

July 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to my final newsletter of the academic year. Where did that year go? It has been another highly successful year for this community.

Catholic Life of the School

This continues to be a strength of the school. Below are the opportunities over the past few weeks.



▪ *Staff Formation Meeting and Jubilee Pledge.* Our staff community came together to take part in a special Formation Meeting in preparation for the Jubilee Year 2025. The event was warmly embraced by all who attended, with staff engaging thoughtfully in reflection on our shared mission and considering their personal Sign of Hope. A selection of interactive stalls showcased the incredible work already happening across our school community. Many of our student leadership groups were represented such as Caritas, STEM leaders, SEND department, GIFT team, Bully busters and many more. We were delighted to see how positively the event was received by staff, but also by how enthusiastic, articulate, and passionate the students were about the group they belonged to. The atmosphere showcased the seamless positive relationships between our students and staff and was topped off with a well-deserved ice cream treat as a small token of thanks for everyone's commitment to our school's prayer life and mission.

▪ *Interfaith Assemblies.* Miss Jameel delivered an assembly on Islam to the Yr8 students, linking closely with their current RE studies. She shared her personal experience of completing Umrah, including photos from her journey to Mecca, to help bring the topic to life. The students were highly engaged throughout and showed great interest in learning more about the spiritual and cultural aspects of Islam.



▪ *Kadampa Meditation Centre [KMC] Manchester Visit.* On Friday 11th July, we welcomed representatives from KMC Manchester to lead our Yr77 assembly and follow-up workshops. KMC Manchester is part of the New Kadampa Tradition, a worldwide network of Buddhist centres founded by Venerable Geshe Kelsang Gyatso. The centre offers meditation classes, retreats, and courses aimed at helping people develop inner peace and live happier lives through the teachings of Buddha. During the assembly, our students were introduced to key Buddhist teachings and how they apply in modern life. They reflected on themes such as mindfulness, compassion, and overcoming negative emotions. The visitors also led a short, guided meditation, which gave students a practical experience of stillness and focus. Following the assembly, KMC Manchester led a series of smaller workshop sessions, giving the opportunity to explore Buddhist beliefs and practices in more depth. The sessions encouraged thoughtful questions and our students engaged with great interest, showing curiosity, respect, and maturity throughout.

- **End of Year Liturgy of the Word.** Our school community came together for a special Liturgy of the Word to reflect on and give thanks for the many blessings of the past academic year. This was a beautiful and prayerful opportunity for staff and students to celebrate our journey together, to look ahead with hope, and to reaffirm our commitment to the values that underpin life at St Damian's. The theme of the liturgy – “*We Aspire to Be More*” – was inspired by the life and witness of St Oscar Romero. Students reflected on his courageous example and the Gospel message that reminds us of our worth in the eyes of God: “You are worth more than hundreds of sparrows” (Matthew 10:29-31). Heads of Year and students shared some of the great memories and achievements from the year, and all present were invited to spend a moment in quiet prayer, considering how they had helped to build a strong community at school and beyond. Without exception, Students participated with reverence and deep respect throughout, it was a moving and fitting end to the school year.

Class of 2030 Transition Disco



The Yr6 Disco a few weeks ago was a resounding success, filled with joy, laughter and unforgettable memories. With excellent attendance, the event was a fantastic way for our new students to celebrate the exciting transition to high school life at St Damian's. It was wonderful to see so many children making new friends, dancing with

enthusiasm, and enjoying a range of fun party games. The photobooth was a huge hit, capturing beaming smiles and silly moments, while the delicious food added to the lively atmosphere. A big thank you goes to the dedicated staff whose hard work and planning made the evening such a success. The event truly captured the spirit of St Damian's – warmth, community, and a joyful welcome for all. On the evening, we raised an **amazing £1317.81**. This will be allocated to our chosen charities.



Oui Oui Paris 2026



It was announced in assemblies a few weeks ago that next year the cultural capital trip at Easter 2026 would be to **Paris**. Included in the trip is a day at Disneyland Paris, The PSG stadium tour and visiting the well-known sightseeing spots like the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre to see the famous Mona Lisa. We were blown away with applications from Yr7 and Yr8 and this week the lucky student names were pulled out of the ‘hat’ by Mr Logue. The lucky students were all extremely excited but please don’t be disheartened if you did not get a place as there is a reserve list if anyone decides they do not want to accept. The exciting part now is the planning stage to make sure this will be another highly successful St Damians trip and the opportunity to make memories that will last a lifetime. Mrs Hayworth will be in touch in September for a date to attend a parental meeting that will provide lots of important information. Mickey Mouse ears at the ready!



Tameside Schools Athletics Championships



This is an annual competition held at Sport City Athletics Stadium. All 16 secondary schools in the borough attend with their best athletes competing in traditional track and field events. This year the St Damian's Team achieved some superb individual results as well as outstanding team performances. These outstanding results led to the girl's being crowned overall **WINNERS** of this year's competition with the boy's team coming in third place behind all boy's schools



Audenshaw and West Hill. Miss Guilfoyle, Head of PE, said *"our students were excellent ambassadors for St Damians throughout the event, with exemplary behaviour, maturity and plenty of team spirit"*.

