

DAME ALLAN'S Digest



MAY 2023

OPAL Launch - Passionate about Play

This half term saw the launch of the OPAL programme at the Junior School and Nursery, which has been embraced by staff and young pupils alike.

OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) is a mentor-led programme for schools, which incorporates play as an essential tool for younger pupils. With the launch of this programme, it is hoped that pupils will benefit from improved socialisation skills, increased concentration levels after play and - of course - it is designed to be very enjoyable too!

OPAL encourages creative, collaborative, imaginative and social play and is helping to open up playgrounds to children of all interests and abilities. Mrs Barlow, OPAL Lead at the Junior School said:

"The launch of OPAL has transformed our lunchtimes. The children are far more engaged in purposeful play and it is having a really positive effect both outside and inside the classroom. We are only in the beginning stages of our OPAL journey so watch this space, there are lots of exciting things to come!"

Mr Laidler, Headteacher at the Junior School added: "Overall, OPAL has been very successful so far, with the children taking to it very quickly, easily and with a huge amount of fun and enthusiasm. It has been a joy to hear the laughter from the playground.

"Children from Years 1-6 are able to circulate and play together and it has been wonderful to see the youngest children benefiting from the support of the older children; likewise, our older children have enjoyed the responsibility of helping the younger ones and supporting them in their play. We have seen sharing, co-operation, resilience, problem-solving, risk assessing and most importantly, lots of fun!"



A welcome from the Principal

Well it is exams season again and it has been heartening for the teaching staff to see all of our GCSE and A Level candidates aiming for their best, with level-headed commitment. We wish them all luck!

The Junior School has been at the forefront of education development this term with the launch of our OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) programme, incorporating creative and open-ended play as an essential experience for younger pupils, contributing to their social development and aiding their learning. It has been an exciting and successful start and we look forward to seeing the fruits of this programme over the months and years ahead.

As you might expect, the co-curriculum has been especially busy this term with a huge range of clubs, activities and groups. Absolutely everybody can find something new to jump into, from Duke of Edinburgh to FemSoc, Dungeons and Dragons to Dance. The Sports Awards evening has been a recent calendar highlight, showcasing stellar performances and recognising those who have shown team spirit, perseverance, and progress in their sport. Well done to everyone involved in this super event.

It has been another historic month with the Coronation of King Charles III. Our Junior pupils took full advantage of the Coronation to enjoy a fun-filled picnic and disco, while Sixth Form students kindly volunteered for the Coronation party at a local care home.

Finally, you may have noticed building work taking place at our Fenham site and the reintroduction of temporary classrooms on the field. We are making improvements to the Queen's Building, our Sixth Form centre, which will ensure that pupils have the quality of facilities to support a really positive experience of Sixth Form life - I for one can't wait to see the new spaces in action.

May I wish you a very enjoyable half term break with your families.



The Allanian Society

It has been another wonderful half term for the Allanian Society, with a particular highlight being the London Drinks event, which was held on 11 May. Allanian Bryan Sanderson, Dame Allan's Schools Principal Will Scott, and Development Officer Katherine Leonard, hosted a great turnout of Allanians at The Royal Over-Seas League for a night of reunions, stories, networking and more. Many happy memories were shared and it was a pleasure to connect with Allanians of all ages.



A 'Game of Thrones' Guest Appearance



We were honoured to welcome back Allanian Margaret Jackman, an accomplished theatre and TV actor, whose roles include a guest appearance in television sensation, Game of Thrones. Margaret, now 85, attended Dame Allan's between 1949 and 1956 and was a Prefect and keen swimmer. During her visit, Margaret gave a talk about her career, enjoyed a drama showcase from pupils, and took part in a Q and A session.



Scan here to read more



Save the Date!

To find out more and book your place visit our website: <https://theallaniansociety.co.uk/events> or contact the development office at development@dameallans.co.uk or 0191 275 1500.

- **Summer Coffee Morning** - 20 June
- **Allanians v 1st XI Cricket Match** - 21 June 2023
- **Classes of 2020, 2021 & 2022 BBQ** - 29 June 2023

- **Richard Holmes Memorial Rugby Match 2023** - 16 December 2023
- **Allanian Dinner 2024** - 23 March 2024

Leavers' Dance Show

Our Year 13 Leavers once again stunned viewers with a fantastic final dance show at popular Newcastle venue, Dance City.

A huge well done to everyone who took part, and to our Dance team for working so hard to organise the show.



