

DAME ALLAN'S Digest

FEBRUARY 2023



Dance City Success!

The first weekend of term saw the whole school dance showcase at Dance City which was a roaring success with two sold out performances.

Over 120 performers from Year 6 to sixth form took part and showed true dedication in rehearsals in the lead up to the show. All four of our dance companies - Jeune, Mezzo, Vizavis and Rogue Boys - took part, alongside all those who attend dance clubs.

The overarching theme was 'a time in history', with dances based on the miners strike in the 80s, the suffragette movement, popular culture, the ice age, Lord of the Flies and the awful treatment in mental asylums - to name a few.

There was a range of music too, some were singalong tunes and others more contemporary.

Head of Dance at Dame Allan's and organiser of the event, Mrs Turnbull said:

'It was so great to see everyone performing with great energy and enthusiasm but most importantly with a great big smile. It was an amazing evening, showcasing what makes dance at Dame Allan's so special.'



A welcome from the Principal

What a positive and productive January and February we have had!

Pupils from Years 11 to 13 sat exams; we welcomed Allanians back to school at coffee mornings and the Allanian dinner; and we continued to enjoy the participation in a huge range of co-curricular activities throughout the Schools.

Highlights included junior and senior pupils performing at the whole school dance showcase which was a huge success, the U15 boys rugby team progressing to the final four of the National Schools Vase, and our Girls in Technology Conference with opportunities for pupils to speak to women working in the technology sector and explore careers in that field.

We also marked Children's Mental Health Week with a host of activities to promote positive mental health.

On the final day of this half term, Friday 17 February, we gather at St Nicholas Cathedral to remember and rededicate ourselves to the foundation of these schools, by Dame Eleanor Allan over 300 years ago, for the education of '20 poor girls and 40 poor boys'. Dame Eleanor could scarcely have imagined her schools as they are today, in size and scope, with thousands of children having passed through the gates over that time.

As half term beckons, so does the start of Lent, often a good time for reflection and setting of intentions. That might mean making small changes that will improve our day or week, helping others or trying something new, all of which are important elements in the personal development and progress of young people.

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

STEAMing ahead at Dame Allan's

This term has seen a host of co-curricular activities related to **STEAM** subjects of **Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths**.

In December sixth formers visited Northumbria University for a Chemistry taster day to discover what university study would be like.

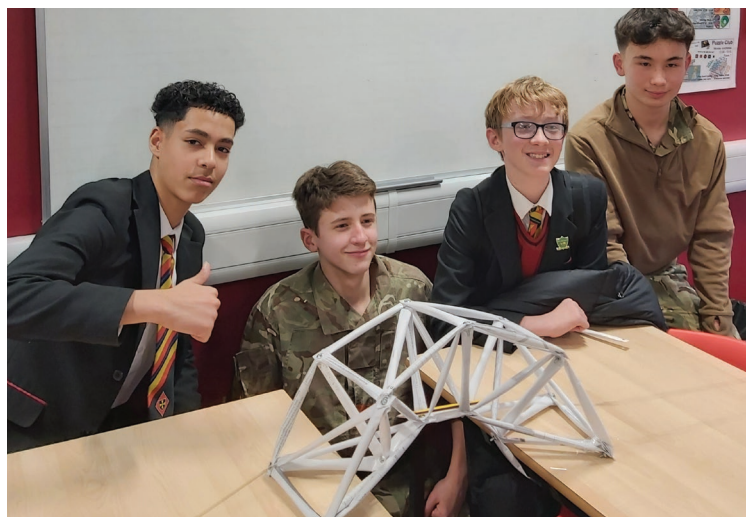
Francesca from Year 12 told us: 'It has definitely made me consider a future in chemistry, as the whole afternoon was a lot of fun and it showed me how versatile and valuable a degree in chemistry would be.' Denny, also from Year 12 was perhaps more honest about the challenge: 'We tried to make a fluorescent molecule, but our practicals didn't quite go to plan! Still, we got there in the end, and had fun in the process. It has certainly made me consider a chemistry or STEM related degree.'

We also hosted our Girls in Technology Conference for Year 9 where we welcomed Sage, Accenture and the NHS.

Each company gave a short presentation and pupils could visit stands to ask questions. We even had ex-pupil Joanne Larby return to give a speech on her career path to working at Accenture.

Year 9 pupil Emily told us she wants a career in technology, specifically Game Design which blends her two passions of art and video games.

