

THE DUCHESS'S COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL, ALNWICK



NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2018



HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

Welcome to our Spring Newsletter!

This half term has been an interesting one. The Beast from the East closed us down for three days and has been the first real test of our new school buildings. They have worked well under these difficult circumstances. Those of you who have longer memories will know what a nightmare it would have been on our previous site(s). What was a real privilege was seeing the support offered to us as a school to make sure we could re-open on the Monday. It's impressive what one digger and 20 helpers can do in four hours in terms of moving snow. Those of you who live outside Alnwick...I cannot begin to appreciate the difficulties you faced during those few days. I hope, as you read this that the temperature has gone up, the sun is out, and the spring flowers are blooming.

Next winter will see us all in one building; our mobile classrooms taken away. More indoor space and more outdoor space with three quad areas, an extra multi use games area, and double the amount of playing fields. Also in the near future, fingers crossed, use of a floodlit, artificial football pitch, courtesy of Alnwick Town Football Club. Our extension (fourth wing) is still on track to be completed in June this year. It will give us more specialist learning classrooms. Crucially it will also give

us more indoor social space as well as further dining space.

No one is shying away from stating that this year has had its moments in terms of working within a school not finished, with 700 new student faces and many new (excellent) colleagues finding their feet. We have valued your on-going support and understanding.

The educational landscape is in a real state of flux at present. Not a week goes by without interference from politicians providing 'sound bites' on all sorts of things. As Headteacher now for over fourteen years the biggest issue I feel we are facing, and we are not alone in this, is the impact that funding levels are having on all our students, but especially those that are our most vulnerable and complex. North Northumberland is one of the most mixed socio-economic communities around. This is particularly the case in terms of aspirations and self-belief.

At the same time we are seeing more and more of our young people struggle with what the modern world throws at them. What we can provide as a school in terms of support is proving more challenging due to the reduction in the capacity of services



and agencies that wrap around our school community. More parents are looking directly to us for help simply because they can't access help elsewhere. How some of our students present to us each morning in terms of need has become more distressing over the last couple of years. These students come from all backgrounds. We are thankful to many in our local community who offer their time voluntarily to support the school in terms of support and intervention. We also thank those parents and friends who have come forward with genuine skills and experience in areas such as careers, counselling, governance and extra-curricular.

Over the last few months, we have continued to build relationships with our Primary Schools. Now we have Year 6 names and numbers we can move forward on working closely with pupils, schools and parents to make sure transition to Year 7 is as smooth as possible. If you are a Year 6 parent, look out for news on a possible informal parent information evening prior to May half term.

Exam season is once again only a few weeks away. Many GCSE and A Level subjects will be examined for the first time with their new syllabus and in the case of GCSE, new grades (1 to 9) will replace the old A* to G. I hope you will appreciate the work my colleagues are putting in to support revision through resources, extra classes etc. Good luck to everyone facing exams this year. My view is that our students, staff, and parents should be working as a team. It is our school community against the rest of the country!

Finally, as you will see from our Newsletter....amazing things are still happening. So many of your children are engaged in many activities within school and providing us with wonderful stories about their work and learning. We are a school that continues to work on the principle of 'one size does not fit all'. May it long continue that way.

Thank you once again and I hope you have a good Easter.


Maurice Hall, Headteacher

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ANNE FRANK EXHIBITION

The Anne Frank Foundation's Schools Programme visited DCHS week beginning 19th February.

A group of year 9 students were taught about Anne Frank's life and the Holocaust, while also learning how issues of prejudice and discrimination relate to modern scenarios.

Over Monday and Tuesday, students attended workshops and learned to become Anne Frank Ambassadors. This meant that on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, they had the necessary skills and confidence to facilitate the exhibition of Anne Frank's life and diary, and present the exhibition to the whole of year 7 and year 8.

STUDENT VIEW

Discovering the Life of Anne Frank was a great experience; I really enjoyed being part of the exhibition! In the beginning, Anne's life meant very little to me, but as the week went on, I learned so much about who she was and why she is remembered today.

I was given three different panels to talk about. They had themes such as discrimination and propaganda. What particularly interested me was how the Nazis manipulated the German population into acceptance of Nazi ideology.

Presenting the exhibition was great fun! I enjoyed being part of the story telling and meeting the other year groups. It took some work, but I soon got into a rhythm. My confidence grew, allowing me to elaborate, adding more information in every session and involving the audience.

Overall, it was a great week and I would certainly enjoy doing activities like this in the future.

Elijah Dawson-Ekaterinis



MAGISTRATE'S COURT COMPETITION

The Magistrates' Court Competition is well underway this year, with the date of the Mock Trial being Saturday 24th March at Newcastle Crown Court. This year the case is R v Fenton and is concerned with whether the defendant was carrying a bladed article in a public place. Those involved are working very hard and are approaching it with great enthusiasm.

The Magistrates' Court Mock Trial Competition is part of the SmartLaw programme which helps improve young people's life skills, their understanding of the justice system and the legal system, and helps them to understand that the law touches every aspect of their lives.

