

# NEWSLETTER

THE DUCHESS'S COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL, ALNWICK



AUTUMN 2013

## Headteacher's Report

Welcome to our Autumn 2013 Newsletter. I don't know where the time goes but it feels only yesterday since we started the term at the beginning of September.

It has been a real pleasure to welcome our new students to the school at a time when I believe we are making big strides to provide that Outstanding Learning Experience mentioned in my September letter. Our Year 9s especially have confirmed all the positives that their Middle School information identified – talented, well behaved, and showing huge potential. I talk a lot in school about creating good 'habits' of

learning – this is certainly the case for many of our Year 9s.

We want Ofsted to return to an Outstanding School, our young people deserve this. In our day to day reviews of how the school operates we are seeing more and more outstanding experiences for our students. When prospective parents



and visitors walk around during the day they are struck by the calm, positive atmosphere and relationships that exist. Our 2013 outcomes emphasise all of this; very successful outcomes for many of our academic and vocational subjects and for our students at both Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form. I know I keep pushing the line 'all things to all people' but we do truly need to be a comprehensive school because we have a comprehensive intake. This is what makes our school a really challenging and rewarding place to work. Not every teacher could work and succeed in our school and I am very proud of the improvements we have made in the quality of our teaching over the years. We are not the finished article but the time and effort that many of my colleagues put in is testament to their understanding of the diverse nature of our school community. To see more A\*/A grades this year, more Free School Meals students making more than expected progress, more students excelling at a wide variety of courses and finally more students than ever before going to top quality courses at good universities is extremely rewarding.

In order to improve the school further we have made some important changes to our Leadership structures. Alongside George Adamson as Deputy Headteacher we have promoted both Linda Armstrong and Gill Maitland to similar positions. Added to this we have promoted Martin Allenby, Jaquie Steel, Lisa Smith and Alan Rogers to Assistant Headteacher positions. These colleagues will continue with the roles they had previously but they will now also have whole school responsibilities in order to

build capacity to manage changes that a) we want to make and b) we are being forced to make by a Government that clearly feels that the status quo is not an option! We have also promoted Ruth Brown, our Head of Art, to a position overseeing our Creative Arts (Art, Music, Media, and Photography). We feel that we have real strength here and want to explore a more cohesive, long term approach to making this area a symbol of much that is excellent about our school.

Finally, you may have picked up in the Gazette that we now have been informed of the three final bidders for our New School build. Staff and Governors are continuing to move this forward. Soon we will be discussing ideas with our students as we seek to 'personalise' our new build and stamp our individual ethos on this significant development. It is still happening and still on schedule for a September 2016 opening!

As I said in my September letter we want to make sure we are available to listen and respond to any concerns or questions you have. This is the part of the year when we are setting targets all the way through our community from individual students to whole school. I very much hope that you will engage with us in this process so we are able to challenge and support our young people together in an honest and open way.

Wishing you all the best over the coming months.

  
Maurice Hall Headteacher

November 2013

## E-safety

### Do you know what your child is doing online?

#### Below is a list of some of the activities your child could be doing online:

- Socialising which can include social networking, instant messaging, web chats and chat rooms.
- Gaming
- Sharing pictures, videos, personal information and location.
- Searching for information.



#### What are the risks?

- Cyber bullying
- Grooming
- Inappropriate websites
- Losing control over pictures and videos

#### What can you do to protect your child online?

- Talk to your child about what they view online.
- Make sure your child knows who their friends are on social networking sites.
- Be careful about the information and images they share.
- Turn off location settings.
- Set parent controls.
- Set boundaries.
- Know how to report and block other users.
- Know who they're talking to.

#### Do you know what your child's mobile phone can do?

Most mobile phones have access to the internet without any restrictions. Contact your service provider to find out if parental settings can be set up. You need to be aware that accessing the internet through Wi-Fi may mean that the safety settings no longer apply.

