

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope that your child has had a 'restful' break and is ready to begin Year 10. This is a very important year in their education as it sets the standards and expectations for KS4. At the end of the year pupils will be sitting exams in many subjects including Maths and English. Also, throughout the year pupils will be completing 'Controlled Assessment' and learning content for their exams. The purpose of this letter is to outline some important information.

GCSE Results

Firstly, I am pleased to announce that St Damian's has again achieved high academic standards. 67% of our pupils achieved 5A*-C including English & Maths. This is a slight dip from last year, but is still the second best exam results in the History of the school. This is the result of hard work from both our wonderful pupils and my great staff. Behind these headline figures, a record 79% of pupils achieved Maths, with 1 in 4 pupils achieving A*/A. Our English results were also above the National Average. Our Ebac 'qualification' also increased showing that as a school we are providing a strong academic curriculum. As a school, it is our intention that pupil outcomes are our top priority.

Work Hard 'Attitude' and Revision

It is vital that your child works hard and develops a positive attitude towards their KS4 studies immediately. As mentioned above, Controlled Assessment in many subjects is on-going and pupils must maximise Hard work, along with the *'belief they can achieve'* to ensure success. Although pupils may believe that their 'exams' are a long way off, this could not be further from reality. I can assure you that our most successful pupils work hard from the beginning of Year 10.

Year 10 Induction Evening

To help parents support their child and understand the importance of Year 10 an evening has been arranged on **Wednesday 25th September at 7pm** in the school hall. I ask that you make every effort to attend as important information will be passed on, including exam dates and expectations.

Meeting Parents and 'Tour' of the School

As Headteacher I believe that 'working closely together' will ensure your child achieves their full potential. Consequently, if there is an issue please contact my PA, Mrs Biggs (0161 331 4752) in order to arrange a convenient appointment. Sorting 'issues' out before they become 'problems', is key to our continued success! Likewise, if you would like a 'tour' of the school during the working day please contact Mrs Biggs for a convenient time. A massive thank-you to the overwhelmingly positive response I continually receive from parents throughout the year.

Questionnaire Responses

Can I take this opportunity to share with you the responses from the Questionnaires collected at last year's Year 9 Parents Evening! The responses showed **1054** positive responses [strongly agree or agree] against **39** negative responses [disagree or strongly disagree]. Of the responses, **87** parents would recommend the school to other parents whereas **0** [zero] parents would not. This shows an overwhelming support for the school. Can I thank you for having faith in the school and I hope that working together will result in outstanding GCSE results for your child.

Prefects

Being a prefect at St Damian's is an honour and recognition by the school that they are responsible mature young adults who are role models for our younger students. Throughout this year all pupils in Year 10 should bear in mind that by Easter many will be prefects. To become a prefect is simple: focus hard on their studies and good behaviour at all times! May I take this opportunity to say that Year 10, like all the years in the school, are delightful young adults and very academic in their ability.

Behaviour

The behaviour of our pupils is excellent. This is due to strong Leadership, high expectations, focus on standards, high quality teaching, a clear rewards system, and importantly, pupils wanting to do well! I will not tolerate repeated poor behaviour by *any* pupil. It simply is not fair for a few pupils to 'ruin' the education of others. Pupils in Year 10 know the expectations and standards that I expect. These are simple, fair, accepted and based upon the important value of respect! Ofsted said *'the vast majority of students behave courteously and enjoy positive relationships with their peers and with school staff'*. This is a credit to the pupils at St Damian's and makes us proud to be their teachers! Can I also remind parents that the school has powers to regulate the behaviour of pupils travelling to and from school.

Uniform and Hair

I am delighted that our pupils look extremely smart in uniform. A high standard of uniform is a reflection that the pupils are proud to be at St Damian's. Last year a small minority of pupils had 'hair styles' that were not permitted. Can I remind parents that unnatural hair colour is not acceptable. Pupils are aware of what is acceptable. 'Challenging' pupils with unacceptable hair styles simply wastes energy and learning time of the pupil [and staff]. Please support the school as we maintain high standards in all our pursuits, including uniform and hair.

Attendance

St Damian's has a fantastic attendance record, indicating that pupils want to, and indeed, enjoy attending St Damian's. It is even more important that attendance becomes a priority in Year 10 and the target should be 100%. Can I also ask that you **do not** take pupils out on holidays during term time as permission will not be granted. See attached letter.

Open Evening

This will take place on **Monday 30th September from 6.30pm**. This is an excellent evening to 'show-off' St Damian's. Although primarily aimed at parents of Years 5 & 6, I am offering an open invitation for you attend the evening. The school will shut early that day at 1.30pm in order that we can prepare for the 'show-case' evening.

Parking

Can I also use this opportunity to ask parents NOT to park in the bus lane when dropping off or collecting their children from school. This is putting our children at risk. Indeed, I would prefer if you did not enter the school car park during the busy morning and after school period if possible. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Finally I would like to thank you for your continued support and I can assure you that my staff, my Leadership team, the very proactive governing body and I are absolutely committed in ensuring that when your son/daughter leaves St Damian's they will achieve outstanding academic qualifications.

I look forward to meeting you very soon.

Yours sincerely

Mr S Logue
Headteacher