The Magistrates' Court Mock Trial Competition has been running since 1994 and annually involves over 4,000 students from over 270 schools and 1,700 legal professional volunteers across over 40 magistrates' courts in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The students take on the various roles in a trial and try a case against another school with the assistance of real life magistrates, legal advisers, court staff and other legal professionals.

Twenty students from this school are involved this year and we wish them all the best of luck!



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MUSIC

department

Music has, inevitably, been dominated by the school production this term.

The band of **We Will Rock You** worked so hard to master Queen's iconic tunes – an impressive feat considering this group of musicians boasted an average age a full two years' younger than last year's band. Who needed Brian May when we had **Ruari Ryan** on lead guitar? The show

highlighted Ruari's amazing technical skills and he has been justly rewarded with the offer of a place at Leeds College of Music. The youngest band member, **Adam Johnston**, has written about his experience below.

Those involved in **We Will Rock You** will also be appearing, for one night only, at the **North Northumberland Hospice's Fashion Show** where the fantastic cast will be able to show off their virtuosic singing skills once again.

Other events in the Music department have included the Rotary District round of **Young Musician of the Year** competition in which **Ruby Falke** and **Palesa Thompson** gave particularly stunning performances and were awarded first and second place respectively. They now move forward to the Regional Final at the



The We Will Rock You Band

Royal Scottish Conservatoire in April. ***We wish them lots of luck and we are grateful to all those who bravely entered the competition.***

GCSE and A level Music students have been busy preparing their repertoire for recordings this term and there have been some excellent and memorable performances. Hours of dedicated practice usually pays off in the end!

Forthcoming events include performances at **Alnwick Gardens**, **Alnwick Market**, the **Northumbrian**

Ranters' evening at the Playhouse and **DCHS Band night**, also at the Playhouse, on **4th July**. Watch out for information about this event which will showcase many of the school's talented musicians. Tickets will be on sale soon.

Mr Ridley and Mrs Cochrane would like to thank all those students who cheerfully give up their time every week to make music happen in the school and particularly to those who support and encourage our younger, fledgling musicians.

A VIEW FROM THE PIT... BEING PART OF THE WE WILL ROCK YOU BAND

I first heard about the school production of **We Will Rock You** back in September. I really felt like I wanted to do it so I auditioned. At the audition I was both excited and nervous. This was the first time I had ever done anything like this before. Within a few minutes I knew that this is what I wanted to do.

Getting the music was a little overwhelming at first. However Queen Music is so iconic and well known I soon picked it up. Even though most of the band already knew each other they welcomed me as if they had known me for years. We all supported each other and treated each other as equals. It was great to have some older players to look up to.

Playing in the **We Will Rock You** band has been great. It has given me the confidence to play in public and it has helped me improve as a saxophone player. Although it has been tough – giving up lots of free time – I have loved every minute of it. Performing in the **Alnwick Playhouse** has been fantastic and I can't wait until the next performance.

Adam Johnston 8NB



WE ROCKED YOU

Reflections on the
school musical

BY OSCAR WILSON

February is usually regarded as the shortest month, but for the DCHS Creative Arts department it is by far the longest: once again, the students put back on their dancing shoes for the school musical. This year's extravaganza, *We Will Rock You*, brought a selection of Queen's greatest bops to the stage, which the entire band & cast delivered like the "champions" they are.



The school musical is always celebrated: for drama students, it's the highlight of the year (along with the November play) and brings seven days of demanding work, energy and commitment in the hopes of creating an outstanding experience for the community. Not only is it a display of the talent of our students across multiple departments (set design, backstage, lighting and sound were all worked on by students across the school); but also, the teachers, who put in countless hours pushing the students to realise their potential come show week. *Bohemian Rhapsody* brought a tear to the eye.

Those who witnessed the spectacle would say it was definitely "A Kind of Magic": the excitable atmosphere left the five sold-out audiences spellbound. But for those who did not see it, words cannot describe the electricity of the shows:

the buzz of the audience, the amount of sweat dripping from everything (I personally became five of the Seven Seas of Rhye), and the feeling of pure ecstasy as 260 people are on their feet, screaming out their lungs to "Crazy Little Thing Called Love". It's the greatest high you can experience, and I am so happy I could experience it with such an amazingly talented group of people.

Unfortunately, this will be the final time most of the cast and crew will partake in a DCHS show: with the Alnwick Playhouse soon closing for renovations, there will be no more shows for two years.

These shows have and will continue to be the highlight of our school career, the friendships and memories made during these eight weeks will be held dearly, and we cannot wait to see whatever will come next – just don't stop us now!



JAMIE'S CAMPAIGN ON CANS

JAMIE OLIVER'S TWEET CAMPAIGN TO BAN SALE OF ENERGY DRINKS TO KIDS

After many successful campaigns such as sugar tax and healthier school menus another has recently 'emerged'. Celebrity chef Jamie Oliver (42) fights his case for the government to crack down and ban retail of energy drinks to children as they are turning them into addicts and becoming essential for everyday life. In one energy drink (500ml) there is 12 teaspoons of sugar and 120mg of caffeine. 69% of all 10-18 year olds in the UK are reported drinking energy drinks.