Junior School Wows with 'My North East' Art Exhibition

Scan here for video



Junior School pupils from Nursery to Year 6 wowed teachers and parents alike at their Junior Art Exhibition. Each year took inspiration from a famous artist and channelled their individual style into their own masterpieces, themed around 'My North East.'



Nursery pupils took the lead from Jackson Pollock, using his 'drip technique' of pouring or splashing liquid household paint onto a horizontal surface. Other art styles used included pointillism, digital art and Japanese-inspired manga. The focus of the North East theme also was varied for each year group, with younger pupils showcasing their houses and iconic landmarks like the Tyne Bridge, whilst older pupils focused on shipbuilders and miners as a nod to the region's heritage, plus a display of beloved North East celebrities (we spotted lots of football tributes!).

It was wonderful to see so many parents viewing the artwork and purchasing the pieces, with all donations going towards St Oswald's Hospice and their Shaun the Sheep art trail. Congratulations and well done to everyone involved in this excellent exhibition.

Newcastle University Guest for FemSoc

Pupils at FemSoc - the Schools' Feminist Society - enjoyed a fascinating lunchtime talk from Laura Tisdall, a historian from Newcastle University, on second wave feminism and the Women's Liberation Movement. The talk was followed by a Q and A session, with Laura commenting that the pupils involved "asked absolutely brilliant questions."



In conversation with... Andrew Moore, Facilities Manager.

Tell us about your role and the wider department...

The Facilities Manager role is wide ranging and varied. It covers day-to-day operations like cleaning, site security, transport and waste disposal, together with building maintenance and the upkeep of the grounds. I'm supported by the Estates team in carrying out these duties; two Caretakers at the Senior School, a Caretaker at the Junior School and two Groundskeepers.

A growing part of my job is monitoring energy use and considering carbon reduction - how can we minimise our fossil fuel consumption and use green energies? I'm also able to provide health and safety support and advice.

Staff and pupils will have noticed some building work taking place on site at the Senior School recently, can you tell us a bit more about what is happening?

The contractors working on site at the moment are extending the Queen's Building, the Sixth Form centre, to accommodate the larger year groups that are currently coming through the school. When the work is completed, there will be larger study spaces for Sixth Form students, a new café, meeting rooms, and staff offices.



Above (L-R), Andrew, Jonathon, Chris, Darren and Mark.

The temporary cabin that has been installed on the edge of the playing fields is to house current Sixth Form students, whilst the building work is ongoing. There will also be six temporary classrooms installed over the summer holidays.

Coordinating building work in a busy school must be tricky! What's the most challenging part of your role?

The trickiest part of my job is the logistics of organising work with minimum disruption to staff and pupils. Sometimes that means carrying out work after 4pm on an evening, or bigger jobs have to wait until school holidays.

Obviously, major projects have to be coordinated with the school timetable and we need to segregate pupils and contractors for safeguarding and health and safety. Unfortunately, that can mean that there is disruption and noise throughout the school day, but myself and my team work very hard to keep this to a minimum.

What part of your job do you like the best?

I've always enjoyed the fact that every day can be different. Also the fact that I deal with a wide selection of staff around the Schools.

Coronation



It was red, white and blue all around at the Junior School on 5 May, as they marked the Coronation of King Charles III with a non-uniform day, special class activities, a picnic and a disco! Year 3 also worked together to create a fantastic collaborative artwork of the Coronation emblem. Meanwhile, a group of Year 8 girls held a fundraising

bake sale to benefit local community choir, Northern Notes, and Year 12 students visited St Mary Magdalene and Holy Jesus Trust - a local residential care facility - to volunteer at the Coronation Party as part of their community service programme. They even enjoyed some dancing with the residents to an Elvis tribute act! All fantastic ways to mark this historical event.



Sporting Success

This term has already seen some fantastic sporting achievements, with talented pupils excelling in cricket, athletics, basketball and football.

It has been a pleasure to see cricket returning to the Schools as the weather has brightened. Our under-17s have started the season well with strong performances against Yarm and RGS, and Junior teams have begun their season with some encouraging displays.

Tennis fixtures have also begun, with some well contested fixtures against RGS - with lots more to be played in the coming weeks.

In football, it was a strong end to the season with the first XI successfully winning The Newcastle City Schools Cup after taking on Jesmond Park Academy. Goals from Charles (Year 12) and Tom (Year 13) during the match led to a tense penalty shoot out, with Harry (Year 13) scoring the winning penalty.

