



In all things faithful

**St Damian's RC Science College**

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**Headteacher**

Mr S Logue BA (Hons), M.Ed., NPQH

June 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

A very warm welcome to my latest newsletter about all things St Damian's. I hope that you enjoy reading the June issue.

### Catholic Life of the School

As ever, the fantastic RE team have been busy over the past few weeks. Below is an overview of their work;

- Yr9 students visited an Orthodox Synagogue as part of the RE curriculum. This was an opportunity to experience a different place of worship and listen to people from the Jewish faith explaining their beliefs and practices. Students had the opportunity to ask questions and understand the faith from within. Students and staff were extremely grateful for their time, and all learnt so much from the visit.



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- During the month of June, the Yr7 GIFT team have been able to show dedication to the Sacred Heart of Jesus with a chapel display. Students learnt about the importance of the celebration and how the hearts they were making are a symbol of Christ's divine love for humanity. Yr7 have also been helping prepare for the Yr6 Induction Day by reflecting on how they felt joining the community and all the ways they have grown. The GIFT team are also working on a project for 'Hope in the Future', a joint project with St Christopher's. This will take place in September with Mass at St Christopher's followed by a treat for the parishioners.
- Yr8 GIFT team have started to plan a campaign across school for pupils to pledge they will act out the *Catholic Social teachings* in everyday life. This is a campaign run by CAFOD and the pupils are leading this in school! Students have been producing ideas of how we can live out the Catholic Social Teaching as a school and individually.
- Yr9 GIFT Team have focused on the inspirational words of Pope Francis, and explored the impact that these have on our everyday lives. They have organised a reflection service in recognition of Pride Month in the wider community. St Damian's is an inclusive and diverse Catholic community and during the service the GIFT team focus on the value each person has in our community and how we are all made in the image and likeness of God, and equal in his eyes.
- Yr10 GIFT Team have planned and delivered assemblies on the Feast of Pentecost. During the presentation they spoke about the Bible story and how at St Damian's we can use our 'gifts from the Holy Spirit' to further develop our community. It was also an opportunity to celebrate the Charity work over the past year, and share 'Love in Action'. The team have also been 'hands on' organising the Chapel for Chapel assemblies each morning. Using the new bookcase we purchased from our local charity 'Emmaus Mossley', they have created a reading area that can be used by pupils and staff for quiet contemplation and reflection.

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Yr8 Confirmation Mass with Bishop John was a wonderful celebration of the sacrament for our pupils and their families. Supported by Mrs Brophy, Mrs Ogden and the RE team, pupils received their sacrament with reverence and respect, showing a commitment to their faith. One of the organisers Charles Saul emailed to say, "can I ask you to pass on special thanks to the students who represented themselves & their families perfectly throughout the service, and represented their school so well throughout the seven preparation sessions."



## Safeguarding Updates



**Water Safety.** Although summer is a time for enjoying the warm weather there is always the hidden danger of children being tempted by unknown waters. The recent tragic news where a young girl from Tameside lost her life shows that **we** must take care when near reservoirs, streams or rivers. All students have had an assembly on water safety, including what to do if they find themselves in danger or if they see someone in need of help in the water. Please support the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Summer Safety campaign by visiting their website and educating yourself and your child about how to keep themselves safe. [www.manchesterfire.gov.uk/your-safety/water-safety/](http://www.manchesterfire.gov.uk/your-safety/water-safety/)

- **Adverse Childhood Experiences [ACEs].** This half term staff have had safeguarding training around ACEs. These are traumatic events that occur during childhood that have a detrimental impact on their future. Statistically, children who have experienced 4 ACEs or more are more likely to suffer with mental health conditions, physical health conditions and deviate from social expectations. Sadly, as a community we have a significant number of children who have had adverse childhood experiences. The training will allow staff to help them consider how to react to different situations when a child reaches out and asks for help.
- **Bullying Assembly.** A few weeks ago, Mrs Brophy delivered assemblies on bullying, focusing on the reasons why people choose to bully, the impact of bullying on the victim and explaining bullying can be face-to-face or online. At St Damian's we do not tolerate bullying. However, we are aware that it does happen, but be rest assured, we deal with any incidents brought to our attention in a timely manner. The NSPCC has some excellent tips for parents to help keep children safe [www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/)



## Trips

I am delighted that Covid is behind us and that we can now start to plan more trips for the next academic year. Several international trips are being planned and further details will follow in due course. Currently we have launched a trip to Barcelona during the Easter 2024 holidays. This is an exciting opportunity for our children to immerse themselves in Spanish culture, experience the Spanish way of life and visit historic venues such as the Sagrada Familia, the gothic quarter and Las Ramblas. We look forward to sharing our holiday adventures with you next year. Watch this space for further trips !!



**Yr11 Update, the Class of 2023**

Yr11 students have now officially left St Damian's. Their conduct, maturity and focus during the exams epitomised everything about St Damian's. Well done! I am so proud of them and I hope they achieve the GCSE outcomes that they deserve. Their respectful behaviour during the Yr11 Leavers assembly and Leavers Mass was a joy to behold. At the time of writing, I am looking forward to the traditional school prom on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June where we can celebrate their 5 years at St Damian's. On behalf of the great staff here, we wish them all the best for their futures and hope that their time here played a major part in shaping them into lovely young adults!



