

# NEWSLETTER

THE DUCHESS'S COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL, ALNWICK

**AUTUMN 2015**



The  
**Duchess's**  
Community High School

## Headteacher's Report



**Welcome to our Autumn Term Newsletter. It is difficult to believe that we are already so close to the end of term.**

As you read through the following pages you will see how many activities your children have been involved in and how important we consider the 'extras' we offer. Coinciding with this newsletter is the publication of our school Newspaper 'The Alnwickist', written with our two federated Middle Schools, describing even more of the various thoughts, views and activities of our young people.

Already our Year 9 students have settled into their studies and we begin to give consideration to their options on their return in January. Our Year 10s are working hard on their GCSE/BTEC courses and our Year 11s are less than 100 school days away from their final exams! In the Sixth Form Year 12s are learning to take more and more responsibility for their own learning while Year 13 are actively engaged with making decisions about the next stage of their lives!

Sixth Form exam outcomes in the summer of 2015 were once again excellent – strong in Year 13 and outstanding in Year 12 with the best set of AS/BTEC results the school has ever had. This has provided us, this year, with the largest Year 13 we have ever seen (over 150). At GCSE many individuals gained very good outcomes linked to their ability. However, like a number of other schools,

we were somewhat disappointed by some of the outcomes in the English Language GCSE. Following major remarks and discussions with the exam board we have seen a number of students move up a grade although these changes will not reflect in any performance tables until later in the year. It is a testament to our English department as to how hard they are working to make sure every student achievements have been analysed alongside pushing our present Year 11s forwards towards the best possible results.

As always there are a number of key areas for us to work on as a school community. Alongside the core areas such as academic achievement I've listed some of the others below:

### Attendance

– as a community we still believe attendance of some students could be improved. Our overall attendance last year was below the national average and we would like to see this improved. We appreciate that illness, on occasion, is uncontrollable however wherever possible we would value everyone trying to avoid taking time off for other reasons. Even a student who has 95% attendance will miss 9 school days in the year which equates

to over 50 lessons! Someone with 90% attendance will miss a day a fortnight!

### Safeguarding

– Like all schools we are heavily involved in making sure your children are safe. Training with updated information happens regularly on issues such as Child Protection, E-Safety and Equalities and Diversity. Recently all staff have had training on Prevent which considers our responsibilities linked to Anti Extremism. An interesting area for us living in a predominantly white community where common misconceptions can be expressed and there can be a danger of extreme right wing, racist reactions. Further information on this area is mentioned in this Newsletter.

### Disadvantaged Students

– these are students who have been on Free School Meals at any point in the last 6 years, or who are looked after or adopted. There is often an achievement gap

between these students (about 30 to 40 in each year group) and others. We have a responsibility to narrow this gap and are working hard to do this. Please see Pupil Premium pages on our website.

Finally, our New Build goes on a pace and adds an extra pressure to everyone involved. Plans are becoming more detailed as the clock counts down. It is an interesting thought that if the council agrees to a move to Primary/Secondary in January then we will begin to look at the idea of adding a new build to a new build!

Once again, thank you for all your support. We couldn't do what we do for your children if you didn't help in all the ways you do.

Happy Christmas!

Maurice Hall, Headteacher



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**ACE on Campus is an event for Year 10 students which aim to increase awareness of and raise aspirations toward attending higher education. Pupils work in groups taking part in a range of interactive sessions related to university life, and are assisted by a current university student throughout the day.**

# ACE on campus

This is always a popular event and a regular slot in our calendar. We took 40 students, many of which have not got any family that have attended university to see what they thought.

Students really enjoyed the campus tour and finding out about what university life entails. On the day one of our groups won the campus activity and all groups had the opportunity to design a university for the future, which will be displayed along

with some of their university designs in school.

As a result of the trip 89% of students felt they were more informed about reasons why people might attend university and 61% felt they were more likely to attend university having experienced what it is like. Interestingly 73% of the students who attended are now more motivated to work harder in school to achieve their goals.

Due to the success of this trip I have



## 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 SchoolsComms. 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)).

**Further details, along with bus company telephone numbers, are on our website [www.dchs-alnwick.org](http://www.dchs-alnwick.org)**



been able to get us a second slot for March so that another 40 students have the opportunity to experience university life and decide if it is a place that they may wish to go.

Year 10 has been working on career pathways as part of their Life Studies curriculum and we will be encouraging students to think about their future direction and the grades they require over the coming year.

# A Midsummer Night's Dream:

## A Behind the Curtain Reflection from Peter Quince

By Sophie Murray



November 4<sup>th</sup> marked the beginning of one of the most enjoyable weeks of my life, this being show week of this year's DCHS drama production 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', in which I played Peter Quince the carpenter.

This was the first time I had played the opposite gender in a show, and it was a task I was more than willing to take on. When it came to the opening night of the show there was a buzz of energy filling the dressing rooms as the Athenians got into their smart and sequined attire, the fairies applied copious amounts of glitter to themselves whilst I pencilled on stubble to

my cheeks. The feeling of stepping onto stage on the first night of a show is almost unexplainable, as the anxiety from the wings seems to melt away immediately; I am yet to find a feeling that matches this. Playing a man was an interesting process to say the least and I found myself struggling to adapt to the many subtle differences that men and women have.

