

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2016 as we move towards the February half term. The **3 C's day – Caritas, Culture and Community**, will be held on Friday, the Feast Day of our patron Saint, St Damian. During the day we will be celebrating the cultural diversity of our community as well as learning about Catholic Social Teaching through Caritas in Action incorporating Pope Francis' message during The Year of Mercy.

School closes on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> for the half term break and we return to school on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016 when hopefully we can look forward to a little more sunshine and a little less rain !

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION:** Our website address has changed to: [www.stdamians.co.uk](http://www.stdamians.co.uk). Anyone having difficulty locating our website please call school for advice.

**Maths** Please ensure your child has a Casio scientific calculator. It is important all pupils in all year groups have the same make as each calculator works differently. Time is wasted if the teacher needs to respond to several different problems concerning how to use a variety of different calculators in the lesson. The maths department will buy back Casio calculators in a reasonable condition when pupils leave at the end of Year 11 . The cost of a calculator is £5.50 and we will buy them back for £3.00

**Who will be the first person to achieve a gold MAC Badge!** Over forty blue MAC badges have been presented to pupils and teachers who have demonstrated excellent mathematical skills outside their normal maths lessons. 'Maths Across the Curriculum' (MAC) was launched earlier this year to reward and recognise good use of mathematical skills across the school. We all know how important 'being numerate' is, both in school and in every day life. Pupils at St Damian's are wearing their blue MAC badges with pride. The challenge now is to achieve nominations for three blue badges in order to be presented with the coveted gold MAC Badge. To date, no-one has qualified – and there is a £50 voucher for the first pupil to achieve three gold badges! Ms Baynham and one pupil Liam McGurk Yr7 are closest to achieving the first gold badge in the school! – *who will be the first?*



Sylvia Lancaster, mother of the murdered Sophie Lancaster, came into school to speak to Year 9 about the dangers of prejudices and stereotyping. This fitted in with their work looking on human rights. Sylvia spoke passionately about the need for tolerance and justice and had our students captivated. The impact she made on them is still being discussed today.

The Liturgy group organised a non-uniform day for the charity Cornerstone. This is an organisation which looks after the homeless and vulnerable and was a charity who touched the hearts of the students. Over £500 was raised and prayers were also said within forms to support these charities.

### **History**

Preparations continue for the trip to Belgium and Mr McHugh thanks all the parents who attended the recent meeting and completed the medical questionnaire. If you have not done so please contact him at school for the form. The final payment of £154 is due by the Easter holidays. ParentPay is now available for payments. Please ensure passports and EHIC forms are in order. Nearer the time there will be special lessons in school to discuss some of the places we are going to visit.



## **Mobile Phones**

Please can I remind parents that mobile phones are not allowed in school. If your child is found using their phone it will be confiscated and we then ask parents to collect the mobile phone from the school office.



**Young Writers Spine Chillers Competition** Congratulations to 51 Yr. 8 pupils who are winners in this years 'young writers' competitions. During Year 8's recent Gothic Fiction unit, pupils were given the homework of writing an entry to the Young Writer' Spine Chiller Competition. Pupils were asked to write a mini saga of 100 words or less but still maintain tension, atmosphere and imagination. Mrs Whiteside said 'We are delighted that so many pupils have been successful. They will now have the opportunity to be published within a special anthology which will be published the end of April 2016. Well Done!'

**CPR & AED Defibrillator** If you or your child is interested in attending a course in school on how to deal in emergency situations, resuscitation, recovery position, CPR and the use of defibrillators please contact Mrs Ogden for further information. It will be a great opportunity for you to learn essential life-saving skills, plus we will answer any questions you may have about the use of defibrillators. Our aim is that this short course will be run after school and will be free to all attendees.

**Call:Push:Rescue Kits from the British Heart Foundation** Thanks to a grant from the British Heart Foundation we are absolutely delighted to have taken delivery of Call:Push:Rescue kits. These kits will go a long way in helping us deliver training for our pupils, staff and school community in CPR, resuscitation and the use of AED defibrillators; of which we now have two onsite.



The training kit covers how and when to perform CPR on an adult or child, put someone in the recovery position and use a public access defibrillator. The kit contains an educational DVD demonstrating how to do CPR and a number of inflatable manikins 'Mini Anne's'.

**Call : Push : Rescue**      **CALL 999 immediately**  
**PUSH hard and fast on the center of the chest 30 times**  
**Give two RESCUE breaths**

For more information about the British Heart foundation you can visit their website at: <https://www.bhf.org.uk/>

**Mutual Respect** At St Damian's we teach the students to treat each other with respect and to speak to one another politely. Recently there have been several incidents where a few parents have not always been polite to the staff, particularly the staff at reception. Could I take this opportunity to please ask that you speak to the staff in a polite and respectful way. At St Damian's we have a simple rule of thumb: *'treat people as you would like to be treated'*. Thanks you for your support in this matter.

**Detentions** When a child is given an afterschool detention by a member of staff, it is not given lightly – apart from an exclusion, detentions is one of the few sanctions we have and therefore can I please ask parents to support the school by ensuring detentions are attended. Under very exceptional circumstances the date of a detention can be changed but it is only myself and the Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Henshaw who can rearrange a detention. Students know that if they persistently fail to attend or if they run away they run the risk of being excluded.