The 'energy drink' means a non alcoholic drink that contains caffeine (a stimulant). Many kids are regularly buying energy drinks and drinking them when they far exceed the recommended sugar and caffeine intake for their age and size.

The energy drinks are usually bright and colourful in design, Jamie believes manufactures are designing these cans for kids as they are their target market. However on most cans it says: "not recommended for children". Jamie now believes that "25% of the retailer's business is now from under 16 year olds"

These drinks for kids are causing a vicious cycle and cause health related issues later in life. This circle consists of the kids drinking an energy drink in the morning to prepare them for their busy days ahead, once the caffeine and sugar starts to run out they experience a 'low' making them want to have another. This yoyo effect of 'high' and 'low' causes them to feel tired and lacklustre the next morning prompting them to reach for another. Energy drinks are believed to cause headaches, abdominal pains and insomnia. Later in life, these drinks are also thought to cause type two diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity.

Jamie also believes the energy drinks are not only affecting the consumers education but also their peers. The 'high' kids are distracting the whole classes learning - it's

a bit like passive smoking. They are paying the price for others' addictions putting their learning in jeopardy. These energy drinks are also linked to poor attainment in school. Teachers are planning lessons around these energy drinks as the minority of children are obstructed by these fatty, sugary, caffeinated substances.

The children are either buying the energy drinks on route to school or their parents are being their suppliers. One other problem is that these drinks are cheap making them easily affordable for the younger generation.

Jamie wants everyone to join a tweet campaign to get the government to legally age-restrict the sale of energy drinks, in the same way that scratch cards are only sold to over 16s. He wants everyone to tweet to the Health secretary (@Jeremy_Hunt) and ask him to ban the sale of energy drinks to children under 16, using the hashtag #NotForChildren.

To conclude, we believe that Jamie's campaign is great and has already kicked off a storm, however not many will agree so far so it is an idea that we can all work towards to save the children from this 'monster' that has taken over. Granting we all know that these energy drinks most definitely do not 'give you wings'; they will however leave you flying as 'high' as the craze.

By Jamie Brown,
Hannah Taylor
and Lily May Dodds



FOOD ALLERGIES

We have a growing number of students in school with severe nut allergies (covering a whole range from peanuts to pistachios).

Some of these allergies are very serious and rapid in their reaction. Please be mindful of this if you are preparing packed lunches or snacks for students, and, where possible, avoid including nut products (or, if necessary, place in a sealed container).

Whilst this is difficult to police we ask for your help and cooperation to ensure minimum impact on students' welfare. Please discuss with your child the potential impact of what is bought by students from shops and cafes and brought into school.

Our school kitchen does not use any nuts in the preparation of meals and snacks. School also deliver assemblies to all year groups regarding anaphylaxis to raise awareness and understanding.



Northumberland

Northumberland County Council

**Education Welfare Service
Child Employment**

Did you know that?

All children from the age of 13 years and who are working must be registered with the Local Authority and be issued with a work permit.

It is an offence for an employer to employ children without registering with the local authority first.

The numbers of hours you can work whilst attending school are restricted. Children must not work before 7am and after 7pm.

Any children working without a permit is not covered by their employer's liability insurance.

If your child is working please ensure that an application form for a work permit is completed.

More information and application forms can be obtained from:
Education Welfare
Virtual Schools
Education and Skills Service
Wellbeing & Community Health Services Group

Brunel Building, 64 Regent Street, Blyth
NE24 1LT

Telephone: **01670 622800**



Careers Updates on our work across school to improve careers and skill provision for students in conjunction with Pathfinder Northeast.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Weekly **Sixth Form business forums** are well underway, with good feedback received from students on how these are helping them improve their understanding on career options. Latest schedule is below:-

Speaker	Topic	Date	Time
Jonathan Shelley, Environmental Agency	Careers with Environmental Agency	Wed Nov 15th	2.30-3.30
Paul Tuttleman, Osteopathy Unlimited	Careers in Osteopathy	Tues Nov 28th	1.50-2.50
Dave Foote, HR business professional	What is HR and careers in it	Fri, Dec 15th	10.00-11.15
Andrew Buddle, Alnwick Dental Practice	Careers in Dentistry	Fri, Jan 12th	12.30-1.30
Daniel Meyer, Accenture	Careers in technology	Thurs, Jan 18th	1.50-2.50
Avril Scott, Marketing Consultant/Strategist	Careers in Marketing	Thurs Jan 25th	1.50-2.50
Chris Anderson, Northumberland County Council	Neighbourhood Town Planning	Thurs Feb 8th	1.50-2.50
Kelly Anderson, Northumberland Tyne & Wear Healthcare Trust	Careers in Mental Health and Learning Disability	Tues Feb 20th	10.00-11.00
Kirsty Potter, Police Forensic Science	Forensic Science	Thurs Feb 22nd	1.50-2.50
Arcinova, Paul Quigley, Ian Wind	Engineering & Scientific Development	Tues March 13th	1.50-2.50
Ben O'Connell, Northumberland Gazette	Careers in Journalism	Thurs, Mar 15th	1.50-2.50
Andrew McFetrich, Sage Finance, Newcastle	Careers in Software/Technology Engineering	Friday Mar 16th	10.00-11.00
Sports, NUFC Foundation	Sports coaching	Fri March 23rd	10.00-11.00
Jackie Ward, Midwife	Careers in midwifery	Thurs, Mar 22nd	1.50-2.50
Liz Hall, Environmental Ecologist	Careers in Ecology	Tues, Mar 27th	10.00-11.00
Peter Lindley, Wooler First School	Careers for Male students in Primary educations	Thur, Mar 29th	1.50-2.50
Karen Hookham, NHS Healthcare	Careers in NHS	Tues, April 24th	1.50-2.50
Kielder Observatory	Astronomy	Thurs, April 26th	1.50-2.50
Alnwick Studio	Careers in hairdressing & running a successful business	Tues, May 1st	10.00-11.00
Ruth Kinghorn, NHS Radiographer	Careers in Radiography	Thurs, May 3rd	1.50-2.50
George White	Chartered Surveyor	Tues, May 15th	10.00-11.00
Lianna King, female engineer	Women In Engineering	Wed, May 16th	1.50-2.50

