

DAME ALLAN'S Digest

OCTOBER 2014



A welcome from the Principal

Welcome to our new look newsletter. We hope you will enjoy reading about the great things that have been going on in the Schools this term, including our fantastic exam results, the Relais de la Memoire conference and much sporting success.

As you may remember from my letter at the start of term, we have taken a new approach to our communications this year. We are really pleased with the new marketing materials, which you may have seen around Newcastle and in various publications. We also produced our first ever radio advert, recorded by our own pupils and broadcast on Metro Radio.

The social media accounts have also proved very popular and provide an insight into what goes on in the Schools on a day to day basis. If you haven't already, I would encourage you to take a look at the Facebook (Dame Allan's Schools) and Twitter (@DameAllans) pages. You don't need to have an account on these sites to see our pages which may be accessed from the link on the Schools' website.

Our recent Open Day was also innovative; for the first time the Boys' and Girls' Schools were open on the same day. We felt this truly reflected our diamond model. It certainly attracted many visitors and it has been very encouraging to hear many positive comments about the event.

As always, we welcome your feedback so please feel free to get in touch to let us know what you think about our new communications strategy and anything else about school life. We wish you all a relaxing break, and we look forward to the start of another busy half term!

Relais de la Memoire

We were incredibly proud to host Relais de la Memoire this term. To be the only school in the UK to take part in the conference is an honour. The theme of conference was 'Victims and Perpetrators of Torture' and we welcomed a range of inspirational

guests to school to take part. This included Richard Moore, who was shot and blinded in Northern Ireland by a British Soldier with whom he has since become friends. Speaking on the subject of forgiveness Richard said: "There is no question, I am

a victim of violence and I have no control over that but I am not a victim of anger and I do have control of that." 115 European students attended across the weekend and took part in a number of workshops, culminating in a brilliant presentation evening.



Down on the farm

Year 1 visited Whitehouse Farm in Northumberland as part of their work on animals and their young.

In the morning, students were shown the outdoor animals and fed goats, sheep, horses and llamas. In the afternoon students played in the adventure playground and went on a tractor ride through a field full of cows.

After the ride Year 1 went into

the animal barn where they held mice, rabbits, chicks and stroked a meerkat.

The farm also has more exotic animals so students found out how heavy a python feels when wrapped around their shoulders and what it feels like to have a tarantula on their heads! The final part of the day was meeting the owls and birds of prey.

A brilliant day was had by all!



Bumper Summer!

We were thrilled with our exam results again this Summer. Our GCSE results were the best the school has ever achieved with a remarkable 29 students achieving all A* and A grades and the girls' results were the best in the schools' history. At A level 18 students achieved the outstanding results of all A* and A grades. For five of the last eight years Dame Allan's has been the top performing school in Newcastle in the Government's league tables for A-levels, based on the average A-level point score per pupil. Congratulations to all the students and staff who worked so hard to achieve these results.

The hills are alive!

This October we sent four of our Year 12 students on a Mountain Skills course. Matthew Anderson, Zach Place, Manon Walton-Williams and Florence McPate were selected thanks to their outstanding leadership and navigation skills on their Duke of Edinburgh expeditions last year. The Mountain Skills course is a

new qualification, run by the Mountain Training Association and our pupils are amongst the first 50 young people nationally to achieve the award. They learnt about all aspects of walking in the mountains including navigation, weather, safety and the environment. Our students summited Helvellyn

Mountain and wild camped at Grisedale Tarn. Mal Creasey, former head of the association accompanied them on the first day, and had plenty of useful advice about UK mountaineering and also about the Himalayas where Matthew and Manon will be going on World Challenge this summer.



A religious experience

As part of the Junior School Religious Studies programme pupils have been creating Diwali cards whilst learning about the Hindu festival. Year 2 also went on a trip to the Reform Synagogue in Gosforth and were shown a succah hut and looked at reading the Torah with a yad. Students asked lots of questions and are really enjoying learning about various religions and cultures.



Our Year 7 girls and boys had a brilliant time on their trips to Derwent Hill at the beginning of term. At the start of each academic year, our new Year 7 pupils go on the residential trip to the Lake District where they take part in climbing, canoeing, gorge scrambling and lots of team building activities.

This helps them get to know each other and build friendships for their time at Dame Allan's Schools. The trips were a huge success again this year, Sophia Long in 7S said: "At Derwent Hill I learnt that believing in yourself can take you one step further than you thought possible."



From Dame Allan's to Beijing...

Our Year 12 Politics class began the term with a lesson to remember when former Dame Allan's pupil and the new President of the prestigious Oxford Union came into school to speak with them. Mayank Banerjee started Dame Allan's Schools in Year 7 and completed his A-levels in the Sixth Form. He commented: 'Dame Allan's Schools provide a fantastic start for young people. The teachers really want you to do well and

prepare you for university life.' Mayank spoke to the new politics students about the history of the 200 year old union, life at Oxford and what his Politics, Philosophy and Economics degree entails. He also spoke about his gap year working at KPMG in London, and about hitch hiking from Beijing to Calais! It was an inspirational talk and we're really grateful to Mayank for coming into school.



