

DAME ALLAN'S Digest

FEBRUARY 2025



Rowing Programme makes a Splash at Senior School

The Schools are proud to have introduced a thriving new rowing programme to transform young novices into future champions, while fostering a spirit of teamwork, resilience and healthy competition.



This includes a strong partnership with Tyne United Rowing Club (TURC) to provide pupils access to state-of-the-art facilities, expert coaching and a thriving rowing community.

"We're focused on developing a rowing club that nurtures talent, builds confidence and inspires pupils to excel," says Miss Mileham, who joined as Head of Rowing in September.

Dame Allan's rowing programme offers a structured approach through both the curriculum and co-curricular activities, ensuring inclusivity and encouraging broad participation in the sport. From Year 9, pupils can train in five weekly sessions that include early-morning ergometer workouts, lunchtime groups, after-school water training at TURC and gym-based strength and conditioning. Winter training features sessions in Tyne United's state-of-the-art rowing tank, which replicates on-water conditions.



"The rowing tank is invaluable for refining technique and ensuring consistent training, whatever the weather," explains Miss Mileham.

The school has also invested in 25 ergometers, a new quadruple scull boat and blades, enabling pupils to train year-round.

Miss Mileham is focused on elevating the school's standing within the Northern rowing community. The club will compete in its first friendly indoor competition against St Peter's, York, in the Spring term and aims to collaborate with schools and clubs across the region, including Durham and Yarm.

"The North East has incredible potential in rowing, but it's often overlooked compared to London and the South East," says Miss Mileham. "I want Dame Allan's to help change that perception."

Looking ahead, Miss Mileham envisages Dame Allan's becoming a regional powerhouse, achieving medals at major events and producing national-level athletes. Plans are underway to affiliate with British Rowing, further enhancing opportunities for competition and development.

"Rowing is more than a sport, it builds resilience, teamwork and discipline," Miss Mileham concludes. "At Dame Allan's, we're not just developing athletes; we're shaping confident, capable young people who can take these lessons far beyond the water."



A welcome from the Principal

The first half term of 2025 has seen a whirl of activity, with particular highlights across our sporting endeavours. Our new rowing programme has seen an excellent uptake, while we have also had great competition successes in football, hockey, badminton, squash and basketball.

Our talented dancers lit up Dance City with the Whole School Dance Show, with pupils from Years 6 to 13 taking to the stage for some dazzling performances. In the Junior School, pupils embraced Art Week with special visits, workshops and speakers, and discovered a new musical instrument with the help of one of our IT Technicians, Miss White.

For those who may not know, we have launched new house identities within the Schools, to help foster an even stronger sense of connection and community. You can read more about this inside with an article from our Senior Head of House, Mrs Dresser.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who participated in our recent survey. Your opinions are very valuable and will help us to move forward with the review of our provision.

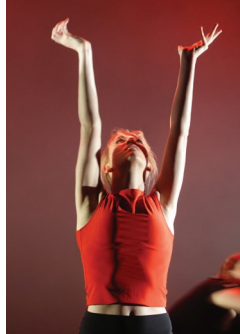
This, as mentioned in our recent parental letter, will allow us to look positively ahead to how we do our work even better in the future, to meet the needs of all our pupils today and for many years to come.

I wish you all a restful half term break.

Whole School Dance Show



Our talented dancers broke out their best moves for two spectacular shows this half term at Dance City, wowing crowds with their skill and dedication. The much-anticipated Whole School Dance Show featured pupils from Y6 - Y13, demonstrating a range of dance styles. The shows were a testament to our hardworking dance department - a very well done to everyone involved, including Mrs Turnbull, Mrs Waters, and Miss Rowe.



Charity Champions

Our community has made us proud with charitable and volunteering endeavours this half term:

- We received some lovely feedback from the monies raised at our 2024 Carol Service, which went to benefit Marie Curie Newcastle. Speaking of the £1,789.93 donation, Marie Curie Community Fundraiser Carly Searle said: "This generous donation will help provide vital care, comfort, and support to individuals with a terminal illness and their families, ensuring they receive the compassion and dignity they deserve during life's most challenging moments. From all of us at Marie Curie Newcastle Hospice - thank you so much!"
- Beneficial Baking: Both Form 7X and our Sixth Formers held fundraising bake sales this half term, with funds going to support Macmillan and Percy Hedley respectively. Well done to everyone involved!
- Guess the Baby: Form 7J held a 'guess the baby' competition - where members of staff submitted baby pictures of themselves - to raise funds for the Newcastle Cat and Dog Shelter. It was a very tricky game, a big thank you to every staff member who donated a picture!