Separate Science and STEM Leader trip to Jodrell Bank Observatory

A group of 48 pupils from Years 9 and 10 enjoyed a fantastic day out at Jodrell Bank Observatory. They learned about the history and applications of the iconic Lovell telescope from its construction in the 1950s to its fundamental role in the cold war and space race. During the immersive Space Dome session pupils were able to sit back and watch



the history of the Universe played out on a huge screen all around them. For the Year 9 pupils taking part, this trip served to inspire and enhance their knowledge of space research prior to studying Separate Science Physics GCSE next year. Mrs Baynham said: *"the behaviour of all pupils involved was exceptional, it was amazing to see them engaging with astronomy research and developing their understanding of the universe"*.



St Damian's Summer Booknic- Wednesday 2nd July

This summer, we 'turned over a new page' in the *Elizabeth Jones MBE Literacy Hub* and welcomed students to participate in our first ever 'Summer Booknic'. Students were invited to take part in a 'Pick 'n' Mix' book selection to have a taste of a new text- we could not judge the book by its cover! Students were then invited to take a seat on our picnic benches accompanied with a picnic treat of their choice before relaxing and digesting their text. Groups could also take part in some trivia to encourage bookish discussion. Once an extract had been read, students then filled in a 'Takeaway Chip' whereby they detailed a review of the event, their views on

their book choices and their name to be entered in to our Booknic Ballot. Comments included *'I liked reading something I would never normally read before'* and *'Thank you for this event- it was very friendly'*. Prizes this year were **incredible** and included



exclusive editions of *'Mayowa and the Sea of Words'* by [Chibundu Onuzo](#) and *'A Box Full of Murders'* by [Janice Hallett](#). Both books have beautiful sprayed edges and are accompanied with some bookish treats. A huge congratulations to India Lawler (Y7), Harry Chipperfield



(Y9) and many thanks to all involved. We had a wonderful lunchtime of 'shelf-care'!

A focus on Student Leadership...Peer Readers

Several of our wonderful Yr10 students volunteered, this academic year, to be paired up with a Yr7 student for some peer reading sessions. That has continued on a weekly basis throughout this school year. When tested the Yr7 students' reading ages this month, I am delighted to see significant progress. The dedication, care and commitment that our Yr10 peer readers have shown has been second to none. They have listened to those students read, encouraged them with prompts regarding intonation, they have helped them understand difficult vocabulary, but most of all, built brilliant relationships with them. The Yr10s were presented with a little thank you from Mrs Heenan in assembly. We will continue to run the 'Peer Reading Programme' in the next academic year because of its success.



Yr 10 Update

- **Music GCSE.** A few weeks ago our talented GCSE Music students took part in recording sessions that showcased their hard work, creativity, and musical skill. The sessions were a true celebration of everything they've achieved. A huge well done to all involved! Special mention goes to George Hope, whose energetic and precise drumming on *Sweet Child O' Mine* was a real highlight; Evie Gough, who gave a heartfelt and expressive performance of *On My Own* from *Les Misérables*; and Elwira Mroccka, who impressed with her beautifully controlled rendition of *Mariage d'Amour* by Paul de Senneville. Mr McCardle, Head of Expressive Arts, said: "I'm absolutely delighted with these recordings. They reflect not only the musical talent of our students, but also the effort, focus, and creativity they've shown throughout the year. It's been a real pleasure to work with them."

Field Trip Summary – Year 10 Geography Fieldwork at Crosby Beach



Our Year 10 pupils recently took part in a field trip to Crosby Beach as part of their GCSE Geography studies. The purpose of the visit was to complete essential fieldwork activities, including an Environmental Quality Survey (EQS) and a questionnaire. These tasks form a vital part of the course and will be assessed in their summer exams in 2026.

The pupils were exceptionally well behaved throughout the day,

demonstrating focus, maturity, and enthusiasm for their learning. After completing their fieldwork, we enjoyed some well-deserved ice creams together in the sunshine. Overall, it was a productive and enjoyable trip that supported pupils' understanding of fieldwork techniques and real-world geographical enquiry.



Spanish



Our year 10 Spanish pupils ended the year on a high. Firstly, our amazing language leaders delivered outstanding Spanish lessons to year 6 on their transition day. Then last week, all year 10 Spanish pupils completed a new style GCSE speaking examination. Pupils arrived for their examinations extremely well prepared and we were blown away by their performances. Our invigilator noted that all arrived on time and he was particularly impressed by their politeness, positivity and commitment to achieve. Well Done Year 10 you've done yourselves proud! ¡Buenas vacaciones!

