

FRIENDS OF DANES HILL



# The Annual



Just can't get enough, p4

Handbags &  
gladrags, p13

Never can say  
goodbye, p14

Money, money, money p6

We've only just begun, p18



# PUTTING ON THE GLITZ

## DANE & HILL SUMMER BALL

Date: Saturday 2nd July 2016

Time: 7pm - 1am

Tickets: £80 per person



Drinks Reception, Three Course Dinner, Entertainment, Dancing, Casino, Charity Balloon Pop

# Everybody's changing



## **Sarah Colenso speaks to The Annual as she prepares to take over as Chair of the FODH**

My son Hector started in Transition in 2013 and I have been involved in the FODH ever since - initially as a class rep and then as Bevendean Trustee.

An amazing legacy has gone before me, most recently the two outstanding FODH heads that I have worked with: Caroline Hill and now Debra Munro. Their professionalism, dedicated leadership and ability to pull a team together are qualities that I hold in high regard and hope to emulate in my role as Chair from September 2016.

We have a wealth of experience and qualifications within the FODH team - the trustees, designated reps and class reps. Together I hope we will

continue to provide high-quality fundraising support to the school.

Although FODH events are very much tailor-made for the families and staff at school, they are also an important part of promoting the school within our local community.

I am passionate about integrating new families into Danes Hill. I want to ensure that everyone has access to the information that they need and feels part of the Danes Hill family as quickly as possible. We are hosting a coffee morning to run alongside the July Second Hand Uniform Sale and would love to see as many parents as possible, both old and new.

Thank you so much to Debra for all her hard work and dedication. I am delighted that she has agreed to stay on as Middle School Trustee for the year ahead.

Here's to another great year for the Friends of Danes Hill.

## Come together

### **Debra Munro on what she will miss (and what she won't!) as she hands over the reins of the FODH**

After two years as Chair of the FODH it is now time to hand over the reins to Sarah Colenso. I would like to thank my amazing team of trustees who have worked so hard over the past two years. The reps and volunteers have helped to make my job so much easier. A special thanks to parents and staff for supporting the endeavours of the FODH.



I have enjoyed my time as Chair. As a new parent to the school, joining the FODH gave me the opportunity to get to know not only staff, but parents across the year groups. I'm not yet sure what I will do with all the free time, but I'm looking forward to finding out.

I trust you will give Sarah and her team the support you gave me and I have no doubt she will do a fantastic job. I will miss our trustee meetings - they were always a good catch up and a time for a laugh. There isn't much I won't miss - maybe the sleepless nights when I had to put forward a contentious funding request.

I look forward to helping where needed and supporting funding requests for our new sports hall. One can dream...!



**Thanks to the FODH trustees for 2015-16: (back row l-r) Michele Gibson, Vice Chair; Louise Porter, Middle School Trustee; (front row l-r) Helen Holyoake, Upper School Trustee; Anita Boswell, Treasurer; Debra Munro, Chair; Sarah Colenso, Bevendean Trustee; Rujuta Swarup, Lower School Trustee**

# Just can't

The class rep plays an essential role in the FODH. **The Annual** spoke to three mums, who have done the job more than most, about why they keep coming back

## **Shirel Stemmons**

### **When were you first a class rep?**

We had just moved here from London in 2001. My daughter Sophie was in Transition at Bevendean - she's now doing her A levels!

### **How many times have you been a rep?**

At least 13 times out of the 15 years we have been at Danes Hill. I've also been the Upper School Trustee. But I've never repped for two classes at the same time.

### **What have you enjoyed most about being a class rep?**

When I came to Danes Hill I didn't know anybody and through being a rep I have made lovely lifelong friends. You have a connection to the strong sense of community within the school and you feel more involved with the children's education.

### **What part of being a rep have you found the most frustrating?**

It used to be really awful when you had to manually write the class lists. I used to have this huge sheet and you would be inputting every last detail by hand! And chasing people for their contribution to the kitty.

### **What three words would you use to describe Danes Hill?**

Love. This. Place. There is such a vibrant sense of community - a real sense of belonging. When I first came to look at the school the kids looked so happy and I thought 'They must be doing something right'. It's really being part of something special and I will cry my eyes out when I leave!

## **Michele Gibson**

### **When were you first a class rep?**

When my son John started Transition in 2008 I was the class rep and I have been involved in the FODH ever since.

### **How many times have you been a rep?**

I've been a rep about three times but I've been Bevendean, Lower School and Middle School Trustee in between. For the last two years I've been the Vice Chair of the FODH.

### **What have you enjoyed most about being a class rep?**

I've made some very strong friendships with people whom I have now known for many years. We've had some great parties over the years. It's just been fun and really social, meeting people in that way.

### **Do you have a memory that stands out in your time in the FODH?**

In 2014 we had torrential rain during the

### **If you could change one thing about the school what would it be?**

Making sure half terms fit in with all the other local schools because many families have siblings elsewhere.