All confirmed events are on DCHS website and details are shared via form tutors.

- Apprenticeship workshop has been held with Year 11 students who expressed an interest in applying for apprenticeships for summer 18. This included understanding the skills employers look for, identifying student's individual strengths, researching opportunities and beginning application process.
- Further local businesses continue to approach with opportunities for work experience and apprenticeships. All details are shared via form tutors.
- Links with St. Pauls and Swansfield Park have been developing to help support Year 6 students in their transition to DCHS. DCHS 6th form students will be working on some key activities that will help to support this transition. More details will be shared in the coming months.
- The skills pilot with a group of Year 10/11 students to develop student's transferable skills and prepare them for the workplace is proving successful. As part of this programme, the students will now undertake a 4-week work experience with local businesses.
- If any student or parent requires any further careers help or support, they can contact Gill at Pathfinder directly via gill@pathfindernortheast.co.uk to find out more about what Pathfinder can offer.

For more information on what Pathfinder can offer, contact

gill@pathfindernortheast.co.uk

or if you have any careers questions in school please contact

martin.allenby@dchs-alnwick.uk



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British Science Week

**12TH TO 19TH MARCH
HAS SEEN STUDENTS AND
STAFF CELEBRATING
BRITISH SCIENCE WEEK.**

Year 7 students have made compasses and used orienteering techniques to navigate a treasure map.

Year 8 students have found the murderer by analysing a crime scene like true investigators. They have looked at fingerprints and fibre samples to piece together the victim's unfortunate demise. A small group of year 8 students also had the opportunity to investigate the ingredients needed to make the perfect muffin with great success!

Year 9 students have investigated physical and chemical changes looking into eggs and chocolate. We have found it can be harder to melt chocolate than you would think!



Year 10 students have been electroplating in their chemistry lessons. They have successfully turned bronze coins to silver and gold. This linked fantastically with their last topic on electrolysis. We have also talked about legal tender and that although they look nice, those 1p's have more sentimental value than actually money.

It has been great to see students of all ages getting involved in these activities with many year 12 and 13 students helping in the lessons of younger students.



Science is all around us and students have enjoyed doing things a little different to the norm this week.

On Monday 19th March, students were able to bring their parents into the Science department to show them what they had done. A fantastic opportunity for students to be proud of what they have done and explain their learning.

Also this year we've had year 8 girls learning about careers in STEM



subjects and the valuable skills STEM subjects can help students to develop. We have also had Year 12 biologists to Newcastle University doing work on microscopes, and Year 13 Applied Science students investigating fermentation at Anarchy Brewery in Morpeth and giving presentations at Arcinova.

We are continuing our celebrations of science with a trip to the Great North Museum in April with Year 9 students. Watch this space for more opportunities for other year groups!



EXAM PREPARATION

As you will be very aware, the main exam series is nearly upon us. Preparation is the key to success in exams. Some courses contain a coursework or controlled assessment element which can significantly boost overall grades. You should ensure that this has been completed to the best of your ability before you enter the written exams. During the weeks leading up to the exams, you must begin preparation. Following the tips below can alleviate stress and panic.

Start early – there is no time like the present and the earlier you start the more you can get done.

Find out when, where and how you work best – are you an early bird or a night owl? Can you work in your bedroom, dining room, on the sofa? Do you work well alone, in a pair or in a group?

Plan your revision – set up a revision timetable for evenings and weekends and then for whole days during exam leave. Don't forget to include breaks and treats to keep you going.

Have all of your class notes to hand.

Use websites like mymaths, kerboodle, GCSEpod and BBC GCSE bitesize to find out information and make notes.

Condense and summarise key concepts and topics – try to vary your techniques too. This could include mind maps, flashcards, voice recording etc.

Use past papers and mark schemes from the exam board – learn instructions you may be given, practice timings, look at how the paper is marked and the different



types of questions that can come up.

Pay attention in lessons – teachers know how the exam boards allocate marks and will be giving out lots of hints and tips for the exams in lessons. Ask questions too.