For further information visit

[www.thinkyounow.co.uk](http://www.thinkyounow.co.uk)

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# MUSIC CALENDAR

## Dates from the Music Calendar for Autumn and Spring

The dates for Autumn are as follows:

**Saturday November 16th** • Choir and band rehearsal in school (9.45 – 3pm)

**Thursday November 21st** • Variety Show in MSH for all school ensembles and A Level soloists

**Thursday December 12th** • Rotary Christmas Lunch for all choirs (in school time)

**Monday December 16th** • Federation Carol Service at St Paul's Church (Choirs, Celidh Band, Windband)

**Wednesday December 18th** • Mayor's Carol Service (Choirs and Ceilidh Band) 7pm at St Michael's Church, Alnwick

**Friday December 20th** • Prize Day (Choirs and Bands)

For the Spring Term as things are mostly "in the pipeline" but here are some definites:

**Friday 31st January** • New Year Ceilidh in MSH

**Week beginning February 3rd** • GCSE Performance Week

**Week beginning February 10th** • A Level Performance Week

**Wednesday 5th –**

**Saturday 8th March** • MUSICAL "Return To The Forbidden Planet"



*Lots more to come!*

# Numeracy

**Numeracy means many different things to different people.**

Some see numeracy as the foundation of mathematics, the concepts learnt in school and necessary for understanding more advanced mathematics, such as quadratic equations and statistical analysis.

Some see numeracy purely as the ability to perform simple number calculations

Others define numeracy in terms of its purpose or its function: numeracy skills are those you need to do a job (for example, using spreadsheets, calculating invoices) or to be an engaged citizen (for example, making sense of statistics reported in the media).

However the international description of mathematical literacy is:

"Mathematical literacy is an individual's capacity to identify and understand the role that mathematics plays in the world, to make well-founded judgements and to use and engage with mathematics in ways that meet the needs of that individual's life as a constructive, concerned and reflective citizen". (PISA)

This definition implies the skills needed for solving problems, processing information, making decisions and interpreting data are essential. Being numerate is about appreciating number relationships and interpreting answers, and not just about doing calculations.

So here are some examples of what we mean by numeracy:

- being able to assess statistics used by advertisers or politicians and really understand what they are saying



- being able to manage family budgets – credit cards, not getting into debt, offers at supermarkets .
- being able to estimate – in all kinds of situations, e.g. journey speed, time and costs.



## NEW MEMBER OF STAFF



Mrs H Curry

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# The Year That Is

The North East is somewhere that will always hold fond memories for me as it is where I completed my undergraduate degree in English Literature, at Newcastle University.

I moved up to Scotland to complete my teacher training at Moray House School of Education, Edinburgh University, but couldn't stay away from the rolling hills of Northumberland for too long and this job at the Duchess' seemed like the perfect reason to return!

It's been a busy 8 weeks and time has certainly flown by! It seems only yesterday that I first arrived here at DCHS; a Newly Qualified Teacher ready to start my career.

The past half term has not been without its challenges; a new country, a new curriculum and a new school. But staff and students alike have been more than welcoming and made the transition all the easier!

As the countdown to Christmas begins I am looking forward to further challenges and getting to know the school and its people all the better. I hope that this term will be just the start of an exciting career at DCHS!

**Mrs H Curry**

# 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 are 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:  
LIST North (Child Employment)

Lion House, Willowburn Industrial Estate, Alnwick NE66 2PF

Tel: 01670 623344



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## EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PERSONS

# THE LAW SAYS

THAT IF I WORK, THE FOLLOWING RULES APPLY UNTIL I REACH SCHOOL LEAVING AGE, AN APPLICATION FORM SIGNED BY MY PARENTS AND EMPLOYER SHOULD BE COMPLETED AND SENT TO THE ADDRESS BELOW BEFORE I START WORKING.

