

Welcome to the Easter newsletter as we come to the end of a very busy, yet successful, term. The following are some of the highlights of our school community and I hope that you are as proud of our fantastic children [and staff] as I am. School closes for Easter on Friday 5th April and we return to school on Tuesday 23rd April 2019 when hopefully we can look forward to a little more sunshine.

Uniform

At St Damian's we pride ourselves on our high standards and this includes our uniform. Our pupils appearance is second to none and there is a great sense of pride in wearing our uniform. However, as we come to the warm weather may I remind parents of some simple basic requirements of our uniform.

- ❖ *Skirts.* These should be of a suitable length. Increasingly several girls are repeatedly rolling up their skirts and this has the effect of them looking too short. This is not acceptable.
- ❖ *Jumpers.* A small minority of girls are pulling the excess material of their jumpers into a bobble at the back. This makes the jumper shorter and tighter and is not acceptable.
- ❖ *Fake tan/nails.* This is not allowed. Please ensure that pupils do not get fake tan or nails over the Easter holidays.

Any pupil not following these simple rules will be sanctioned. Please support our fair and accepted rules so that St Damian's continues to provide an outstanding education for your great children.

Lent



During the build up to Lent Fr. Simon, Mr O'Loughlin and members of the Liturgy group took assemblies from all year groups to engage students in the topic of reconciliation. A powerpoint presentation was shown looking at conflict throughout the world and what was being done about it and students heard readings about the importance of this topic. Throughout the day students were given the opportunity to have individual reconciliation and speak to Fr. Hundreds of our students took this opportunity. Thank you to Fr. Simon for being available to our students at this important time.

World Book Day Hunt



Well done to all the pupils who joined in with the World Book Day Hunt. KS3 pupils were asked to collect the character names that staff were wearing and link them to the novel they were from. KS4 were asked to collect as many of the 80 key quotes required for their exams that had been placed around the school. Well done to Daniel Smith (KS3 Winner) and Joseph Ashworth (KS4 Winner). We look forward to next year!



New Intake, September 2019

Once again, St Damian's has been inundated with applications for a place in September. Over 600 families put St Damian's down as a choice. Offer letters were sent to families at the beginning of March and we are looking forward to welcoming our new intake in September. Sadly, many have not been offered a place.

Parents Evenings

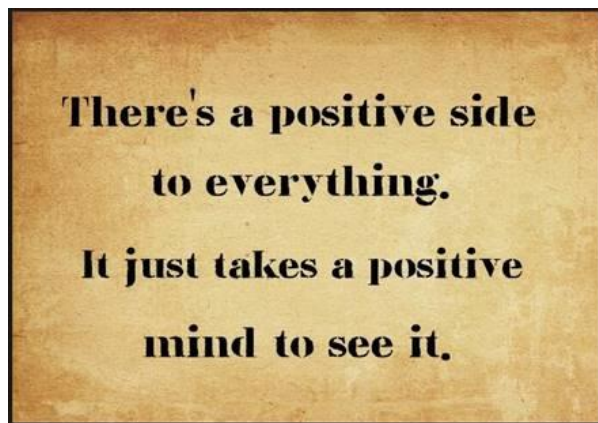
Parents Evenings are an opportunity to discuss the progress of your children. As in previous years, parental questionnaires returned by the parents are overwhelmingly positive. Of the 525 returned, only 5 wouldn't recommend the school. We don't take your support for granted and we will continue to work with you to ensure your child receives an excellent education: that is the least that you can expect. Below are typical comments:

- ★ How can you improve on being the best? Just maintain the high standards
- ★ Brilliant student support for my daughter.
- ★ There is always room to do better but in the 5 years of us coming to St Damian's we can't see how. You have everything covered.
- ★ My daughter loves coming to school. The support and encouragement given to her has made such a difference in her. Thank you to all the staff.
- ★ Relationships between staff and pupils is outstanding. Pupils are empowered, and this brings the best out in them.

