

Welcome to the St Damian's newsletter as we come to the end of a very busy term. One of the highlights has definitely been winning '**Most Inspirational Secondary School of the Year**'. We were awarded this prestigious accolade at a special presentation evening that took place at Liverpool Cathedral in November. Everyone at St Damian's works tirelessly ensuring your children are offered all they need to ensure that by the time they leave us they have received a well- rounded education. Pupils, staff, parents and governors should be really proud to be part of the St Damian's community: we have been very humbled to receive this fantastic award.

Charity Starts at St Damian's

The charitable side of St Damian's has been in full force over the last few months, with Mr O'Loughlin and the Liturgy group collecting Christmas presents in for two very good causes: those families in the local community who may need a helping hand and the chemotherapy ward at Manchester Children's Hospital. Students and parents have contributed generously and there is still time to help!

The Liturgy group have visited assemblies, form and classes, produced posters and presentations to make sure everyone is involved in the liturgical side of school.

Thanks to the new Yr. 7 intake the Liturgy group's numbers have swelled! Look out for the purple ties when you visit the school! Any new members are more than welcome to come to room 7 on a Tuesday lunch time.

In November students were asked to complete small prayer cards which remembered someone who mattered to them who is no longer here. Everyone in the school community completed one and these were passed onto Fr. Simon, the school Chaplain, to offer up.

St. Damian's is also looking forward to welcoming Joanna Millan back to the school for the fourth year running. Joanna is a survivor of the holocaust and has always made an impact on those she speaks to.



Share Day 2016 - Update

An amazing £5,855 was raised by our school community for the 2016 Share Day. We would like to thank parents, pupils and staff for their efforts and support. The Charities we supported were delighted with the cheques we presented to them.



For Share Day 2017 we are excited to announce our very first May Ball which will be held on 5th May 2017 at San Rocco, Ashton. More details to follow in the New Year. Please keep this date free for your diary.

Leavers 2016 Certificate Evening

It was lovely to welcome back our Leavers 2016 to collect their certificates and special awards. If anyone was unable to attend the evening their certificates are available for collection from Reception. Good luck in your future: the staff and I wish all Year 11 leavers success in their futures.

Winter Wonderland – Thursday 15th December 2016

This is a packed afternoon of Christmas activities. Christmas Jumper Day, Christmas Lunch, our Christmas Food Market a Disco and a Singer ! Stalls will be selling hot chocolate, hot vimto, cold drinks, sweets, crisps, waffles and chocolate. We will also be having a special appearance by 21 year old Josh Davis. Josh has already been tipped as the UK's Justin Bieber with his soulful tone and cheeky personality. Josh most recently supported former X Factor winner Ben Haenow & Olly Murs on tour. Check out a couple of his cover videos on You Tube - [Josh Davis - Justing Bieber What Do You Mean Cover \(Private Video\)](#), [Josh Davis - Mark My Words \(Cover\)](#)





Language Ambassadors

The Yr. 10 Language Ambassadors went to the Christmas Markets with Miss Tomkow and Miss Stoneley. The trip was a reward for their planning and creating of the Yr.9 assessments. At the markets they took part in various language tasks, ordering in their chosen language at a variety of European stalls and then they had free time to do some Christmas shopping. As always they behaved impeccably and it was a great day all round!



STEM LEADERS 2016/2017

The much anticipated STEM leaders were chosen this year. Well done to all that were selected and it looks like they have not failed to disappoint. They have been very busy helping out at Science club and also helping with KS3 intervention. A great start to the year! The Science Department looks forward to working with you.

STEM EVENT - Brian Cox Lecture

As part of the Royal Society's 'Science Matters' series, we joined **Brian Cox** at Manchester's Victoria Warehouse where he lead a presentation on the global debate and topical issue of Genetically Modified food. Brian Cox pitched questions about the future of our food to a panel of science experts. Genetic modification of plants and animals is studied in the GCSE Biology programme of Study and this was a fantastic opportunity for our young scientists to pose questions and get answers on GM issues that matter to them.

