

DAME ALLAN'S Digest

MAY 2021



A welcome return to outdoor excursions



Nature was the theme of this year's Mental Health Awareness week in May. Outdoor learning is a hugely important part of education at Dame Allan's and we've long seen the wellbeing benefits to children spending time outdoors.

Coincidentally, easing of social restrictions has seen a welcome return to some outdoor excursions this term.

At the Junior School, pupils have been making the most of the outdoor spaces on site. Year 1 recently explored the newly refurbished Woodland Ways.

Year 8 have eagerly thrown themselves back into activities for the John Muir Award. Recently they spent the day at North Middleton Farm, a former arable farm now being slowly rewilded. The group had a great day exploring the site and working on conservation projects.

Duke of Edinburgh expeditions have also returned at the Senior Schools, including this Bronze trip to Alston and Kirkhaugh.



A welcome from the Principal

There is real optimism in the Schools that we are steadily approaching something close to the Old Normal.

This half-term has seen a welcome return to regular sporting fixtures for the Junior School and outdoor education trips for the Senior Schools. Alas, the weather has not been too kind over the last six weeks but these activities are such an important part of life at Dame Allan's that it is great to be able to offer our pupils these experiences again.

We have also been able to welcome into the Schools our author-in-residence, Dan Smith, who has held several talks for year group bubbles at both the Junior and Senior Schools, and the Junior School has welcomed back a series of workshops run by external providers such as Cooking 4 Life and Technology Tom.

Of course, this term has also seen a season of summer assessments at the Senior Schools. This can be a tense time even without the added stress of a pandemic, so I would like to take this opportunity to say how proud we all are of our Year 11 and 13 pupils for the way they have handled studying for and sitting such important assessments over the past few months. They can now relax, having done everything possible towards their results in August.

Next half term, we hope to see blue skies and sunshine for the final few weeks of the academic year. Before then, have a wonderful half-term.

Blencathra visit

On Monday 17 May, Year 12 geographers travelled to Blencathra in the Lake District to undertake fieldwork in preparation for the Independent Investigation element of the A-level course.

They were the first guests at the Field Studies Council (FSC) centre since the lifting of restrictions.

The group studied a corrie on the Borrowdale Fells and looked at glacial depositional features in Borrowdale itself. Fieldwork techniques for the collection of placemaking data were practised in Carlisle.

Tutor Pippa Cowley provided detailed guidance on the techniques students can choose from to collect data for their investigation and the evening classroom session was used to consider approaches to data analysis and presentation using geographical information systems.

Our thanks to Pippa and the FSC for welcoming the group and to the Lakes weather for giving the group the only two days without rain in the month!



If you go down to the woods today...



This term the woodland area of the Junior School has been spruced* up thanks to the efforts of our Estates team. Mr Newbery and Mr Hopper created a new archway out of willow and even made a smart new sign. We think it looks great!

*pardon the pun!

Did you know...?

On Thursday 20 May, the Senior Schools hosted the Regional Heat of the National Literacy Trust's Online National Reading Champions Quiz 2021.

Teams across the UK were quizzed about books, characters, authors and even solved some word-play teasers. The event ran across the entire morning and we've heard from our librarians, some of the questions even stumped them!

Two teams of girls and boys represented Dame Allan's and we are thrilled to say they took **1st and joint second place**. This sees them through to the finals later in the year.

Congratulations to James, Bea, Matilda and Katie (Team Artemis) and Rachel, Ellie, Ethan and Ben (Team Zeus).

Volunteering

Sixth Form students Izzy, Anna and Grace organised a food bank donation of over 50 bags and boxes for Feeding Families just before Easter. During the course of their efforts, they found out more about Feeding Families and how they provide emergency food care boxes to people's doorsteps and run courses on how to manage money and cook food. The girls also arranged to volunteer with them on Saturdays to help pack up boxes.

Well done to them, fantastic effort!



SPORT

Even through the recent restrictions, there has still been plenty of sport going at Dame Allan's and for our pupils in their sporting endeavours outside of school.