### **What advice would you give to someone repping for the first time?**

If you're considering it, definitely do it. It is the best way to get to know the school and the parents.

If you've decided to do it, try not to do too much - not too many socials every term. It's really important to find out what your class want so have a coffee morning, ask them and take it from there.

### **What makes for a good class rep?**

You have to be enthusiastic even when no one else is! You must want to do it, have a positive attitude and care about doing it.

### **What made you go back to do the job of rep again and again?**

I want to be involved in my children's school lives and those memories. Friends of mine often say 'Why are you taking more on? Why don't you step back?' But I want to do it and my kids love it.

### **What is a rep's most important job?**

There are two different jobs and they are both important. One is connecting with the FODH and communicating their business to the class and getting people involved in events. The second is organising the social side - connecting to the parents and helping them connect with each other.



Fireworks night. We were pulling together and trying to put on a brave face on things. And it all worked out! Most people still showed up and everybody said they had a good time.

# get enough



## Jude Roberts

**When were you first a class rep?**  
Ten years' ago! 2006.

### How many times have you been a rep?

I have helped out in some way every year that my son Jack has been at Danes Hill. Mainly as class rep but I've also helped with Lost Property, the Charities Committee and once as Secretary of the FODH.

### What have you enjoyed most about being a class rep?

I love being involved and by helping out I have got to know the school really well and have made some great friends. It's fun helping at the events, I've done everything from manning the bar, to selling burgers and cakes, and counting bounces for the bounce-a-thon! I have really enjoyed getting to know the staff behind the scenes, including the ground staff and catering team, who do so much to ensure school life runs smoothly.

### What part of being a rep have you found the most frustrating?

It's a shame that it is the same group of

### What part of being a rep have you found the most frustrating?

Where you have to ask for volunteers for something and nobody volunteers; but then everybody volunteers at the end. It's that period between asking and right before the event where you're stressing out! But everybody always comes through.

### What three words would you use to describe Danes Hill?

Intense. Social. International.

### What advice would you give to someone repping for the first time?

Communicate with people but avoid sending too many emails. Try to host a few simple, fun events to get people together. Enjoy getting to know the parents and their children.

parents who volunteer year in and year out. Sometimes I find the lack of participation from others a bit frustrating. Being involved in the FODH has been really rewarding, given me many laughs and a genuine sense of being part of the school community. It's also a bit irritating if people don't acknowledge class emails if they require an answer.

### What three words would you use to describe Danes Hill?

Impressive. Confident. Opportunity.

### If you could change one thing about the school what would it be?

In an ideal world I would love Danes Hill to go all the way through to 18!

### What advice would you give to someone repping for the first time?

Get stuck in and involved. Don't be afraid to ask for help from people who have done it before. Enjoy the laughs and new friendships. It is not a huge drain on your time - the more you put in the more you get out.

### What makes for a good class rep?

A friendly, organised person, who just gets things done. A good communicator - someone who can be persistent when they need to be and does not take things too personally (like nobody reading her emails!).

### What made you go back to do the job of rep again and again?

I like keeping in touch with what is going on at school. Being part of the FODH has given me a good understanding of the school and I feel very comfortable communicating with staff members.

### What is a rep's most important job?

There are two. The first is to pass on information to the parents in their group in a timely manner, and the second is to encourage parents to meet up socially once or twice a term.

### What makes for a good class rep?

Someone who is enthusiastic, opinionated and is interested in their child and the school. You need to attend the meetings too!

### What made you go back to do the job of rep again and again?

A few times it was because nobody else volunteered, but generally I like to be involved.

### What is a rep's most important job?

Reach out to new people in the school who are in your class. They will benefit the most from your support and might have lots of questions. Sometimes they don't even know what they don't know in such a busy school like ours. Send out a contact list and try to arrange a few mostly simple, not overly costly events through the year.



# MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

£12,619



New staging for Bevendean



Timing equipment for the Ski Club

£3,095



£4,358

New mats for the Gymnastics department



£756

Knex construction for the Science department



The FODH has £87,159 in funds waiting to be spent on enhancing the educational experience for our children. Funding requests do not need to come from pupils or staff, anyone can put one in. So, if you have a good idea, download the form from the FODH website ([www.fodh.co.uk](http://www.fodh.co.uk)), research the cost and put in a proposal.

# We are family

The weather forecasters were proven wrong and the sun shone for Family Day 2015. Children set up their stalls and the Pimms flowed. It was wonderful to have so many dads volunteering and to see families supporting the day and enjoying time together. Many thanks to the bakers who contributed to the always popular cake sale and all the volunteers and staff who helped out.

We had some lovely singing from the Bevendean and Lower School Choirs, followed by fantastic performances from Star Steppers and the Gymnastics Squad. Year 6 children set up a stall selling Percy Pigs and pink lemonade. The year 7s and 8s were very grateful for the sunshine as they bravely took turns in the stocks, facing an onslaught of wet sponges. Even Mr Andrews got a soaking, attracting huge crowds of excited children queuing up for a turn!