|                           | I CAN WORK ON   | DURING THE FOLLOWING HOURS: -   |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---|
| WHEN I AM<br><b>13/14</b> | SCHOOLDAYS      | Not more than a total of two hours in one day during the following periods:-<br>a) In the mornings between 7 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.<br>b) In the evening between close of school and 7 p.m. |
|                           | SATURDAYS       | 5 hours a day between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.   |
|                           | SUNDAYS         | Only 2 hours between 7 a.m. and 11 a.m.   |
|                           | SCHOOL HOLIDAYS | 5 hours a day on any weekday (except Sundays) between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.<br>But total hours worked <b>MUST NOT EXCEED 25 HOURS</b>   |
| WHEN I AM<br><b>15/16</b> | SCHOOLDAYS      | Not more than a total of two hours in one day during the following periods:-<br>a) In the mornings between 7 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.<br>b) In the evening between close of school and 7 p.m. |
|                           | SATURDAYS       | 8 hours a day between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.   |
|                           | SUNDAYS         | Only 2 hours between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.  |
|                           | SCHOOL HOLIDAYS | 8 hours a day on any weekday (except Sundays) between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. -<br>But total hours worked <b>MUST NOT EXCEED 35 HOURS</b>   |

COMPULSORY SCHOOL AGE FOR ALL CHILDREN IS THE LAST FRIDAY IN JUNE IN THEIR FINAL YEAR  
APPLICATION FORMS AND THE BYE-LAWS PROHIBITING CERTAIN EMPLOYMENTS AND SPECIFYING OTHER CONDITIONS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM:-

LIST North (Child Employment)  
Lion House  
Willowburn Industrial Estate  
Alnwick  
NE66 2PF

TEL: 01670 624802/623343

THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE

# Hair and Beauty

In hair and beauty we learn different hair styles, how to keep our hair healthy and how to style, blow dry and shampoo hair. We also learn how to make hair ups, curls and plaits. We learn about the correct shampoos and conditioners to use on certain types of hair.

The things we enjoy most about Hair and Beauty lessons are the practical's. We enjoy creating hair styles for our friends. We talk quite a lot but still get on with our project but there is a lot of theory with writing to do - it is so hard and confusing this part of hairdressing!. But, we have a laugh and get carried away. It's so interesting how you can style hair and it is fun to do because there are lots of people to talk to in hair and beauty. It has made us so confident to do our own hair at home. We really enjoy hair and beauty and hope to get a qualification in hairdressing.

**Aimme Mallan & Andrea Purvis Y10**





## German Study Trip to the Rhineland: July 12th–18th 2013

**The programme combined visits to famous historic landmarks as well as opportunities for exercise & fun. There were activities each evening in the hotel's meeting room and students had the opportunity to use their German in real life situations.**

The Hotel Rheinlust in Boppard has a lift and free wi-fi. Each room has its own private facilities and the food was amazingly good.

The study element encompassed a range of experiences - students learned about the legend to do with Loreley and found out about the history of the castle at Marksburg which dates from the 12th Century and is the only castle on the

Rhine that has never been destroyed and rebuilt. We visited the military fortress of Ehrenbreitstein, and learned about the history of "Germania" or the Niederwalddenkmal, built in 1871 to commemorate the victims of the 30 Years War.

One of my personal favourites was the very relaxing trip down the Rhine where students learned about the history of the

area through its castles along both sides of the Rhine. For many students there were a number of new experiences: the cable-car ride in Rudesheim, chair-lift in Boppard and large cable-car over the River Rhine at Koblenz were all great fun.

In terms of sporting activities the group took part in swimming and ten-pin bowling, we also did lots of walking to get to places each day of the trip and during the 3 hours shopping in Koblenz, as well getting to all the rides at Phantasialand Theme Park! Socialising was a key feature of the trip and in the evenings the students played bingo in German and became a celebrity for the Murder Mystery Evening. The last evening was one of celebration as each student was awarded a certificate which stated how they had uniquely added to the group and helped make the trip into a great success. As well as the prizes of German pens etc. for everyone there were individual

prizes for being the fastest down the slide at the swimming pool, for being the best detective and for having the best costume at the Murder Mystery, as well as for the highest scores at bowling and various winners from the Bingo and Quiz Evenings. Our aim was for all the students to arrive home safely in England having had a great time abroad with us. From the comments of the students and the parents I am sure that we achieved our goal. We were proud of our students throughout the trip and were very pleased to receive compliments from just about everyone: the hotel, swimming pool, bus driver to name a few. This July my colleagues and I had an absolutely fantastic time in the Rhineland with 42 students from Year 9. Miss Hogg, Mrs R. Brown, Mrs Jurke, Mr Hay and Mr Brown would like to say a big thank you to everyone who made the trip so special. :-)



