



In all things faithful

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Headteacher

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Dear Parents/Carers,

In a few weeks your child will be starting their GCSE exams. The following are some tips to support your child over the next few weeks and months in order that they maximise their GCSE outcomes. It is these outcomes that will allow your child to have **more opportunities and choices** as they move onto the next stage of their education.

As always, working together is the best way that your child will achieve their potential. Below is an overview of extra revision sessions that I hope parents will support. At this point, can I say, on behalf of the teachers who led on these revision sessions, **a massive well done to those who attended over Easter**. It was well attended, and the teachers were impressed with their attitude and work rate. This needs to continue over the next few months.

A] General Information regarding revision and intervention

- **Exam timetable.** This is on the school website. It is important that your child plans their revision around this when the exams begin. As a parent it may also be useful to know what exams your child is doing so that you can 'plan' with your child.
- **Revision.** It is vital that your child is revising 2-3 hours each night in a quiet place with no distractions, for example, no access to mobile phones. At the heart of any effective revision is ensuring that your child looks at past exam papers and completes/attempts exam style questions. This will allow them to identify gaps in their learning/knowledge and they can ask their teacher for support/help.
- **TEAMS.** Please remember that some teachers will choose to share revision resources via TEAMS and students should check this regularly. This is particularly important the evening before each exam, when last minute reminders may be shared.
- **Intervention before/after school.** This intervention will continue until Friday 12th May as exams begin on Monday 15th. A new intervention schedule will be in place from Monday 15th May. This will be shared in due course with the students.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 - 8.50			History/Geography	MFL	Food/Sport
3.10 - 4:10	English	Maths		Science	RE

- **Half term break.** There will be a revision schedule for half term, similar to the Easter schedule. This will be in the middle of the exam period. I will share this in my May letter, but I hope that parents will support this initiative.
- **Saturday mornings.** The *English, Maths and RE* departments have planned a series of Saturday revision sessions prior to, and during, the exam season. Again, I would hope that parents support this and ensure that, if needed, your child attends. The following are the dates and the subjects for your perusal.
- Sat 13th May: **RE** 9.30-14.30 (Y band morning, X band afternoon each time)
- Sat 13th May: **English** 9.30-11.30 selected students

- Sat 20th May: **RE** 9.30-14.30 (Y band morning, X band afternoon each time)
- Sat 3rd June: **Maths** 9am -12noon
- Sat 3rd June: **RE** 12.20 to 2.30
- Sat 10th June: **Maths** 9-12
- Sat 10th June: **English** 12.30-14.30

Attendance at all intervention sessions will be invaluable! There are only 15 school days until the start of the exams on Monday 15th May.

B] Increased stress and anxiety over the next few weeks and months

As we approach the GCSE exam period, we want to support our Yr11 students' wellbeing. I know, as I have had 2 children of my own go through the GCSE period, that this can be a very stressful time for your child. It is understandable, and normal, that the level of anxiety and stress will be higher during the exam period. This may affect their mood, sleeping or eating habits. If this is the case they are certainly not alone and there are things they can do to support their emotional wellbeing.

- Talk to their teachers or Student Support Officers to ask for help to manage their stress levels
- Talk to friends and family to discuss their worries and concerns
- Be kind to themselves and practise their self-care
- Get outside and stay connected with their friends
- Remember to take revision breaks
- Try to keep to a regular sleep pattern
- Keep things in perspective

If your child would like to access support outside of school, there are several agencies who offer help and support to young people.

- ✓ **TOGMIND/42ND Street.** Located on Katherine Street, A-U-L. Telephone number 0161 330 9223
- ✓ **Kooth.com.** A free, safe, anonymous online support and counselling service for young people aged 11-18 years to support emotional wellbeing.

C] General Information

Some other points I would like share;

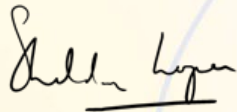
- **Exam Dates.** The GCSE exams start on Monday 15th May and the exams officially end on 21st June. However, some students will finish their exams before then.
- **Study Leave.** Your child does not officially leave school until their last exam. However, the St Damian's official leaving date for Yr11s will be on Wednesday 14th June, after the Maths exam. All students will still have at least one exam after this date and some pupils will have more.
- **Behaviour Expectations.** As you know, at St Damian's we have high standards and expectations. I am proud to say that the vast majority of our Yr11 students are mature and take responsibility for their behaviour and over the next few weeks I expect all Yr11 students to have a great attitude to their learning and their studies.
- **Uniform.** The expectation is that Yr11 students continue to attend school in proper uniform, have appropriate hair and wear no jewelry. Students should be focused on their work and failure to adhere to our simple school rules simply wastes their time.
- **Attendance.** There is a very strong correlation between student achievement and attendance. It is fundamental that your child attends school right up to and including the 14th June. This is a pre-requisite for an invitation to the Prom.

- **Prom.** This is a great tradition at St Damian's and is about the celebration of 5 fantastic years at the school. This is taking place on **Friday 30th June 2023 at The White Hart, Lydgate**. This evening is to reward students for good attendance, appropriate behaviour and hard work during the run up and completion of their GCSE exams. Several students are not going and others have been sent letters regarding poor attendance. As I have repeatedly said, this is by *invitation only* and good **behaviour AND attendance** is expected over the next few months as a minimum requirement.
- **Mass Date.** As a fiercely proud catholic school, we will hold a leavers Mass to celebrate Mass one more time as a group. Students would have started their journey at St Damian's with a welcome Mass and it is fitting to end their time here with a Leavers Mass. This will take place on **Wednesday 14th June at 12 noon** at St Christophers [subject to it being confirmed]. Parents are very welcome to attend. Hoodies will be distributed after the Mass.
- **Strikes.** As you know there are more strikes planned for the **27th April and the 2nd May**. Can I reassure both parents and Yr11 students that school will be open on these strike days for Yr11. I expect all Yr11 students to attend school as normal on these days.

Finally, on behalf of all the great staff at St Damian's, we wish your child **all the very best** in their forthcoming exams and in their futures. We all look forward to great individual outcomes in August. I hope that St Damian's has played a large part in their lives, shaping them into lovely young adults with the work ethic, values and character to be successful!

A massive thanks for your overwhelming support over the past 5 years. I have never taken it for granted.

Yours sincerely



Mr Logue
Headteacher