Posture was a key element and had to be maintained throughout the performance in order to portray a character that was not only comical but also believable. In order to achieve this I found myself (sometimes unintentionally) monitoring how men walk, their gait and common gestures they incorporate into everyday life. I think this is pivotal evidence of the attention to detail that DCHS productions swear by in order to deliver an entertaining performance that

leaves an impact on the audience. Playing a man also brought about a new perspective for me as an actor; it allowed me to explore the not so obvious differences between men and women.

I felt more relaxed on stage as I wasn't constantly checking my stance or caring about how I was sitting. The play also indirectly made a joke on gender roles in society during the 1920s, as the seemingly more competent males were played by women. This has been by far my favourite role I have taken on in production, though it was a struggle to grasp at first, the end resulted in a deeply gratifying experience.

*To play to near sell out audiences in The Alnwick Playhouse over 4 nights has to be one of the highlights of my time in school so far!*

## Durham Maths Challenge - First Place

The following students took part in a maths challenge in July against 23 other secondary schools in the Sunderland and Durham area: **Catherine Jackson, Oscar Wilson, Emma Hutchings** from Year 9 and **Scott Edwards** from Year 10.



**We came first** and our rivals, Durham Johnstone, came 3rd!

Well done to our Duchess students. They won a cup and a shield of which they are, rightly, very proud.

*Please congratulate them if you see them.*

# Attendance Matters...



**One of the most important things your child can do to achieve academic success is also one of the most basic: going to school every day. In fact, research has shown that your child's attendance record may be the biggest factor influencing their academic success. By attending class regularly, your child is more likely to keep up with the daily lessons and assignments, take assessments and receive feedback.**

Just by being present at school, your child is learning how to be a good citizen by participating in the school community, learning valuable social skills, and developing a broader world view.

Your commitment to school attendance will also send a message to your child that education is a priority for your family, going to school every day is a critical part of educational success, and that it's important to take your responsibilities seriously including going to school.

## What you can do

As a parent or guardian, it is possible to plan ahead in order to limit your child's absences, make school attendance a priority, and help your child from falling behind if it is necessary to miss a day of school. You can do this in the following ways:

Help your child get to school on time every day. Babysitting, problems with

a car or late bus, and the weather are not permissible reasons to miss school. Frequently coming to school late may also be noted on your child's permanent record, and will make it difficult for your child to stay caught up with the first lessons of each morning. Teach your child how to set and use an alarm clock, and limit the use of 'blue screen' usage late at night / early in the morning.

Follow the school's guidelines and attendance policy, and report excused absences immediately. At the beginning of the school year, review the school's rules and make sure you understand whom you need to call if your child is going to be absent.

Check homework. Check each night to see that your child understands and completes the day's homework assignments.

Take an active role. Stay involved with your child's daily experiences at school by asking how the school day went, and then

listening carefully to what your child shares with you both the successes and struggles. Make it a point to meet key staff at the school.

Locate potential sources of anxiety. If your child frequently appears upset or reluctant to go to school and cannot tell you why, schedule an appointment with his or her form tutor or pastoral mentor to look at supporting the issue.

Keep updated on school events and announcements. Read the school documents that your child brings home and take note of important announcements and dates.

Try to limit the amount of time that your child misses school due to medical appointments or illness. If possible, avoid scheduling doctor's appointments during the school day. Allow your child to stay home only in the case of contagious or severe illnesses.

Schedule family events with your child's school schedule in mind. Plan holiday celebrations or family trips during weekends or school vacations. In the case of family emergencies or unexpected trips, talk to your child's teacher as far in advance as

possible and set up a way that your child can work ahead or bring important homework on the trip.

Plan ahead. Encourage your child to prepare for the next school day by laying out clothes the night before and helping to fix lunches.

Promote good health. Make sure that your child eats a balanced diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables, and has opportunities to exercise every day through a sports team or playtime outside.

Create a restful environment. Finally, make sure that your child can relax before bedtime by doing something quiet like reading rather than do something stimulating, like watching television / play on mobile devices. Ensure that your child gets enough quality sleep. Ideal amounts range from 8 to 12 hours. Getting enough sleep will help your child get up on time, be refreshed in the morning, and feel ready for a full day of learning ahead.

By making your child's school attendance a priority, you will be taking an important step in supporting your child's school success, and setting a good example.

**Remember every day counts.**



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**In October we took 14 students to Newton Rigg Agricultural College. This college is situated on the edge of the Lake District and forms part of the Askham Bryan College - one of the leading land-based colleges in the UK.**

# Newton Rigg FIELD TRIP

**The trip was designed to raise the aspirations in students and to show them a possible route that they could take following their GCSEs, if they are interested in activities that revolve around our amazing countryside. Newton Rigg has a vast range of courses and some of our students are studying there following their GCSEs.**



Students chose to do workshops in Equine Studies, Animal Care, Agriculture and Game Keeping. For animal care they were shown the range of animals on college site and they learned the requirements of the course. This was a very 'hands on' experience and interestingly a two-way learning street whereby one of our students educated the lecturer on the species of Duck that they have!

I accompanied a group of boys to the agriculture workshop where we were shown around their trials for varying crop varieties and the students were able to get up close to maize when the tractor on site broke down.

The equine facilities are some of the best I have ever seen and students who are interested in following this course can actually bring their horses along with them to study – although this certainly doesn't hinder those who do not own a horse as they are able to ride the college horses.

