

DAME ALLAN'S Digest



MARCH 2024

High School Musical hits the right note

Our talented Senior School pupils wowed audiences with three performances of Disney's High School Musical this month, including a brand new matinee performance. It was a feel-good triumph, which captured all of the nostalgia of the hit 2006 movie, complete with musical numbers, basketball skills, and some impressive choreography!

The performance saw the audience transported to the halls of East High School, telling the tale of Troy and Gabriella as they navigate high school politics and budding romance, whilst contending with fame-hungry rivals, Ryan and Sharpay.

Head of Drama, Mrs Clark, said: The choice to do High School Musical came very much from the pupils - it's been a seminal part of their childhoods and the lighthearted, fun tone; themes of friendship and camaraderie; along with having a large ensemble cast; very much ticked our boxes.

As always, working on the show has been joyous due to the enthusiastic cast and crew, and dedicated staff, involved. Thank you too to all the families for their support, with lifts, helping with lines and costumes, and of course, for watching the show!"



A welcome from the Principal

It has been another busy and bustling half term at Dame Allan's, with a big highlight being the brilliant production of Disney's High School Musical. The cast pulled off three outstanding performances full of passion, movement and musicality - what a joy for the audiences!

There have been some special days in school. World Book Day saw inventive costumes in the Junior School and a book quiz competition at the Senior Schools. We also marked International Women's Day (IWD) with a host of activities and events in the Senior School, including a creative IWD competition which saw a stellar level of entries, in volume and quality - see inside for finalist Issy's moving poem.

Careers were in the spotlight, too, as we celebrated National Careers Week. Year 11 pupils faced mock interviews with industry experts, whilst Junior School pupils enjoyed career talks from a host of professionals - from vets to microbiologists and much in between.

We also hosted the final event of our '23/24 series of The Lectures, where noted historian and broadcaster Lucy Worsley spoke captivantly about our collective fascination with murder, and her passion for history in all its gory detail.

Our sports teams have seen some major success, including our boys' U15 football team's victory to take the Bowl in the Independent Schools Football Association competition, and an inspiring visit from England Rugby star Sarah Hunter, among the other highlights.

Finally, it was a pleasure to host over 180 guests at our 2024 Allanian Dinner for alumni, with our theme taking an enjoyable look back to the 1980s. A huge thank you to everyone who made the evening so special, including our guest speakers David Ward and Angela Crossfield.

As we approach the long Easter weekend and holidays, many of us will be looking forward to celebrating and relaxing with friends and family. Happy egg hunting!



The Lectures: Lucy Worsley

It was our great pleasure to welcome noted historian Lucy Worsley to the Senior School this half term, as she brought the 23/24 series of The Lectures to a close. The Newsom Hall was packed with pupils and families, who were all riveted by Lucy's talk on the dark story of our fascination with murder...

Once again, our thanks go out to Allanian Mark Dolder for his continued support of The Lectures at Dame Allan's.



National Careers Week

Careers were in the spotlight at both the Junior and Senior Schools this half term. The Junior School welcomed in a host of parents, who generously gave their time to explain to pupils more about their chosen careers. A particularly special moment saw Veterinarian Rachel, who spent time with our Nursery and Year 2 classes, helping our young pupils test their new skills on their stuffed toys!



Year 4 enjoyed a fantastic off-site careers talk from a parent (Mr Murray) who is a microbiologist at Newcastle University. They were invited to the labs to find out more about his work.



In the Senior School, Year 11 pupils were introduced to the interview process via mock interviews with volunteers from a range of industries, including law, medicine, media, and computing. Each pupil was matched with an interviewer who reflected their interests and career ambitions. We also welcomed several Allianians and visitors to give class talks on their industry, with top tips and advice. Thank you to everyone who gave their time and expertise!



A duo of Musical Evenings

Musical talent has been in the spotlight this half term, as we held our Jazz Night and DAS Young Musician of the Year events. A wide range of instruments and vocal talents were on display across the two evenings, from cello and piano, to violin and drums.



Congratulations also to our Young Musician of the Year winners, Dorian (Y7, for piano), Ethan (Y10, for piano and violin), and overall winner Sophie (Y12, violin), pictured above. They were awarded their prizes by visiting judge David Murray. Joint 1st place were Hild & Hedley and Cuthbert & Ridley! A massive well done to everyone involved.



Quack-ing Fun at Junior School

Our Junior School welcomed some ducklings this half term! Our Early Years pupils were so excited to watch them hatch and grow, and have been inspired to learn about creatures that hatch from eggs, including ducks, chicks and dinosaurs.