The Year 9 boys got involved with STEM too with a workshop from engineer Mrs Lines. They were challenged to construct bridges out of paper which were then loaded with masses to see how much they could hold - the strongest managed to hold 4kg!



Musical success for pupils

It has been another successful half term for musicians across the Schools.

Ann Maria in Year 8 won first place in the parish guitar championship for the Indian Catholic Community of Great Britain which sent her through to the regional championships, coming second place. Then at the national championships she came third place overall! A great achievement which Ann Maria says 'was a good experience for performing and improving my musical abilities!'



Meanwhile, Matthew in Year 13 has secured an ARSM qualification for his piano playing. This performance-focused diploma is for learners beyond Grade 8 level and provides motivation, structure and feedback for developing musicians. Successful candidates can use the letters ARSM after their name to reflect their accomplishment.

Well done to both musicians for their achievements this term!

Sports round up



It was a successful term for rugby with the boys U15 rugby team reaching the semi-final of the Natwest National Vase. They played a great game against Samuel Whitbread School in the quarter final and are now down to the final four of the 256 schools that entered the competition. Wishing our boys the best of luck in the semi-final in March which would take them to the grand final at Twickenham Stadium!



Our Junior School pupils have also been competing in rugby and hockey with their trip to Edinburgh this term. Year 6 enjoyed a sports tour to Edinburgh to play rugby and hockey with Loretto School, Stewart's Melville College and The Mary Erskine School. Our Year 5 boys saw off seven other independent schools to be crowned ISFA Northern Champions. They managed to win five and draw two games in the football tournament to finish top by one point. A fantastic team effort!

Our pupils are speeding ahead in cross-country too, with Jack from our U15 team finishing first at the TSSA Cross-Country event and becoming Tyneside Champion. Our U13 boys team did well too, finishing mid-table. Will, Zoe, Poppy, Annie, Ellie and Jack have all qualified to represent Northumberland in the Inter-Counties Championships next month too.

Our KS4 Squash team qualified for the National Plate Finals in Nottingham and our U16 Netball team reached the regional finals, coming a respectable 5th place. Year 10 Allanah has been selected for a regional pathway in Netball too.

We also launched our new Athlete Development Programme. Led by para-triathlete and geography teacher Mr Salisbury, the programme sees four elite athletes, who compete at a national level, share their expertise with other pupils.

England badminton champion Lucy, Sunderland RTC footballer Lillie, Newcastle Eagles Academy elite basketballer Nick, and talented polocrosse player Millie will guide and support younger pupils who are already playing higher-level sport, advising them on how to juggle training, matches and competitions with their studies and school life.



In conversation with... Amanda Howarth, Junior School Administrator.

Tell us about your role and the wider department.

The Junior School Office is one of the first points of contact for many of our parents and children so it is vitally important the administration team provide a warm, welcoming and professional environment. The team is currently made up of myself (School Administrator) and Sarah Fleck (School Secretary). The Junior School's Administration Department deals with many of the day to day enquiries that we receive from parents and staff so each day differs. As such, routine is mainly cast aside as each day can be very different to another.

What are your main responsibilities?

Our roles have a lot of contact with parents, pupils and Dame Allan's Senior School staff. We deal with enquiries, bookings, absences and greeting prospective parents, whilst also providing administrative support to the Head of the Junior School, teaching and support staff. Ultimately, it is our role to maintain the smooth running of the school office and all it encompasses.



Are there any challenges?

As with all roles there will always be challenges but as yet none that have not been overcome by accessing the knowledge and support of fellow members of staff and reaching a resolution. Adaptability is a crucial part of the role.

Have you always worked in the education sector?

I have worked in the manufacturing, legal and finance sectors, but I have been working in the education sector for many

years now (with a few career breaks along the way to have children). It is certainly my favourite sector in which to work because every day is different.

You joined Dame Allan's just over a year ago. How have you settled in?

Since I started just over a year ago I have found everyone to be very supportive and welcoming. My favourite part of my job is the feeling of being part of much more than just an organisation but as being part of a supportive team and a work 'family.'

Celebrating North East artists during Art Week

In February Dame Allan's Junior School celebrated Art Week. Packed full of fun activities, pupils from nursery to Year 6 created art related to the theme 'My North East' and influenced by regional artists. From seascapes and landscapes to buildings and bridges, pupils used a range of techniques to create some beautiful artwork. There was lots of drawing, painting, collage, print-making and even some 3D sculpture work! All artwork will be displayed at a Junior School art exhibition in March so look out for it! Well done to all our budding artists!