## Important Calendar Dates

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Monday, December 9    | Progress Check 2 opens                            |
| Thursday, December 12 | All Choirs at Rotary Lunch<br>Holly Ball          |
| Monday, December 16   | Aln Federation Carol Service 6.30 at St Pauls     |
| Thursday, December 19 | Non Uniform Day                                   |
| Friday, December 20   | Prize Day<br>School closes for Christmas Holidays |

## 2014

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Monday, January 6      | Training Day  |
| Tuesday, January 7     | School reopens for Spring Term  |
| Wednesday, January 8   | Parental Surgery – Alnwick  |
| Thursday, January 9    | Parental Surgery – Wooler   |
| Friday, January 10     | Parental Surgery – Seahouses  |
| Monday, January 13     | Mock Exams begin (until January 31)   |
| Thursday, January 16   | Poetry Evening  |
| Tuesday, January 28    | KS4 Options Evening   |
| Wednesday, February 5  | Sixth Form Options Evening  |
| Monday, February 10    | Progress Check 3 opens<br>A Level Music Performance Exams (all week)                              |
| Wednesday, February 12 | Y12 Higher Education morning  |
| Friday, February 14    | Non Uniform Day<br>School closes for Spring Mid Term holiday                                      |
| Monday, February 24    | School reopens after Spring Mid Term holiday  |
| Monday, March 3        | SEN Open Afternoon<br>GCSE Music Performance Exams (all week)<br>School Musical – Dress Rehearsal |
| Tuesday, March 4       | School Musical – Dress Rehearsal  |
| Wednesday, March 5     | School Musical – Alnwick Playhouse  |
| Thursday, March 6      | School Musical – Alnwick Playhouse  |
| Friday, March 7        | School Musical – Alnwick Playhouse  |
| Saturday, March 8      | School Musical – Alnwick Playhouse  |
| Monday, March 24       | Consultation Day<br>GCSE Art Exams (all week)   |

## Important Calendar Dates

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Monday, March 31           | Progress Check 4 opens<br>A Level Art and Photography Exams (all week)                |
| Friday, April 4            | Non Uniform Day<br>School closes for Easter Holidays                                  |
| Tuesday, April 22          | School reopens after Easter Holiday   |
| Friday, May 2              | Training Day  |
| Monday, May 5              | May Day Holiday   |
| Friday, May 9              | GCSE Exams begin (until June 24)  |
| Monday, May 12             | AS Exams begin (until June 10)  |
| Friday, May 23             | Non Uniform Day<br>Y13 Leavers Assembly<br>School closes for Summer Half Term Holiday |
| Monday, June 2             | School reopens after Summer Half Term Holiday<br>A2 Exams begin (until June 24)       |
| Monday 9 – Friday 13, June | Y8 Parental Interviews  |
| Wednesday, June 11         | Y12 Higher Education Evening for parents/<br>student finance                          |
| Monday, June 16            | Progress Check 5 opens  |
| Tuesday, June 17           | Y12 Higher Education Day  |
| Friday, June 20            | Y13 Leavers Dinner  |
| Friday, June 27            | Y11 Prom<br>University Open Day – Newcastle/Northumbria                               |
| Monday, June 30            | Y12 Work Experience Week begins   |
| Tuesday, July 1            | Y10 Presentation Evening  |
| Thursday, July 3           | Y8 Intake Day   |
| Friday, July 4             | Y7 Sports Day   |
| Monday, July 7             | Y10 Exams (all week)  |
| Thursday, July 10          | Y9 Presentation Evening   |
| Friday, July 18            | Non School Uniform Day<br>School closes for Summer Holidays                           |
| Thursday, August 14        | AS/A2 Results   |
| Thursday, August 21        | GCSE Results  |
| Monday, September 1        | Training Day  |



## NEW MEMBER OF STAFF



### Mr T Hillman

Moving north east to the beautiful and peaceful Northumberland countryside is about as far removed from the hectic hustle and bustle of Inner London teaching as possible! I now live on a farm and am preparing for the arrival of our first Alpacas – I used to live in a flat in London with a potted-plant and no garden! Though change is good; and it is the welcome from the whole Duchess community that has made it just so. The science department have made me feel right at home already in my role as Head of Biology. I know Mr Aston will be sorely missed by many; and I know I have some big boots to fill – but I feel like the staff and students are going to make that transition an easy one!