Children's Mental Health Week

During the week beginning 4th February, St Damian's embraced Children's Mental Health week. The pupils started each morning with a wellbeing quote, giving them the opportunity to reflect on their importance in the world and celebrating their unique qualities. During lunchtime a range of activities were on offer to encourage pupils to learn about and participate in simple actions that can boost positive thoughts and promote an understanding of who we are, these included craft club, games club, yoga led by Miss Guilfoyle and music and drama led by Mrs Evans and Mr Tuck.

At St Damian's we take mental health and wellbeing extremely seriously, we do not believe that we should look at this just once a year when awareness is raised through promotional weeks, instead it is a core belief that through our pastoral system and with the guidance of our Student Support Officers and our 4 fully trained Mental Health First Aiders that every child has the opportunity to reflect on and assess their mental health.



Year 10 BTEC



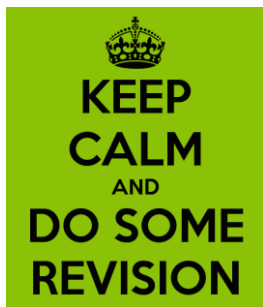
On Tuesday 5th February, **Year 10 BTEC Music** students entertained an audience of family and friends with a selection of musical items as part of their performance assessment. There was a variety of solos and ensemble pieces, presented by our talented vocalists and instrumentalists. The evening was a huge success and pupils performed brilliantly. Congratulations to all involved!

Rehearsals for our upcoming school production of **'Matilda'** the musical are in full swing, taking place on Tuesdays after school, and Thursday and Friday lunchtimes. The production will take place from 1-3 July in the school hall. There is still chance to become involved in this amazing opportunity – any pupils who wish to develop their acting, singing



and dancing skills (as well as make new friends and have the experience of a lifetime!) should speak to Mr Tuck or Mrs Evans for more details.

As part of **National Careers Week**, Year 10 BTEC Music students took part in an interactive careers and further study in Music and the Creative Industries workshop given by guest speakers from Access Creative College Manchester. Pupils took part in a mini competition using the LaunchPad app on iPad and all took home a goody bag containing Access Creative prospectus, souvenirs and information leaflets. Thank you @access creative for this fantastic learning opportunity!



Easter Revision for Yr11

GCSE's start on the 13th May and Year 11's are working extremely hard, both in school and at home and we wish them all the best. There is plenty of revision both during the school day and 'out of hours' and we hope that you will support us by encouraging your son/daughter to attend all relevant revision sessions.

There are huge benefits to attending revision classes in school, where there isn't the distraction of social media! Staff know where the difficulties are and can concentrate the revision on these areas and it is also a great opportunity for pupils to clear up any queries they may have. Please support the school and encourage your child to attend, staff very generously give up their holiday time to come into school, they know the difference targeted revision can make to final results. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my staff for all their tremendous efforts, they are working tirelessly and giving up a great deal of their own time to ensure your children achieve their very best. As Headteacher, I couldn't ask for more.

There is an extensive revision timetable, details are available on the school website;

http://www.stdamians.co.uk/images/Information/StDamians_Easter_Revision_V1_2019.pdf



St Damian's National Careers Week

St Damian's joined schools and businesses nationally to host a series of events in school to mark 'National Careers Week'. St Damian's is working in partnership with Ms Val Dickenson, our Careers Enterprise Adviser, to forge links with local businesses so that pupils have the opportunity to meet employers and find out about the qualifications, skills and qualities needed for the World of Work.



Years 7-10 pupils were given assemblies on labour market information, detailing the growth sectors for jobs in Greater Manchester.

Year 7 pupils attended employer workshops covering a range of occupations: accountancy, banking, photography, recruitment, social media and digital projects, travel, ICT.



Year 8 pupils attended a year group presentation delivered by the editor of the Tameside Reporter, Nigel Skinner. Pupils submitted some very well researched tasks on 'My Dream Career' in the form of power-points, poems & Dear Diary tasks. Dream Careers ranged from becoming forensic scientists, dancers, actors and broadcasters to politicians, lawyers and architects.



experience & an Escape Room. Two classes in Y9 also took part in a goal setting workshop run by KPMG.

