

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope that your child has had a 'restful' break and is ready to begin Year 11, arguably the most important year to date in their education. 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 a 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 current Year 11 pupils show that already 57% of pupils have achieved a Grade C or above in Maths and this is an excellent platform upon which to build upon. 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.

### **Meeting Parents**

Over the next few weeks I plan to meet *every* parent of Year 11 pupils. Please contact my PA, Mrs Biggs (0161 331 4752) in order to arrange a convenient appointment. I will be available at the following times:

|                        |   |                 |
|------------------------|---|-----------------|
| Mondays and Tuesdays   | - | 7:00am - 5:00pm |
| Wednesdays and Fridays | - | 7:00am - 3:00pm |
| Thursdays              | - | 9.00am - 5.00pm |

Meetings will begin immediately in September and the purpose is two-fold. Firstly, to outline my expectations and explain how you can help your child. Secondly, it is an opportunity at the beginning of the year to raise any issues you may have. As Headteacher I believe that 'working closely together' will ensure your child achieves their full potential.

### **Year 11 Induction Evening**

Induction Evening for Year 11 students will take place on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2013, the meeting will take place at 7:pm in the Hall and it is vital that all parents attend if possible.

### **Work Hard 'Attitude' and Revision**

It is vital that your child works hard and develops a positive attitude towards their studies immediately. Controlled Assessment in many subjects is on-going and there are crucial exams in November, including English and Maths GCSE exams. To help your child prepare the school has a timetable for revision. It is crucial that parents support the school in ensuring that your child attends where necessary. This changes half termly and is dependent upon needs of the pupils and the school. Hard work, along with a '**belief they can achieve**' will ensure success next August. Although that seems a long time away, I can assure you that those pupils who are the most successful work hard from the beginning of the year.

### **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 the younger students. All prefects are aware of the expectations of being a prefect, the criteria is simple: focus hard on their studies and good behaviour at all times!

In the past, prefects had only ONE opportunity to become a prefect; Easter of Year 10. I believe ALL pupils should be given further opportunities to become prefects. As such, pupils who are not prefects will be given two further opportunities to become a prefect, before the October half term and before Christmas.

Likewise, pupils who are already prefects have to be mature and responsible. I reserve the right to take away a prefects tie if they are misbehaving, not working or fulfilling their duties in a responsible manner. However, they can earn the tie back over a period of time.

### **Behaviour**

The behaviour by the vast majority 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. Again, all pupils, especially those in Year 11 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 behaviour of pupils traveling to and from school.

### **Uniform and Hair**

I am delighted that our pupils look extremely smart in their uniform. Year 11 pupils set the standard for the younger pupils. Indeed many Year 11 pupils are prefects, and hence ambassadors for the school Community. 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 11 and the target should be 100%. Can I also ask that you **do not** take pupils on holiday during term time as permission will not be granted. See attached letter.

### **Questionnaire Responses**

Can I take this opportunity to share with you the responses from the Questionnaires collected at last year's Year 10 Parents Evening! The responses showed **809** positive responses [strongly agree or agree] against **18** negative responses [disagree or strongly disagree]. Of the responses, 59 parents would recommend the school to other parents whereas 2 would not. This shows an overwhelming support for the school. Can I thank you for having the belief in the school and I hope that working together will result in outstanding GCSE results for your child.

### **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 the governors of the school, my Leadership team and my staff are hard working, conscientious and determined to ensure your child achieves the best education.

I look forward to meeting you very soon.

Yours sincerely

Mr S Logue  
Headteacher