2016 Christmas Lectures on Energy

Begun by Michael Faraday in 1825, the CHRISTMAS LECTURES are now broadcast on UK television every December and have formed part of the British Christmas tradition for generations. This year the Christmas Lecture is based on energy. Supercharged: Fuelling the future Professor Saiful Islam leads an incredible journey through the invisible presence that drives everything around us. This is a MUST watch over the Christmas holidays and will be shown on BBC4 at 8pm on the 26th, 27th & 28th December.

Music

Musicians from across the school have been busy since the start of September, rehearsing, performing and auditioning through Greater Manchester and more nationally. Around 150 St Damian's pupils have been having instrumental lessons in school this term, learning from specialist peripatetic staff from Tameside Music Service. All of these pupils have their lessons during school time and it has been magnificent to see so many pupils flourishing and enjoying both academic and social benefits of learning to play an instrument. International Scientific Studies have long concluded that learning to play an instrument helps children with maths and literacy, learning a foreign language and developing socially and emotionally. If you would like more information about instrumental lessons at St Damian's, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Dickson.

In November 2016, St Damian's KS3 choir were invited by the Greater Manchester Music Hub to represent Tameside in a 'Performance in Song' workshop, led by the acclaimed vocal teacher Lyn Marsh. This was a tremendous reward for the selected group of pupils who were chosen to represent the school in recognition of their talents, dedication and commitment of the Arts both in and out of school. The workshop was a huge success and pupils were tremendously excited to put their newly acquired performance skills into practice.

30 instrumentalists have started their involvement this term with the Halle Orchestra after St Damian's was once again selected (from schools across Greater Manchester) to work on the Halle's flagship education project 'Adopt-a-player'. Pupils have been working with Halle Musicians in a number of creative workshops, (leading to a final performance on December 5th) as well as visiting the Halle to watch a full orchestral performance at The Bridgewater Hall.

SVP Party



On a grey December day the lives of those that attended the SVP party were brightened by the warm welcome, care, hospitality and entertainment that they were provided with. Father Simon introduced the party with his lovely combination of catholicity and wit. This was followed up with Mrs Dickson's fabulous 'Funk Band' playing the work that they had worked on in collaboration with the Halle Orchestra.

Many talented pupils from all the year groups gave splendid performances, to the delight of the audience. Our guests were then waited on by our polite pupils who kept up a constant supply of festive food and drink, under the watchful eye of the invaluable event organiser, Gail Wright. This was followed up by our delighted guests being presented with hampers and bottles of wine.



Highlights from our forthcoming musical, 'Annie', filled the hall with Christmas joy for one and all. The party was concluded with a community sing-a-long of carols and Christmas songs. A great time was had by all and the event really made the build up to Christmas special for all those involved.

'Annie'

Our musical production for 2017 is the wonderful 'Annie'. This well loved play follows the attempt of the orphan, Annie, to trace her parents. The show is cram packed with memorable songs, such as 'Maybe', 'Tomorrow' and 'Hard Knock Life', as well as many others

The show will take place on Wednesday 8th February, Thursday 9th February and Friday 10th February in the school hall. Further details to follow. Book early to avoid disappointment.

Lionheart

A group of Year 10 pupils have been to Wigan Athletic Football Club to take part in the northern regional final of the LionHeart Challenge. Pupils worked extremely hard on their community action project showing great leadership and enterprise skills. We are really proud of all of them.



KS3 Science Club



There has been a fabulous start to KS3 Science club this year, with over 40 students attending some sessions. The Year 10 Stem Leaders have been fabulous helping the younger students with activities. Activities so far have included methane madness, making flubber, flame throwers, and investigating sugary foods. The photo is of Molly Hatton in Year 7 creating an icing sugar flame thrower under the watchful eye of Stem leader Georgia Guilfoyle.

Young Carers in School

A young carer is a young person who, without payment, provides help and support to a parent, sibling or other family member, who could not manage without them. This could be due to age, physical or mental illness, addiction or disability. Young Carers take on practical and emotional tasks that normally would be undertaken by an adult. The tasks and level of caring undertaken by a young carer can vary, according to the nature of the illness or disability, the level and frequency of care required and the structure of the family unit.

