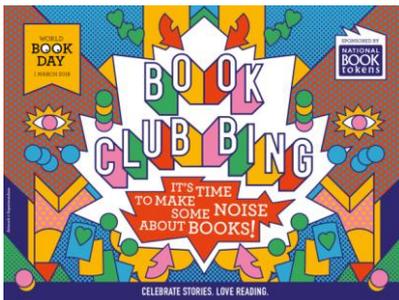


Welcome to the St Damian's newsletter as we come to the end of a very busy, yet successful, term. The following are some of the highlights of our school community and I hope that you are as proud of our fantastic children [and staff] as I am. School closes for Easter on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> March and we return to school on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2018 when hopefully we can look forward to a little more sunshine and a little less snow!

### World Book Day Book Exchange



Despite being delayed by the snow, the book exchange to celebrate World Book Day 2018 was a huge success. Pupils were so generous with their donations that they were able to take up to four books home each! In addition, Year 7 pupils had a special World Book Day English lesson where they watched 'THE BIGGEST BOOK SHOW ON EARTH' where some of the BIGGEST and BEST authors and illustrators shared stories.



### Year 9

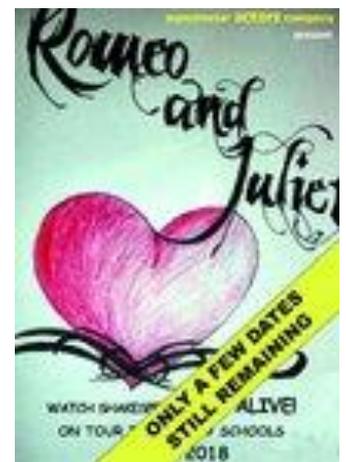
Congratulations to the whole of Year 9 on the quality of the 'Romeo and Juliet' research projects. The standard of work submitted has been particularly high across the year group and your teachers have been extremely impressed with the significant amount of time and effort demonstrated. Pupils will be rewarded for their efforts in the Aspire assembly at the end of term. Well done Year 9!

Year 10 Geographers were brilliant during their fieldtrip to Salford Quays last month to collect data on the impact of urban regeneration, as part of their topic 'Urban Issues & Challenges'. They have now completed their fieldwork write up, and are looking forward to their coastal investigation in Colwyn Bay in the summer, to look for evidence of long-shore drift.

### Shakespeare: Simply Stunning!

Shakespeare was brought to life, thanks to a visit by a theatre company on 15<sup>th</sup> March. ManActo was invited in to perform in front of our Year Nine pupils as part of their study of Romeo and Juliet. The performance included several key scenes from the play, followed by an opportunity for pupils to quiz the actors about the characters, the themes and how an audience in Elizabethan times would have reacted. The performance was both exciting and entertaining whilst providing our pupils with a fantastic opportunity to experience Shakespeare live.

Adam Franklin said, "...seeing the performance live helped me to understand just how Shakespeare wanted to make the scenes so dramatic". Joshua Van Weerdenburg added, "I enjoyed the performance because it was so complex and we could see how the two "star-cross'd lovers" were doomed. Katie Howard enjoyed the performance because she, "...could watch the play, rather than just read it". Overall, the pupils really enjoyed and appreciated watching a live performance of the play. The English team was delighted to be able to provide pupils with such an opportunity that, not only enhanced their understanding of a



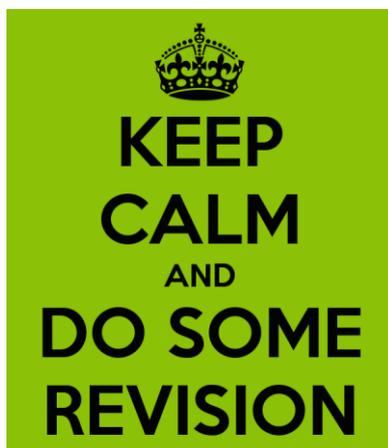
GCSE text, but also provided them with a culturally enriching experience.

### Aspire Ambassadors

The Year 9 Aspire Ambassadors have been busy planning and thinking of ways to reward Yr.9 pupils who are working hard.