Attend extra revision classes where possible.

Buy a revision guide – class teachers will be able to guide you about what to buy.

Alternate between easy and difficult topics and subjects – this will help you to stay focused and motivated.

Revise the more difficult topics when your mind is fresh.

Make sure you know where and when the exams are – this will be on your exam timetable and check with your teachers what equipment you will need too.

Use family and friends to test your knowledge.

Cover all topics – don't rely on topics not appearing on the actual exam.

During exam season it is important to stay healthy. Regular meals, drinks and snacks can improve memory and retention. Try to get eight hours sleep each night but if this is not possible aim to get six hours minimum. Don't try to pull an all nighter!

In the exams make sure you:

Take a bottle of water. (With the label removed)

Listen to the instructions read out at the start of the exam – put your hand up to ask questions if necessary.

Read the questions carefully – especially any words that give instructions e.g. write down, explain, identify, calculate, evaluate etc.

Skip the questions you don't know – you can return to these at the end if you have time.

Know how many questions you have to answer.

Keep an eye on the time.

Double check your answers at the end.

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News from the Sixth Form

Life in the Sixth Form is a busy and challenging time. Assignments and coursework to complete, as are the requirements of any Level 3 qualification. However, we like to think that there is more to life than just school work.

Opportunities to get involved in whole school life are essential to ensure students gain the soft skills alongside their examination results to access their appropriate next steps, be that University, Employment, College or Apprenticeship.

We aim to involve students in **volunteering** either in or outside school, each to complete at least 1 hour per week. There are **enrichment opportunities** on a Thursday afternoon, where students can complete an EPQ research task, producing a 5000 word report on a subject of their choice and which provides a qualification with UCAS points attached (equivalent of half an A2). They can also re-sit English and Maths qualifications or work their body at the gym.

A **work experience week**, where all students are encouraged to get a real-life experience in an area of their choice, is organised for Year 12. Dates this year are **25th – 29th June 2018**. This provides a great opportunity to **"TRY"** the world of work in their chosen field.

During tutor time, time is spent supporting and investigating appropriate next steps using **"UNIFROG"** and **"UCAS"** websites. *(Parents please have a look as there is a mountain of information for you to*

help your son / daughter.) A visit to the **UCAS Careers Fair** at the Metro Radio Arena on **Wednesday 25th April 2018** (we take all Year 12 students), this is then followed up by **Progression Day** on **Thursday 5th July**, when students start to work on Personal Statements and begin considering the University Application Process alongside Apprenticeship opportunities, to keep their options open.

Alongside all of this, students are encouraged and given opportunities to develop as good citizens. Some act as **Peer Mentors**. We also have **Prefects** who support in a more general way around school at Break and Lunch-times.

Extra-curricular activities continue to be a strength of our school and Sixth Form is no different. From Choir, Band, Theatre, Sport and Art, students are encouraged to find joy in expressing themselves and finding new opportunities to shine. I am sure any who saw *We Will Rock You* will agree.

Our mottos are our guiding principles and our Sixth Form is one where we want students to thrive in what can be the most testing of times.

Our aim is to help Year 12 to: **"Develop the confidence to be responsible for their own learning and success".**

By the end of Year 13 we want them to be: **"Ready to embrace their future with confidence and enthusiasm"**

Some quotes from our students:

"Each Department is its own community; there's a place for any student in this school"
"A creative and fun environment with extra-curricular activities for all interests"
"Links with career opportunities and working businesses helped me to plan my future"
"We're encouraged to broaden horizons and explore future paths"
"A positive place to learn and grow"
"Dedicated study periods encourage time management and independence"

Charitable work is also important. We have raised over £1250 this year, from cake sales to climbing Ben Nevis indoors, to support both local and national charities.

Our next venture is for **all Sixth Form to run 1Km for Sport Relief on Friday 23rd March**.



We want our Sixth Form to be a transition from Compulsory Education to an appreciation of Learning and how it can enrich lives academically, financially, socially and spiritually.

If you wish more details, and feel that this is the place for you, please contact us.

We also have our own **6th Form Newsletter** which gives greater detail and insight into 6th Form life at The Duchess's Community High School.

If you are a current year 11 or 12 parent and would like to help us in a more 'hands on' way by joining our Parents Forum please email: Denise.Drummond@dchs-alnwick.uk

Denise Drummond, Head of Sixth Form

Tell us about medical needs and medication!

We keep records in school of information supplied to us by parents/ carers to enable us to support students with medical conditions.

Details of the full policy, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions, are on our website as well as copies of forms to complete should your child need medication while at school. Please read the information and complete the relevant forms if your child has a condition we should be aware of. It is your responsibility to inform us of any condition, change to a condition or medication for your child.



CREATIVE ARTS FACULTY

ART DEPARTMENT NEWS

CCAD

Year 12 students had the opportunity to attend Cleveland College of Art & Design for a practical experience of both subjects at a higher educational level through traditional darkroom activities and a screen printing/illustration workshop.