**Parking** We have been contacted by a resident on the St Albans Estate who has expressed concern about the way parents are parking when they collect their children after school. Cars are double parked, driveways are

blocked and cars are parked on double yellow lines. I have also been informed of an incident whereby a parent was blocking a driveway and when they were asked to move, so the resident could collect their child from a different school, the parent refused. I appreciate how frustrating the lack of parking must be however, I am becoming increasingly concerned for the safety of our children and ask that you park considerately and safely.



**Senior Members of the Liturgy Group** The Senior Members of the Liturgy Group spent the afternoon with Mr O'Loughlin and Fr Simon designing a programme for current and future members of the group; a kind of instruction manual. They have reflected on their own experiences and designed an education programme for those who will follow in their footsteps. This will allow the Liturgy Group to continue to lead the Spiritual and Liturgical life of the school and ensure that the 5W's continue to be at the heart of St Damian's.

**Young Carers Awareness Day** Our young carers enjoyed a special lunch together as a treat to **celebrate** 'Young Carers Awareness Day'

**The Big Sleep Out** Please join Fr Simon and our community in this year's Cornerstone 'Big Sleep Out' on April 22nd 2016 at St Christopher's RC Church. Cornerstone supports the thousands of people who have to endure sleeping rough on our streets. Sleep out for just one night and help those who are forced to sleep out every night. To find out more follow this link and help the homeless in Manchester <http://www.cornerstonebigsleepout.co.uk/>



**Hi welcome to our new APP- iMLS**  
The iMLS App allows students, parents and staff to access the school library from a mobile phone or tablet. Schools using Junior Librarian.net or Eclipse.net (hosted) can now ensure the library and its resources are accessible anywhere, anytime and available to your whole school community. The app is a fantastic way to encourage parental engagement with reading.

With iMLS students can ... Search your library resources; View the latest and most popular books; Write and record video reviews;

Check in on the latest news from the library; Check their library account; View recommended reads using Who Next; Request books for the school to purchase. Plus much more ...

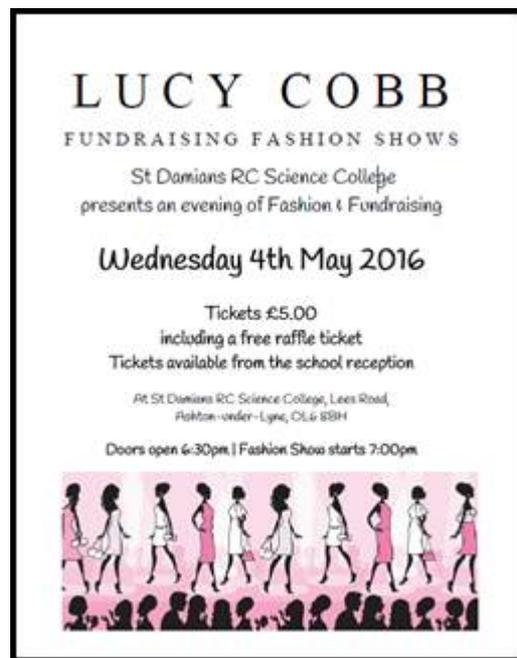
[www.microlib.co.uk](http://www.microlib.co.uk)



iPad



iPhone / iPod



## Encouraging Your Child's Reading for Pleasure: Our school library catalogue online and introducing 'Who Next' and the iMLS App

Dear Parent / Carer

Our school is strongly committed to improving literacy and knows the importance of reading for pleasure. There is good evidence to suggest that young people who read for pleasure daily perform better in reading tests than those who never do. We want to encourage children to enjoy reading and to read a wide range of good quality literature.

I am delighted to inform you that the school has recently made a significant investment in our library with the introduction of a new online version of our library catalogue. The new system allows pupils, staff and parents to view our school library catalogue online and pupils are encouraged to use this to help with research, to write reviews about books they have read and search for new books and other library resources.

The system includes a fantastic new feature called 'Who Next' which recommends new books and authors based on the books that your child has already read. You will be able to use this feature at home to help your child select their next book.

You can access the system via the school website or directly using the following link: [www.microlib.co.uk](http://www.microlib.co.uk) Junior Librarian.net / Eclipse.net].

If you have access to an iPhone, iPad, iPod touch or Android phone, then you can also download a new App called 'iMLS' to access the library from those devices. The app is available from the App Store and Android Market.

Having the library accessible in this way and having parents engaged with reading will help support our commitment to improving literacy standards. If you would like details of your child's username and password so that you can use the new app to also track their reading history and borrowing patterns, please complete the slip below and return it to the school librarian, Ms. S Toole/Librarian

We hope you find the new facility useful and welcome any feedback.

Yours faithfully,

**Mr. S.Logue BA (Hons),M.Ed., NPQH**  
Headteacher

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Name of Child \_\_\_\_\_ Form \_\_\_\_\_

I / we would like to receive username and password details for my son / daughter to be able to access the new online library system and App.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Parent / Carer Date \_\_\_\_\_