A fabulous £2,778 was raised for the FODH. Thanks to Kate Nolan and her Middle School team for their hard work.



# Viva Las Vegas

For the annual school ball in July 2015, Vegas came to Oxshott. With tickets sold out in just two days, it was guaranteed to be a night to remember. Amazing showgirls kicked off a fabulous evening of fun and entertainment. The sparkling table decorations and large video screens showing images of the iconic city set the scene for a great evening out to celebrate another happy year at Danes Hill.

The charity auction raised £32,000 for Shooting Star Chase. Kalm Kitchen provided a Michelin-starred feast for all, and later on Super Fly had everyone dancing the night away.

Many thanks to our primary sponsor CHK Mountford, and to all of the sponsors who generously donated auction prizes.

A huge thank you to everyone involved in organising this great event. Viva Danes Hill!



2015 Ball Committee: (l-r) Madhavi Reddy, Michele Gibson, Linda Lesage-Chrisp, Monique Lawson-Smith, Nicci Clark, Debra Munro, Anita Boswell.



# Baby, you're a firework

Fireworks 2015 was another rip roaring success as children, parents, staff and friends enjoyed a breathtaking spectacle courtesy of the wizards at Pyrovision. Their amazing artistry lit up the skies over Oxshott.

Helen Holyoake and her Upper School team managed a fantastic funfair, BBQ and stalls and the weather was (thankfully!) kind to us all. Special thanks to Taya Pobjoy, Shirel Stemmons, Emma Cole, Sam Hall and their teams of volunteers who made sure everything ran smoothly and to all the Danes Hill staff who helped with set up and catering.

Firework fact: revellers munched their way through 500 sausages on the night!



The fireworks team (l-r): Shirel Stemmons, Helen Holyoake, Emma Cole, Taya Pobjoy. Sam Hall (not pictured)



## IT'S HIP TO BE SQUARE

Quiz Night 2016 was held in late February and the Dining Hall was packed to the rafters with variously talented, yet entirely enthusiastic general knowledge boffins. Twenty-one tables were sold, with each team scrambling to solve the questions set by our experienced Quiz Master, Andy Wall. Andy took six weeks putting the questions together to be sure they were varied and challenging enough to test the eager Danes Hill throng. Test your general knowledge ability on two questions from this year's quiz:

- Q. What kind of clock was invented in 1656 by Christian Huygens?
- Q. In which state is the USA's highest peak?

In a gesture of appreciation for their hard work throughout the year, the school kitchen staff were special guests of the FODH. Rather than cooking for the crowd, they were the Ladies That Lunch team for the evening.

The victors were the Hot Nuts, proving they were also quite clever nuts! The team, who have competed together for many years, were named after the spicy nuts mixture annually prepared by teammate Kyja Washington. Perhaps it was the omega 3s that gave them the cutting edge?

Thank you to Rujuta Swarup for coordinating the event, which raised almost £4,000. If you answered, 'the pendulum' and 'Alaska' to the previously posed questions, be sure you have a seat next year!





# Last Christmas



Once again the Christmas Fayre was a huge success, raising £7,070 and providing the perfect opportunity for some Christmas shopping and plenty of Christmas spirit.

Sarah Colenso and her team worked tirelessly for weeks and a huge thank you needs to go out to them. When asked what the highlight of the day was for Sarah, she giggled and said; "All the walkie-talkie conversations with Louise. It was the easiest way for us to stay in touch on the day."

Our main sponsor, Academy salons, had a wonderful stall doing hair and nails. The Elsa plaits proved to be very popular – and there were even a few mums sporting plaits by the end of the day.

The prize for the best-dressed stall went to the Tombola stall decorated by two transition classes – TL and TF. A big thanks to Emma Townsend, Jo Roydon-Turner, Sinead Lonergan and Sarah Studholme. The other prizewinner was the hot food stall.



The Christmas Fayre committee: (L-r) Louise Staples, Nicola Gibbs, Sarah Colenso, Lexi Gatte, Anita Boswell, Rujuta Swarup (not pictured)



The turkey hats worn by the volunteers selling hot food did indeed draw the crowds, crowning it the stall that raised the most on the day.

New to the Fayre this year were the Crafty Corner and Beat The Teacher stalls. Who knew that our teachers had so many hidden talents? And the children loved making their crafty bits and pieces and having something lovely to take home. Trevor Cline's magic and balloon modeling show was another new attraction and provided much laughter.

Other thank yous must go to the groundsmen, Claire Walsh, Tiffany Callis, Kate de Vere and the kitchen staff for all their hard work in preparation and on the day.



# All I want for Christmas

*Out of the mouths of babes: quotes from the children at the Bevendean Christmas shop*



Thanks to Alex Estwick and her team for all their hard work behind the scenes

"I am definitely going to get the Lego for my Dad and the magic set for my Mum."

"I don't need to keep it a secret because I am going to give it to myself."



"The best thing about Christmas is going to my Granny's house."



