

# DAME ALLAN'S Digest



FEBRUARY 2024

## £7000 raised for St Oswald's Hospice

**Dame Allan's Junior School has raised an incredible £7000 for local charity, St Oswald's Hospice. Thanks to generous donations from parents and our community, as well as the hard work of pupils and staff, this money will be going to support a very worthy cause, which helps so many families in the region.**

Fundraising began in 2023, with a collection bucket at the Junior Art Exhibition. Fundraising activity has continued throughout the year, as well as participation in the Shaun the Sheep trail across Newcastle last summer, where Shauns designed by Junior pupils Hettie and Monty were proudly displayed at the Great North Museum. The fun culminated with the Shaun the Sheep shuffle this term, where pupils braved the cold to run sponsored laps around the Junior School. A huge well done to everyone involved, especially Mrs Strettle-Brown for her efforts in coordinating this fundraising.



## Strike a pose - Dance Show Success

**Skilled dancers from across Dame Allan's Schools stunned at a special performance at Dance City this month, with displays of talent from across the Schools.**

On 10 and 11 February, performers from Year 6 and above wowed with dances inspired by a wide variety of music, including a smash hit from the Barbie movie! The energy in the room was electric, and it was great to see the culmination of everyone's hard work.

A huge well done to everyone who took part in this fantastic event, with special thanks to our dedicated dance teachers.



## A welcome from the Principal

Spring is in the air and a highly productive and enjoyable first half term of 2024 is behind us. It has been a very busy period, full of visits, activities and learning including a useful set of exams for pupils in Years 11 to 13.

Talent from across our Junior and Senior dance groups has wowed audiences at Dance City; the Right Revd Dr Helen-Ann Hartley, Bishop of Newcastle, visited the Senior Schools for some thought-provoking chats with our pupils; and our Junior School completed an incredible fundraising achievement in aid of St Oswald's Hospice, raising over £7,000 - amazing!

Excitement is building as rehearsals gather pace for our upcoming drama performance of 'High School Musical' - if you haven't booked your tickets yet, I'd advise you to do so!

We've also hosted the third of our 2023/24 series of The Lectures. Jo Fairley (of Green & Black's chocolate fame) spoke passionately about building an exceptional business and I know the chocolate rewards during the Q&A were very well received ...

Despite frozen pitches making practice difficult at the start of the term, our sports teams have made us proud, with great performances and much development in basketball, football and netball, and some obstacle course champions to celebrate too.

I must end on a sad note to tell you that we lost a much-loved member of the Dame Allan's community in early February. Chris Gill was a long-serving and highly valued member of our IT team. An Allanian himself, as well as an outstanding photographer, Chris worked for Dame Allan's for nineteen years. We were all deeply sorry to hear of his death. He will be greatly missed.

May I wish you and your family a peaceful half term break.

# Obstacle Course Champs



Congratulations to brothers James (Year 9) and Thomas (Year 7) who have qualified for the British Obstacle Sports national team after triumphing at the qualifying event the British Obstacle Course Race (OCR) Junior Championships held in Milton Keynes. They now have the opportunity to attend prestigious events abroad this summer.

As part of the competition, the boys had to take on 'Ninja Warrior' style obstacles, designed to test an athlete's strength, skill, and endurance, including swinging across a pendulum, scrambling up a slant wall, and crawling under barbed wire!

James and Thomas are now working with Mrs Cookson to set up an obstacle racing club at the school, hoping to get other pupils involved in their passion. Their story was also featured widely in local press, including interviews on BBC Radio Newcastle!



## Spotlight on: The Cosy Snug



To mark Children's Mental Health Week (5-9 February), we shone the spotlight on the Cosy Snug, our newest wellbeing space at our Junior School. Year 3 pupils Martha and Joseph joined Deputy Head Mrs Farren, Art Psychotherapist Ms McRae, and therapy dog Poppy to celebrate the space.

Martha said: "The Cosy Snug is nice, it has lots of art supplies so you can draw something and Play-Doh to play with. It is a good place to go if you need someone or some quiet. If you don't talk about your feelings you can get poorly, so talking about it helps us to have a better time at school."

Joseph is a big fan of Poppy, and has handcrafted her a dog house out of card. He said: "When I stroke Poppy, she makes me feel safe. I think the Cosy Snug is a really good thing for the school."

## A warm welcome to the Bishop of Newcastle

It was a pleasure to welcome the Right Revd Dr Helen-Ann Hartley, Bishop of Newcastle, to the Senior School recently. She met with Year 7 RPS pupils, as well as enjoyed a guided tour.



# In conversation with... Mrs Kristy Clark, Head of Drama

## What is your favourite thing about teaching drama?

I love seeing the pupils grow in confidence and really start to believe in themselves. It's also hugely rewarding seeing a piece come together, whether that's a little group project in a Year 8 lesson for example, or a full scale show.