The Allanian Society

Coffee Morning

This term we held our winter coffee morning. We welcomed back leavers from the 50s, 60s and 70s and had the pleasure to welcome back Miss Crossfield and Miss Houlton who taught Geography and Modern Foreign Languages. Allanians also had the chance to tour the school, seeing how the site and facilities have changed since their time here. It was great to share memories, see what everyone is up to and reconnect with past pupils and staff.



Careers and Mentoring Programme

We have strengthened our alumni support framework with the launch of a Careers and Mentoring Programme. Entrepreneur Alice Hall and film producer Krishna Muthurangu are already signed up to be mentors along with over 65 others!

Mentors will be able to offer career guidance and professional advice to younger Allanians just starting in their chosen fields. Users can search for mentors via The Allanian Society website, and connect. It's a great way to facilitate connections between Allanians and add to our already strong careers guidance provision to those who have now left school and become our valued alumni.

To find out more about the Careers and Mentoring Programme visit the Allanian society website at: www.theallaniansociety.co.uk



Save the Date!

To book your place visit: theallaniansociety.co.uk/events or email development@dameallans.co.uk

Reunion Groups Afternoon Tea

4 March 11:30am - 3:00pm

The Lectures Professor Ruth Gregory

23 March 5:00pm - 7:00pm

London Drinks Reception

11 May 6:30pm - 9:00pm

DASPA

DASPA have had a busy half term at the Junior School with film nights for Years 1 - 6 across January and February. We were also delighted to be asked to become part of the OPAL play project. DASPA are funding the purchase of storage hubs to enable the initial realisation of this project and we will be fundraising for the project via the raffle at the summer fair. If you would like to donate a raffle prize please email: daspa@dameallans.co.uk

At the Senior School, we continue to support performing arts performances including the drive time concerts and the concert to mark the opening of the Jubilee Building, both of which showcase the fantastic talents within the school community.

DASPA have also supported some fantastic funding requests including a new state of the art kiln for the art department in the Jubilee building, pasta machines and drying racks for food studies, jumping spiders for the science labs, a Lego Colosseum and books for the classics club, an embroidery sewing machine for art, a digital piano for music and Micro:Bit robots and portable monitors for computing. We really hope these additional resources

will help enhance the experiences of pupils who use them.

As always, we have been running uniform sales on the first Tuesday of the month. If you have any uniform to donate it would be very gratefully received and can be dropped off at school.

We have also launched this year's 50/50 club with tickets available via parent pay with the first occurring on the 3 March. The more entries, the greater the prize fund will be.

Looking ahead, this year's Ceilidh will be on 3 March. Tickets, which include a pizza, are available via parent pay or contact daspa@dameallans.co.uk.

We will also be providing refreshments at the Jazz night on 1 March and the school production of The Addams Family on 16 - 18 March.

Meanwhile at the Junior School, we will be supporting the Easter party for Years 1 and 2.

Finally, DASPA received a very generous donation of a popcorn machine from Mr Hassan, a parent in the Junior School. We would like to say a huge thank you to him and we look forward to using his generous donation at Junior and Senior school events.



Safeguarding at Dame Allan's

This term it was Children's Mental Health Week from 6 - 10 February which saw a range of activities across the school. The theme, 'Let's Connect' focused on making meaningful connections in both the online and 'real' world. Our sixth form mentors visited form classes in Years 7-9 to deliver activities based around e-safety and mental health: pupils were asked to design collaborative postcards and write positive messages to one another. Pupils of all ages were encouraged to 'start conversations' about online activities as

part of Safer Internet Day on Tuesday 7 February and our Year 12 students fiercely debated the Online Safety Bill at Debating Club. Our FemSoc group looked at the historic stigma around women and mental health whilst the Year 12 Listening Skills group created an A-Z of mental health. Mrs Procter, Mrs Crawley and Mr Dobson educated the students on the importance of diet, sleep and exercise on 'Wellbeing Wednesday', whilst Mrs Joicey encouraged pupils to try a range of mindful activities in the library on 'Tranquil Tuesday'.

It was wonderful to see so many pupils talking positively about health and wellbeing so please continue these conversations at home. There are a number of useful resources for parents on the Place2Be site which are freely available.

On a practical safeguarding note, pupils should not be on site before 07:45 due to there being a lack of supervision at this time. If on occasion circumstances arise that mean arrival before 07:45 is unavoidable, pupils must go to the dining hall.



DAME ALLAN'S SCHOOLS
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