Students learnt practices relevant for their A Levels and it was an excellent tool for promoting passion for and an understanding of creative careers and pathways. They all had an fantastic day learning new skills and techniques and were able to gain valuable evidence for their coursework. The day was concluded by a creative visual lecture informing the students about further education and possibilities in the design industry.

ARTS AWARD

We are happy to announce that we had a selection of Year 11 students who have recently gained their Bronze Arts Award through a live project at The Alnwick Playhouse. Students were asked to redesign the toilets and dressing room areas, linking it to a 1920s theme. Students worked with artists and craftsmen to bring their designs to life and spent a whole day installing. Students gained a wide range of skills and grew in confidence, which has since shone through in their coursework and exam projects.

Another group of students gained their Arts Award through the Youth Theatre Group in Alnwick.

Congratulations to all - a fantastic achievement.



ARTICULATE ART PROJECT

Students from Year 10 and and 11 Art and Photography have completed a fantastic project with the Laing Art Gallery and poet James Whitman in response to the Paul Nash exhibition, and the students' own project themes. This included a trip to the gallery to see the shows, an artist workshop day at school and culminated in an excellent exhibition at the gallery which students were able to visit. One of the main aims of the Art and Photography GCSE is for students to learn how to develop ideas and reflect on their work, as well as learning to really understand Art in the real world, and this project has really helped students to do that. It was exciting for students to see their work out on public display. Well done to all the students involved!

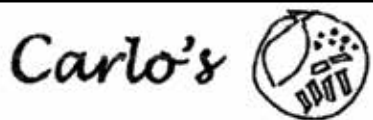




Photography Competition Winner

A huge congratulations to **Daisy Barnes** for being a winner in the **Great Exhibition of the North Photography competition!** This fantastic shot of Thrunton Woods at Christmas has won Daisy a great prize and will be exhibited as a part of the Great Exhibition of the North. It was a regional competition with a large number of entries.

Very well done!



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WORLD BOOK DAY

Our original plans for World Book Day on Thursday 1st March were foiled due to inclement weather conditions, but we rescheduled it to Thursday 8th March and went ahead with our activities regardless.

World Book day is a celebration of authors, illustrators, books and most importantly, of reading! It is the biggest celebration of its kind and is celebrated in over 100 countries across the world.

Therefore, KS3 students spent the morning doing a range of 'book related activities' which they thoroughly enjoyed and there were a range of additional activities and competitions held throughout the day which all students were able to participate in if they wished to. Some students and staff came to school dressed as a book character and there were some fantastic costumes - thank you and well done to everybody who did so

and to some of our parents who made some very creative outfits.

In addition to the range of activities, students were also given a book token to exchange for either a free book or to put towards a book of their own choice.

This is the first time that World Book Day has been celebrated at DCHS, so having learned from our experience this year, we are already planning bigger things for next year..... my personal thanks go to all of the staff who took part, in particular Mrs McRoberts, our fantastic librarian, who was involved in the organisation of the event from the beginning, Mr Oliver, who organised the 'Book Character Treasure Hunt', Mrs Lawson, Head of English who shared some great ideas and Mrs McQueen in reprographics who did an extraordinary amount of photocopying!



Cartoonist Visit for Year 7

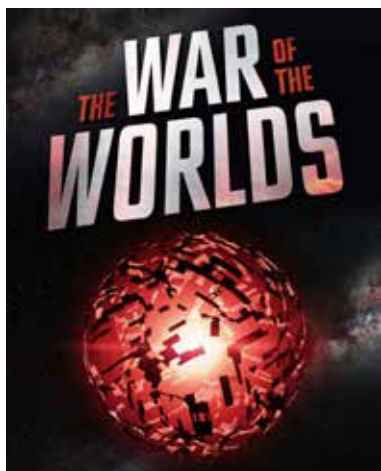
On Tuesday 20th February, we had a famous cartoonist, Kev Sutherland, at DCHS to work with a group of Year 7 students.

Kev draws some of the popular Beano cartoon strips, such as Dennis the Menace, and also works on some of the Marvel characters and comics. The purpose of the session was to develop writing skills and students created their own cartoon characters and storylines, as well as being drawn personally in 'cartoon style' by Kev. They learned a great deal about the 'cartoon strip making process' and were able to 'tell stories with pictures' during the session.

We really enjoyed hosting Kev and the students thoroughly enjoyed the session.



Theatre Visit for Year 8



On Thursday, 8th February, some Year 8 students went to see an evening performance of 'The War of the Worlds' at The Northern Stage in Newcastle in preparation for an upcoming unit of work based on the story in the Summer Term.

The production consisted of 4 actors taking different roles through which to tell the story of some aliens from Mars landing on Earth and trying to take over the World. Unusually, the aliens landed at Alnmouth! The students thoroughly enjoyed the experience and their behaviour throughout the visit was impeccable-they were a delight to take and were a credit to themselves, to the school and to their parents.

RAF ROADSHOW

February saw the RAF roadshow visit DCHS with their Jet fuelled extravaganza! All Year 8 and Year 9 students attended the roadshow which explained the Physics of flying; looking at lift, drag, weight and of course thrust. The students all had to cover their ears when the Jet engine was fired up reaching over 100 decibels and 600 degrees Celsius!! Ear splitting stuff!