Junior School Art Week

The Junior School came together this half term to celebrate Art Week! Led by Mrs Forster, pupils of all ages learned to use their 'superpower of looking' to delve deeper into artworks and ask questions. Pupils also enjoyed trips to the Laing Art Gallery, plus art workshops within school.



In Conversation with... Mrs Murtha, Assistant Cook



After more than 20 years as part of Dame Allan's, beloved Assistant Cook Mrs Murtha (known to all as 'Dot'), is retiring. We spoke to her about her role, her memories from Dame Allan's, and what she will miss most.

You've been at Dame Allan's for such a long time, you'll be a huge miss. What is your favourite part of working here?

The people! The staff in the kitchen, the teachers and the pupils, I'll miss the social side of the job. I've seen pupils come

through the Schools and go off into their careers - I'm still in touch with some now and love hearing about their jobs and their travels around the world.

Do you have any standout memories?

One that stands out is when we helped with a Sixth Form project, when staff performed (Is This The Way To) Amarillo, I was dancing in the dining hall! Another year, some of the Sixth Form girls dressed up as catering staff as part of their leavers day celebrations. I went out onto the field to get a photo with them, it was lovely.

What are your plans after Dame Allan's?

I'll be doing up my house, and then I'm looking forward to travelling around the UK on some holidays.

And finally, what food do you think has been the most popular with pupils over the years?

It's got to be the roast potatoes, definitely.

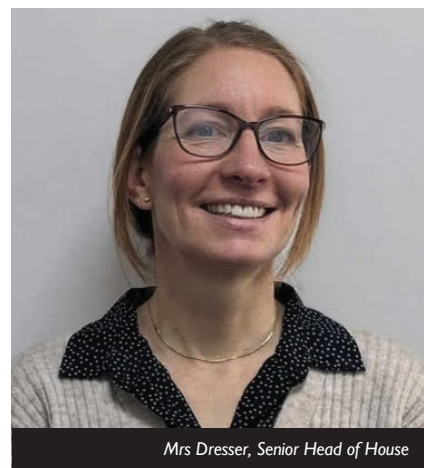
A New Era for Dame Allan's Houses

It's been an exciting time at Dame Allan's, as we have launched our new house identities! Every pupil and member of staff, from Junior School to Sixth Form, are now part of either Hunter, College, Forest, or Manor.

These houses now offer continuity for all throughout the Schools, meaning Junior School pupils can maintain their sense of community once they transition to Senior School. Every pupil is encouraged

to be proud of their house, with healthy competition for house points encouraged!

There are lots of new activities for pupils to get involved in to earn points, from one-offs like House UNO and House Rowing competitions, to regular events like Live for Five music performances and Dance Platform showcases. Charitable efforts too are rewarded with house points, for example recognising the house that



Mrs Dresser, Senior Head of House

gave the most to our harvest festival and Christmas food bank collections.

Social events like the Y7 disco have also incorporated house events, with the 'mummify the Heads of Houses' game proving particularly popular! House lunches also took place at the end of the autumn term, allowing pupils of different year groups to socialise within their house groups. House assemblies and House breakfasts also allow for regular updates and promote a feeling of belonging and community.



Pupils and staff are encouraged to wear their house badge with pride, as a visible signal to others. It's really important that every pupil feels like they have an opportunity to contribute something towards their house.

Mrs Dresser is very open to house competition suggestions, pupils can email me directly with ideas. Upcoming competitions throughout the year will include: Healey Cross Country; Sports Days; House Football; House Netball; House Chess; Library Quiz; World Book Day; House Breakfasts.



Do you know what house your child is in? If in doubt, ask!

Sports Updates

Cross Country

In a busy half term for cross country, 20 pupils represented Newcastle in the County Cross Country Individual Championships on 21 January, held at Temple Park, South Shields. Additionally, five pupils qualified to represent Northumberland at the Inter county event, where three of our Year 7s, Hattie, Ben and Alexander, finished in the top ten.

Junior Sport

Our U10 boys football team were crowned U10 Independent Schools Football Association (ISFA) North East Champions! Huge congratulations to them! The boys scored a whopping 17 goals across the six games, only conceding 2 all afternoon. It's fair to say they are a very talented group!