## We're so excited for the upcoming performance of High School Musical! Without giving too much away, what can audiences expect?

Lots of singing, lots of dancing, lots of nostalgia for those who grew up with the Movie (not me, I'm far too old), incredibly talented performers...and a serious amount of cheese!

## Dame Allan's runs a series of drama-related co-curricular activities, what do you think are the most important skills learnt by taking part in drama and performance?

Working with other pupils, particularly across the schools and across year groups. Those that take part in the shows, and any clubs really, form such close bonds and become lifelong friends; it's wonderful to see.

## What advice would you give to someone who is interested in drama, but perhaps a little nervous about getting involved?

Don't be nervous as we love welcoming new people. Being supportive of others is the cornerstone of all drama clubs (and lessons in fact) so you would soon feel at ease. And if you don't feel comfortable performing you could be part of our backstage team, or help with the technical side of things.

## What is the best live production you've seen? (Except for those within Dame Allan's!)

That's like asking me to pick my favourite child! Can I do a top 5? Hamilton, Les Misérables,



Matilda, Things I know to be True (Frantic Assembly) and Cymbeline (Kneehigh)

THE DAME ALLAN'S SCHOOLS PRODUCTION OF

Disney

**HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL**

**ON STAGE!**

**BOOK NOW!**

Don't miss Dame Allan's Schools' production of Disney's High School Musical on stage!

Friday 15 and Saturday 16 March at 7pm, with a new matinée performance on Saturday 16 March at 2pm.

To book, visit <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/events/landing/54934>

## Women and Girls in Science



February 11 marked the International Day of Women and Girls in Science. We're lucky to have some fantastic female science role models at Dame Allan's, so we asked them to share their advice for girls who might be interested in a science career:

**“Go for it! Sciences are for everyone and there are such a wide range of opportunities open to you that you are sure to find something that appeals to you.”**

Mrs McDougall, Head of Chemistry

**“If you are interested in any aspect of science there will be a pathway to study it, research it and make it happen.”**

Mrs Burns, Teacher of Biology

**“Having more female scientists helps to address gender bias and paves the way for more creative solutions to challenges we face. The scientific community needs you!”**

Miss Lambourne, Head of Biology

**“Grasp every opportunity to attend Women in STEM events. Also, when the time comes, research universities and colleges to ensure you find the course that's the right fit for you.”**

Ms Willis, Teacher of Physics

# Sports Round Up

## Basketball

Basketball has been a real highlight of this term, with our Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10 boys crowned Tyneside Cup winners. Our Year 8 won 28-12 against Durham Johnston, Our Year 9 team won 59 - 46, with top scorer Hayden and our Year 10s won by a very impressive 51-19, with top scorer Aidan.

Year 7 and 8 teams are unbeaten in their Jr NBA competitions and our Year 9 and Sixth Form teams continue their unbeaten runs in the National Cup competition.



## Netball and Hockey

Our girls have made some fantastic competitive performances in netball and hockey this half term, showing incredible teamwork and effort against some very tough opponents.



## Rugby

Our U16s team won the Pocklington 10s and our U13s won the Durham 7s. February also marked the final 15 a side rugby fixtures, with our U17s finishing a competitive season. Excitingly, four of our Year 13 students have been involved in the Newcastle Falcons U18s team in the U18 Premiership Academy League, a big well done to Ollie, Tom, Charlie and Harry.

## Football

Our under 15 boys are through to the Independent Schools Football Association National Bowl Final following a superb 4-1 victory over Bedford School in the Semi-Final.

## Cross Country

In cross country, four students qualified to represent Northumberland in the Inter County round taking place in a few weeks - congratulations to Poppy, Zoe, Marina and Nick!



# The Allanian Society

## Fantastic Fundraising

A big thank you to everyone who attended the Richard Holmes Memorial Rugby Match in December. Thanks to your generosity on the day and online, we have raised a fantastic £417.00 for Marie Curie UK!



## Last Chance for Allanian Dinner

A huge thank you to everyone who has already purchased their ticket for the 2024 Allanian Dinner! If you'd like to join us on Saturday 23 March, limited tickets are still available and can be purchased via our website <https://theallaniansociety.co.uk/events> or by calling 0191 275 1513.

The evening will be a fun-filled celebration of the 80s at Dame Allan's, with guest speakers including Allanian David Ward - the first resident British High Commissioner to Samoa - and former teacher Angela Crossfield.

Guests will enjoy a welcome drink and 3-course 1980s-inspired menu, plus table wine.



## A Community of One Thousand

We are delighted that we have reached more than 1000 members of The Allanian Society website!