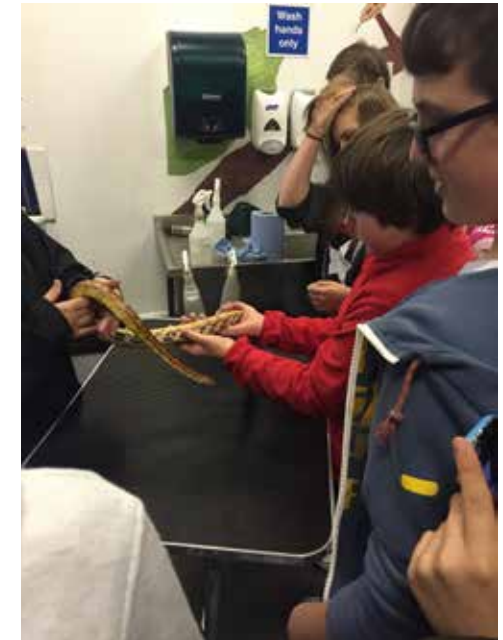
Students really enjoyed the trip and their feedback was very positive. Only 2 students thought this wasn't the right route for them and the other 12 want to come back to experience more. Some of the comments from students on the way home were:

"I enjoyed both sessions and I would

like to spend more time using the facilities I really liked how hands on you could be with the animals".

"I enjoyed learning about the different animals and their diets. What stood out was how amazing the facilities were and how many courses there are".

Certainly a successful trip and there will be a further trip in February where the students get to experience the residential aspect of college life and a few more of the course on offer.



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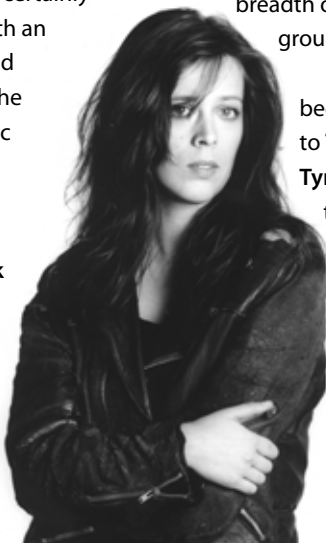
ALSO AT BERWICK (01289 306479)

# Creative Arts

**Students and Staff in the Arts Mark Gold Creative Arts Faculty at DCHS, have been working hard this term to make the most of the darker days by the development of a rich and varied extra curricular programme of opportunities and experiences.**

This term we welcomed **Mrs Susie Cochrane** to the Faculty team as our new **Head of Music**. A busy department at the best of times, things have certainly shifted up a gear this term with an extensive array of concerts and musical ventures to support the outstanding work of our music students.

Students have attended concerts at the Castle Guest Hall which are part of **Alnwick Music Society's** programme, visited the **Alnwick Playhouse** to hear **Kathryn Tickell** in addition to having Kathryn deliver a workshop on composition to the Sixth Form.



The development of a **Scandi band**, **Capella group** and the introduction of Ukuleles to the Year 9 curriculum means that more opportunities are open to all students to unleash their Musical talents. The introduction of lunchtime concerts has been a particularly delightful addition to the weekly schedule, with students and visiting musicians (most recently **Stuart Hardy** and **Brian Jackson**) showcasing their talents every Thursday. A wonderfully relaxed way to have your sandwich and enjoy some live music! The **Annual Autumn Variety Concert** was certainly the jewel in the Music Department's crown this term, with a comprehensive programme showcasing the breadth of talent from our soloists and groups alike.

The **Film Department** has been equally busy with visits to **The Berwick Film Festival**, **Tyneside Cinema** to see *Spectre*, the **Alnwick Playhouse** to see a screening of *Paper Towns* as part of Into Films Schools week. Students in the Sixth form are busy preparing, developing and creating their Short films for entry for the forthcoming 2016 Short Film Awards.

## GREAVES GRINDLE

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The **Alnwickist** continues to provide students with opportunities to develop their journalism and photography skills, catching up with all the news happening in the school community. The **Alnwickist** continues to be an amazing platform for budding journalists and photojournalists to start their media experiences and new faces are always welcome.

Last but by no means least the **Art Department** continues to strive to bring the widest range of opportunities and experiences for our Art and Photography students.

Seeing and experiencing art through Gallery, Museum, Workshop and University visits are such an important part of our students portfolio work and this term we have been to see LOT's. So far our students in Years 11, 12 and 13 have been to **The Baltic** for a Portfolio Advice day and various exhibitions, **Shingley Gallery**,

**Laing Gallery**, **Great North Museum**, **Sunderland University** for Photography and Glass workshops and **University Gallery Northumbria** to see the outstanding exhibition of Matisse prints.

After school, teams of students have been volunteering their time to develop scenery, backdrops and props for *A Midsummer Nights Dream* and are currently starting work for the forthcoming Musical in the new term.

*The Faculty continues to evolve, nurture and develop students in the Arts and are always looking to find creative opportunities to share. The Autumn term has certainly been a busy but enjoyable one and the spring term looks like it will continue to deliver more of the same...watch this space!*

**Ruth Brown**

Head of Art & Creative Arts Faculty.