A young person may engage in: Practical tasks (cooking, housework and shopping), physical care (lifting or helping someone use the stairs), personal care (dressing, washing, helping with toilet needs), managing the family budget (collecting benefits and prescriptions), managing medication, looking after younger siblings, helping someone communicate



Here at St Damian's R.C Science College we offer support for young carers. If you, or a family member needs support please contact Mrs Harrison for more details. All contact will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Gifted and Talented Sports Performers

Brogan Slicker Yr11: Brogan is an extremely talented netball player and has recently been selected to play for the Loughborough Lightning U19' Squad. The team play in the English Netball Super league! A superb achievement and a star to watch for the future.

Phoebe Hollin Yr9: Phoebe has been selected to play on the Greater Manchester Girls U14's County Football Squad. This is a great achievement for Phoebe as the standard of football and the number of girls on trial increases every year

Superb Individual Results from the Tameside Schools Swimming Gala:

Gabby Wardle – 3rd Backstroke, 4th Freestyle, Chloe Hand – 1st Butterfly, 1st Freestyle, 1st Individual Medley 2nd Breaststroke, Olivia Corbett – 6th Breaststroke, Leah Worthington – 2nd Breaststroke, Sophie Park – 4th Butterfly 3rd Breaststroke 2nd Freestyle 2nd Individual Medley, Robyn Kilbourne – 4th Backstroke 3rd Freestyle, Sally Hughes – 5th Backstroke, Charlie Hobson – 4th Backstroke 4th Freestyle, 4th Individual Medley, Ronan Giron – 5th Freestyle, Girls Team Canon (Relay) – 1st (Hand, Hughes, Worthington, Park and Kilbourne)



Young Carers

Our Young Carers had lots of Festive fun when Mrs Harrison, Mrs Hunter and Miss Mistry accompanied them on a very special visit to the Manchester Christmas Markets. Mrs Harrison said " They celebrated with mugs of hot chocolate sat in the log cabin. They have brought their mugs back to school as a souvenir and we will use them when we have our Christmas party. The children thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and they were a credit to St Damian's, it was an absolute pleasure to take them out on the trip. It is a privilege to do something for them that

they all enjoyed." It's good to remind them how special they are to us in school and how much we appreciate the hard work they do at home.

Christmas at St Damian's ...

- Monday 12th December – 6:30pm Christmas Carol Service of 'The Real Christmas Story' .Hot chocolate, Hot Vimto, Hot Winter Spice and mince pies to be served in the Piazza beforehand
- Thursday 15th December – Christmas Jumper Day, Christmas Lunch & Winter Wonderland
- Monday 19th December – Christmas Liturgies
- Tuesday 20th December Early finish for pupils at 1:30pm



School Buses



School will finish at the earlier time of **1:30pm on Tuesday 20th December 2016.**

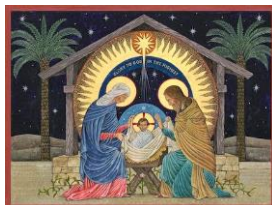
All school buses have been arranged for this earlier time

Reminder about our high standards

At St Damian's we work really hard to maintain our high standards and expectations. The outcome of these is plain for all to see: a heavily oversubscribed school, happy children and good GCSE outcomes. Furthermore, parental support is overwhelmingly very positive. Indeed, at the latest parents evening, Year 11 in November, 100% of parental questionnaire returns would recommend the school to others. This is as high as any school in the country! One parent wrote "Cannot recommend this school enough. Everybody is trying to get their child in this school."

Everybody is talking about this school". This was one of dozens of really pleasing comments. Can I say a simple but genuine thank you for supporting the school. However, I must remind all parents that if any pupil continuously disrupts the learning of others or doesn't conform to our simple and well established rules, which are based on our core value of respect, then their place at St Damian's is at risk. A reminder that no phones and no hoodies are 2 of these simple rules. Also, a reminder that I, as Headteacher, do not have to give any notice for after school detentions.

Finally, may I take this opportunity, on behalf of both the staff and the governors to wish you a peaceful and Holy Christmas and we look forward to welcoming the children back to school in the New Year, Wednesday 4th January 2017. God bless!



Term Dates 2017/2018

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

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

**Easter Sunday is 1st April 2018*

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