Rugby

All age groups have worked hard since the new year during 7's training as the 7's season is upcoming. There will be a great number of competitions as we gradually build towards March with Rosslyn Park. Our U16s triumphed in the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School (QEGS) Wakefield 10's competition, going unbeaten throughout the day - a fantastic achievement.

Our U18 10's team had some great performances and development at the Durham 10's. The highlight of the day being the performance against Durham. Our U13's were involved in the first 7's competition of the year at Durham and the squad showed real progression across the day. Our U17's are the only team still playing 15 a side rugby with an eye on next season's 1st XV squad. The squad took place in the Barnard Castle Festival and went unbeaten across four games against RGS, Durham, Barnard Castle and Ampleforth.

Basketball

Our Y8 and Y10 basketball team were crowned winners of their respective Tyneside Cups! Y8 (pictured) triumphed over Durham Johnston 51-38, whilst Y10 won their victory over St Cuthbert's with a score of 34-58. A huge well done to the teams and to their coach, Mr Hopper.



Hockey

Our Senior 1st team headed to Nottingham to take part in the National Schools Final, with many players juggling this with their A Level mock exams. The girls really stepped up against quality opposition with some fantastic hockey on display!

The following week, our Y8 girls also attended National Finals in Nottingham, finishing 4th in country in their competition.

Badminton and Squash

Our racquet sports have had significant success, with our U16 and U14 squash players qualifying for the Nationals in Nottingham, and our Badminton players winning two county competitions and qualifying for Regionals in York - well done everyone!

Netball

The Senior 1st Team attended the second round of the Netball National School Competition - Regional Schools.

The standard at the tournament was very high with many netball performance athletes, the girls stepped up to the challenge but sadly did not qualify for the next round. They finished 5th place overall out of 6 teams. Well done to the year 11s - Izzy J, Bella H for being selected to represent the Senior Squad at this tournament. All netball teams are now playing remaining league matches and looking forward to a busy month ahead.

The Allanian Society

Spots filling fast for 2025 Allanian Dinner - 22 March

Time is running out to book your spot on our 2025 Allanian Dinner! Join our special guest speakers, passionate Dame Allan's sporting advocate Farne Conway (class of '87) and current Dame Allan's Head of Academic PE and dedicated sportswoman Helen Dresser (class of '97), and celebrate your sporting memories- good or bad. Whether you loved to lead the way scoring tries in rugby, or preferred to walk at the back of cross country (we won't judge), school sport has an impact on us all and generates memories to last a lifetime. Add in a welcome drink, table wine, great company and delicious three-course-dinner, it is sure to be a night to remember.

The night will also be extra special, as we will be paying tribute to former staff member Sandra Rickaby.

Book online at www.theallaniansociety.co.uk/event/allanian-society-dinner-2025
or contact Development Manager Katherine Leonard on 0191 275 0608 or at development@dameallans.co.uk



Dates for your Diary

**Monday
23 June:** Allanians Return and Inspire Careers Event (volunteers needed), 9.00am - 12.00pm.

If you are interested in giving your time to support our careers programme for current pupils, we'd love to hear from you. You will be a part of a carousel of Allanians sharing their university or work experience with Sixth Formers. Contact Katherine Leonard for more information.

**Thursday
13 November:** London Drinks 2025, Royal Over-Seas League at Six Park Place, St James's, 6.30pm - 9.00pm.

Cake, Coffee and Conversation

Thank you to everyone who braved the cold to join us for our most recent coffee morning, which was held on Wednesday 12 February at Dame Allan's Senior School. It was wonderful to see so many faces, new and old!

School Trips

Durham University Library

Our Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) students enjoyed a trip to Durham University Library to support their project studies this half term, accompanied by Dr Nye, Miss Medway, Mr Smith and Mrs Salisbury. This trip helped them to build their independent research skills, as well as gave them experience of navigating a complex university library.

Girls in Tech Event, NU Foundation

A group of Y9 girls enjoyed a day at the NU Foundation in mid-February, learning all about cyber security. This 'Girls in Tech' day was designed to spark pupils' interest and enthusiasm for computing and featured workshops on cyber security, robotics and eSports.



Adventurer Dan Smith visits CCF

Veteran and adventurer Dan Smith visited us to speak to our Combined Cadet Force about his most recent fundraising challenge. Dan will be single-handedly canoeing along the wild waters of Canada's rugged Yukon territory, facing bears, rapids, and more, to raise funds for military charities, Team Forces and Launchpad. Pupils learned survival skills and navigation tips, plus got the chance to explore the gear that Dan will be taking along on his trip. A really valuable and inspiring session for all!