## FORESTERS

14 Fenkle Street, Alnwick 01665 602138  
and at 41 Queen Street, Amble 01665 710424

**SUPPLIERS OF UNIFORM FOR YOUR LOCAL SCHOOLS**

## The Duchess's Community High School: Clubs

Run by...	Club	Venue	Time
Classical Civilisation	Latin & Romans Culture - students & staff	T2	Thursday lunchtime
Modern Foreign Languages	Drop-in sessions	T1	Tuesday lunchtime
		T4	Thursday lunchtime
Technology	Coursework catch-up	Department	Tuesday & Thursday after school
	Greenpower - Yr9 students to be selected	Downstairs Technology	Starts Jan/Feb 2016
	Ministry of Make - Yr9 - 12 places.	H2	Tuesday lunchtime
Science	Biology drop-in	E15 & F5	Thursday after school
	Chemistry & Applied Science drop-in	F4	Tuesday after school
	Physics drop-in	t.b.a.	Lunchtime - day t.b.a
	Science Club - investigating ideas through experiments & research	F1	Thursdays 1.15-1.45
	RSC Chemistry Olympiad - 6th Form	F5	Tuesdays after school
Geography	Tectonics Club - Yr13	A12	Friday lunchtime
Maths	Chess Club	T6	Wednesday lunchtime
Film & Media	Alnwickist Newspaper	C20	Mondays 1 - 1.30
	Film Club	C20	Wednesdays 2.45 - 4 p.m. (approx.) Once per month.
English	Play & Musical rehearsals	various venues Playhouse & 6th Form Centre	Evenings
Public Services	Canoe Club	Coquet Shorebase, Amble	Sundays 10 – 12.20 (not in winter)
ICT	Coding Club	t.b.a	To start 2016
Art	Art Catch up / drop-in - talk to individual teachers as to what's on	ST1, ST2 & B9	Tuesdays & Thursday's mostly but we have an open door policy every night and lunchtime
	Set design - Play and Musical	ST1 & ST2 – on-going throughout the year	On-going
	Art Club - run by Sixth form	ST2	Various times throughout the year - advertised by posters around school

Music	Samba Band	All music in B4 or B5	Monday lunchtime
	Music Theory		Monday lunchtime
	Ceilidh Band		Tuesday lunchtime
	Wind Band		Tuesday after school
	Scandi Band		Wednesday lunchtime
	Clarinet group		Thursday lunchtime
	Jazz/Big Band		Thursday after school
	Capella Choir		Friday lunchtime

P.E (All PE on sports fields/pitches of indoor venues.)

Girls U16/18 Hockey practice & fixtures	Monday after school
Girls U14/16 girls football	Monday after school
Girls U14/15 Hockey practice & fixtures	Tuesday after school
Girls senior U16 netball	Tuesday after school
Girls U14/15 netball	Thursday after school
Boys senior football	Monday after school
Boys junior football	Tuesday after school
Boys junior rugby	Wednesday after school
Badminton	Wednesday after school
Trampoline	Tuesday after school

## 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.
- The numbers of hours you can work whilst attending school are restricted. Children must not work before 7am and after 7pm.
- It is an offence for an employer to employ children without registering with the local authority first.
- 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 and  
Community Health Services Group, County Hall, Morpeth NE61 2EF

Tel: 01670 622800



In October, 32 History students from Year 10 and 4 staff travelled to Ypres in Belgium, which one local Alnwick soldier described in his diary in 1915 as "the most dangerous part of the whole front".

# History Study Tour

## WW1 BATTLEFIELDS, OCTOBER 2015

a section of the German and British front lines has been preserved as a memorial park for the Newfoundland regiment. Students were able to follow in the footsteps of the troops across the battlefield and learn more about the disaster of the first few hours of this 4 month battle. We also visited the largest remaining mine crater from the Somme battle and the Thiepval memorial where a number of students found relatives among the 72,000 names of the missing that cover the monument.

As well as studying the conditions and effects of the fighting, the group was also able to pay its respects to those who fought and died in the war (German and Belgian as well as British). Among the graves we visited were those of Valentine Strudwick, who joined up at 15 years of age and died in battle aged 16, and Matthew Taylor, an Alnwick soldier and former Duke's School pupil who was killed in Belgium 100 years ago.



Some students were also able to find the graves or memorials commemorating family members who had died in the conflict.

We had a some welcome breaks from the war with an evening ten-pin bowling in Ypres and a morning shopping and sightseeing in the beautiful city of Bruges. On the final evening of the tour we attended the moving "last post" ceremony which is held every day at 8pm at the Menin Gate in Ypres.



In the Ypres area we visited preserved trench systems, both British and German, and memorials. We spent an afternoon in the town where we visited the "In Flanders Field" museum and also the Menin Gate, where over 50,000 British soldiers with no known grave are commemorated.

The middle day of the tour involved a journey to the Somme battlefield in Northern France where

# Student Voice

A lot has happened since we returned to school in September. We have elected two Pastoral Leaders - Sixth Form students Edris Ramezanpour and Jamie McCaulay. They now take on extra responsibilities helping with Student Voice. At the moment Edris and Jamie are compiling clips and editing a video of the school. They hope to give an insight into the daily goings-on and life at DCHS. This will be available on our website soon.



In October a selection of our Student Council representatives from years 9 - 11 attended a Parliament Outreach Programme with our A Level Government and Politics students. In this workshop they acquired further understanding of debating, elections, law making and campaigning.