Years 9 & 10 were encouraged to try out their entrepreneurial skills and think of creative ways to use £40 as part of the Willow Wood Hospice 20:20 Challenge & A Dragons' Den competition. The aim being to create profits that will go to Willow Wood Hospice. There were several fantastic ideas which included: organising a football tournament, selling bird boxes, selling American Candy, a pizza lunch raffle, a VIP lunch



To raise aspirations and encourage girls into STEM subjects, a pilot flying both passenger and cargo transport came to speak to pupils in Year 9 & 10. In addition to all the outside speakers, teachers gave insight into the types of careers directly related to the subjects being taught. During the week, pupils' minds were opened up to a new world of potential opportunities which they never knew existed.



Mission Contamination

It's gone viral...

Year 7, 8 and 9 have been asked to write a story on the topic of contamination but it cannot be longer than 100 words. This has been a challenge for many but with the introduction of Exciting Writing classes this year, the pupils have embraced the difficulties and produced some excellent pieces. Here are just a couple.

The Storm

The deadly storm was approaching. Purple clouds were hurling up in the air. Distinctive pink lightning struck randomly. Debris and rubble lay everywhere. However, it contained a deadly virus! Survivors would perish under the large ominous tornado. I gazed out of my window to witness ghoulish creatures lurking. Project C.U.R.A. was underway. The radar tower created analysis of data. It was approaching. Time could not benefit. A BANG had raised my awareness. I clung to C.U.R.A. upon my chest. It glowed with rage. Though it was unstable, it had to do. The storm ravaged through the tower. The power was unleashed.

By: Aldrin Weston Year 8

Upon the Roof of a Small Pizzeria

I stand silently upon the roof of a small pizzeria watching, watching you try to escape the wrath of my marvellous metal creation. I stand silently upon the roof of a small pizzeria wondering, wondering if you can feel them yet. Wondering when they would drive you to the brink of insanity like you drove me. My marvellous metal creations will whine and screech until your sudden death. I stand silently upon the roof of a small pizzeria listening, listening to your helpless cries, listening to your wails until you reach the end. Silence- I stand in.

By: Evelyn Stewart Year 9

Internet Safety

Whenever an opportunity arises to discuss social media with your child it is worth reminding them that most problems can be avoided by using some or all of the basics: **block, report, ignore, delete**. These four rules are drilled into pupils at primary school but are often forgotten after a year or two at secondary school. Many of the social media issues that begin at home and then cause issues in school could be avoided if pupils followed some, or all, of the four simple rules. A great reminder would be the video on the St Damian's website ([Students > eSafety & ICT page](#)). This was produced during Internet Safety week last year and was based on pupils' often relaxed answers to questions about social media.



Natural History & Science Museum Trip



Our Year 9 Science pupils participated fully in the Science day trip to the Natural History Museum and Science Museum, London. They were exceptionally well behaved and enthusiastic throughout the day and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. I was really proud of them all!

Here are some responses from pupils who went on the trip;

★ I really enjoyed the trip and especially the Natural History museum. My favourite parts were the dinosaurs, human-biology, insects and the aquarium. There was a life-size moving dinosaur and lots of interactive activities in human biology and insects. In the Genetics section I enjoyed having a booklet to find out information and help me remember facts

because this is what we are learning about in GCSE science at the moment. The science museum was very interesting and there were interactive games. My favourite bit was the Space floor.

★ At the Natural History Museum, I learnt a lot about sea creatures. I figured out that only 97% of the whole sea has been discovered. Also, I saw a replica of lots of the creatures at the bottom of the sea and I learnt how they

had adapted to live there. At the science museum, I learnt about human sensitivity in a practical fun way.

- ★ At the Natural History museum, there were many sections to explore, for example, marine and sea life, dinosaur bone structures and mammals. Also, I found out about the way babies develop in the womb and grow and how bones move when doing activities. I used games to help me understand more about how the brain monitors feelings. We discovered where our senses are detected, and how we react using a 3D brain.