"My Dad likes Star Wars so I got him a Star Wars mug."



"It was tricky choosing something for my Mum because there are so much good things to choose from."



"I am going to hide my presents under my bed."

"The best thing about the Christmas Shop is the stickers and the sweets."



"To keep them a surprise I will wrap them up and hide them."



# Handbags & gladrags



The humble bag is so much more than just a receptacle to stash your keys and your smartphone. So if you can tell your rucksack from your wristlet or your manbag from your messenger then put your knowledge to the test.



Match the bag to the member of staff. Good luck!



(Answers on page 19)

# Never can say

The Annual speaks to the staff who just can't seem to stay away from Danes Hill about their time at the school and what has made them come back.

## Carly Holzer, Religious Studies

**Which three words would you use to describe Danes Hill?**

Bustling. Happy. Fun

**What are your top three memories of your time here?**

Firstly I would say a memory from my school days here at Danes Hill. We used to have to ring the school bell by hand, and it was situated above where the headmaster and teachers used to park their cars. One break time I was the one ringing the bell, and it fell and landed on Mr Gough's car. We also had little hand bells and used to hang out of the windows and ring them.

**Quiz question: Does anyone know where the original bell is situated now at school?**

As a teacher I loved going on the Normandy trip and visiting all the beaches. And finally I remember a year when snow disrupted many of the Christmas productions. On the day many children could not get to school and others had to fill in for them. One little girl was saying the lines of the person who had not arrived and instead of saying frankincense she said Frankenstein, which led to much laughter from the audience and us in the wings.

**When did you leave Danes Hill? How has the school changed during the time you were away?**

Having taught at Danes Hill for a few years, in 2013 I left to travel, and arrived back in November 2015. While I was away new buildings were built and the school seems bigger. Having said that, the family ethos is still here, as well as a wonderful sense of community. Just as an example of how strong the

sense of community is, my mum still gets together with a group of friends from my brother's year three class!

**What did you do while you were away?**

Originally when I left I had planned to go to Australia. However, during the summer I met my husband-to-be and so delayed my trip. Eventually I did get to Australia and then met up with my now husband in the USA. We came back to the UK in January 2014 to get married and then moved back permanently from the USA last September.

**What were you looking forward to when you knew you were returning? What did you miss the most?**

I really did miss teaching while I was away, and could not wait to get back into the classroom. Being away cemented the fact that I love to teach. On my return it was great to see so many familiar faces and see how the children I had taught before had grown up.

I missed the camaraderie in the staff room, school lunches, summer BBQs and getting involved in all the different activities and trips.

**How do you think the school will change over the next few years?**

Hopefully we will have a lovely new sports hall. I remember when the Ark was built and how exciting it was to move from The Old Stable Block (part



of which still exists today as the Music department) to the Ark.

**If you could change one thing about the school, what would it be?**

I would love to take the fences down. I know it is not possible in the interests of keeping the children safe, but I used to love looking out of The Rookery classrooms onto the field. The children could run straight out of their classrooms onto the grass.

**If you hadn't been a teacher, what would you have done instead?**

I would have gone into Outdoor education. I took a gap year after school and worked at a children's camp in Australia - I really loved it. In the end I felt that teaching as a career had more longevity.

**If you could teach another subject what would it be?**

At the moment I teach RS and am really enjoying that. I also loved being a generalist teacher - teaching in the lower and middle school across all subjects.

**What were your school days like?**

I was a pupil here and I was one of only six girls in my year. I loved school and my memories are all of a fun, happy, unstressful time. I remember having an afternoon break and only having clubs on one night a week.

We all used to do our homework straight after school, at school, so I seldom remember doing any homework at home. My favourite teacher was definitely Mrs Parfitt, she was my form teacher in both my first and last year at Danes Hill.

## Sonal Chatrath, Learning Support

**When did you arrive at Danes Hill?**

In 2006. My husband and I had just moved down from London where I had owned a nursery school. I originally covered a maternity position as Head of Nursery at Bevendean, but was offered a permanent place after that, at first in learning support, then in the Lower School and finally, I was the Head of Transition for four years before I left.

**When did you leave Danes Hill? What did you do while you were away?**

In 2012 I moved to Manor House School to become the Head of Preps, running their pre-prep programme. I stayed for three years.

**What were you looking forward to when you knew you were returning?**

I had almost forgotten how big and busy Danes Hill is! It's a very different pace from other schools. It gave me the privileged position of being able to look at Danes Hill from the outside. I was delighted when I was offered the opportunity to head learning support. The school is a very dynamic place to be.

**What are you particularly hoping to achieve in your role?**

I am passionate about personalised learning. For me, every child has different needs, and that's my drive. I also think that through more personalised learning comes a lot of creativity.

**If you could change one thing about the school, what would it be?**

I would like to see the children outdoors more, learning out of the classroom. I initiated outdoor learning in The Pad-dock at Bevendean, which has worked very well. If I had a magic wand I would have my learning support centre in our beautiful woods.