In Student Council meetings (Years 9 - 11) students have had a close up look at the plans for the new school and have suggested ways we may raise further funds for the new build - throwing wet sponges at teachers seems a popular option!

Issues brought up in Student Council have helped improve the school environment, with changes made to bins, toilets and PE changing rooms.

Students have also requested an updated list of all the clubs & extra-curricular activities offered at present. This has been completed and is available on tutor notice boards, the school website (<http://www.dchs-alnwick.org/enrichment/clubs/>) and is included in this newsletter.

Last year students informed us of their views on homework, progress checks, the school canteen and uniform. We value the opinions of our students and are using Student Voice to continually improve. Students can share their opinions by contacting a member of the Student Voice Working Party which consists of Lisa Smith (Assistant Headteacher), Susan Green (Maths), Anna Harrison (Humanities), James Thompson (RE) or by attending Student Council, our next meeting will be the week beginning the 7<sup>th</sup> March.

# THE Prevent STRATEGY

## What is the Prevent strategy?

Prevent is a government strategy designed to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorist or extremist causes.

The Prevent strategy covers all types of terrorism and extremism, including the extreme right wing, religious extremists and other causes.

## How does the Prevent strategy apply to schools?

From July 2015 all schools (as well as other organisations) have a duty to safeguard children from radicalisation and extremism.

This means we have a responsibility to protect children from extremist and violent views in the same way we protect them from drugs or gang violence.

Importantly, we can provide a safe place for pupils to discuss these issues so they better understand how to protect themselves.

## What does this mean in practice?

Many of the things we already do in school to help children become positive, happy members of society also contribute to the Prevent strategy.

These include:

- Exploring other cultures and religions and promoting diversity
- Challenging prejudices and racist comments
- Developing critical thinking skills and a strong, positive self-identity
- Promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, as well as British values such as democracy

We will also protect children from the risk of radicalisation, for example by using filters on the internet to make sure they can't access extremist and terrorist material, or by vetting visitors who come into school to work with pupils.

Different schools will carry out the Prevent duty in different ways, depending on the age of the children and the needs of the community.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How does Prevent relate to British values?

Schools have been required to promote British values since 2014, and this will continue to be part of our response to the Prevent strategy.

British values include:

- Democracy

- The rule of law
- Individual liberty and mutual respect
- Tolerance of different faiths and beliefs

### Should children be learning about extremism?

The Prevent strategy is not just about discussing extremism itself, which may not be appropriate for younger children. It is also about teaching children values such as tolerance and mutual respect.

The school will make sure any discussions are suitable for the age and maturity of the children involved.

### Is extremism really a risk in our area?

Extremism can take many forms, including political, religious and

misogynistic extremism. Some of these may be a bigger threat in our area than others.

We will give children the skills to protect them from any extremist views they may encounter, now or later in their lives.

## Where to go for more information

### Contact the school

If you have any questions or concerns about the Prevent strategy and what it means for your child, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, HM Government:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/417943/Prevent\\_Duty\\_Guidance\\_England\\_Wales.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417943/Prevent_Duty_Guidance_England_Wales.pdf)

## KEY TERMS

**Extremism** – vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values such as democracy, the rule of law and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs

**Ideology** – a set of beliefs

**Terrorism** – a violent action against people or property, designed to create fear and advance a political, religious or ideological cause

**Radicalisation** – the process by which a person comes to support extremism and terrorism

### See our policies

You will find more details about radicalisation in our safeguarding policy, available on our website.

We also have information about spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and British values.

### External sources

The following sources may also be useful for further information:

Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, HM Government

[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/417943/Prevent\\_Duty\\_Guidance\\_England\\_Wales.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417943/Prevent_Duty_Guidance_England_Wales.pdf)

Frequently asked questions, Prevent For Schools: [www.preventforschools.org/?category\\_id=38](http://www.preventforschools.org/?category_id=38)

What is Prevent? Let's Talk About It: [www.ltai.info/what-is-prevent/](http://www.ltai.info/what-is-prevent/)

# What is Safeguarding

We as staff, and you as parents, are all working towards providing our young people with the resources and skills that they need to make healthy and safe decisions about their own lifestyles and development. We are also committed to taking action to ensure that all of our students are growing up in circumstances that are both secure and supportive of this development.

So what does safeguarding cover? It is a broad umbrella term which denotes areas such as: E-safety, Child Protection, substance misuse, anti-bullying, behaviour and attendance, all of which, OFSTED (and the school community) recognise can impact on a student's progress and wellbeing.

## Who is responsible for safeguarding?

In short – everyone. However, within school the following staff have Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) training and status. They are:



Linda Armstrong



Anne-Marie Carter



Alan Rogers

A large number of staff have also received specialist Safeguarding training, including all Directors of Learning. A full list can be found in our Safeguarding policy on the school website.

## Training Information

In addition, ALL staff members receive regular Child Protection training and know who to go to and what to do should they have any concerns about the wellbeing of a student. Again, our policy outlines the procedures for reporting any concerns.

The school is committed to keeping

up to date with issues which we feel are a concern for young people in modern British society today. Staff members have had recent training about:

- Drugs awareness**
- Equality and Diversity**
- E-safety**
- Extremism and radicalisation (Prevent)**
- Female Genital Mutilation** (see new information on website)
- Sexual Exploitation**

## Further information

Should parents or members of our community have any concerns regarding the safety of a DCHS student they can contact school and speak with either a DSL or their Director of Learning. Other sources of advice and information can be found on the Northumberland County Council website under 'Safeguarding Children: Information for Parents and Carers'. Here you can find links to agencies such as CEOPs for E-safety information or links to Barnados, Bullying UK and the NSPCC.

