

# The Swaminarayan

**EDUCATION IS THAT WHICH LIBERATES**

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

The theme for the first week in the New Year is: **You are special.** I have written about it at the back of the Swaminarayan.

## **Hemal Gor wins 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize in the Whitbread Award 2017**

36 pupils were nominated by their schools for the ISA Whitbread Prize 2017 for involvement in – and service to – wider aspects of school and community life; in conjunction with achieving academic excellence in GCSE results. Being nominated is a great achievement in itself, as these 36 nominees come from approximately 5,000 pupils who sat GCSEs in 2017 at ISA's 440 Members' Schools.



Two years ago Hemal came to us and asked us if he could do a charity walk in aid of Wings of Hope Charity. He said he wanted to do a return 22 miles walk between two places of worship because according to his grandfather, it was auspicious. Always supportive of the aspiration of our students we, of course, agreed. Hemal completed the walk with one teacher and one other pupil, Dhruvi Patel, raising £800 in the process towards building new schools in Malawi and South India. He was in Year 9 and going into Year 10. It was clear, even then, that Hemal was a young boy going places. We remember how exhausted he looked when he slumped on the railings close to the end. Hemal followed the charity walk by volunteering at the local library as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Silver Service strand, an experience he assures us contributed to a 9 and 8 in the GCSE English Literature and Language examinations respectively. For the physical aspect of the award, Hemal joined Vale Farm's football

Team in partnership with Wembley FC. In music, Hemal has completed 4 Tabla examinations with the ABGMV Board and obtained distinctions in all of them with the aim of continuing this streak when he sits his final Diploma Exam.

Over the years, Hemal has also taken part in BPhO's GCSE Physics Challenge, in which he has attained a Silver Medal; UKMT's Intermediate Maths Challenge, where he has also obtained Silver medals for the last 3 years. Hemal's mathematical prowess has led him to be invited to Mathematics Master classes at the Royal Institute. He was also a recipient of the Young Physicist of the Year award in 2016 at Queen Mary, University of London for his proactive participation in physics. Hemal has completed the Gold Award in the LAMDA examinations with Distinction. He has represented the school in the Rotary Youth Speaks Competition- reaching the London District final in 2016 with the Best Chairperson Award. Hemal clearly shines academically as is apparent from his outstanding GCSE results of 1A<sup>1</sup>1A\* and Grade 9 in English Literature and Grade 8 in English Language.

## **Part V. The Limits and Requirements for Democracy**

If democracy is to work, citizens must not only participate and exercise their rights. They must also observe certain principles and rules of democratic conduct. People must respect the law and reject violence. Nothing ever justifies using violence against your political opponents, just because you disagree with them. Every citizen must respect the rights of his or her fellow citizens, and their dignity as human beings. No one should denounce a political opponent as evil and illegitimate, just because

they have different views. People should question the decisions of the government, but not reject the government's authority.

Every group has the right to practice its culture and to have some control over its own affairs, but each group should accept that it is a part of a democratic state. When you express your opinions, you should also listen to the views of other people, even people you disagree with. Everyone has a right to be heard. Don't be so convinced of the rightness of your views that you refuse to see any merit in another position. Consider different interests and points of view.

When you make demands, you should understand that in a democracy, it is impossible for everyone to achieve everything they want. Democracy requires compromise. Groups with different interests and opinions must be willing to sit down with one another and negotiate. In a democracy, one group does not always win everything it wants. Different combinations of groups win on different issues. Over time, everyone wins something. If one group is always excluded and fails to be heard, it may turn against democracy in anger and frustration. Everyone who is willing to participate peacefully and respect the rights of others should have some say in the way the country is governed.

### **Year 9/10 Girls win Brent Netball Finals – Ms Shanks writes...**

Both the Years 9 and 10 netball teams placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in their pool for the round robin section of the Brent borough competition, allowing both teams to attend the finals at JFS on Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> December. As the weather has been quite bad this week the format changed a little, leaving our Year 9's playing off for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> and our Year 10's playing off for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The Year 9 girls, along with two Year 8 girls took the court against Preston Manner, a little nervously as the competition was twice their height and the stakes were high. Those nerves soon vanished once the first whistle was blown and they started to use techniques learnt in class to get in front of those tall players. However, JFS was always that one step ahead of our girls. Our mid court players, Raisa, Pari and Janvi all played an amazing game helping both the defensive and attacking ends of the court. Unfortunately we missed out on a win, losing by around 9 goals, putting us in 4<sup>th</sup> place. Great effort girls, well done!



I have never seen the Year 10 girls, plus Mansi from Year 9 play with the confidence and strength they did on Tuesday. They entered the game against Convent with such a positive energy and will to win. Every single girl played extremely well, focusing on their basic skills of, driving into space, straight line passes, getting in front and not forcing the passes but working the ball around. This really worked for the girls as they took out the win 12-4, leading them to place 1<sup>st</sup>, winning the Year 10 Brent competition.

Player of the game goes to Khushi Patel, who plays GA in the Year 10 team. Her shooting was on fire, missing only 1 or 2 shots the whole game. Khushi's help through the mid court in both attacking and defending was fabulous. Never giving up and leaving everything out on the court, she stayed positive and encouraged her team mates throughout the whole game. Thanks Khushi for your efforts.

### **You are special**

#### **Think**

This week I want to speak to you about how special you are. Ask your parents how they felt when you were born and more often than not you will learn that it was a very special time for them. Your first smile, your first word, your first step; they will have all been very special moments for them. Over the many years you have lived they will have treated you with special care. They have fed you, bathed you, dressed you, played with you, taken you on holidays, bought you many things you will have wanted and shared many moments with you that you will remember as special.

#### **Feel**

Believe me when I tell you that you are the most special person in the world and there is nobody else like you. God has given you your own special gifts and you have the capacity to achieve special things and create a very special life for yourself. The only thing left for you to do is to find your own special things.

#### **Do**

As you grow up, learn what you are good at and what you can do better than other people around you. Write them down in a little book that you keep by your side, and somewhere, in all the good things you will write, lies your own special answers for what you should do with your own special life that only you can create. Make each day special; try and learn something new every day and one day when you are older, you will find your own special answers for life. Don't ever let anyone make you feel or think differently.

### **Christmas Holidays**

Reports will be available on Schoolbase from Friday. You will know from the published calendar that next term will begin on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January for everyone in the school. There is no staff training day this year. The Senior School has a non-uniform day on the last day of term. Students will have to pay a £1 donation for the privilege of coming to school in their clothes. The money will go towards sponsoring a rural school in Cambodia.

**My sincere thank you to everyone: pupils, staff, parents, governors, trustees and santos for their support and hard work this term; we look forward to receiving everyone back next year.**

**On behalf of all the staff, a most wonderful Christmas break and a Happy New Year.**

**Yours sincerely,**

**Nilesh Manani**