A group of six golfers represented the school last week in the County Championships with Rachel (Year 8) finishing 6th in the girls' competition; in the boys', Lewis (Year 9) took 3rd, Joe (Year 8) in 11th and Josh (Year 11) took 13th. Well done to all the pupils who took part on a day that provided some tough conditions for golf.

Our Saturday cricket matches have been competitive and have really helped the boys and girls get back into the swing of cricket after many missing out last year. In our Year 10-11 mixed match, Team Eddie and Ollie won the first match and we witnessed a fine display of batting with Tom (Year 10)



striking 50*. Following a tough couple of weeks of weather, we managed to host a Year 9 vs Year 10 match with the Year 10 team winning with three balls to spare despite a dominant performance with the bat from Will (Year 9) scoring 52.

I am sure you all saw Owen (Year 7) on the BBC website taking four wickets in four balls on his debut for the men's cricket team at Allendale CC. A huge well done from all of us at Dame Allan's. Owen also represents Northumberland County along with fellow Year 7 DABS Will.



Girls trials

In the Girls' School sport, a huge congratulations to Lucy (Year 9) on her upcoming trials for the U15 England Badminton squad at the National Badminton Centre. Lucy has also been selected, along with Jane (also Year 9) to represent the county in the U15 cricket team.

Lillie (Year 9) continues on her football journey at Sunderland Academy and has also been selected by the England FA to take part in an FA Lioness Talent ID as well as the ISFA

U16 trials in the new academic year. We wish her all the best for that.

Well done to all of our pupils this year in their efforts to keep going through the pandemic, we can only hope for even more normality after half-term.

Mr Taylor. Acting Director of Sport

A notice from Schoolblazer

“ As part of our drive to reduce our plastic usage, we will no longer include a plastic returns bag in orders that are sent in cardboard boxes. We know that just 8% of these returns bags are used by parents, meaning over 28,000 bags were thrown away last summer. Removing these is obviously an easy way to cut down on our plastic waste.

To further reduce waste, we will no longer include a printed returns label with all orders, parents will need to login to their account and request a return online, whereby a returns label will be generated and they'll need to print these off at home. This is clearly communicated on the dispatch note enclosed with every order.

A reminder that tracksuit bottoms are required as part of Dame Allan's PE kit and that we will be stocking a girls' trouser option as part of the uniform. ”

Falcons Academy Flying High

We have seen excellent progress on the rugby field over the past few weeks as several of our students in DABS and the Sixth Form have been in action for the Newcastle Falcons Academy:

Ben (Year 13), Charlie, Dan and Will (Year 12) and Jaime (Year 11).

Charlie and Ben have both played for the Newcastle Falcons in match victories versus Sale (34-14) and Wasps Academy (68-22) in the U18 Academy League. The match photographer caught some fantastic moments of play, including some of Ben in possession with a somewhat bloodied nose and a shot of Charlie scoring versus Wasps

Dan and Will (left to right) have played in a narrow loss to Sale U17s (22-19) and we hope they will all gain further representation in matches versus the Yorkshire and Leicester Tigers Academy sides.



Jaime has been invited into the U16s set-up to train for the rest of the year which is an excellent achievement.

We wish them all well.

Looking ahead, the Y12 boys are excited to play again for Dame Allan's next season. They are currently making the most of the DASPA Fitness Room, working hard in their games lessons with strength and conditioning sessions.



Good luck Mollie!

We're wishing Mollie (Year 7) the best of luck as over the holiday she is off to Durham to take part in a showjumping competition on behalf of Dame Allan's!



Congratulations!

Year 9 DAGS Georgie has just been announced for the British Gymnastics squad for the 2021 Acrobatic World Championships and the 2021 World Age Group Championships in Geneva this summer.



The Allanian Society



A message from the Chair

With so much now going on across the Allanian community, the Society was pleased to be able to play our part to keep spirits high.

Recently, we provided judges and prizes for the DASPA virtual pet show, and Board members Yunis Ali and Jenny Wilkes delivered virtual careers talks to help students think about a bright post-lockdown future. Our longstanding support for the Public Speaking competition continues and we are thrilled

to extend our support to the House Debating competition, which is being driven by the energy of Emily, one of the Sixth Form members of our Board.

