

Thursday, 7th January 2016

No. 13

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 feels energised to begin the hard work that will inevitably be required over the rest of the academic year.

During the staff training day, we carried out a review of several areas including the quality of reporting to parents, the timing and organization of the Speech Day, organization of the GCSE Options, the planning and transition to new syllabi, the role of Heads of Departments, Lesson Observations, the role of Heads of Houses, the timing of the Mock Examinations and the register for Able, Gifted and Talented. We will feed some ideas raised into the systems and procedures of the school as and when we can.

Theme for next week

The theme for next week is “**Keep good company.**” I have written about it on the reverse of the newsletter.

Entrance Examinations

As you are aware, the Senior 1 Entrance Examinations will be held on Wednesday, 13th January 2016 in the morning. There are 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’ Consultation Evening

The first Parents’ Consultation Evening for Senior 1 pupils will take place next Thursday, 14th January 2016 between 4.30-7.30 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.

S5 Parents’ Consultation Evening

Since S5 are in a crucial year, they have two consultation evenings. The second meeting will take place on Thursday, 28th January 2016 between 4.30-7.30 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 last term.

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.

Parents' Portal

Now that the use of the portal is well established after two terms of reports, it is our intention to place resources for pupils on the site. All subject leaders and Heads of department have until the end of this term to sort out the resources they would like to place on the portal while we organize dedicated locations for all the subjects separately to avoid confusion. Once this is done, we will upload all the material for the pupils and parents of the school to use. This will include written material, questions, examination papers, videos and links to useful websites for the subject, links to examination boards, etc. **Any suggestions from parents will be most welcome while we are planning and collating the material.**

The Swaminarayan is already placed on the main school website so we will not duplicate the process with the portal. You can easily access the Swaminarayan under the image: Head's Newsletter.

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 15th January 2016**. 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.

Keep good company

Think

We get new students joining our school every year, and I always make sure I spend at least one lesson per week or fortnight with them for one year. It gives me a chance to speak to them about anything and everything that is affecting their life and in time I get to know them very well. In most cases we are able to change them for the better, but sometimes no matter what help and support we give, we are not able to influence them. I always find that in such situations the influence of the company they keep outweighs all other positive influences.

Feel

It is fascinating to see how the students who are focused and hard-working always seem to find each other and in time almost always become good friends. Even at such a young age, these students know what is good for them and find like-minded friends who have the same inclination. The same is true for students who have lost their way; they attract friends who have the same attitude problems as they do. Their relationships with these students are as unstable as their attitudes, and sadly, some of them never form strong bonds with anyone, drifting through life aimlessly from one crisis to another because they are too arrogant to listen to good counsel. Sometimes 'good students' seeking acceptance become mixed up with them and end up being dragged down with them. At times the students with negative attitudes can come under the influence of a caring mentor, where they are shown the error of their ways, and in time, they change for the better. It is a joy to see such a transformation.

Do

Be careful who you associate with; pick friends whose desire for success is as strong as yours. If you want to soar to great heights in your life, learn to pick partners who are willing to make the difficult journey with you. Positive people plant positive thoughts in your mind and put down strong roots which hold you up in all adversity, helping you to reach your destination.

Yours sincerely,

Nilesh Manani