#### About me:

I completed my undergraduate degree in Sports Physiotherapy at St. Mary's college in Twickenham, south west London, and began working with injury specialists, Sports

trainers, and physiotherapists in central London. I have a keen interest in Human Anatomy and Physiology, Biomechanics and gait analysis, and so it was intriguing studying and treating sportsmen and women from various fields of athletics and team sports and also some of the most dedicated patients from the armed forces.

Not the greatest sportsperson myself but I do like to stay active and enjoy long-distance running which has given me some of my favourite achievements such as completing the New York and London Marathons for charities. Next year I will complete my 5th Great North Run – which is easily the best distance event this country has to offer! I also adore snowboarding as the three fractured ribs (and counting) are testament to!

I've been lucky enough to have travelled to many different countries and take in various cultures and experiences including 5 day weddings in Kolkata, climbing Mt. Kinabalu, visiting Orang-utans in Borneo, accidental spear-fishing in Fiji and caving in New Zealand. Even temporarily being kidnapped in Mumbai!

Eight years ago I went back to St. Mary's college to complete my Science PGCE and have since been teaching in London. Most recently I worked in North Wembley as Head of Science for three years before moving north; and it is great to get back to my Biology roots (excuse the pun).

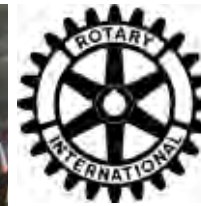
Highlights already include; inheriting a fantastic tutor group in year 10, and supervising the successful dissection of horse legs at the Open Evening with Jamie (year 10) and my fabulous sixth form Biology Leaders – not something I would regularly be doing in London! I'm now looking forward to the joint Biology and Geography field trip

to Iceland in the Easter break, although it means I will miss out on the science trip to London and my second home – the Natural History Museum. I'm also thinking of signing up for the DCHS Ski trip next year, but I'm not sure my ribs can take it!

"The world as we have created it is a process of our thinking. It cannot be changed without changing our thinking." This quote from one of my heroes, Albert Einstein, reminds me of the continually changing nature of our world; whether that's the ever changing world of education or the persistently evolving wider world that our students will be entering. It

reflects how we as teachers have to adapt to this changing world, adapt our methods of teaching, our outlook, and change with every new generation of students that we work with. It also resonates with me of how privileged I am to be working with my new colleagues at Duchess's and within this community. Finally then, to paraphrase one of my favourite scientists: "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change." – Charles R Darwin