If you're a former pupil or staff member and would like to join our community, visit [www.theallaniansociety.co.uk](http://www.theallaniansociety.co.uk)

## The Lectures



It was our pleasure to welcome Jo Fairley, founder of Green & Black's chocolate, plus many other ventures. She spoke engagingly about her business journey, and rewarded the best audience questions with some delicious chocolate treats! An inspiring night for all.

## Charity



(L-R) Miss Brady joins Mrs Walton in the cold to raise funds

We are so proud of our Senior School staff member Mrs Walton, Head of Psychology, as she has raised more than £4,000 for the Motor Neurone Disease Association. Inspired by her mum, ex Dame Allan's Head of Games Sandra Rickaby, she took on the challenge of walking 15,000 steps a day in January - often supported by her fellow teachers on freezing cold lunch breaks. Her son Oliver, in Year 9, also gave a talk to fellow pupils about Motor Neurone Disease, helping to raise awareness of the impact it can have.



Well done also to Year 7 pupil Rory, who took it upon himself to sell candy canes over the festive period to raise money for The People's Kitchen and the West End Food Bank. He delivered his total of £300 to them this month - well done Rory!

# DASPA

**We're pleased to announce the tickets for our Gatsby themed ball are now on sale on Sumup, you can buy them at <https://daspa.sumupstore.com>**

The event will be held at 7.30pm on 22 June at The Biscuit Factory. Tickets are £85 each, with an early rate of £80. We're very happy to organise tables or if you have some people you'd like to share a table with just let us know on the forms.

We're seeking sponsorship for this event to help support the Schools even further with our fundraising and we would also welcome any auction prizes, if this is something you'd like to support DASPA with please let us know.

## Recently funded

We're excited to announce that we have funded two robots to be used in regional

robotic competitions. This has enabled the Computing Department to offer participation in this prestigious competition to year groups outside of Year 13. Meanwhile at the Juniors we are funding a sandpit for the OPAL project.

At the Junior School, our DASPA film nights have been very successful! Many thanks to all staff and parents involved.

## Coming up

Looking ahead, we have a Year 1 and Year 2 Easter Party on 22 March, tickets will be on sale after half term. The DASPA family Ceilidh will be on 1 March at 6.30pm at the Newsom Hall, with music from our two school Ceilidh bands, supported by a professional caller. Tickets are £3.50 and on sale on Parentpay. If you would like to pre-order a Domino's pizza on the evening this can be done through our sumup store.

## Uniform sales

- Tuesday 5 March: Senior School uniform sale at St James and St Basil's Church, 8.45am - 10.00am
- Saturday 11 May: Summer Fair at the Junior School, 11.00am - 1.00pm
- 2nd July: Uniform sale at St James and St Basil's Church, 8.45am - 10.00am

## Other news

Please come and chat with us as we do refreshments at the Senior School's production of Disney's High School Musical On Stage and the spring concerts, we'd love to meet you!

Finally, thanks to everyone who bought a lucky number lotto ticket. We raised over £500 for DASPA projects which support our schools, there will be a draw for £91 for the next six months. Winners will be notified directly, if you have any questions please email [daspa@dameallans.co.uk](mailto:daspa@dameallans.co.uk).

Many thanks for your support.  
The DASPA Committee

## Safeguarding at Dame Allan's

Children's Mental Health Week (5-9 February) was based around the theme 'my voice matters'. As you'll have read, down at the Junior School we spotlighted our newest wellbeing space, the Cosy Snug. At the Senior School, pupils in Years 7-9 marked the occasion with an assembly inspiring them to use their voices to support others, drawing on Greta Thunberg's statement: 'you are never too small to make a difference'. Whether it is through raising awareness of an issue through debating, participation in a society such as FemSoc or EcoPanel, or speaking up for another

pupil, our young people regularly make their voices heard and are listened to by staff.

Our School Council used their voice last term to request an anonymous reporting tool, Whisper, to alert our pastoral staff to any issues or concerns they may be having via text or email. Whilst we hope that all our pupils feel able to speak to any member of staff directly about a problem that they may be experiencing, we hope that this new anonymous reporting tool, launching next half term in the Senior School, will be an additional way for pupils to make their voices heard.

Pupils in Years 10 and 11 were invited to consider potential barriers to speaking up during form time discussions, focusing on the advantages and disadvantages of social media in recognition of Safer Internet Day. For our young people, 'inspiring change, making a difference, managing influence and navigating change online', the theme of the campaign this year, is no easy feat, but our PSHE curriculum is designed to provide our pupils with the tools they need to manage their relationships both online and in the real world.

## Parking Reminder

Parents and guardians are politely reminded to be considerate of our neighbours when dropping off or collecting their children at the Senior School. Whilst the vast majority of parents are kind and considerate of our local neighbours, there have been some limited incidents of inappropriate parking and encroachment into private gardens, which is understandably frustrating for our local community. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.



**DAME ALLAN'S SCHOOLS**  
building the future

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