British Science Week



STEM leaders showed their excellent organisational and leadership skills when planning and preparing for British Science Week earlier this term.

KS3 students were invited to activities at lunchtime designed by STEM leaders. Some of the activities included; Methane bubbles, Rainbow fizz and slime. Each lunchtime there were queues to gain entry to the activities where students were encouraged to be curious about the world around them. The Science Department would like to thank the STEM leaders for their fantastic contribution



Science Competition

A big Congratulations to Rhiannon Stafford who won the Science Competition. The competition asked students to design and describe a model of the DNA molecule. There were lots of entries but STEM leaders decided that they liked the creative aspect of Rhiannon’s design and were impressed by her detailed description. Well done Rhiannon and we hope you enjoyed your prize.



Go Science LIVE !



Year 10 Separate Science students and STEM leaders were invited to an event at the Bridgewater Hall called Go Science LIVE!

This event was hosted by the Chief Examiner to describe key examination techniques and tips for their upcoming examinations. As well as this there were 5 Scientists who discussed their research and life’s work with the audience.

Professor Robert Winston was one of the Scientists who gave an inspiring talk on his work and research on fertility and Professor Dave Cliff whose talk on Robotics inspired students to think about their own career paths.

Year 11 Separate Science were treated to an evening with women in STEM hosted by Manchester University. Students saw some of the leading women discuss their roles within the STEM industry. As always students finished the event by a trip to Nando’s.



Diary Dates

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Friday 5 th April 2019 | Break up for Easter |
| Tuesday 23 rd April 2019 | Return to school at 9:am |
| w/c Monday 29 th April 2019 | Year 8 Exams Week |
| Monday 6 th May 2019 | Bank Holiday Monday |
| Monday 13 th May 2019 | First GCSE |
| w/c Monday 20 th May 2019 | Year 10 Exams Week |



Term Dates 2019/2020

AUTUMN TERM	First Day	Last Day		No: of Term days
INSET DAY closed		*Monday 2 nd September 2019		School
Autumn 1 st Term	Tuesday 3 rd Sept 2019	Friday 25 th October 2019	Pupils in school	39
Half term holidays	Monday 28 th October 2019	Friday 1 st November 2019	School closed	
INSET DAY closed		*Friday 15 th November 2019		School
Autumn 2 nd Term	Monday 4 th November 2019	Friday 20 th December 2019	Pupils in school	34
Christmas holidays	Monday 23 rd December 2019	Friday 3 rd January 2020	School closed	

SPRING TERM	First Day	Last Day		No: of Term days
Spring 1 st Term	Monday 6 th January 2020	Friday 14 th February 2020	Pupils in school	30
Half term holidays	Monday 17 th February 2020	Friday 21 st February 2020	School closed	
Spring 2 nd Term	Monday 24 th February 2020	Friday 3 rd April 2020	Pupils in school	29
INSET DAY closed		*Friday 20 th March 2020		School
Easter Holidays	Monday 6 th April 2020	Friday 17 th April 2020	School closed	

*Easter Sunday is 12th April 2020

SUMMER TERM	First Day	Last Day		No: of Term days
Summer 1 st Term	Monday 20 th April 2020	Friday 22 nd May 2020	Pupils in school	24
MAY BANK HOLIDAY		Monday 4 th May 2020		School closed
Half term holidays	Monday 25 th May 2020	Friday 29 th May 2020	School closed	
Summer 2 nd Term	Monday 1 st June 2020	Thursday 16 th July 2020**	Pupils in school	34

*STAFF INSET DAYS: (school closed to pupils)

Monday 2nd September '19

Friday 15th November '19

Friday 20th March 2020

** It is anticipated that autumn term 2020/2021 will commence Tuesday 1st September 2020

On behalf of the great staff and Governors at St Damian's, we wish you and a holy Easter break and hopefully some time to enjoy some good weather!