After eighteen months of lockdown, we are looking forward to meeting together safely at an event to be held at the Schools in June. If you know any Allanians who do not receive this newsletter, please encourage them to contact us.

Stephen Davies, Chair of the Allanian Society

Alumni News

Congratulations to Professor Ruth Gregory, former pupil and recently retired governor, who has been promoted to Head of the Physics Department at King's College, London. Ruth was first captivated by physics through reading a book borrowed from the Florence Moat Library, something she says was fostered through "fantastic support from my teachers, who were so much fun in lessons - allowing us to be just the right amount of naughty while staying on track!"

Fenham Heritage Walk

Thursday 24 June 2021, 4.30-5.30pm, Senior Schools

Walk 4.30pm to 5.30pm

Join local historian Mike Greatbatch on a short guided walking tour of Fenham and discover how the area was developed as a garden suburb in the years before the Great War, and how Dame Allan's came to be built on land sold for development in the 1920s as Fenham became established as a middle class suburb. Copies of archive plans and images will be used to illustrate this history throughout the walk.

The walk starts at St James & St Basil's Church (west entrance), then Moorside South to Wingrove Road South. Cross Wingrove Road South and continue to Nuns Moor Road and Bolbec Road. The walk will last 45 - 55 minutes, and we will finish at the Fowberry Crescent entrance to Dame Allan's Schools.

Marquee event, meet the team 5.30-6.30pm

We will then move on to a large well ventilated marquee on the school field, where you will have the opportunity to meet the new Principal Will Scott and Chair of Governors Ian Belsham as well as members of the staff team including Allanians Vicki MacDonald, Bursar and Geoff Laidler, Head of the Junior School. The event is an opportunity to learn more about what's happening in the Schools, including the upcoming North End Development project as well as a chance to come together for the first time after a long period of social isolation during lockdown. Tea/coffee and cake will be served. If you can't attend the walk, you are still very welcome to come along to the marquee for a catch up over a cup of tea.

If you would like to join us on both or either event, please sign up by emailing t.elandar@dameallans.co.uk or ring 0191 275 1500 no later than Monday 21 June. Note the walk is limited to 15 people, but there is no limit on marquee event. We look forward to seeing you and welcoming you to the Schools.

DASPA

The DASPA Committee have had another busy half-term. We recently organised a Virtual Pet Show. It was brilliant for the committee to undertake a new event and one that would be difficult to do in-situ at the Schools! Over 150 pets were entered into the competition ranging from dogs, cats and rabbits to tortoises, sheep, horses, hens, lizards and frogs - the committee hadn't realised the popularity of guinea pigs! Well done to the winners: Nosey, Rainbow, Star and Sparkle, Julie and Fluff, Toby, Topsy, Rosie, Cory, Buttons, Jenson and Minty, Waffle and Squiggles. They each won Best in Show rosettes. Also, a big thank you and congratulations to all of the entries who won Highly Commended Pet Families rosettes.

Thanks to the Allanian Society for supporting our book token prize and well done to Junior School pupils Evie, the winner of the book token prize, and Jessica, the winner of the Pet Art prize.

Thanks to fellow parent Emma from Kingswalk Law for all of her work fundraising for DASPA this term.

DASPA is pleased that the Year 6 and 7 parties are planned for the end of term - our thanks to the Dame Allan's staff for their enthusiastic support of these events.

Looking ahead, please come and see us at the refreshment stand at the Gala Concert on the 25th June and rest assured we're working on new events to bring the school community together and raise funds. Please email daspa@dameallans.co.uk if you'd like to get involved.



Safeguarding at Dame Allan's

Activity on social media continues to be a positive way in which young people keep in touch with each other, as long as it is used with respect for all participants.

However, safety must be very much in mind when young people are setting up and contributing to accounts on platforms such as Instagram and TikTok. Please make sure that your child understands the need for the highest privacy settings and does not add personal information such as school email addresses.

Organisations such as Internetmatters.org has lots of helpful information for parents and pupils of all age groups.



DAME ALLAN'S SCHOOLS
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