**If you hadn't been a teacher, what would you have done instead?**

In another life I might have considered being a chef.

**What is your favourite part of the school day?**

I really enjoy watching the children in their free play. I have duties on the play-

# goodbye

## Halcyon Manton, Year 1

**Which three words would you use to describe Danes Hill?**

Happy. Hardworking. Nurturing.

**What are your top three memories of your time here?**

That's a hard one, I have so many fond memories as a child and as a teacher. As a child, one of my best memories was moving from Bevendean to the main school. It meant that I was able to see my big brothers at school every day (even if they didn't like their little sister pestering them in the playground).

As a child and a teacher, one of my favourite events of the year has always been Sports Day, it is such a wonderful event full of fun, laughter and, of course, team spirit. Another fantastic event was when we celebrated the Royal Wedding in 2011 at Bevendean. All the children and staff were dressed up, we had a golden carriage, games and a playground party.

**When did you leave Danes Hill? How has the school changed during the time you were away?**

Apart from being here as a child, as a teacher I left in 2012 and came back in 2015 so I have not managed to stay away for long!

Bevendean has not changed too much in that time, apart from a new head of Pre-Prep, Mrs Samson, and I am now working in a different year group. It has been lovely to fit right back into the day-to-day life of Danes Hill and be welcomed back by all the staff.

**What did you do while you were away?**

My husband and I moved to Abu Dhabi in the Middle East. I was teaching in the British International School working in

ground and my position is in the woods. I just love it; all the imagination pouring out of the kids.

**What are your interests?**

I am a passionate follower of international cricket. I was born and brought up in Kenya and girls certainly didn't play cricket. I have been known to plan my trips abroad to coincide with the Indian Premier League! Over and above that, I do a lot of reading and cooking.

**What were your school days like?**

The lovely thing was that in Africa, once school ended at 3 or 4 o'clock, it was my time. My parents had to pull me back into the house. There was a lot of freedom and simplicity.



Year 5, Year 1 and Reception (they like the teachers to move around each year). It was a fantastic adventure and teaching experience, not to mention the fact that I could spend every weekend on the beach!

**What were you looking forward to when you knew you were returning? What did you miss the most?**

I was very much looking forward to getting back to Danes Hill, it is such a familiar place to me that it feels like home. I was looking forward to meeting my new class who had only seen a picture of me on their induction day.

At Danes Hill we have so many wonderful resources to aid our teaching. We also offer the children exciting extra-curricular activities and school trips. While I was in Abu Dhabi the government changed the law for a few years which meant we were not allowed to take the children out of the school grounds.

**How do you think the school will change over the next five years?**

There are always exciting plans and developments lined up for the future of

Danes Hill. It is hard to say how it will change, but I know that new facilities are always on the agenda, enabling the children to thrive in an outstanding environment.

**If you could change one thing about the school, what would it be?**

Nothing of course ;)

**If you hadn't been a teacher what would you have done instead?**

I have worked with children since I was 14 years old and have never even imagined doing anything different. If I was not a teacher, I think I would have gone into child psychology or counselling... Or be a backing dancer for Beyoncé!

**If you could teach another subject, what would it be?**

Dance - I have always loved it and taught it to different age groups in Abu Dhabi as part of their after school clubs.

**What were your school days like?**

**What was your favourite school dinner?**

My school days were fantastic. I have very fond memories of all the schools I attended and have close friends from them all. Some of my closest friends were even at Bevendean with me. My favourite school meal was lasagne with fruit iced sponge and custard for pudding.

**If you could go back in time who would you most like to meet?**

It's a tough question... I would actually like to meet some of my great aunts again. I was lucky enough to spend my early childhood with a few of them. There were seven sisters who were brought up in the Caribbean. They were very fun and flamboyant characters, always in their glad rags ready to celebrate and make the most of life.

**Do you have a role model?**

One of my dreams when I was younger was to be the Prime Minister of India! I don't know why, I'd never been there! It fascinated me seeing this Indian woman (Indira Gandhi) leading this huge country and it made me quite interested in India. I spent a lot of time reading about the ideology of Mahatma Gandhi. I was very inspired by his powerful message and the simplicity with which he lived his life.

**12. What would be your advice to children leaving Danes Hill?**

Grab every opportunity that comes your way! And stand by your principles - don't let anybody tell you otherwise.



# So long, farewell...

## Huw Morgan, Head of Upper School

**Which three words would you use to describe Danes Hill?**  
All-round. Academic. Amazing.

### **What key memories do you have of your time here?**

I remember on my first day at Danes Hill being told that I had one free period, but that I would probably lose it! I was teaching science in the portacabins and we had one gas cylinder to share between both laboratories.

### **What will you remember most fondly when you retire?**

The achievements. Our Common Entrance results and successes at senior school scholarships are continually surpassed and the children have set a new record this year.

Danes Hill will always have a special place in my heart.

### **When did you arrive at Danes Hill?**

I arrived in September 1986 and on my first day I remember saying to Mrs Morgan: "I'll give it three years". That was 30 years ago! Our two daughters went through the school too.