**T. Hillman** Head of Biology



## Rotary International Design & Engineering Competition

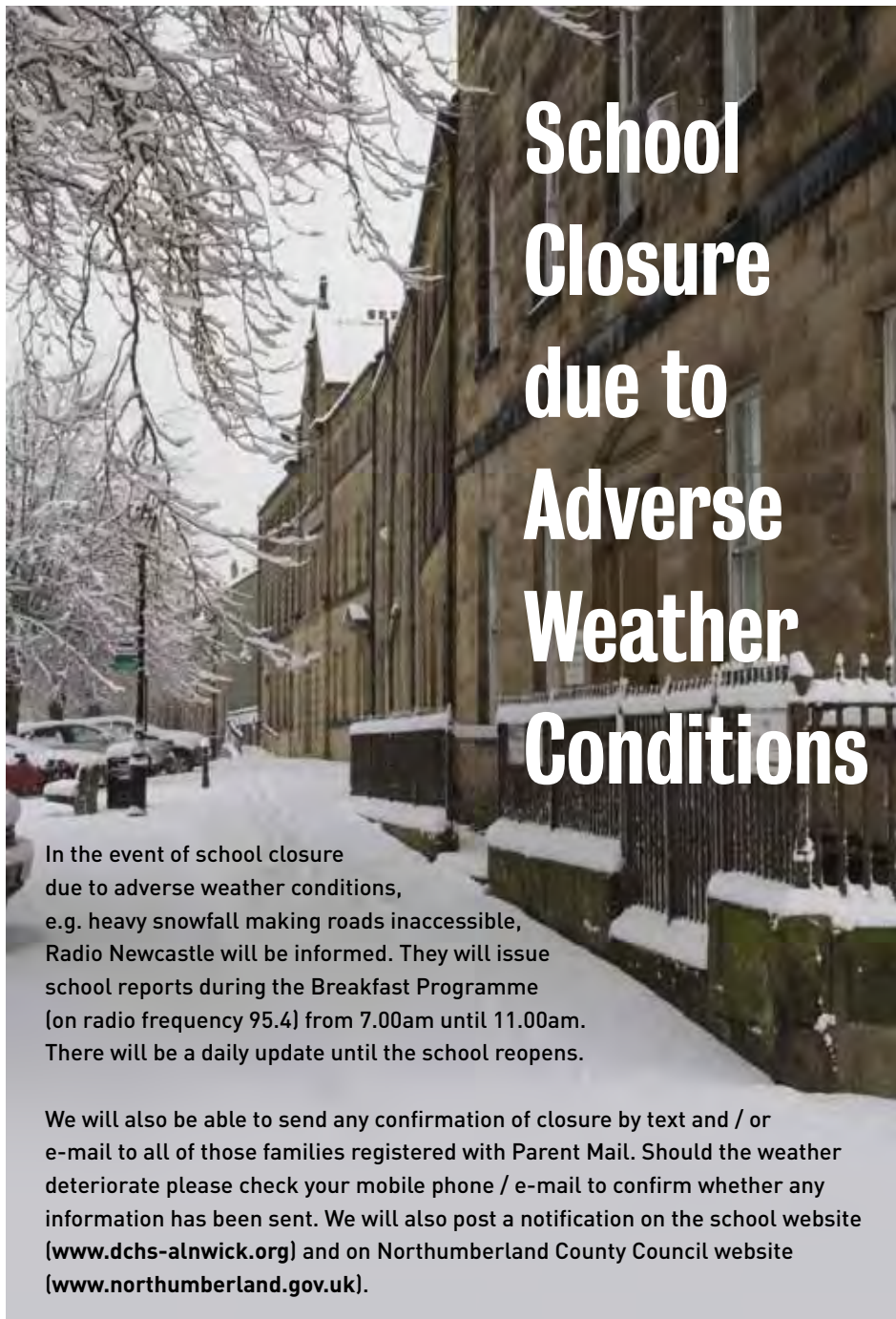
**Stu McCormack** and I had the pleasure of taking three of our fantastic GCSE, AS and A2 students to The Discovery Museum, Newcastle – **Matthew Jordan, Annie Davison & Jack Wyld**. There were a number of local schools competing for a small number of prizes and two main categories – Pre-16 and Post-16. Matthew won **First Prize** in his category and £150 Prize money. Matthew and Jack also won **Eldon Square Vouchers** during a Treasure hunt task.



All three represented the school in a fantastic manner. They were eloquent, polite and presented their products very well. The judges and organisers commented on the very high standard of all students involved. Our students were also awarded a **Silver Crest Award** each for their projects.

If you see them around school, pass on your congratulations. **Sarah Denton**





# School Closure due to Adverse Weather Conditions

In the event of school closure due to adverse weather conditions, e.g. heavy snowfall making roads inaccessible, Radio Newcastle will be informed. They will issue school reports during the Breakfast Programme (on radio frequency 95.4) from 7.00am until 11.00am. There will be a daily update until the school reopens.

We will also be able to send any confirmation of closure by text and / or e-mail to all of those families registered with Parent Mail. Should the weather deteriorate please check your mobile phone / e-mail to confirm whether any information has been sent. We will also post a notification on the school website ([www.dchs-alnwick.org](http://www.dchs-alnwick.org)) and on Northumberland County Council website ([www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk)).