Students also got to see how the RAF now use drone technology to perform intricate tasks and as a bit of fun they saw drones play musical instruments, and catch and throw balls.



Impressively the RAF drones can reach over 200mph chasing cars and using face recognition technology - real James Bond action!

Students got to take part in the demonstrations on airflow with giant fans and beach balls and were able to ask the RAF Engineer questions about careers, sports, aircraft and experiences. A great time had by all and we look forward to having the roadshow visit again in the future!



SPORT

GIRLS' SPORT

HOCKEY

The dark nights and no hockey pitch on site have been very limiting to the Duchess's hockey teams as they have nowhere to train on a regular basis. Training for matches happens when we play on flood lit astros at Morpeth and Newcastle. However the U15's with consistent team selection and hard work on the pitch are now becoming much more tactically aware and have been playing teams who have a 4 year head start, as the private schools have been playing together since Yr5. They are growing in confidence and Captain **Ruby Wyld**'s inspirational play and organisation really motivates the team. Their season came to a positive end reaching the semi finals at the County Tournament with some spirited play which really boosted their confidence, only losing 1 match. A recent league 2-1 win over Kings and beating NHSG 1-0 in the tournament have been real highlights. This season has had mixed fortunes for the other squads. The majority of the U13s are totally new to hockey and only saw their first hockey pitch when they played RGS on their on-

site astro! A steep learning curve. **Harriet Robson, Emma Walsingham, Holly Spencer** and **Joely Hindmarsh** have been playing hockey with Morpeth Ladies and their experience is a real boost to their respective teams. The U18 have enjoyed playing a few matches fitting them in between their school work and part time jobs.

NETBALL

We have practiced every Tuesday night all through the winter and had a great turn-out particularly from juniors.

Year 9 have been particularly keen and have shown great improvement throughout the year.

Year 10 have had some great performances this season and continue to have a positive attitude.

Seniors had a good start to the season but unfortunately demands of work have affected their commitment.

There are a number of girls playing regularly at Alnwick Ladies who train at Willowburn on Tuesday evenings.

FOOTBALL

The football has been on hold for a while since our last fixtures before Christmas. Unfortunately we had to withdraw our U16 team from the league due to lack of players, which was a shame, however a new U13 league has just started which is great news for our year 7's. We have lots of year 7 players who are keen to play and are already part of a local club or academy. I have high hopes for our year 7 team coming through and I hope the interest continues all the way through to year 11. We have recently



played our first round matches on Monday (12th March) against Bedlington and Coates school. We won our first game against Coates, but unfortunately lost our game against Bedlington, who were an all year 8 team, some of whom play club and academy level. We have our second round of matches on Monday (19th March) against Rothbury and Berwick- so fingers crossed we come away with two wins. It is great to have such high interest from the



girls and they have a great enthusiasm and excitement for the game, we also have some newcomers to the sport, which is great to see. The other girls have been really supportive of those new to the sport, showing encouragement and also supporting in giving them some coaching during game play, which has been really nice to see. Keep up the good work girls.

CROSS COUNTRY

First challenge of the year was the Tyne Area - Junior and Inters won this event with 9 girls chosen to represent North Northumberland at the County event Temple Park. Well done to **Millie Breese** yr8, **Beth Carragher, Sophie Robinson** Yr13, **Eve Buddle** and **Lauren Brown** Yr8 who were selected to represent Northumberland at the Inter Counties at Barnard Castle on 3rd February. Special mention to Millie and Lauren who then won through to the National Finals in Leeds on the 17th of March. Sophie is first reserve. **Good Luck!**



RUGBY

It has been a busy year so far with regards to the girls' rugby. We have attended many festival's all over Northumberland and have had a lot of interest from all year groups. This is fantastic news for girls' rugby, which seems to be an up and coming sport for our girls. We have luckily had the opportunity to have rugby coaches come in and deliver some lessons for our students, but also run our girls after school club too, which I think is one of the reasons our girls have really taken a liking to rugby. It has been a pleasure to take the students to these festivals and watch how the girls have grown in confidence in their ability and not be afraid to get stuck into a tackle (I have seen some of our smallest year 7's take on seriously strong girls and successfully bring them down). We have a couple of

festivals left this year, but we are really looking forward to the beach rugby festival in the Summer.

CRICKET

Congratulations to **Harriet Robson** Yr9 and **Emma Wolsingham** Yr7 who train and play with the County squad and they have been training hard through the winter. Harriet is also on the National Development Squad. **Outstanding!**

BADMINTON

At the recent area competition the Yr10 Duchess's teams competed against 4 other teams from Berwick and Longridge Towers. They came second. Well done to the teams of **Jess Moses, Laura Murphy, Hannah Taylor, Anna McQueen** and **Lauren Shepard, Megan Spours, Jess Crossman, Olivia English, Ailsa Batley**.



Lauren Shepard, Megan Spours, Jess Crossman, Olivia English, Ailsa Batley.



Jess Moses, Laura Murphy, Hannah Taylor, Anna McQueen.