• Food Technology

Students took part in two days of cooking as part of their GCSE qualification. They showed fantastic dedication and enthusiasm as they engaged in intensive cooking sessions, building on essential practical skills in preparation for their final assessment in Yr11. These sessions provided a valuable opportunity to refine techniques, improve time management, and experiment with presentation – all of which are crucial for their final cooking day in Yr11, and overall GCSE grade. They demonstrated creativity, resilience, and a growing confidence in the kitchen, laying a strong foundation for success. Mrs D'Rozario and Mrs Brophy were extremely proud of the high-quality dishes produced and have high hopes for their GCSE outcomes next year.



Celebrating the Talents of our Children ...



Swim England Artistic Swimming Combo Cup 2025 - On 5th July 2025 Latisha Balde, Yr7, represented Denton Synchronised Swimming Club at Ponds Forge International Sport Centre, Sheffield. The Combo Cup is a unique annual competition in which we expect to see the finest young swimmers from England, Scotland, and Wales, performing feats of athleticism and flexibility in the water that truly must be seen to be believed.

Swimmers are synchronised to each other and to the music. Routines are judged on execution and artistic impression and a pre-determined degree of difficulty. The degree of difficulty is declared prior to performing, and may decrease in the final score if athletes fail to complete the declared movements. Each routine has a coach card, where the elements and their difficulty are declared in order of performance. Latisha and her Team came 6th out of 34 teams entered in their age group category which is a very big achievement for a small swimming club – well done Latisha !

Staff Profiles

Rather than doing the traditional 'Staff Profile', in this newsletter we are going to celebrate the two members of staff who are leaving us to explore pastures new.



Mrs Perret-Hall, Science Teacher - Anna has been with us for nearly a decade! In the time she has been with us she has been an outstanding Head of Year and an exceptional science teacher. All of her students loved her, ranging from all abilities and ages! We know that she is swapping one of the most challenging and rewarding jobs for another – being a mum! We wish her all the best and we know she will keep in touch!

Miss Jameel – English Teacher - This term, we bid a heartfelt farewell to a great colleague whose care, compassion, and creativity have left an impact on the St Damian's community. From the moment Hena arrived, she embraced the ethos of our school and was instrumental in setting up the very first St Damian's School Newspaper, giving pupils a voice and platform to express their ideas with pride and purpose. Her dedication as a form tutor has gone far beyond the expected—she has been a daily source of support, encouragement, and kindness to every student in her care. Her time in the English Faculty has been equally memorable. We wish her all the very best in the next exciting chapter of her career journey.

ASPIRE Day July 2025



We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all the external speakers who contributed their time and expertise to make our ASPIRE Day such a valuable and inspiring experience for our pupils. Their engaging sessions provided powerful insights and practical strategies that

helped pupils reflect on important themes, particularly the concept of resilience and being able to 'bounce back' from setbacks. In today's fast-paced and often challenging world, resilience is a vital skill—it empowers young people to manage setbacks, overcome difficulties, and grow through adversity with confidence and perseverance. By exploring this theme through workshops and discussions, pupils have been encouraged to build emotional strength and develop the mindset needed to thrive both in school and beyond. Special thanks to our ex-pupils Caitlon Senior and Oliver Cooney, Lee Mason, founder of Stately Recruitment, Julie Mallinson from 'The Power of Resilience', Darren Lane from 'Gambling Harm', Nechen Mallam from 'MIND' and Kerry Wolstenholme RSE Educator and Author.



Share Day Activities

The atmosphere in school is electric as forms are busy raising as much as they can for Share Day from the £10 each form was given as a starting point. Reynald and Szymon won the raffle to be Headteacher for the day, they authorised an early lunch and a film afternoon for Yr7 to celebrate the end of their first year at St Damian's. Events taking place in school vary from a staff darts



Staff Darts Competition



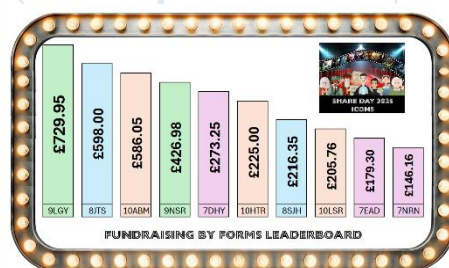
Reynald & Szymon enjoying lunch with Mr Logue



Mr Jones Getting 'Sponged'

competition, pupil talent show, car wash, sponge a teacher, football game between Yr10 and staff – Yr10 won 1 – 0 ! karaoke and many more. Share Day takes place on Thursday 17th July and we are looking forward to another fabulous day of celebration all in the name of charity and so far the weather doesn't look as if it's going to be that bad either, fingers

crossed – watch this space for pictures and details of what we all got up to on possibly one of the most exciting days of the year – all in aid of charity !



Fundraising Leaderboard as at 14th July

Have a great summer and we look forward to welcoming everyone back in September 😊

Yours sincerely

Mr S Logue

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Headteacher