The two Amys received the award in recognition of their efforts leading



a group of Sixth Formers in organising a fashion fundraiser at the Newcastle Falcons ground which raised over £2,500 for the Marie Curie Hospice, Elswick.

Amy Shaw said: "It was a privilege to attend the awards ceremony with so many inspiring young people. We were just happy to raise so much for charity and want to thank everyone who supported us and donated."

Killer whales!

Our Junior School children had a brilliant time learning about whales, porpoises and dolphins in the North Sea this half term when they took part in workshops run by whale and dolphin charity ORCA. The children were able to see and learn about the differences between mammals and fish and how they help our seas and coasts.



DASPA

DASPA will be helping students go places in 2015 after agreeing to help fund a new school mini-bus which will be available to all students and departments.

In addition, DASPA is funding three Wi-Fi enabled cameras that can be used to safely upload photographs to the Schools' network while students are out on trips. DASPA also agreed to fund programmable robotics that will be used in Maths, Science Computing and Design and Technology, allowing students to access state of the art technology in a fun way.

DASPA Junior has swung back into action in 2015. The first Film Night took place with a fantastic response to the films The Lego Movie and How to Train Your Dragon 2.

Imminent purchases planned include Chess Clocks, playground toys and bibs to be worn at sports day and sporting competitions. Organisation is also underway for the upcoming Easter Party in April.

Allanian Society

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Joan Graham, former Headmistress of Dame Allan's Girls' School, over the Christmas period. Joan Graham was a former Dame Allan's pupil and became Headmistress of the Girls' School in 1970. She retired in 1988 and her endeavour was to create a happy environment in which pupils could thrive. She was a huge supporter of extra-curricular activities which gave the Schools so much character. Joan Graham was a great supporter of the Schools and the Allanian Society. She will be greatly missed.



In tune!

We are thrilled at the singing success of two of our Girls' School students. Year 8 student Zoé Buckthorp has been accepted into the National Youth Choir after successful auditions and will attend residential courses with the prestigious organisation. Year 7

student Pamelina Oubnova competed in the Avison Ensemble Young Musicians' competition at the Lit & Phil in Newcastle. Competing against nearly 40 other talented musicians Pamelina has made it to the final which will take place later this month. Well done to both girls!

Sport



Premiership Rugby invitation

Year 10 students Jack Netts, Adam Gurteen and Alexander Watson have been invited into the Newcastle Falcons Academy after consistently impressive performances for the Schools' team. The Newcastle Falcons Academy scheme identifies and develops the most talented young rugby players in the

country, including the current Falcons captain. Mark Laycock, Academy Manager, said: "The three Dame Allan's boys were selected because they showed real promise in their trials. They have made an excellent start in the academy and I'm sure this is just the beginning of an excellent rugby career for all three of them."

Looking to the future...

Friday 13 February – Founder's Day Service at St Nicholas Cathedral, 10am. Half term starts after service.

Monday 23 February – School resumes

23 - 25 February – Year 12 Geography residential trip to Blencathra

Thursday 26 February – DABS Year 9 Parents' Evening, 4pm

28 - 1 March – School play rehearsal weekend, Oliver Twist

2 - 6 March – National Careers Week activities

Tuesday 3 March – DABS Year 9 Parents' Evening, 4pm

Thursday 5 March – Junior School World Book Day

5 - 7 March – School play, Oliver Twist

Tuesday 10 March – Public speaking competition, 7pm

Friday 13 March – Red Nose Day, non-uniform day for the Junior School

and Nursery and Senior Schools

18 - 19 March – LAMDA Exams

Saturday 21 March – Junior School and Nursery Open Morning, 9.30 am – 12 noon

Monday 23 March – DABS Year 8 Parents' Evening, 4pm

Tuesday 24 March – Year 3 Science Trip – Centre for Life

Thursday 26 March – Lunchtime music recital, Lumsden Music Centre

26 - 27 March – Year 3–5 Combined Arts, Sound of Music Performances, 2pm

Saturday 28 March – Allanian Society Dinner, dance theme – Newsom Hall

29 March - 2 April – Gold Duke of Edinburgh Practice Expedition, the Lake District

30 March - 31 March – Junior School Parents' Meetings

Tuesday 31 March – Spring Concert



DAME ALLAN'S SCHOOLS
building the future

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