# SPORT

## School representation in sport

Over the remainder of this academic year, your child may be selected to represent the school in a sporting competition. This may involve travelling on buses or walking to local venues from school and then representing a school team. Information regarding these activities will be passed through your child via the daily bulletin and/or specific Facebook groups. You do not need to respond to this message; the school will assume that you give permission for this type of activity unless you contact Mr S Harrop (Head of PE) to specifically request that your child does not participate in this type of event.

Should you have any queries or do not wish your child to participate in future, please contact Mr Harrop so that we can update our system.

## GREAVES GRINDLE

*Chartered Accountants*

Victoria House, Bondgate Within, Alnwick, Northumberland NE66 1TA

Telephone: 01665 510222 / 603460



Nick Robertson kicks off a new year of sport.

## Boys Sports report

The pleasant weather this term has led to all school fixtures being completed. Thanks go to all the many staff involved and to the parents/carers for being so patient and helpful whilst waiting for buses to return.

The school rugby teams have been busy playing friendly, league and cup fixtures. Initial worries about lack of numbers were soon dispelled as the squad sizes grew as the term went on.

All three teams have progressed in the cup fixtures and are sitting in the middle

of their respective leagues. The U14 area squad has been selected and the school has 6 representatives: **Rory Davidson, Tom Harrop, Nick Robertson, Ollie Tulip, Joe Tudor, and Dan Phillips.**

At U18 level, **Nick Clarkson** and **Joe Phillips** have both been successful in securing county squad selection.

The school football squads also have healthy numbers and are proving competitive in their respective leagues.

**Charlie Caden** (pictured opposite top left) has been chosen for the U14 area squad. **Thomas Slack** has been chosen for the u.15 area squad. Coincidentally, they are both goalkeepers.



Charlie Caden

Perhaps the greatest honour this term is the selection of two U16 boys for the full county squad. **Sam Eastham** and **Josh Briggs** faced stiff opposition in the trials and now represent Northumberland at football.

Worthy of a mention is a carry over from the cricket season. **Ed Brunton** achieved the best bowling figures for a county junior cricketer in England whilst representing Northumberland.

His reward was to receive a sponsorship deal from Gray Nicolls representative **Alistair Cook** at Lords.

Ed is pictured below receiving his award.





## Girls Sports report

Another very busy start has been made to the sporting year by all girls participating in sport, whether recreationally for fun or for more serious competition. The U15, U16 and U18 hockey teams have made a positive start to the new season, the U18s only losing one match so far and the U15 squad is getting larger as more girls want to play for the school. The U15 team are enjoying more success than last year as they are another year more hockey wiser and have a real fighting spirit. The new U14 players show real promise and have made serious progress having played very little 11-a-side before in their Middle Schools and are expected to compete against private schools that have played together for 4 years already! Our three football teams have made a great start in

the County league (4 wins, 2 draws and 2 losses) and we have given girls in our Yr8 feeder middle schools the opportunity to play in the U14 league and they have loved the experience. All four netball teams have had satisfying victories too and the U18s reached the semis of the County Tournament. The Yr10 girls are looking forward to some serious rugby lessons on a Monday when Rob Green from the RFU development team comes in during lesson time to coach. I foresee some very happy and muddy faces! The inter girls cross country team came fifth in the County round of the English Schools Cup which was hosted by us in The Pastures. Our first runner home, in ninth place, was **Amy Thorne**. On Nov 11th the cross country teams competed in the Tyne & Wear Competition on a very hilly Haydon Bridge course.