### **How do you think the school might change over the next few years?**

I am sure Danes Hill will continue to evolve and stay at the cutting edge of education. Success breeds success and the school will remain at the top of the prep school tree.

### **If you could change one thing about the school what would it be?**

The sports hall is the one piece of the jigsaw that is missing.

### **What will you miss about Danes Hill?**

The children. I'll also miss all my friends in the Common Room and my comrades on the Senior Management Team.

### **What are you looking forward to doing?**

Having the time to do things. Danes Hill is all encompassing and to do the job properly you have to put the hours in. I am keen to take up the cello and gain my racing car licence.

### **If you could teach any subject, what would it be?**

Music. I have a passion for music and learned to play many instruments in my youth. I started with the piano at 7, was playing the chapel organ by 10 and got to grade 8 by 13.

### **What were your school days like?**

I loved school. My parents were very supportive and keen for me to do well in academics, sport and music. I was a true all-rounder.

### **If you had a piece of advice for the children at Danes Hill what would it be?**

Don't count the days, make the days count. Make the most of every opportunity that comes your way!

## Janine Morgan, Year 4



**Which three words would you use to describe Danes Hill?**  
Friendly. Full on. Family.

### **What key memories do you have of your time here?**

I was walking the course in Malvern at the National Cross Country competition with the girls before the race. I realised we had to get to the start quickly and decided to go down a muddy hill to get there. I felt myself go head-first, like a Jürgen Klinsmann dive. The poor girls weren't sure if they could laugh or not.

And there are sad memories - the late Heather Garside was our Head of Games and when I stand and look over our fields I know how happy she would have been to see it.

### **What will you miss about Danes Hill?**

Pretty much everything. Well, people actually! The memories and friendships.

### **How has the school changed since you started?**

It's a lot bigger, but it still feels the same. People might worry about it getting very big, but there is always

someone who will point you in the right direction. It is a family as much as a school.

### **How do you think the school might change over the next few years?**

Some students might choose to leave earlier as more senior schools are starting at an earlier stage. But I get the feeling that some may regret it because I think the top end of our school is where Danes Hill really comes into its own. The children really blossom in years 7 and 8.

### **If you could change one thing at the school what would it be?**

I'd have had a sports hall years ago!

### **What are you looking forward to doing?**

We are hoping to travel. Mr Morgan and I have a motor home that we bought a year ago. We have only ventured as far as France in it, so hopefully we will go a little further. We'd really like to send a postcard from somewhere to arrive in September when everyone starts back at work!

### **If you weren't a teacher, what would you have done instead?**

When I was young I was an athlete. If it were later on time-wise I'd have been a professional athlete. But when I was running there was no money in it, you had to work. (Mrs Morgan represented GB on the track at the Moscow Olympics).

## Rebecca Sykes, D&T

**Which three words would you use to describe Danes Hill?**  
Fast-paced. Bags of opportunities. Fun.



### **When did you arrive at Danes Hill? How has the school changed in that time?**

I joined Danes Hill in 1996 as a parent when my eldest child started in Transition. I have always had a passion for horticulture. Just as I was about to

start my RHS course in 2008, Mr Parfitt convinced me to come and teach D&T at Danes Hill on a part-time basis. I remember him showing me the floor plans for the Robins building and when it eventually came to fruition, Mr Murdock asked me to head the D&T department. I was instrumental in introducing Food Tech to Danes Hill. With the help of the FODH we started our kitchen garden, which the children and I love planting each year. Most fruit and vegetables are available all year round, but the garden helps children to learn about seasonal produce.

The main changes have been in the number of children at the school, the

increased pace at which everything moves and the traffic!

### **How do you think the school will change over the next few years?**

I really hope that the Sports Hall finally gets planning permission.

I think one of the big challenges facing Danes Hill going forward will be the increase in senior schools accepting children at 11+ and how that will change the shape of prep schools.

### **If you could change one thing about the school, what would it be?**

I would have a shorter school day - even if it meant slightly shorter holidays.



## James Oliver, Head of Boys Games

**Which three words would you use to describe Danes Hill?**

Nurturing. Fantastic. Great children.

**What key memories do you have of your time here?**

Mr Murdock getting swiped off his feet in Alpe D'Huez while taking photos of the children bum boarding. Watching Andrew McCallum score 100 runs. Being involved in first team rugby and witnessing great teams emerge over the seasons.

**When did you arrive at Danes Hill?**

**How has the school changed since?**

I arrived during the summer term of 2003 and had a few weeks to familiarise myself with the school before starting on a one year contract in Sept 2003... which turned into 12 wonderful years at the school.

Since then, wow the place has grown, I still remember the little D&T block, small wooden sheds, and also Timbuktu, the double storey block of four class rooms where I had my first year 5 form room.