ALNWICK AND DISTRICT SPORTS AWARDS

DCHS students won the following categories for excelling in their respective sports:

Junior female **Harriet Robson** Yr9 (Cricket)
 Junior male **Thomas Prentice** Yr10 (Cycling)
 Junior Team Cricket U/13 boys and Harriers U/13 girls XC
 Most Improved - **Holly Desborough** (Rugby)
 Overall award voted by the public
Alnwick Ladies Football team
 including: **Kitty Lindley** Yr12, **Jade Barrett** Yr12, **Ash Grisdale** Yr13

The evening was superbly hosted by **Kitty Lindley** and **Jack Balmbro**, both Yr12 students.

BOYS' SPORT



BADMINTON

Both boys badminton squads have enjoyed very successful tournaments this term.

The two key stage 3 teams are pictured left.

The 'A' team comprises **James Taylor, Gregor Batley, Matthew Parks** and **James Carragher**.

In the 'B' team we have **Ethan Fagg, Matty Straker, Laurie Blackburn** and **Thomas Davison**.

In the area round held at Willowburn Sports Centre both teams performed well. The 'A' team won all their matches and the 'B' team only lost 1 match (to the other Duchess team). So the 'A' team moved forward as North Northumberland champions to the county round held at Blyth Sports Centre.

The team started well with a comfortable victory over Cramlington. Ashington were overcome in double quick time. The 3rd match was a really tight affair against a physically much larger team from St Benet Biscops, we eventually lost 3-2 in games, 74-67 in points. In the final game we lost to a talented team from Ponteland. Ultimately the boys finished in a very creditable 3rd place. The boys are in year 8 in a year 9 competition so should go well

next year. The action shot is of **James Taylor**.



The key stage 4 competition followed a similar format. The area round at Willowburn produced identical results in that the 'A' team finished first with the 'B'

team finishing second. The 'B' team of **Oli Telfer, Jamie Kelly, Cameron Prentice** and **Harvey Wort** ran the 'A' team close and even took a game off them in a very exciting match.

So the 'A' team of **Iain Taylor, Spike Patton, Oscar Patton** and **Hugh Shackleton** moved forward to the county round again at Blyth. Team pictured left.

The boys played with great determination and no little skill in every game. Fighting hard for every point. In the end we finished 3rd because of the group system although we were the 2nd best team there. The boys won 3 games and lost 1 to eventual winners KEVI Morpeth. They were a year young so will go back again next year with high hopes.

RUGBY

Three Duchess's High School students have represented Northumberland Rugby at under 16 level.

Reece Gaines, Harry Paul and **Josh Lowes** were all involved in an opening game victory against Cumbria. When they played Durham Josh (2) and Harry scored tries in another victory.



Important Calendar Dates

Thursday, March 2

School closes for Easter holiday

March 28 – April 5: Lagny, France Trip

March 31 - April 7: Ski Trip

Monday, April 16

School reopens after Easter holiday
Progress Check 3 for Y11/12/13 opens

Thursday, April 19

Y7 Subject Parents' Evening

Friday, April 20

Progress Check 3 for Y11/12/13 closes

Wednesday, April 25

Y12 to Higher Education Fair at Metro Arena

Monday, April 30

Progress Check 3 for Y9/10 opens

Friday, May 4

Progress Check 3 for Y9/10 closes

Monday, May 7: May Day Holiday

Tuesday, May 8

Progress Check 3 for Y7/8 opens

Thursday, May 10

Y11 Presentation Evening

Friday, May 11

Progress Check 3 for Y7/8 closes

Monday, May 14

Summer Exams begin

Thursday, May 17

Y9 Subject Parents' Evening

Thursday, May 24

Y11 Leavers Assembly

Friday, May 25

School closes for Summer Mid Term holiday

Monday, June 4

School reopens after Summer Mid Term holiday

Thursday, June 7

Y8 Subject Parents' Evening

Wednesday, June 13

Y12 Parents' Higher Education Information Evening

Monday, June 18

Progress Check 4 for Y9/10 opens

Friday, June 22

Progress Check 4 for Y9/10 closes
Final day for GCSE exams

Tuesday, June 26

Last day for GCE Level exam

June 22 -24: Y12 Stratford Trip

June 25 – 29: Y12 Work Experience Week

Monday, June 25

PC4 for Y7/8 opens

Tuesday, June 26

Y7 Presentation Evening

Thursday, June 28

Y8 Presentation Evening

Friday, June 29

PC4 for Y7/8 closes
Y13 Leavers' Dinner

July 2 – 6 Y12 Ecology Field Studies week

Tuesday, July 3

Y10 Presentation Evening

Thursday, July 5

Y6 Transition Day
Y12 Progression Day
Transition Evening for parents (6 – 7.45pm)

Friday, July 6

Y11 Prom

July 8 – 13: Public Services Expedition Week

Thursday, July 12

Y9 Presentation Evening

July, Friday 20

School closes for Summer Holidays

AS & A2 Results – 16 August 2018

GCSE Results – 23 August 2018

Monday 3 and Tuesday 4 September

Training Days



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