The ducklings were also a big hit with Richie and Graham, our Neighbourhood Police team who visited the Junior School recently with School Nurse Mrs Procter to talk about their roles, and to explain that the police are not always there for bad or scary situations. The force are keen to be a more visible presence around the Dame Allan's community, and welcome queries from pupils about their jobs.



Marking International Women's Day

March 8 was International Women's Day (IWD), with dedicated activities and events taking place throughout the Schools.



Miss Clifton organised an IWD competition themed around women in art, inviting responses to 'If you could choose a painting by (not of, necessarily) a woman to hang in the London National Gallery, what painting would you choose?' A huge amount of creative entries were received, in the form of poetry, artwork and even a custom game! Isabella (Year 7) was crowned the overall winner, with Masa (above, Year 10) coming in second, Issy (Year 11) coming in third, and Kemi (Year 10) and Anouk (Year 7) both were highly-commended.



An IWD Poem by Issy, Year 11.

Inspired by the 1774 Angelica Kauffman painting, Ariadne Abandoned by Theseus.



*The painting speaks one thousand words,
every one so loud to hear.
It speaks of faith and strength and love -
a pact made without fear.*

*For the beautiful Ariadne, who had searched long for joy,
their meeting brought love at first sight.
So she fought by his side, so proud, brave and kind,
joining him in his fight.*

*They struck their bargain,
succeeded their quest,
and the future was safe and bright.
Into the sunset they ran hand in hand,
pure happiness as day turned to night.*

*Alas their hope for marriage,
turned out to be shatteringly brief,
for there she lay, abandoned and betrayed,
forlorn with shadow and grief.*

*Alone once more, hand to her brow,
pain etched in her core.
And where is he? Her knight, her myth -
ran from her side forevermore.*

*I become lost in her pain,
and shed so many tears for the disappointment she must feel.
For the bone deep ache and the heart shattering break
I can only imagine is real.*

*I'm lost in empathy
and know that all the world must see.
This amazingly beautiful emotional tale
that leaps from the canvas to me.*

*For surely a woman had held this brush
and stroked across the canvas this way,
only a woman could emote such feeling
on this and any other day.*

World Book Day

World Book Day returned to the Schools with a riot of costumes and literary fun! Special workshops were held throughout the week at the Junior School, whilst the Senior School celebrated with a quiz. There were also some excellent book-themed costumes across both schools.

Library Manager Mrs Huck said: "World Book Day celebrates reading for pleasure and it was fantastic to see so many of our pupils dressing up as their favourite characters and taking part in the House Children's Literature Quiz, demonstrating their love of reading and books. It was a wonderful event and hopefully the first of many. Massive thanks to the pupils who acted as quiz master and markers to ensure everything ran smoothly."



Sports Round Up

Football

Huge celebrations were in order for our U15 boys football team, who were crowned winners of the Independent Schools Football Association Bowl 2024! A massive well done to our hard working footballers and our fantastic sports staff.



Basketball

Our U14 basketball team triumphed over High Storrs School, Sheffield, by 76 - 68, to put us through to the last 16 in the country. It was a nail-biting overtime win, as we were tied 64 - 64 at the end of full time. Well done to Hayden who was the top scorer with 44 points.

Netball and Cricket

In netball (below), our Year 8s won the U13 Mowden Hall tournament, whilst our Year 9s were runners up in the City Tournament. Congratulations also to Sian, Abigail and Tabitha, who have all been selected to play in the U17 North East DPD Regional team.

This half term also saw our first girls cricket tournament of the year! There was lots of fun and lots of learning in preparation for the summer term, with some fantastic batting and bowling on display.



Rugby

England rugby star Sarah Hunter CBE - who led England to Six Nations victory in 2021 and 2022 - paid a visit to the Senior School to lead a special rugby session for young girls from Years 7, 8 and 9. She then held a fascinating Q&A, it was an inspirational event!



We had four teams in Rosslyn Park's National Schools 7s this year, the most Dame Allan's have ever taken, including a debut for our U14 Girls. It was particularly special to send our first brother and sister pairing to the event, with Eve (Y8) and Orin (Y10), pictured below.



Rowing

A number of our rowers attended the National Junior Indoor Rowing Championships again, some as school entries and others as DAS pupils entered under Tyne United RC. There were great results all round, with Marsha - who only began rowing this term - coming 4th in the Y9 girls competition.

The Allanian Society

A Dinner to Remember

Our recent Allanian Dinner was a resounding success, it was wonderful to see so many of our Allanians return to Dame Allan's for a night of food and fun. The 1980s theme went down a treat, with the retro menu being a particular hit!