**How do you think the school will change over the next few years?**

It will go from strength to strength. Hopefully we will get our sports hall. During my last term at Danes Hill we took part in 500 sports fixtures and had over 100 teams competing in various events. The amount and different kinds of sport that the children are exposed to at Danes Hill is amazing.

**If you could change one thing about the school, what would it be?**

The school has most things just about perfect. Wouldn't mind having the odd sleep-in on a Saturday morning?

**What is your best Danes Hill memory?**

At the first ski tournament that we competed in back in 2010, we took 8 teams and all 8 were disqualified. But by the following year the teams had county, national and IAPS titles

**What is your best memory of your time here?**

Definitely the Isle of Wight trip - it was fantastic. I loved seeing how the children grew in confidence day by day.

**What will you miss about the school?**

School dinners. The busyness of the school and constant interaction with people.

**What are you looking forward to doing once you leave?**

I am finally taking a leap into the world of gardening. I am signed up to do my RHS qualification and will be opening my own business in July



to their names. And after singing *Waltzing Matilda* at my first rugby dinner Mr Murdock had it written into my contract that I would never sing it at a rugby dinner again!

**What will you miss?**

The children. I was lucky enough to teach at all ability levels and I loved seeing each and every child progress. The children that I taught when I first arrived at Danes Hill are now 28 years old. I found it very humbling to see the response from my ex-pupils when I left Danes Hill, some of whom have turned into world class sportsmen.

**What are some of your signature phrases?**

Catches win matches. Score more goals than you let in. Hit, stick so the next one rips.

**If you weren't a teacher what would you have done instead?**

I would have been a surfer. I love surfing and travelling. Perhaps I could have been a photographer travelling the world following the surfers and making surfing movies.

**What would your advice for the children at Danes Hill be?**

Remember that enjoying what you are doing is number one. Give it all you've got, and your best does not always mean you will be the winner. However, if you have given it your best, in your heart you will have succeeded.

**If you could go back in time who would you most like to meet?**

Robin Parfitt. I would like to thank him for believing in me.

called Gardening Angel, helping people in their gardens.

**If you weren't a teacher what would you have done instead?**

Horticulture. When I left school I had secured a place to do a horticulture qualification but was put off by others who said that 'girls don't do horticulture'. One of the things I love about the D&T and Food Tech department at Danes Hill is that it has managed to eradicate any gender biases with both Mr Taylor and I teaching across both rooms, and boys and girls alike enjoying everything from sewing to woodwork.

## Susie Williams, Head of History

**Which three words would you use to describe Danes Hill?**

Nurturing. Busy. Wonderful.

**What key memories do you have of your time here?**

I had a year group of girls who won the national netball finals. Thereafter, a group of mums invited me around to their house and made a real fuss of me. They had put together a video of the highlights of the season, there were speeches and they gave me cards and flowers from all the girls. I could not believe they had gone to so much effort just for me.

And the class run that I organised with my form last year. All of the families gathered together in Bushy Park on Mothers' Day, in freezing cold conditions, to raise money for Comic Relief. It was very special. Oh, and we had hoodies made (of course!).

**When did you arrive at Danes Hill? How has the school changed in that time?**

I arrived at Danes Hill in 2004 where I did my training to become a teacher. I have taught Games, History and been Head of Girls Games, Year 5 and most recently History. The biggest change has been the size of the school both in number of pupils and facilities. However, through all this change the ethos has remained the same and there is still a wonderful sense of community.

**How do you think the school will change over the next few years?**

There has been a shift in focus recently towards preparing children for their future schools. I think that the future of the 11+ and 13+ systems will have a big impact on how children are taught at junior school level. We need to rise to the challenges of these changes while still staying true to ourselves.

**If you could change one thing about the school, what would it be?**

The size. I would want to keep it small and close knit. I love walking around the school and being able to call each child by name when I address them. I feel like I am only just clinging onto that now. And I would bring back sandwiches in the staff room at 4pm.

**What will you miss about Danes Hill?**

I will miss my colleagues dearly, some of whom are my best friends. I will miss all the laughs in the common room. But most of all

*continued on page 18*



I will miss the children. Oh, and the food - I will miss that too.

**What are you looking forward to doing once you leave?**

I am looking forward to giving myself some time out. I am going to be working with my sisters and in my family business. As anyone who knows me well will tell you, my family is top of my agenda. I can't wait to pop back in to school and be able to admire the children in their full glory from the

sidelines, without any pressure or weight on my shoulders.

**If you weren't a teacher what would you have done instead?**

I'd love to have been a journalist.

**What words of wisdom do you have for the children you have taught?**

Your life lies before you like a path of driven snow, be careful how you tread it 'cause every step will show.

**John Dawson, Security & Traffic management**

Mr Dawson worked at Danes Hill for 18 years.

We featured him in last year's Annual in the Behind the Scenes section, and sadly he left the school due to health reasons earlier in the year.

He sent the PODH this lovely letter of thanks, which we felt we must share with you.



# We've only just begun

**Ruth Samson, Head of Danes Hill Pre-prep, Bevendean**

**Which three words would you use to describe Danes Hill/Bevendean?**

Family. Team. Creative.