Building on the previous reward at Christmas the Aspire Ambassadors have come up with a new idea! They have asked each subject teacher to nominate two Yr.9 pupils who they believe have been working exceptionally well. The Aspire Ambassadors have generously donated Easter Eggs and these will be presented along with a certificate from the Aspire Ambassadors this Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March during the Aspire Assembly. Well done the Aspire Ambassadors - keep up the hard work. You are a credit to our Community.

### Easter Revision for Yr11



GCSE's start in May and our 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.

An extensive revision timetable has been given out to Yr11's and the timetable is also available on the school website. There are huge benefits to attending revision classes in school, and 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.

### Spanish and French Workshops

Miss Tomkow and Miss Lucas have been hosting GCSE Spanish and French workshops after school and we have seen lots of hardworking Yr. 9 pupils getting started early on their GCSE courses. The classes are open to all Yr. 9 pupils who have an interest in languages and have already decided which they will continue studying at GCSE. It is a great way of making sure pupils are prepared for the challenge of MFL GCSEs!

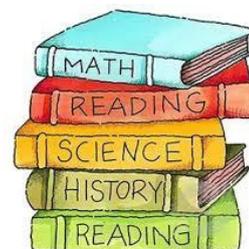
### Life after St Damian's ...

Joseph Jones, a former St Damian's pupil who now studies Physics, Maths and Chemistry at Ashton 6<sup>th</sup> form has carried out an experiment that, in mid-April, will travel two orbits on board the International Space Station (ISS). The results from the experiment on board the ISS will then be used for Joseph's Extended Project Qualification. Watch this space as Joseph will soon be visiting to inspire our Scientists.

### Oxbridge Offers

We were delighted and very proud to hear that two of our former pupils have applied to and been offered a place to study at Oxford and Cambridge University.

Niamh Connaghan has received an offer to study at Cambridge University and Alice Jackson has received an offer to study at Oxford University, both to study biological sciences. Both girls are at Ashton 6<sup>th</sup> Form and Niamh is studying Biology, Chemistry and French A level and Alice is doing Biology, Geography & English Language - we wish both girls all the very best and will keep you posted !!



### New Intake, September 2018

Once again, St Damian's has been inundated with applications for a place in September. Over 596 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.

### Pupil Behaviour

Can I take this opportunity to again stress that the behaviour of the vast majority of our pupils is a joy to behold. Pupils really are ambassadors for the school. This has been commented upon by every external visitor and recently on our Ofsted report. We are proud of our high standards which are not for negotiation and we will continue to promote these. It is with regret that a small number of pupils do

not follow our simple rules and have either left the school or their places are at serious risk. Continued disruptive behaviour at St Damian's will not be accepted by me as Headteacher. A massive THANK YOU to the parents who work closely with myself to ensure our high standards continue. The outcome of these high standards are there for all to see: **Happy children with strong values achieving excellent academic qualifications.**

### Tameside Youth Council

YOUNG people in Tameside have chosen their leaders to represent them locally and nationally. Tameside Youth Council, supported by Tameside Council, held elections for members to vote for their representatives and a huge *Congratulations* to our very own Year 10 pupil Joe Magee! Joe, was elected Tameside's Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) for a two-year term, which includes travelling to Westminster to represent the borough's young people in the House of Commons.

His manifesto included topics such as sport and obesity, community cohesion and social media and focused on reducing class sizes to help pupils achieve their potential and awareness and support for mental health problems. Joe will lead on initiatives such as "Make Your Mark" where schoolchildren vote on which issues matter most to them, such as votes at 16, with MYPs across the country meeting at the House of Commons to debate and decide on how to campaign on them.

Well done Joe! The next Prime Minister could be you!

### 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. 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:

- ★ "I love how much my child's developing now, loves to learn. Amazing progress so far"
- ★ "My daughter adores school and is excelling in all subjects, thank you"
- ★ "I like the way my daughter(s) performance continues to improve from the relentless efforts the teachers put into teaching to bring out the best in children"
- ★ "Always feel my children are in the very best place"
- ★ "Think all the staff do an amazing job"
- ★ "An outstanding school with outstanding teachers"
- ★ "Extremely proud my child is a pupil of a fantastic school"
- ★ "You have changed my boy into an amazing lad!"