A duty social worker on the Children's Social Care Team can be contacted on the following numbers for guidance and advice:

**01670 822386**

(out of hours)

**01665 626830**

(Alnwick office)

**01289 334 000**

(Berwick office)

***Remember - we all have a responsibility for Safeguarding***

**The School Expedition took place from Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2015 to Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2015. Twenty students comprising of 13 Males and 7 Females, (Year 9 – 5 students, Year 10 – 10 students, Year 11 – 2 students, Year 12 – 3 students). The**

**three supervising teachers were: Darren Smith (Deputy Leader), Amy Smith and myself as Leader. We were joined by five instructors from Abernathy Trust, Barcaple.**

As always the expedition is driven by the cost and the interest of the students. In

September all Year 10 Public Service students indicated that they wanted to do this expedition by returning the reply slip from the course paperwork, however numbers went down and I opened the expedition up to other Public Services students in the other year groups.

**UNIFORMED SERVICES  
COURSE**

# Scottish Expedition

**28 JUNE 2015 – 03 JULY 2015**



One student had to be removed from the Expedition due to doubts in his behaviour; he was quickly replaced by a student from Year 9.

The river Tay is Scotland's largest volume river flowing through the central Highlands to the east coast. Beginning at Kenmore, the river has many grade 2 rapids and a couple of grade 3s.

The Tay offers paddling for many levels from flat touring to white-water and the national slalom site at Grandtully. The river can be paddled all the way from Loch Tay to the North Sea at Dundee.

<http://www.ukriversguidebook.co.uk>

**Here is a brief overview of our trip:**

## Sunday 28 June 2015:

We left school at 13:45 travelling in convoy, stopping off for a short break at Kinross service station just after Edinburgh, before making our way to the campsite at Killin west of Loch Tay, where we met up with the Abernathy staff.

*Weather: Sunny with rain showers*



## Monday 29 June 2015:

We drove the short distance to Kenmore where we prepared the equipment and sorted out food for the week. Students were split into three groups and briefed whilst we transferred the vehicles closer to Perth. The groups spent 2 hours training on Loch Tay while they waited for our return.

The river levels were good. We left Kenmore late afternoon and only paddled around 5kms to the first campsite. We had to navigate some grade 2 rapids which gave the students a taste of what was to come. The campsite was good and the students quickly organised themselves.

*Weather: Sunny with some showers*

## Tuesday 30 June 2015:

06:45 wakeup call by a flock of sheep which walked through the campsite. We managed to get on the water, the first group leaving at 09:30; this was going to be a long day with us hoping to cover approximately 30kms. It also required heading down a lovely bumpy stretch of river, rapids such as "Chinese Bridge", "Church pool rapid" the "Fisherman's Rapid", before Grand Tully. The progress was swift and some students did swim on the lower level rapids without



problems. At Grand Tully we lined the canoes around the rapids; this is a 3 star skill which the students managed very well. We camped in a farmer's field on the side of the Tay it was a spectacular sunset!

*Weather: Warm with little breeze.*

### Wednesday 1 July 2015:

All were woken at 07:00 and on the water by 09:30 leaving in groups we leap frogged down the river making quick progress, 30kms travelled. Grade 1 and 2 rapids made the day interesting. The weather was very warm, sun tan lotion and lots of fluids were needed on the trip. Groups had to camp apart due to the lack of a large camp venue. All were treated to a magnificent thunder and lightning show with torrential rain during the night.

*Weather: Blue skies and very warm followed by torrential rain and thunder storms in the evening*

### Thursday 2 July 2015:

All groups met in Dunkeld for lunch

before moving on to paddle the last leg to Perth 20 kms away. We were finished and off the water just after lunch time. Whilst the students sorted out the equipment we collected the vehicles and packed up. After a short stop in McDonalds we travelled to the campsite in Inver.

The Students behaviour was of an exceptional standard, all the Abernathy staff commented about this, highlighting the student's willingness to learn and get involved. I am happy to report that all achieved their 1 Star qualification in paddle-sport and we should be able to present them with their certificate in the near future. However I would like to highlight that some of the skills we covered over the week were above and beyond 1 Star level

*Weather: Sunny*

### Friday 3 July 2015:

All students acted with consideration and politeness to others on the campsite, something which was highlighted by two parents from young families who

approached me before we left to say how impressed they were and that they were a credit to the school. We arrived back at the school just after lunch and after a short turnaround of equipment we allowed the students to leave with their parents.

During the expedition students have been lucky to see Osprey, Red Kites, Canadian Geese, Deer, various varieties of ducks and birds. We saw signs of Beaver but only managed to see a dead one on the side of the river. We passed Victorian bridges and architecture, castles and stately homes as well as seeing some of the modern construction that has been built along the river. We have witnessed gullies rowing down rapids and fishermen casting fly. Students now understand the need to be mindful of others on the river and those who are in the group, as risks are ever present and need to be managed. I think that our expeditions help students to be confident individuals and give them life skills to be responsible citizens. When asked if they enjoyed the trip all agreed that it wasn't easy but that they had had a great experience, all have said they would like to do it again next year, some even asked if they could book a place now.