Sports Awards

The Sports Awards were a highlight of this half term, celebrating the best and brightest of Dame Allan's sporting community. Pupils, parents, staff and guests gathered together at the Vertu Motors Arena, home of Newcastle Eagles basketball club, to share and celebrate sporting successes across a range of disciplines, including netball, hockey, rugby, football, cricket and squash.

Attendees enjoyed an inspirational talk from guest speaker Kate Haywood - a former Olympic and Commonwealth swimmer - plus an opening dance piece to kick off the evening's festivities.

Individuals and teams across the Schools were honoured for their excellence and

achievements in sport, as well as special accolades for those who have made the most progress throughout the year.

Sian (Year 11) was named Sportswoman of the Year, alongside James (Year 10), who was named Sportsman of the Year. The Director of Sport Awards for Sports Leadership were presented to Iona and Joe (both Year 13), and the Trophy for Commitment to Sport went to Erin (Year 11) and Charles (Year 8).

Alun Barlow, Director of Sport at Dame Allan's, said: "It is always a pleasure to see so many students excel at their chosen sport, and this year was no exception. Although it does make it harder to choose our winners, Dame Allan's is in the fantastic position of having so many talented, hardworking and inspiring young athletes.



This whole night was a fitting celebration of all that they have achieved."

School Trips

It has been a busy term for school trips! Over 100 students from Year 9 completed their practice and qualifying expeditions for their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award, exploring Alston, Hadrian's Wall and Bamburgh.

Additionally, this half term saw a Sixth Form trip to Berlin, a Junior ski trip to Les Menuires, a Year 1 trip to local business SafetyWorks to learn all about keeping safe in different environments, and a Year 3 visit to a local Gurdwara.

Several year groups also enjoyed residential trips to the Lake District this half term. Pupils from Years 5 and 6 visited Derwentwater, whilst Year 12 students enjoyed a geography residential trip to Blencathra.



DASPA



The DASPA Committee have been busy this term organising the DASPA Junior Summer Fair. It was held on 20 May and was a great success - our special guests this year were two miniature ponies, who were adored by all! It was a real school community effort and we are pleased to announce that the Fair raised more than £4,000!

A big thank you to the Sixth Form Officers who assisted with some of the stalls, they were a great help to staff and parents. Our Year 6's were

brilliant too on their fun game stalls and we hope they all had a great day. Thank you also to Craig and his catering team at the Junior School, plus Mr Hopper and Mr Foster for tech support.

A real highlight of the day was the raffle, which included some generous prizes from our parents - thank you so much to everyone who donated a prize. Thanks also to all of the Junior School parents who kindly donated items for our stalls.

We were very proud to support charity stalls from St Oswald's Hospice and Samantha's Legacy at the Fair alongside our social enterprise stalls.

It was a pleasure to welcome many new parents and to help them with our ever popular uniform sale! We really need more uniform donations for our Senior School uniform sales, as our stocks are running low. We will accept donations at any time; items can be dropped off at Senior School Reception or the vestibule behind the dining room. The positive environmental impact of this initiative is significant, which is great news.

Charity

Our Library Manager, Ms Joicey, recently visited local charity Children North East to donate boxes of books, which were gratefully received by charity representative Meera Vedhara (pictured). These will be used in several of their programmes across the city, benefitting lots of local families.



Safeguarding at Dame Allan's

Eating Disorder Awareness

Our pastoral staff recently received an informative training session from Maria Lavelle from Eating Distress North East (EDNE), a local charity which provides counselling, workshops and information for individuals, friends and families affected by eating disorders.

As well as raising awareness of the various types of disordered eating, Maria offered excellent advice on the importance of the language we use around food. The labelling of food by diet culture into "good" and "bad" can encourage fixed rules and unhealthy behaviours. Whilst following guidelines can help to maintain a healthy lifestyle, rigid rules can lead to inflexible behaviours and thoughts such as 'I must never eat sugar'. This can lead to individuals feeling like a failure when they break their own rules. Gently

challenging these thoughts by encouraging the replacing of 'shoulds' and 'musts' with "could" or "can sometimes" can help to challenge this 'all or nothing' way of thinking.

Disrupted eating often starts as a strategy for young people to regain control, rather than as a way of achieving a desired look, and can develop into an everyday struggle which impacts work, health and relationships. Eating distress and disorders are serious emotional and physical problems and it is important to seek help and support as soon as possible to promote recovery. If you are concerned about your child's relationship with food, please get in touch with your child's Head of Year or Mrs Procter, the school nurse, for advice.

Further information is available at www.edne.org.uk



DAME ALLAN'S SCHOOLS
building the future