

# The Swaminarayan

**EDUCATION IS THAT WHICH LIBERATES**

**Dear Parents, Guardians, Pupils and Friends,**

## **Theme for next week**

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

## **Thank you**

My sincere thanks to all the parents, pupils and teachers who took their time out yesterday evening to give their guidance for what is likely to be a life-changing decision. I hope the parents and pupils found it useful. Some of the reasons we explored for not changing the school for your A Levels:

- Fitting into a new school, new environment is always difficult, it is a hit and miss, and you could end up rather unsettled.
- Adapting to new teaching may also be difficult; this is not advisable when you have so much support from the teachers who know you so well. You have formed a bond and it would be catastrophic to destroy that during your two most crucial years.
- The time travelling to the new school is not to be negated because it can take away invaluable time from studying, not including the time you have to stay behind for coursework, etc.
- Changing school can have a very negative impact on your UCAS reference because you are moving from a school which knows all the finer achievements in your schooling to a school which will still be discovering your purpose, what makes you connect as an individual.
- There is often a syllabus change when you move from GCSE to A Level which will require you to get used to the new style of questions, assessments and language.
- Extra support from the teachers is second to none which will be extremely hard to replicate elsewhere, especially when the examinations draw near.

## **WRITER'S CORNER**



**This is the second instalment on, "How Children Learn Social Skills" by Naomi Aldort. What Wee-ones Tend to Learn at a Peer Group Setup:**

Grouping children by age, or even within the span of a couple of years, is like putting the blind with the blind. It often results in some of the most undesirable children's behaviours and can produce failing social habits. These behaviours are not natural to children but rather induced by this artificial setup.

In their desperation, wee-ones have no choice but to grab, scream, hit, or adapt the role of a victim. Behaviours are learned as they are experienced: The hitter learns to hit, the abused learns to be a victim (and to hit) and the "teacher's pet" learns to appease. Feeling, failing and dependent, they also learn to obey authority rather than to trust themselves. Such peer group experiences become part of the child's "social skills;" *these are not authentic social abilities but rather unhealthy survival strategies.*

To prevent calamities and respond to the struggles created by putting socially undeveloped children together, teachers must resort to methods of control. They organize the children's activities, patronize, coerce, reward and punish or give much hated "sermons." The content of these well intended lessons

the teacher provides are not what is being learned. Instead, the children learn the controlling behaviours of the teacher which do not contribute to a good set of social skills. Ironically, most teachers conclude that children need imposed structure, group organized play and externally imposed discipline. But in reality these are only needed when children are put together in peer groups such as classrooms and other coercive setups. Many parents report that pre-school or kindergarten turned their content child into a whiny or aggressive one. Even when parents are sitting close by to their toddlers who are expected to play together, they notice that it rarely works and when it does, it is for a short duration.

### **REMINDER: Senior 4 Parents' Teachers Consultation Evening**

The S4 parents' consultation evening will take place on Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2018, between 4.30 and 7.00 pm. There will be an opportunity to meet all the subject teachers including the Tutors. This is an important meeting for Senior 4 as many are likely to be entered for several GCSEs next summer. We do hope all the parents will be present.

### **Diwali celebrations & Senior Citizens Party 2018**

This year the much anticipated Senior Citizens Diwali Party will be held on Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> October 2018. There will be two performances of the play, the first to start at 8.45am, for which parents are welcome to attend. The second performance will be at 11.00am for the senior citizens, if there are any grandparents of the students who would like to attend, please contact the office to collect the tickets. We will also be serving a delicious Diwali lunch prepared by our diligent kitchen staff at lunch time. We thank you for your support in advance.

### **Half Term, Diwali and Annakut Holiday**

The week beginning Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018 will be the start of a two weeks half-term holiday for all pupils and teaching staff. Pupils and staff return to school as normal on Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2018. The office will be open between 9am to 4pm during the week. Diwali will be celebrated at the Mandir on Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018 which is of course followed by Annakut at Mandir on Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

## **Character**

### **Think**

This week I want to speak to you about character. I remember reading somewhere that the character of a person is that which he or she truly is in thought and action. I have thought hard about how a good person would act and I believe that persons of good character would always act in a manner that would do no harm to anyone or anything.

### **Feel**

This is a very difficult quality to embrace but we can get close to that aim if we conscientiously look at ourselves daily, learn from what we do right and what we do wrong, and strive to improve. The following five powerful tools will help you to learn and reach that goal:

### **Do**

1. The power of faith: always have faith in yourself that you have the capacity to achieve great things and you will.
2. The power of conscientiousness: you must continue conscientiously to strive hard to improve no matter what the difficulties and to show courage.
3. The power of fear: always be afraid of the consequences of acting wrongly in thought, in what you say and how you behave because that fear will stop you from doing wrong things.
4. The power of energy: you must have abiding energy to face up to all that is wrong and choose the right.
5. The power of insight: you must learn to pause and think to gain a good understanding of how you must act before acting and be prepared to destroy the root cause of that which is wrong.

**Yours sincerely**

**Nilesh Manani**