This is our 9<sup>th</sup> annual canoeing expedition I've already started to look at next year's expedition; The Great Glen was my original thought however one of the instructors mentioned a number of other options which I would like to look at. I have also been asked by my Year 13's if I could organise a weekend expedition for them to paddle the Tweed.

I have written to parents to inform them about how well their children were on the course and to direct them to the video of the trip.

The staff from Abernathy (Barcaple) were outstanding as always; communication was clear both to staff and students on and off the water, nothing was too much trouble, everyone was involved in decision making, students given first class instruction in camping and paddling. They were friendly and professional instructors who quickly made a good rapport with students and staff.

I would like to thank Governors and Maurice for allowing the trip to go ahead and I am confident that we have provided an experience that our students will remember.

**Neale Brown**

# PHSE UPDATE

## LIFE STUDIES

Last term Year 9 worked on a range of skills that they need for team working; communication, roles, leadership, confidence and co-operation.

This was tested when they had to build a working raft and compete against other groups in their class. The students produced some amazing examples which will be displayed in school.

This term they are looking at careers that they might be interested in and how they can use their skills and learning styles to influence their capacity to achieve their goals.

Year 10 have been working on career pathways, what skills employers look for and how they can demonstrate these. They have also been considering the world of work in terms of rights and responsibilities at work. This term they are focussing on moral and spiritual discussions, tackling what we understand by prejudice and looking at moral dilemmas so that they are able to articulate their thoughts and ideas on; Euthanasia, Abortion, Capital Punishment, Belief in God and Animal Testing. Year 11 have had some external speakers in delivering sessions to increase their awareness of vulnerability; specifically in terms of child exploitation, online safety, relationship abuse and consent. They have in their programme also worked on multicultural Britain and ways of tackling racism. This term they will be doing further work with external agencies to look at who they can access for support around sexual health and relationships. They will also continue looking at careers working towards creating their own CV and practising filling in job application forms.

# SPORT

## Boys Sports Report

### Rugby

The highlight of the term so far has been the visit of Argentinian touring side St Gregorys. On their last visit they proved far too strong but this time the tables were turned and DCHS ran out comfortable winners. There were strong performances from **Corey Alliston** and Captain **Sam Eastham**. The team is pictured below.

In the first 10's tournament the seniors played well with a playing record of won 3, drawn 1 and lost 1 to finish 2<sup>nd</sup> overall. Player of the tournament was **Sam Eggleston**.

In the second tournament at Druid Park the Seniors went one better and won all their games to win the competition. Player of the tournament was **Duncan Smith** and leading try scorer was **Owen Davidson**.

The Year 10 team have been performing well in 15 a side and have won both their games. The team is well led by **Jamie Comber** and **Harvey Young**.

The Year 9 squad also enjoyed success in the 10's tournament as they finished 2<sup>nd</sup> overall with a record of won 3, lost 1. **Drew Thompson** was an excellent Captain and **James Stanley** finished as leading try scorer.

County honours have been gained by **Duncan Smith** at U18 level and **Joe Tudor** pictured below at U16 level. Joe has also represented Newcastle Falcons this year.



Dylan Potter pictured scoring for year 9 team



## Football

The DCHS Year 10 football team have so far played 3 league games resulting in one win and two defeats. There has been a strong interest from students this year and numbers have been high at both training and matches. The team has managed to progress through to the next round of the cup against Berwick. A special mention goes to **Leon Midgley** and **Joe Threlfall** who have both been selected for the county U15 Northumberland football squad for the 2015/16 season. Well done boys!

### Year 9 Football



The DCHS Year 9 football team have made a good start to the 2015/16 season. So far Year 9 have won 2 out of the 4 games they have played. Great enthusiasm has been shown by all of the students who have represented the team so far. A special thanks goes to **Mr Drummond** (maths teacher) who is manager of the team this year.

### U19 football team



The U19 team have made a promising start to the season resulting in three wins and one defeat in a competitive league. The team consist of Year 11, 12 and 13 students who show great enthusiasm to play. We have been drawn against Ashington in the next round of the Chronicle Cup which is to be played before Christmas (stop press, Duchess win 4 nil). A special thanks goes to Sam Eastham in Year 13 who organises training and helps notify students when games are.

## Cricket

The indoor cricket season has begun and the school have started positively with a victory over Alnwick CC. Because it is a mixed adults and junior league the boys are finding that their superior athleticism in the field is giving them a distinct advantage. Currently the boys sit top of the league after 4 wins out of 4 games, the biggest margin of victory coming against Percy Farmers who they defeated by 100 runs. Notable performances so far have come from **Nick Robertson** and **Leon Midgley**. Team pictured below.



## Sports leaders

Our Year 12 sports leaders continue to do a fantastic job within our sporting community. They have been involved in a number of events, most recently the middle school rugby tournament and also the first school indoor athletics day.

## Girls Sports Report

### Hockey

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 as always have made a positive start to the new season and 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 aside before in their Middle Schools and are expected to compete against private schools that have played together for 4 years already!

The wet weather recently has postponed some matches but these games will be played later in the year.

### Football

Our 3 football teams U14/U15/U16 have made a great start in the County 7 a side leagues. (9wins 3 draws and 3 losses).

### Netball

Netball this term has been very positive. Lots of girls especially in Yrs 9 and 10 attending practice and keen to play in matches.

