

# The Swaminarayan

Education is that which liberates

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

## **Theme for next week**

The theme for the week after half-term is “**Excellence.**” I have written about it on the back of the newsletter.

## **Half-term**

The half-term holidays will be from Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> to Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2019. All the staff and pupils return to school on Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019 as normal. Everyone should note that the school is open during the half-term. Any pupil attending extra lessons must sign in at the office.

## **The Power of Words**

1. To live without constantly expanding our knowledge is to close our eyes both to the purpose and to the facts of life;
2. Remember that your language is the one thing you cannot hide - except by silence;
3. Your ability to use your language and the extent of your vocabulary will determine your income and your future;
4. Remember that finishing school is just the beginning of your days and years of learning. With learning will come wisdom, kindness, patience, love, understanding and success as a person; and,
5. It is never too late to begin!

## **Six Ways to Revise: Mathematics**

**The best six ways to revise for Mathematics are listed below, written by experienced teachers.**

1. Learn the times-tables up to 15.
2. Practise calculations without a calculator.
3. Show written working.
4. Revise by actively ‘doing’ not just ‘reading’.
5. Explain your method of working to a friend.
6. Check whether the answer is sensible when you have finished.

## **Writer’s Corner**

Anxiety Specialist Priya Amlani writes about **5 Ways to manage your child’s screen time...**

As an anxiety specialist working with many children and parents, one of the burning issues I hear about, is parents complaining their children spend too much time on screens. I have seen the impact of increased screen time and the change in families over the last few years particularly. It is with this in mind that I share my experiences with you.

### **Types of concerns parents raise due to technology:**

- Children always on the phone
- Gaming addiction (can lead to missing school)

- Cyber bullying
- Anxiety (constant information - news always at hand)
- Fear of missing out (FOMO)
- My child does not talk to me
- Lack of respect

### **What's the real issue with technology?**

It is evident that technology has a lot of positive benefits for children and using technology is an important skill to have. The main concerns that parents present to me is the impact on their child due to frequent exposure to various types of media such as gaming, social media, unnecessary browsing and watching too much TV. I am going to base the rest of the article based on these concerns.

### **Impact of social media and increased screen time**

- Anxiety and Depression
- Cyber bullying
- FOMO (Fear of Missing Out)
- Unrealistic expectations
- Negative body image
- Poor sleep patterns
- Lack of concentration
- General addiction
- Pornography

### **How can you help your child?**

1. **Modeling: NLP modeling** is a process used in neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) to discover and code patterns of excellence as demonstrated consistently by top performers in any field, ideally via direct experience. Simply put your children will model your behaviour, you are their role model and they look up to you. If you are always using your phones, your children think that's acceptable behaviour. As an adult you may have valid reasons to be on your phone, however children do not realise that and follow in your actions. It is therefore very important to **lead by example** and set **family rules that you all follow**.

Examples of family rules are;

- No screens for the first hour after waking up
- No phones in the bedroom
- No screens at meal times

2. **Communication:** It is well known that 55% of our communication is through body language, 38% of our communication is through tone of voice and only 7% of our communication is through words. It is for this reason we often say, actions speak louder than words. This again links to modeling, if you do not look at your child when you speak to them or you do not give them eye contact because you are on a call or doing something, they learn the same from you. It is extremely important to build their social skills and teach them the importance of eye contact and positive body language; such as looking at you when you are talking, pausing a game whilst having a conversation and speaking calmly with each other.

3. **Benefits and Consequences:** It is very important to be clear with your children what your expectations are with the use of screens. Discuss clear benefits for them putting the screens away and the consequences if they do not. Examples of benefits are;

- Quality time as a family if we all put our phones away during meal times
- Relaxed morning for all before school, which means as parents we do not have to shout

It is important to also discuss consequences of not following family rules and this is something you as parents have to agree on and decide as a family.

4. **Get clear on your Goals:** Be very clear on your concerns regards to screen time. You may find that you and your partner have different concerns and hence deal with your child differently. Are you worried about their addiction or their safety? Is it about anxiety, cyber bullying, or grooming? Is

it about time management or distraction during homework? Understanding the root of your concerns will give you the clarity as to what your goals are regards limiting screen time and you will then be able to set clear boundaries.

5. **Clear Family Values and Beliefs:** One of the greatest challenges parents face is the peer pressure their children experience. Many parents are clear, that they prefer not to give their child a phone or wish to give limited screen time, however, children often complain their friends have more freedom and they feel left out. The example I like to use here is that as a family you will have certain values that you follow despite what others do; such as choosing to be a family that is vegetarian, or vegan or whether you eat in certain ways. You may have certain family customs that you never waver from, like movie or games night, supporting a favourite football team and particular bedtime routines. Likewise, it is important to talk about screen time and social media in terms of family beliefs and values. This has two advantages, one that the child will struggle to argue against a family value and two that they will have a good understanding of family beliefs around screen time. The main take from all the above is, that technology if used appropriately has a lot of benefits. However, there are negative consequences also and as a family you have to be very clear on what your values and beliefs are around technology. You have to be clear on what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in your family and imbibe these values from early on in your children. Be congruent and persistent as parents and remember, we all make mistakes, the important thing is to learn from it, rather than dwell on it. If you would like any support with managing your child's behaviour or use of screen time, contact me via [Priya@AmlaniCoaching.com](mailto:Priya@AmlaniCoaching.com)

## **Excellence**

### **Think**

Have you ever looked up at the sky lately and seen how bare it looks? It is because not many people dare to soar. The higher people climb, the greater the space, and the larger the offices and fewer the people. Out of every thousand people just one stays the full course and reaches the top. Out of thousands who have striven to reach the summit of Mount Everest, only 600 people from twenty countries have ever made it to the top. Others have succumbed to the harsh weather, and either given up or perished.

### **Feel**

A large multi-national company has only one chief executive, and they, like all those others who have reached the top have had to aim for excellence their whole life, working long hours and remaining focused on their task against all adversity. They have shown intense commitment to excellence and in time they have been rewarded. Excellence is not arrived at by chance but by constant effort. They have thought of excellence in their every action and have taken risks when others have hesitated. When trouble has come their way they have stood firm and resolute to that single aim for excellence, even if they have been the only one.

### **Do**

As a child of this world, once you have decided to aim for excellence in your life, seek the help and assistance of everyone you know. Your journey will be more enjoyable with others by your side as there will surely be times when you will want to give up when the going gets tough. The support, guidance and encouragement of others can be a huge source of inspiration at such times, and no one achieves excellence without a mentor to guide them.

**A Very Happy Valentine's Day to everyone.**

**Yours sincerely,**

**Nilesh Manani**