**St Damian's: WINNERS!**

We are absolutely delighted and honoured to announce that St Damian's are winners of the **Outstanding Progress in a Secondary School Award** at this year's Education Business Awards 2023. This is a fantastic achievement as we celebrate our 60th Anniversary. As many of you know, our incredible improvement journey started in 2010 when we were placed in special measures, and then for the first time in St Damian's history, we were judged 'outstanding' in 2017. Since then, we have continued to deliver an exceptional 'holistic' education for **all** our students, who consistently perform above the National Average; a direct result of quality teaching and a rich, ambitious curriculum. We could not achieve any of our success without the care, love and support of our fantastic staff, wonderful pupils, our families and community who always have, and continue to support us. Special thanks to @educationbizz for the recognition of everyone's hard work.



This is further external validation that the St Damian's community is very strong!

**Yoga !**



As part of our Pastoral Theme this half term, 'Staying Healthy', 8SRN and 8PGL took part in an early morning yoga class following a fruit tasting session. For some students this was their first time eating a pomegranate! The two Year 8 classes that were involved in the Yoga learned a number of new moves and were very impressed with Mr Greenall's ability to balance upside down!

**Staff Fund-Raising Event**

On May 21<sup>st</sup> several staff completed the Manchester 10k. This was to support Mrs Jinks and her 2 children, Lauren and Brad, who were ex-pupils, to raise money in memory of their father, Craig Jinks, who sadly passed away earlier this year. The day was very warm, but we managed to raise nearly £2,000 for the Brain Tumour Charity. Thanks to everyone who generously donated.



**Languages Update**

June has been a busy month for the Languages department, and we have lots to celebrate.

- *Yr10 Language Ambassadors.* Firstly, our amazing ambassadors, led by the wonderful Miss Smith, planned and delivered a Spanish taster class to Yr5 pupils from St Christopher's. They displayed outstanding leadership skills and we couldn't have been prouder of them! Upon leaving one Yr5 student remarked that he 'couldn't wait to come to this school'. High praise indeed! *¡nos llenen de orgullo!*
- *Exchange Students.* This month we welcomed the arrival of three Yr10 French and Spanish students hosted by two of our Yr10 students. The educational and cultural benefits of having these students attend St Damian's in the summer term are considerable and I am sure Alexis, Daniel and Jorge will receive a warm St Damian's welcome. Any families that are interested in hosting a Spanish student next year please contact Mrs Sutton.
- *Yr10 GCSE Orals.* Finally, our Yr10 students have completed their Mock speaking examinations. These mock examinations will ensure our students are fully prepared to succeed in Yr11. Students will receive invaluable feedback from their teachers to set them in good stead for September. *Bonne Chance!* and *¡Buena Suerte!* to all!



**World Wellbeing Week 26-30 June 2023**



Our BEE WELL strategy actively promotes ways in which we support our staff with health and wellbeing at work, especially dealing with mental health. We had lots of activities for staff during **World Wellbeing Week** which started with a BEE WELL breakfast and a *Heart 2 Heart*, aimed at sending out positive messages to everyone, sharing the 5 ways to wellbeing; to Connect, Take Notice, Be Active, Keeping Learning and Give. Our Wellbeing Champions strive to improve the health and culture of our school as part of our Wellbeing Strategy in our BEE WELL Services at St Damian's. They encourage connection with others and help colleagues with certain aspects of their life, both inside and outside of work. As part of our commitment to DfE Education Staff Wellbeing Charter, it is our



commitment to actively promote, improve and protect the mental health and wellbeing of all our staff. Special thanks to Chloe at The Village, Ashton for 7 day gym passes and membership offers, and Cash Box Credit Union [a community savings and loan cooperative] for coming into school to support our wellbeing week.

**General Updates**

- ✓ *Times of the school day.* Although there were plans to change the school day for next acadmic year, this will now not happen. The school day will stay the same which is students are 9am until 3.10.
- ✓ *Share Day.* This is always one of the highlights our school calendar and this year St Damian's is celebrating it's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and we would like to invite our pupils to be VIP guests and celebrate at the Diamond Festival. Headlining on our Diamond Stage will be SCAPEGRACE, Aaron Sax, Imogen-Paige, DJ Denis and more. Pupils will also be able to show off their own talents at the open mic tent! We are asking for a voluntary donation of £10.00 and all proceeds from the day will be donated to our chosen Charities for

2023 – Reuben’s Retreat, 60 for the Christie and Emmaus, Mossley. We believe that our fantastic pupils deserve a day of fun and celebration and we thank you all for your continued support. We are hoping that this will be a jubilant day.

✓ *Celebration Evening.* This week we held our annual celebration evening to formally recognise the achievements of our students. It is always such a pleasure to see our students get on stage and perform. Their talents and confidence are inspiring. The award winners have worked incredibly hard all year and deserve a moment of recognition for their efforts. It’s evenings like these



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✓ *Ofsted inspection visit.* As you are aware, Ofsted inspected the school on **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> June**. Unfortunately, I can’t share the outcome of the inspection as it goes through a quality assurance process. However, I can confirm that I am extremely pleased with the outcome, and I will share the report at the earliest opportunity. Can I take this opportunity to thank parents for their responses, which were overwhelmingly positive!

As always thanks for your support.

Yours sincerely

Mr S Logue  
Headteacher