

Thursday, 11th January 2018

No. 14

The Swaminarayan

EDUCATION IS THAT WHICH LIBERATES

Dear Parents, Guardians, Pupils and Friends,

We hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and New Year break, and feel rejuvenated to begin the hard work that will inevitably be required over the rest of the academic year, as the 6th Form students will already have discovered, starting with the Mock examinations.

Theme for next week

The theme for next week is "**Forgiveness.**" I have written about it at the end of the newsletter.

Entrance Examinations

As you are aware, the Senior 1 Entrance Examinations will be held on Wednesday, 17th January 2018 in the morning. There so far 55 candidates for 42 places including SEVEN competitive scholarships on offers. Parents of pupils in Year 6 will already have received a letter from me regarding the organization of the day.

S1 Parents' Teachers Consultation Evening

The first Parents' Consultation Evening for Senior 1 pupils will take place next Thursday, 18th January 2018 between 4.30-7.00 pm in the Yogi Hall. All the parents will have an opportunity to meet their child's subject teachers including the House Tutors, who meet the pupils twice per day and keep a very careful eye on their welfare, progress and achievements.

Stress Questionnaire

I have attached a stress questionnaire at the back of the newsletter for pupils to do so that they are able to assess their level of stress. So do try it.

S6 Parents' Consultation Evening

Since S6 are in a crucial year, they have two consultation evenings. The second meeting will take place on Thursday, 8th February 2018 between 4.30-7.00 pm in the Yogi Hall. As always all the parents will have an opportunity to meet their child's subject teachers including the House Tutors. This is an ideal opportunity to review their progress and performance after the Mock Examinations at the beginning of this term.

Ten of the worst things you can say to your children – This week the first two things parents should not say to their children...

1. "Why can't you be more like your brother or sister?"

It's often tempting to try and use one sibling as a role model for another, but Dr Amanda Gummer, psychologist and founder of Fundamentally Children, says this is one of the biggest mistakes parents can make. "It makes them feel unappreciated and less worthy than their sibling, causing long term problems with self-esteem and motivation," she says.

"It causes friction between the children and can be detrimental for the child who is being portrayed as the 'good' one too as they can develop behaviours that are designed to maintain the status quo and make themselves look good and the 'naughty' child trapped in that role."

"This can have a huge impact on the future success, happiness and well-being of that 'naughty' child as after a while they take the 'may as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb' approach and become increasingly badly behaved."

2. "Because I say so"

Most parents swear they'll never use this cliché when they have children. But then comes a time when they just don't have the energy or time for full explanations.

Not only is "Because I say so" the most unsatisfactory explanation ever, but it removes any potential for the child to learn about why they shouldn't do the thing you've told them not to. It also removes any sense of responsibility on their part. Finally, there's risk of a power struggle ensuing because the silent message is, "I tell; you obey."

Take the scenario of your child asking why they can't swing from the bannisters. If you take the time to explain the danger element, there's a lesson in actions having consequences. Plus, it gives them an opportunity to get down themselves because they realise what might happen, thereby giving them back some control and autonomy. Finally, it could, just possibly, avoid an argument.

Explanations can also help kids understand that their feelings matter and that you are hearing what they say. For example, "I know you really want to visit George this afternoon, but I have some errands to do in town and I need your help. How about we see him tomorrow?"

Meetings with Tutors

As parents were made aware during the Parents' Induction at the beginning of the year, all pupils have at least one meeting with their tutors to review their performance and progress during the term. These meetings are pre-arranged and all parents have been informed about them by the tutors. It is our hope that this will allow the parents to be present with their child in the meeting. They are crucial, if we are to ensure, the right support is given to all the pupils in the school. Your presence in these meetings is also crucial to the motivation of the child and I hope you will make every endeavor to be present.

Instrumental Lessons – Mr Oza writes:

As you may be aware, instrumental lessons for piano, drums, flute, guitar and violin are offered by peripatetic teachers at the school. All lessons will be starting from this week and next week. Parents who want to enroll their child/ren for these lessons should complete the application form and return it to me by the end of next week, **Friday, 19th January 2018**. Please note that these lessons are offered during school hours with an organised time table so your child/ren will not miss the same lessons more than once or twice in the whole term. This is the case in every school for peripatetic music teachers.

Forgiveness

Think

Nobody in this world can claim that they have not been harmed by another person. Whether we like it or not, all human beings have weaknesses and imperfections that sometimes lead them to make mistakes, such as saying something harsh to someone, cheating, lying or taking advantage of other people's goodwill. Yet people have great strengths as well. A person can do ten good things but when they do one thing wrong we will quickly forget about them and only remember the bad thing. We will resent them for it and hold a grudge for a long time over that one error.

Feel

I have seen long standing friendships destroyed because one friend has said something hurtful to the other, and all the good times they have shared since they were very young are forgotten because of it. We could argue that they weren't really good friends anyway because if they were they would have apologised, forgiven each other and moved on.

Do

It isn't easy to forgive when the scar is still fresh because we feel hurt, let down and want to teach them a lesson. I would urge you not to spoil your relationship with someone who has been a long-standing and good friend to you. It will only hurt you. Instead, sit down and talk to them about it and you will be surprised at how it becomes something so trivial that before you know it you will both be laughing about it. Say sorry, shake hands, hug and forgive. It takes a generous heart to forgive, forget and move on.

Yours sincerely,

Nilesh Manani

Stress Management

Stress is a very natural and important part of life. We all need stress but not too much or far too long. Stress helps keep us alert, motivates us to face challenges, and drives us to solve problems.

However, distress, on the other hand, results when our bodies over-react to events, leading to a "fight or flight" reaction. If we think something is scary or worrisome, our bodies react accordingly.

Have you ever had to give a talk to your class and found that your heart pounded so loudly and your mouth was so dry that you thought you just couldn't do it? Or sat in exam, and just blanked out?

Below are situations that cause stress in some, and distress in others. Score yourself from 1 to 5, with 1 being unstressed and 5 being stressed out.

Stress Test	Unstressed					Stressed				
Getting a last minute assignment	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Accidentally breaking something while using it	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Misplacing your mobile phone	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Waiting in a long queue at the supermarket	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Being grounded at home	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Not having enough money	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Losing an essay because the computer crashes	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
No biscuits or crisps in the cupboard	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

If you scored mostly 4's and 5's you must chill out more and learn to approach things in a more reasonable way. Remember, a strong reaction is better reserved for a serious situation. And if you scored mostly 1's and 2's get the person next to you to check if you have a pulse!