**What are your favourite memories of your time here so far?**

Observing the creative learning. Spending time with all the children from Mini Transition to Year 1. Getting to know my staff and parents. Maths Week, especially dressing up as a ruler! Book Week, especially dressing up as the Gruffalo! Science Week, especially seeing Mr Andrews' experiments and meeting the mad scientist. Any opportunity to dress up and have fun. Seeing all the children on their birthdays for a certificate, sticker and pencil.

**How do you think Bevendean will change over the next 5 years?**

I hope Bevendean will continue to go from strength to strength. I want the children to love coming to school every day and to feel that 'every day is an adventure'. I would like to introduce more opportunities to meet the parents, perhaps by hosting coffee mornings once a week and I would like Bevendean to be the number one pre-prep in the area.

We are already looking at ways to extend the school day for our Mini Transition children by offering Monday



and Thursday afternoons and we are looking closely at nutrition in the school. We have run a sugar-free week and invited a nutritionist to the school to talk with our parents. I would like to see this initiative grow further in the future.

**If you could change one thing about the school, what would it be?**

I would love more space but I think this is every headteacher's dream. I would like to ensure that we spend more time together as a Bevendean staff to ensure that we can work together, as a team, to keep moving the school forward.

**If you weren't a teacher what would you have done instead?**

I always wanted to be a shopkeeper

when I was younger and I spent hours playing 'shops'. Or an interior designer. I like things to match where ever possible. To be honest, I have wanted to be a teacher since I was four years' old when I used to teach the chickens at the end of the garden. They were not very good listeners!

**If you could teach any subject what would it be?**

I studied English Literature and Education at Warwick University for four years and have led English in my three previous schools so I would say English and Drama. I used to direct the Form 1 productions at The City of London Freeman's School for eight years and I think drama is a subject which can encourage and develop such a wide range of skills in children.

**What were your school days like?**

**What was your favourite school dinner?**

I loved school and it was this love which partly made me want to become a teacher myself. I always wanted to go to school in the mornings and my favourite teacher was called Miss Jones.

My favourite dinner was mince with cabbage or roast dinner. I loved butterscotch tart for pudding, with a dash of whipped cream and still do today.

**James Bennett, Head of Boys Games**



So far, my time at Danes Hill has been great. The environment is a very driven one where the children are challenged across the board. What has struck me most is that, unlike other

schools that I have worked in before, all areas of development are on an equal standing, from academics through to sport and extra curricular activities.

The three words that I would use to describe Danes Hill are:

**Diverse:** the school has so much on offer for the children. Even though it is big, it still manages to tailor activities to the interests of all pupils.

**Inclusive:** everyone gets involved, not just participating in sport, but actually competing at the right ability level.

**Caring:** I love being a tutor. The pastoral care at Danes Hill is something that we as staff take responsibility for.

I have been really impressed with all the added extras that Danes Hill provides, from the amazing D&T and Food Tech department, to the residential trips and sports tours.

A morning that will stay in my memory for a long time is one Saturday last term when we had U8, U9, U10 and U11 boys all playing rugby matches and the girls were playing netball that morning too. So we must have had around 300 children playing sport, as many parents supporting, the catering staff putting out delicious eats and drinks - just an amazing atmosphere.

I would like to thank the parents for their fantastic support. They are there weekends and weekdays, home and away to support the children. It is really appreciated by both staff and children.

Here's to many more happy and successful years of sport at Danes Hill.

# The Annual 2016

was written, designed and edited by:

Ayesha Ali  
Nicole Birrell  
Fiona Koep  
Caroline Pearce  
Victoria Scott

Thanks also to Claire Walsh,  
Head of Marketing,  
Danes Hill School

Printed by:  
Bd3 Limited  
8a West Cliff Road  
Dawlish  
Devon  
EX7 9EB

Printed on Novatech Matt



Thank you to everyone who has volunteered in any way over the past year. FODH would be nothing without you!

## Handbags & gladrags

page 13



1f Madame (Mrs Goul-Wheeker)



2e Mrs Clark



3g Mr Jarvis



4a Mrs Callis



5b Mrs Neville-Towle



6c Mrs Cawley



7h Mr May



8d Mrs Bingham





# CHK MOUNTFORD

THE LETTING SPECIALISTS

CHK Mountford offer the very best selection of rental property in Surrey's prime locations. We continually help find more homes for families in Oxshott, Esher and Cobham than any other agent.

A thorough letting service combined with local expert, highly qualified and a very professional team ensure the only highest level of service is offered to Landlords and Tenants, which has become synonymous with CHK Mountford for over 28 years.

For all your property rental enquiries please call us on 01372 464474

**Esher office**

70 High Street | Esher | Surrey | KT10 9QS

01372 464474 [esh@chkmountford.co.uk](mailto:esh@chkmountford.co.uk)

[chkmountford.co.uk](http://chkmountford.co.uk)