

Welcome to the St Damian's newsletter as we come to the end of a very busy term.



I am *excited* to announce that this year St Damian's will be holding our *first May Ball* on **Friday 5th May 2017 at San Rocco, Ashton.**

It is with *great pleasure* that I would like to invite parents, carers and other members of our school community to attend *what will be a truly great night*. *Proceeds* from our event will be donated to the school's nominated *Share Day* Charities *Willow Wood Hospice* and *The Macmillan Unit* at Tameside General Hospital.

The cost of the *May Ball* is £40.00 per person and bookings for tables of ten will receive a *free* bottle of red and white wine for the table. Included in the price is a *three course meal*, a *Michael Buble* Tribute Singer and a *disco*. **Kindly note that this event is for adults only.** If you are unable to attend but would still like to kindly *support the event*, we are looking for companies who would like to *advertise* in the programme and also *auction* and *raffle prize* donations. If you would like *further details* on the event or would like to purchase tickets, please contact Mrs Jinks.

Charity Starts at St Damian's



Just before we broke up for Christmas, Mrs O'Loughlin and Mrs Jinks and 4 of our Liturgy group members visited the Chemotherapy ward at Manchester Children's Hospital to drop off the Christmas presents we'd all collected.

To say they were overwhelmed would be an understatement. They were very, very grateful and explained that without gifts like this many children's Christmas' would be a lot worse. Whilst we were in the foyer with the presents a lady spoke to us and said her child had been in the ward for 4 months and it was gifts like this which allowed her to smile.

Tameside Numeracy Network Challenge



At the end of last term, teams from Tameside Secondary Schools battled it out at the annual Tameside Year 7 Maths Challenge. 15 schools from across the borough were represented in an event that challenged the most talented pupils in a range of Maths based activities. Two teams from St Damian's pitted



their wits against strong opposition. It was a wonderful event which saw our teams enjoy a day of challenging puzzles including creating their own space stations! The teams competed with great enthusiasm and effort and were rewarded with both second and third place overall; an amazing achievement !

Lent at St Damian's

Ash Wednesday was a time for the whole community to come together to share in the forgiveness that Jesus has offered us. It opened the season of fasting and prayer at St Damian's and allowed us to have time to reflect on the wrongs we may have done and how we can move forward and make them right.

During Lent pupils in Years 7 to 10 will have an RE lesson with Father Simon. 'Grill the Priest' is an opportunity for pupils to ask Father any questions about the priesthood, being a Catholic or any moral questions that they might have.

Finally, they will have opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. There will be a service for each year group held during assembly and each year group will be invited to go to the chapel with Father Simon to receive God's forgiveness and love.

Other News from the RE Department ...

On Thursday 16th March, approximately 120 students received the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Mr O'Loughlin spoke about the importance of this Sacrament to the year group and Fr. Simon saw students individually throughout the day. Before Easter all students, across all year groups will have the opportunity to speak to Fr. Simon. This is part of St. Damian's Catholicity in the build up to Lent.

On Tuesday 21st March St Damian's had a non-uniform day with a twist! Students and teachers were asked to include an odd pair of socks or "funky" socks in their outfit. This was to mark National Down Syndrome Day; something which touches many within the St. Damian's community. Just over £600 has been raised !

On Wednesday 29th March Joanna Millan visits St Damian's for the fourth time in as many years. A welcome visitor, Joanna speaks about her experiences during the holocaust and her survival afterwards. Mr O'Loughlin commented that "*Joanna always makes an impact on our Yr 9's and it is a privilege to have her back to the school again*". A powerful experience.

Maths Across the Curriculum

Pupils, Teachers, Support Staff, Governors and Priests are all almost fighting over who can achieve the greatest number of MAC badges to date! However, there are only four qualifiers so far for the £50 voucher: These pupils are: Grace Allen; Megan Cooper; Emily Tracey and Rubab Mahmood. In addition, Dr. Mitchell and Fr. Simon join Ms Steciuk as the three "Adults" achieving three gold badges. Well done and thank you for your support and enthusiasm, encouraging us all to be "proud of being numerate". MAC badges are given out by MAC Ambassadors who see excellent maths being used in non-maths subjects. Please praise anyone you see proudly wearing their MAC badge!

PLF Storm Numeracy Intervention!

Yr10 Pupil Learning Forum (PLF) are helping Yr7s and Yr8s with numeracy intervention each morning. They are using their well-honed numeracy skills to support Mr Trimble's intervention group. Pupils are working through "numeracy ninja" work books. Only if they achieve 100% are they awarded with a Ninja Black belt. So far, no black belts have been awarded, but watch this space. !

Pupils with Attendance 90% and Under

There is a clear and proven link between attendance and attainment and that absences will begin to have a negative impact on pupil's progress and achievement. All pupils whose attendance is 90% and below are classed as persistent absent pupils. As a positive strategy to improve their attendance we have introduced a **Back to School Interview**, to maintain our high whole school attendance target of 97%

On pupils return to school the procedure will be:

- To discuss with the pupil the reason for their absence
- To ask if medical advice was sought
- To ask what support we can offer to improve their attendance
- To ask whether school was informed on the day of absence.

Thank you to parents and carers for supporting us in maintaining our high standard of attendance.