DASPA

We have been busy supporting events at both the Senior and Junior Schools this half term.

At the Junior School, our DASPA film nights for Years 1-3 and 4-6 have been very successful, many thanks to all staff and parents involved. At the Senior School, we supported the Open Mic night, which was another fantastic evening of entertainment, and supported a fantastic funding request for additional Switch controllers for the eSports Club. We would like to take the opportunity to thank all parents who support our funding raising effort. We also held a successful AGM and are pleased to announce the retention of many of our trustees. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank Annelise Kopko

and Jocelyn Tantawy for their help and support during their time as trustees and wish them well for the future.

UNIFORM SALES

Our uniform sales continue to be popular and we now run joint senior and junior uniform sales every other month. In addition to the sales, both senior and junior subcommittees have been sorting through donations to continue our support of local and international organisations. This half term, we've provided donations to three local schools, a food bank and KitAid. Thank you to everyone who donated items and to those who gave up their time to help us sort donations to support these charities. If you have

any uniform to donate it would be very gratefully received and can be dropped off at school.

- Tuesday 4 March: Senior School uniform sale at St James' and St Basil's Church, 8.45am - 10.00am
- Thursday 20 March: Junior School uniform sale at the school at pick up
- Monday 7 April: Senior and Junior School uniform sale at St James' and St Basil's Church, 8.45am - 10.00am

UPCOMING EVENTS

Looking ahead, we have a Year 1 and Year 2 Easter Party on 7 April - tickets will be on sale after half term. The DASPA family Ceilidh will be on 7 March at 6.30pm in the Newsom Hall, with music from our two school Ceilidh bands, supported by a professional caller. Tickets are £3.00 per person and are available on the SumUp store where you can also preorder a Domino's pizza. We are also supporting school providing refreshments at the Jazz night and the Spring concert.

Many thanks for your support.

The DASPA Committee

Safeguarding

Safer Internet Day

Could you confidently recognise an online scam? Scammers are getting continuously more advanced, and Safer Internet Day (11 Feb), aimed to address this for both parents and pupils. The theme of 'Too Good to be True' was explored in school with quizzes in form time, helping pupils of all ages to ID an online scam and learn how to stay safe online. Themes explored included how AI is impacting how scams operate, how the government can tackle this threat, and what changes young people would like to see around internet safety and scams in the future.

Some of the top tips for parents from UK Safer Internet include:

- encourage discussions about going online and any 'scam' stories in the news. Open discussions mean that your child may be more willing to share their internet usage with you, and you will be more aware of what your child is interacting with online
- look out for warning signs that someone or something online cannot be trusted "It just seems too good to be true!"

Common signs of a scam include being asked for money or personal information (think: bank or contact details, passwords, or phone numbers), developing a false sense of urgency, or playing with emotions

- set parental controls to restrict what your child can access and to limit them putting any payments through online

Find out more at www.saferinternet.org.uk

Children's Mental Health Week

The first week of February saw Children's Mental Health Week (3 - 9 Feb). Whilst at Dame Allan's we always prioritise the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils, it was a great excuse to focus more on some of these lessons, and the frameworks we have to support pupils of all ages.

The theme was 'Know Yourself, Grow Yourself', with special form time activities held across the week for KS2 pupils. Popular animated film Inside Out 2 was used by several year groups to help pupils explore different emotions and how mental health can play a role in how they are feeling. In the Senior School, our Govox platform - termly surveys

that generate a wellbeing report, including self help tips for each child - have also been extended to Years 7, 8, 10, and 12.

A reminder that if your child is having any struggles with their mental health, the Pastoral Team is there to assist. Please do not hesitate to reach out via enquiries@dameallans.co.uk, or via 0191 275 0608.

Ramadan

We understand that a number of our Muslim pupils make the decision to fast during Ramadan. If this will be the case, we ask that **parents or guardians inform the school if their child is going to participate in fasting**. While at school, if there are concerns about pupils who are fasting, the school has an overriding safeguarding duty and will apply judgement and common sense on a case-by-case basis. We will make as much reasonable provision for those pupils who wish to pray in school as we can. We are sympathetic to praying at prescribed times, but we do not support the leaving of lessons to pray. Pupils in Year 11 and above, if requested by parents, may leave school at lunchtime to pray in a mosque.



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