Our guest speakers, Allanian David Ward and former teacher Miss Angela Crossfield, spoke passionately about their time at Dame Allan's, and it was a particular highlight to offer tours of the School to those who have not returned for some time. We also paid a fond tribute to former teacher, Keith Moodie. Thank you to everyone who made it such a special evening!



Allanian Coffee Morning

Join us on 5 June, 9.30am - 11.30am for coffee, cake and chat in our Queen's Building cafe. Contact Katherine Leonard on 0191 275 0608 or ke.leonard@dameallans.co.uk to reserve a place.

Careers Week

A big thank you to all of the Allanians who gave their time and skills as part of Careers Week at Dame Allan's, including Phil Jackman (pictured). Whether you gave a class talk, staffed an information stall, or held a mock interview, your kindness is very much appreciated. We know our pupils ended the week feeling inspired!



School Trips

It has been a busy half term for trips:

Year 3 enjoyed a busy day at The Hancock Museum, exploring rocks, minerals and fossils for science, then taking part in some fascinating Ancient Egyptians work for history.



Year 7 explored a local Synagogue and learnt about the Jewish faith, whilst Sixth Formers travelled down to London for a Politics trip. They attended a talk from Rory Stewart and Alastair Campbell, plus were generously given a guided tour of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office by Allanian David Ward.



Red Nose Day



On Friday 15 March, our Junior School held a non-uniform day to raise funds for Red Nose Day! It was fantastic to see everyone getting involved and we raised a grand total of £516.00.



DASPA

DASPA have had a busy half term supporting the school with their activities.

We have limited tickets left for our DASPA Ball at the Biscuit Factory on 22 June. Please email daspa@dameallans.co.uk for details. We have availability for corporate sponsors for the event and have a variety of packages for every budget! We are now seeking auction prizes and would welcome any offers our parents and wider body could offer.

This half term, we organised and held a very successful ceilidh which was enjoyed by everyone who attended. A big thank you to Miss Ripley, Miss Medway and our band

leader Cathy Geldard. Our two school ceilidh bands are in fine form!

Many thanks to Mr Lawrenson, who opened the ceilidh with his Northumbrian Pipes. Thanks also to our Irish dancers, the ceilidh musicians too and everyone who came and supported the event.

We were also very happy to support the school by providing refreshments at the amazing production of Disney's High School Musical.

At the Juniors we are busy getting ready for our Summer Fair on 11 May. This will be held between 11.00am - 1.00pm at the Junior School.

If you would like to volunteer at the event please contact us on our DASPA email address.

The Juniors have held a successful Easter party and a whole school Easter egg competition. We would like to express our thanks to Mrs Needham, who is instrumental to all of these Junior School DASPA activities.

Our next Senior School uniform sale will be on 7 May at St James' and St Basil's Church at 8.45am - 10.00am. Uniforms for all schools will also be available at the Summer Fair on 11 May at the Junior School 11.00am - 1.00pm, and then on 2 July at St James' and St Basil's Church, between 8.45am - 10.00am.

Safeguarding at Dame Allan's

A recent initiative from Northumbria Police has seen them visiting local schools - including Dame Allan's Junior School - to introduce themselves to the pupils and cement the important role of the police within our communities.

As well as being on call for harmful or dangerous incidents, the police play a large role in helping to safeguard young people, and integration with schools can be a powerful tool in doing so. One of their key areas of focus are County Lines gangs, where organised criminal groups target, recruit, and exploit children and young people to transport and sell drugs.

The police can help disrupt this activity by spotting the signs and reporting concerns if we notice something isn't quite right, and families can also do their bit to spot warning signs.

County Lines activity tends to come in three stages: target, test, and trap.

- At the target stage, criminals will watch an area where lots of children come and go - like a school - to spot anyone who looks vulnerable. They will then strike up a friendship and build trust.
- The next stage is test, where the criminal will offer money, trainers, or a phone to make the child feel special and part of the gang. They then test this loyalty by asking the child to run a small errand, or hold onto items for them.
- The final stage is trap, where the gang will isolate the child from their friends and family, using threats and blackmail to maintain their control.

At Dame Allan's, pupils are given age-friendly information on how to stay safe and avoid such dangers - such as not engaging with strangers, warning signs within their peer group, and channels to report any uncomfortable interactions to. You also can help protect your child by being curious about their friendship groups, knowing where they are when they are not at home or school, and identifying any new or expensive 'gifts' they may have received.

Resources from charities such as Childline can also be invaluable, and our pastoral team are always here to support you and your child.

Do not hesitate to reach out should you have any concerns.



DAME ALLAN'S SCHOOLS
building the future