Win a Fair Trade Chocolate Hamper

The geography department are running a raffle ticket system for all years to win a fair trade chocolate hamper to celebrate fair trade fortnight. Each student who gets an Achievement point will get a raffle ticket entry. We will be announcing the winners next week and I'll try to get a photo of winners with their chocolate hampers next week for the newsletter.

Global Citizens Club

Currently Global Citizens Club are working on a campaign to raise awareness about refugee issues and to raise money for a number of local refugee charities including the Refugee Council and Manchester Refugee Network. They have delivered assemblies to both Yr 8 and Yr 7 students about refugees and have created an information newsletter about refugee issues. They will also be taking part in a sponsored walk around Dovestones reservoir on the 24th March to raise money for these charities. During the last Yr 7 assembly of the term they will be hosting a RefuTEA event, where they will be selling hot chocolate and biscuits. There will be a quiz and a creative writing competition for Yr 7 students to enter as part of the event. Raffle tickets will also be on sale with Easter eggs as prizes. All money raised will go to the charities above.

Young Carers

On Wednesday 22nd March the St Damian's Young Carers were invited into school with their families for Afternoon Tea. We were delighted to welcome not only Mum's, Dad's, brothers and sisters but Grandma's and Grandpa's as well. Proceedings were accompanied by Bethany Hughes on piano.



St Joseph's Visit during Science Week

Year 6 students from St Joseph's visited our Science labs during science week. Our STEM leaders were on hand to demonstrate some exciting experiments. The Year 6 students had a fantastic time setting fire to Magnesium and burning various other metals. There were also colourful experiments using acids, alkali's and making indicators. One student said 'I cannot wait to start school at St Damian's ! The STEM leaders once again proved their maturity by working with the Year 6 students.

Sport at St Damian's

Below are some of the fantastic accolades our pupils have achieved so far this academic year!

Tameside Schools Football Cup

Yr. 7 made the quarter finals
Yr. 8 Semi-final stages
Yr. 9 Finals v Audenshaw / West Hill tbc
Yr. 10 Finals v West Hill
Yr. 11 Semi-finals v Alder

Tameside Schools Football Cup B league

Yr8 – finished 1st and 2nd
Yr10 = finished 5th

Tameside Schools Indoor Athletics

Yr. 9 Girls Team – 3rd place
Yr. 8 boys team – 2nd place
Yr. 8 girls team – 3rd place
Yr. 7 boys and girls team – 5th place

Tameside Schools Spring Netball Tournament

Yr9 Team 3rd Place
Yr9B Team 5th Place
Yr8 Team 1st Place
Yr7 Team 2nd Place
Seniors TBC

Greater Manchester School Games Swimming

Yr7/8 Girls Swim team 4th in Greater Manchester in a mixed team with Audenshaw Boys School

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR HALF TERM 5:

1. Yr7/8 Girls Tag rugby
2. Boys Yr 7 – 9 B league football
3. Athletics events

Dates for the Diary

Friday 31 st March 2017	School closes for the Easter holiday
Tuesday 18 th April 2017	Pupils return to school, we return on WEEK 2
Monday 24 th April 2017	Year 8 Exam Week Commences
Tuesday 2 nd May 2017	Yr10 Biology GCSE
Wednesday 3 rd May 2017	Yr10 Chemistry GCSE
Thursday 4 th May 2017	Yr10 Physics GCSE
Friday 5 th May 2017	Summer Ball
Monday 15 th May 2017	GCSE's begin

Term Dates 2017/2018

AUTUMN TERM	First Day	Last Day	
INSET DAY	*Tuesday 5 th September 2017		School closed
Autumn 1 st Term	Wednesday 6 th Sept 2017	Friday 27 th October 2017	Pupils in school
Half term holidays	Monday 30 th October 2017	Friday 3 rd November 2017	School closed
INSET DAY	*Friday 24 th November 2017		School closed
Autumn 2 nd Term	Monday 6 th November 2017	Wednesday 20 th Dec 2017	Pupils in school

SPRING TERM	First Day	Last Day	
Spring 1 st Term	Wednesday 3 rd January 2018	Friday 16 th February 2018	Pupils in school
Half term holidays	Monday 19 th February 2018	Friday 23 rd February 2018	School closed
INSET DAY	*Friday 16 th March 2018		School closed
Spring 2 nd Term	Monday 26 th February 2018	Thursday 29 th March 2018	Pupils in school
Easter Holidays	Friday 30 th March 2018	Friday 13 th April 2018	School closed

*Easter Sunday is 1st April 2018

SUMMER TERM	First Day	Last Day	
Summer 1 st Term	Monday 16 th April 2018	Friday 25 th May 2018	Pupils in school
MAY BANK HOLIDAY	Monday 7 th May 2018		School closed
Half term holidays	Monday 28 th May 2018	Friday 1 st June 2018	School closed
Summer 2 nd Term	Monday 4 th June 2018	Friday 20 th July 2018**	Pupils in school

*STAFF INSET DAYS: (school closed to pupils)

Tuesday 5th September 2017, Friday 24th November 2017, Friday 16th March 2018

** It is anticipated that autumn term 2018/19 will commence Monday 3rd September 2018