Professor Gregory, who specialises in Maths and Physics, took physics class entitled 'Time and Extra Dimensions in Space' discussing black holes, the galaxy and more, with a Dr Who inspired twist. During the lesson Professor Gregory discussed many fascinating aspects of her work and the world of science, with

Dr Who at A-level?

Our Year 11 girls were given a fantastic opportunity when former Dame Allan's Schools pupil and Professor at Durham University Ruth Gregory took them for a physics class.

the girls particularly interested in black holes and the process of 'spaghettification'. As students prepare to make their A-level subject choices Professor Gregory encouraged the girls not to feel intimidated by physics or maths and said: "Only your imaginations can limit you."

Sport

On the ball

Our Year 8 and 9 girls had a brilliant residential netball trip to Conover Hall, Shropshire for the GSA Netball tournament this term. The girls put in an impressive performance, with the Year 8 team coming first in the plate competition, beating Pipers Comer School 4–3. They also had the opportunity to meet Pamela Cooley, the current England netball captain, and ex England International player Karen Newton.



Silverware snatch at Barnard Castle

The Tait 10s Tournament took place at Barnard Castle on Sunday the 12th October. Congratulations to the DABS U12 team who won the Shield. The team won four games and went unbeaten in the afternoon against Durham, Yarm and Austin Friars to lift the Shield. The squad of 15 was skippered by James Julien, who, alongside talented centre Ben Pettifer produced some

excellent performances throughout the day. The squad under the tutelage of Mr Hudson and Mr Midcalf improved throughout and enjoyed playing in fine sunny conditions. Strong performances by all the boys involved indicated how far each individual has improved.



Medal winners!



We are incredibly proud of the national sporting successes of Year 12 and 13 students Fran Cave and Suzie Barwise-Munro. Fran recently competed in karate at the JKS European Championships in Denmark. Over the two day competition, Fran won a bronze medal in the individual kumite and a gold in the Great Britain

team event. Suzie travelled to Australia for three weeks over the summer to compete in the tetrathlon world competition. This involved running, swimming, shooting and horse riding for Great Britain. Suzie won a silver medal in the individual pursuit and won gold as part of the Great Britain team.

Looking to the future...

4 November – Return to school

10 November – Shakespeare Schools Festival, Whitley Bay Playhouse

11 November – Remembrance Service, Newsom Hall

13 November – Year 12 Parents' Evening

19 November – DABS Year 10 Parents' Evening

19 and 20 November – Junior School Parents' Evening

22 November – DASPA Christmas Bazaar

24 November – DAGS Year 10 Parents' Evening

25 November – OLED Awards Evening

26 November – Autumn Concert, Lumsden Centre

28 November – Non uniform day to raise money for Children in Need

1 December – Nursery Carols and Nativity

2 December – Reception Nativity

3 December – Year 13 Parents' Evening

4 – 5 December – Year 1 and 2 Peter Pan

5 December – GCSE/A Level Dance Performance

8 December – Christmas Musical Extravaganza

10 December – Year 3, 4, 5, and 6 Carol Service

at St James and St Basil

10 December – Senior Choir singing at Muckle LLP Carol Service

11 December – Choral Evensong – St James' and St Basil's Church

12 December – Carol Service at St Nicholas Cathedral (Term ends after service)

12 December – Allanian Society Christmas Lunch – Northern Counties Club

13 December – Old Boys' Rugby Match and after match function



DAME ALLAN'S SCHOOLS
building the future

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DASPA

This year DASPA was delighted to agree funding to provide technology in the form of iPads to the PE department mainly as a self-assessment tool for the pupils, helping students to analyse their own performance. Feedback from the PE department confirms this has been taken on with relish in many sports, in particular, gymnastics. Provision of a thermal-imaging camera has helped enthuse the students and support their understanding in the sciences. Having such an advanced hands-on tool has made lessons fun and engaging for the students. DASPA Juniors have continued to fundraise for different projects in school. The Summer Fair was a resounding success raising over £2800. They have bought new playground toys for each age group, with DASPA donating £250 towards the costs. Thanks to DASPA Junior's generosity there is now new wooden seating in the Key Stage 1 forest school area.

Allanian Society

The Allanian Society had a fantastic time at their London drinks reception in October. Allanians from a wide range of year groups got together at The Fine Line Bar along with Dr Hind, governors and retired Dame Allan's teachers. Thank you to all who came along, we're looking forward to the next get together at Christmas!

We are sad to announce the death of Allanian Richard Maitland Laws CBE FRS, Former head of the British Antarctic Survey, Master of St Edmund's College, born 1926.