## Newcastle University

On the university trip we did group activities. We went on a tour of the university at lunch time and we did something where we had to work our way around the university. We played a couple of games with our rep like Pictionary but it was about life in the university. We learnt about a day in the life of a university student and how they would budget their day. We learnt about catered and self-catered flats. There were a lot of courses there we didn't know about, examples such as classical studies and automation and control with industrial product. **Josh Hall & Sam Morning**

We went on a fantastic trip to Newcastle University on Monday the 18th of November. We had an introduction by two students, Rachel and Duncan, who lived in the university themselves and we learnt a lot from them. We learned about self-catering (self-catering is when you have your own kitchen and living room). Being catered for is when you get your food prepared for you morning, lunch and evening. After that we did a few activities - we played a budgeting game to understand what the students here are responsible for mainly for the self-catered students. Then we had a half an hour walk around the whole entire campus - it is huge - it was amazing! There was lots of space for people to work, to concentrate, and to hang out. At the end of the day we got some feedback from the students and then had a quiz; it turns out we actually learned a lot in that one day about the university and a lot about the courses, some I had never heard of like zoo-ology, and how much work you have to do. It is hard work but it looks like a lovely university to be in; most people like it and I learnt a lot more in that day than had known. I would definitely go there again. **Imogen Carr – Y10**

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## Elections for a Parent Governor: November 2013



### **Carole Rae's Statement for Election as Parent Governor of The Duchess's Community High School on the Hard Federation Governing Body.**

I believe that I have a lot to contribute to help provide the best possible education for our young people.

Being a parent with two teenage lads, one currently at the Duchess's High, the other hopefully due to start in September 2014, I have a long term vested interest in the School.

I am currently a Parent Governor of Glendale Middle, which gives me some insight about the challenges facing a School Governor. Having been through most forms of school life from Eglington Church of England first school, to boarding at P.N.E.U. school in Hexham then Cobham Hall in Kent, to a newly combined Comprehensive at the Duchess's High, I feel I have a broad unique insight into our education system. I feel sure my varied experience will go a long way to help in the role of being a 'critical friend' which Ofsted sees as one of the main criteria of being an effective School Governor.

I have a keen interest in the education of our children and feel that a good foundation through strong leadership, effective teaching, supportive Governors as well as involved parents should enable all the pupils and schools to achieve the highest standard.

Thank you for your consideration, I sincerely hope you will show your support by voting for me - Carole Rae. I promise to give my all to this important position.

Your Servant

**Mrs Carole Rae**

## Elections for a Parent Governor: November 2013

### **Russ Taylor: Parent Governor Statement.**

I was born in Alnwick, my wife is a local girl and my family are all settled in this area which we are proud to call home. My children Lauren and Emily have been in the local school system from nursery age and currently attend DCHS where Lauren is in Yr 13 and Emily is in Yr 10.

I have previous experience as a Governor, as I had the honour to represent the Dukes School. As such I fully understand the requirements and commitments placed on the role of Parent Governor and I believe the experience I gained previously will be of great benefit should I be offered the opportunity to take on this new role.

I am currently a serving member of the Royal Air Force and have been for the last 24 years, I come from a Forces background as my father also served for over 30 years. As such I fully understand the importance of a strong and stable school environment, not just for the forces children, but for all. For approximately 17 of my 24 years I have been directly involved in the education, training and development of young men and women who choose the RAF as a career and through these roles I have gained extensive experience in development, coaching and mentoring, welfare and duty of care issues and all aspects of management and leadership. My current role is directly involved with the standards and assurance of training and education of both instructional staff and their students. Additionally I have experience of large and complex multi-million pound programmes dealing with equipment and infrastructure I am confident that my past and present experiences will complement the role of a parent governor.

I can also empathise with the needs of today's children and also the necessity for parents to work in partnership with the schools by contributing towards values in school education through the Governing Body. My wife and I have been proud to be able to send our children to the various schools covered by the federation and although not always faultless, we have always been impressed by the outstanding care shown to our children.

Information: Schooling Unit & Curriculum Unit - Leeds Metropolitan University, Leeds, LS2 9BT, UK. Tel: 0113 276 1234



21<sup>st</sup> November 2013

Dear Parents/Carers

2 nominations have been received for the election of a Parent Governor. A ballot papers are enclosed with this Newsletter and each parent/carer may vote for **ONE** candidate.

Election addresses have been prepared by the nominees and can be found in this Newsletter.

Please return your ballot paper to me at The Duchess's Community High School not later than **FRIDAY 6<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2013**.

In the event of a tie, the votes will be recounted. If the votes are still equal the candidate with the youngest child at the school will win.

Yours sincerely

Maurice Hall  
Headteacher