Seniors are struggling with the pull of academic extra classes but do prioritise for matches. We compete in county tournaments with relative success seniors finishing 5<sup>th</sup>.

U16 did not enter due to controlled assessments

Like all extra-curricular we aim to include as many students as possible. Girls are attending both Boulmer and Morpeth clubs to gain more experience which is great.

### Rugby

Some Year 10 girls have had some serious rugby sessions in their PE lessons.

The U15 players will enjoy some hard hitting competition in the County 7 a side tournament on the 30<sup>th</sup> Nov. We are entering 3 teams which is fantastic.

If you want to do more rugby then Alnwick Rugby club have Girls sessions on Sunday mornings 10am-12pm.

### Cross Country

The inter girls cross country team came 3<sup>rd</sup> in the County round of the English Schools Cup which was held in Newcastle gaining Regional Qualification.



Our first runner home in 12<sup>th</sup> place was **Eve Buddle**. The team of **Eve, Fiona Robson, Abi Lewington, Sophie Enser, Claire Robson** and **Jess Burke** travelled to Stockton on Sat 7<sup>th</sup> Nov accompanied by the boys team who also qualified. It was a very wet and hilly course that posed a real challenge especially the water logged finish! Everyone ran well but a tough field of the best of the north east meant as a team we did not qualify for the nationals.

Next challenge was the Tyne and Wear event at Haydon Bridge the following Monday for Year 9, 10/11 and seniors.

**Callie Henderson** (Year 9) came 2<sup>nd</sup> in her junior race and **Becca Reed** and **Rosie Murton** came 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the senior race.

Medals for them! Well done! The area event is 11<sup>th</sup> Dec at Druridge Bay.



## Important Calendar Dates

Thursday, December 10	Holly Ball
Monday, December 14	Aln Federation Carol Service 6.30 at St Pauls
Friday, December 18	Prize Day (School open as usual until 12.50 p.m.)
	School closes for Christmas Holidays
<b>2016</b>	
Monday, January 4	Training Day
Tuesday, January 5	School reopens for Spring Term
Week beginning January 11	Year 11 Mock Exams
Week beginning January 18	Year 12 Mock Exams
Week beginning January 25	Year 13 Mock Exams
Thursday, January 28	Year 11 Parents' Evening
Monday, February 1	Progress Check 2 opens
Week beginning February 1	GCSE Music Performance exams
Wednesday, February 3	KS4 Options Evening
Friday, February 5	Progress Check 2 closes
Week beginning February 8	A Level Music Performance Exams
Wednesday, February 10	Post 16 Options Evening
Friday, February 12	School closes for Spring Mid Term holiday
Monday, February 22	School reopens after Spring Mid Term holiday
Thursday, February 25	Year 13 Parents' Evening
Monday, February 29	School Musical – Dress Rehearsal
Tuesday, March 1	School Musical – Dress Rehearsal
Wednesday, March 2	School Musical – Alnwick Playhouse
Thursday, March 3	School Musical – Alnwick Playhouse
Friday, March 4	School Musical – Alnwick Playhouse
Saturday, March 5	School Musical – Alnwick Playhouse
Week beginning March 14	GCSE Art Exam
Wednesday, March 23	China Trip departs (returns April 1)
Sunday, March 27	Ski Trip to Prato Nevoso, Italy departs (returns April 2)
Thursday, March 24	French Exchange Trip departs
Thursday, March 24	School closes for Easter Holidays
Tuesday, April 11	School reopens after Easter Holiday
Monday, April 11	Progress Check 3 opens
Friday, April 15	Progress Check 3 closes



## Important Calendar Dates – continued

Thursday 16 – Monday 20, April	A2 Art Exam
Tuesday 14 – Friday 22, April	AS Art and Photography Exams
Thursday, April 21	Year 10 Parents' Evening
Friday, April 29	Training Day
Monday, May 2	May Day Holiday
Thursday, May 5	Y11 Presentation Evening
Monday 9 – Friday 27 May	Y12 Study Leave
Friday, May 13 – Friday 24 June	Summer Exams
Thursday, May 26	Y13 Leavers Assembly
Friday, May 27	Y11 Leavers Assembly
Friday, May 27	School closes for Summer Half Term Holiday
Monday, June 6	School reopens after Summer Half Term Holiday
Monday, June 6	Progress Check 4 opens
Wednesday, June 8	Y12 Higher Education Evening for parents/student finance
Friday, June 10	Progress Check 4 closed
Thursday, June 16	Y12 Progression Day – TBC
Friday, June 17	Year 13 Leaver's Dinner
Friday, June 24	University Open Day – Newcastle/Northumbria
Friday, June 24	Year 7 STEM day
Monday 27 June – Friday 1 July	Y12 Work Experience Week
Thursday, June 30	Y8 Intake Day
Friday, July 1	Y7 Sports Day
Friday, July 1	Year 11 Prom
Monday 4 – Friday 8 July	Y10 Mock Exams
Monday 4 – Friday 8 July	A Level Art Exhibition – The Playhouse
Wednesday, July 13	Y9 Presentation Evening
Thursday, July 14	Y10 Presentation Evening
Wednesday, July 20	School closes for Summer Holidays
Thursday, August 18	AS/A2 Results
Thursday, August 25	GCSE Results
Monday, September 5	Training Day