Thank you for the fantastic comments and your continued support, it is very much appreciated.

However, there are a very small number of parents who aren't as polite as they should be when speaking to staff, for example, our receptionist, Mrs Mattison. This will not be tolerated and is not in the spirit of our great school which is built on seamless relationships and our core value of respect. I reserve the right to take whatever appropriate action is needed to ensure that my staff are not verbally abused. At all times please be considerate.

### Music Department News

#### Music Lessons

Our pupils are learning about some exciting new topics in Music this term. Year 7 have been studying Pop Songs of the 1980s and learning to play 'Eye of the Tiger' on keyboard. Our Year 8 pupils have journeyed to Africa, finding out about African Drumming and learning to play the djembe. Year 9 are focusing on building up their instrumental skills for their Rock Bands project, by taking part in workshop sessions on electric and acoustic guitars, bass guitar and drum kit. Pupils have been really enjoying these experiences, and it is fantastic to see them developing as musicians and as individuals.



## Chamber Choir

The St Damian's Chamber Choir is now up and running, performing a variety of liturgical music, spiritual, gospel, pop and musical theatre! Our pupils performed at the St Damian's feast day masses on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February, singing a choral arrangement of 'Make me a Channel of your Peace' (Holstein) and Liam Lawton's 'Where Two or Three Are Gathered' for Holy Communion. The choir also sang during the distribution of ashes in our Ash Wednesday liturgies on 14<sup>th</sup> February. Well done to all involved!

*St Damian's Chamber Choir rehearse at 1:50pm on Wednesdays in Room 38.*

## St Damian's Man Choir!

In 2018, boys at St Damian's have been invited to take part in a new choir dedicated especially to them! Along with Mr Trimble and Mr Reyes, the boys have been enjoying performing songs such as Journey's 'Don't Stop Believing' and Coldplay 'A Sky Full of Stars'. Watch this space for a forthcoming enrichment trip and possible television appearances!

*Man Choir rehearsals are at 1:50pm in Room 38, on the first Friday of every month.*



## St Damian's Band

Under the direction of Mr Wright, St Damian's Woodwind tutor in residence, the school band have been busy rehearsing this half term. They are performing pieces including 'The Final Countdown', 'Eine Kleine Nachtmusik' and 'Rock Around the Clock'. We have a good mixture of instruments, from bass guitar to trombone, and numbers are growing each week - new members from any year group are always welcome!

*Band rehearsals are on Tuesday lunchtimes at 1:50pm in Room 38.*

## Drums Club



Calling all future rockers! Drums Club takes place every Thursday lunchtime with Mr Stoneley in Room 38 and is for all pupils wishing to try their hand at drum kit and improve their technique. Sticks are provided!

***Any pupils wishing to join the extra-curricular clubs listed above are welcome - speak to Miss Evans for more information***

**Charity Begins at St Damian's ...** Brilliant news! Pupils have raised £1,400 for @TeenageCancer Trust. A massive thank you to everyone who has been

so generous and donated to this extremely worthwhile cause championed by Tom Astbury.

Year 10 separate science pupils attended 'Women in Physics' hosted by the institute of physics at the museum of science and industry. All pupils enjoyed the lectures, and a particular favourite was Professor Fay Dowker's lecture on Wormholes. An added bonus was we were able to see Tim Peake's space suit and if you look carefully at the picture you can see it in the background !



**IMPORTANT NOTICE** The Privacy Notice for Pupils (how we use pupil information) has been updated March 2018; a copy is on our website [www.stdamians.co.uk](http://www.stdamians.co.uk) and a paper copy can be requested from school (Tel; 0161 330 5974)

**Parent Governor Election** Ballot papers for the parent governor vacancy will be given out to pupils on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> April returnable to school by Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2018.

## Diary Dates:

Tues 3 <sup>rd</sup> April - Fri 13 <sup>th</sup> April	Yr11 GCSE revision in school - Refer to the timetable on the website
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> April	Return to school after the Easter break
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> April	Y8 Exam Week
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> May	Bank Holiday Monday
Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> May	GCSE's begin

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