

Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015

No. 10

# The Swaminarayan

**EDUCATION IS THAT WHICH LIBERATES**

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

## **Theme for next week**

The theme for next week is “**Learn to forgive.**” I have written about it on the reverse of the newsletter.

## **Our Beloved Jayantikaka**

It is with deep sadness I write to inform you about the passing-away of Jayantikaka. He lived in the caretaker’s bungalow and did seva to look after the school in the absence of the caretaker. We would often find him roaming the school compass in the company of his German shepherd dog, Sam. For those of us who knew him, he was more than a man who simply looked after the security of the school. His kindness to us all, his guidance and wisdom when we felt a little down, his faith in Bapa, were an inspiration to us all. We will miss him deeply. May Bhagwan Swaminarayan and Param Pujya Pramukh Swami Maharaj bless his gentle soul and give strength to his family during this difficult time. His funeral detail are as follow:

**Date:** Sunday 29 November 2015

**Time:** 10.30am

**Address:** Hither Green Crematorium, Verdant Lane, London SE6 1TP

**Note:** The family has requested not to bring any flowers; instead it would be Jayantibhai’s wish to make a donation to the Swaminarayan School.

## **Speech Day Tomorrow**

This is the last reminder for The Speech Day. Parents and guardians are reminded that the school will close at 1 pm for Senior School pupils. They should all arrive to the Yogi Hall in the school at 6.15pm, where their tutors will be there to receive. Parents should go to the Mandir where they will be guided to their seats in the front of the Haveli. We want to start promptly at 7pm with the arrival of Pujya Paramtattva Swami, Trustees and Governors, so it would good if all parents, guardians and friends are seated by 6.55pm. The Mandir has prepared a sumptuous dinner to be served after the evening.

The Speech Day is a celebration of the achievements of ALL the pupils in the Senior School. I know they have all worked extremely hard throughout the last year in every field of the school’s activities and deserve to be recognised for their efforts. I, for one, am very proud of all of them.

## **Important GCSE, AS and A Level Reforms – Postcard 8**

This postcard examines the issue of spoken language in the new GCSE English language and how it will be assessed. I have **published it at the back of The Swaminarayan.**

## **Women of the Future Programme – Urja Thakrar (12G) writes:**

On Wednesday, 18th November, six girls from the Lower Sixth embarked on a trip to the headquarters of the Lloyds Banking Group, as part of a Women of the Future programme. There, we received the opportunity to listen to inspirational female speakers who were able to educate us on the importance of hard work and belief in yourself. The number of women with different backgrounds, stories and lives was astonishing. It was clear, however, that they were

all equally as determined and supportive, which was something that brought us all together at the presentation irrespective of age or amount of life experience. Next - meeting the ambassadors. This was a fantastic opportunity as we were able to interact with women from all sorts of fields including medicine, digital marketing, banking, media, and even comedy. As a feminist, it was truly inspiring to be surrounded by so many successful and powerful women, and be able to seek advice about our own futures and prospects from experts in the respective industries that we're interested in. We'd like to extend our sincere thanks to all the organisers of the event as well as Ms Maharaj for arranging this unique opportunity for us.

### **YEAR 11 GCSE DRAMA EXAMS SCHEDULE 2015/2016 – Mr Benny writes:**

Please would parents be aware that Year 11 Drama students are now in direct preparations for their UNIT 1 WJEC PERFORMANCE exam. Rehearsals (which must be attended) are as follows:

1. Students will rehearse Wednesday and Thursday evenings (4.15-5.15/30pm) for the next fortnight, and any extra night their separate groups may agree to.
2. SUNDAY 6<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER: ALL DAY REHEARSAL – 9.30am until 4pm (possibly earlier finish, subject to progress)
3. Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER: ALL DAY REHEARSALS – P1-6 *incl.* with provision for post-school rehearsal only if vital.
4. EXAMINED PERFORMANCE Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER: P1-4 *incl.* AUDIENCE: Years 9 & 10 GCSE actors.

ADVANCE NOTICE: The Unit 2 performance exam is scheduled for the week of Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> to Friday 13<sup>th</sup> MAY, 2016 inclusive. WJEC will confirm which day exactly in due course. I look forward to your support and co-operation. Premature thanks.



**Religious Conference - Jai Patel S5 Writes,**  
Being part of a faith school is a polar matter. It can inspire both intense pride and also stigma. Ms Parshotam introduced six of us S5 students to an enthralling opportunity. Yogesh, Naiya, Dhruvi, Ishaan, Ria, and I were invited to Religious conference at the *Al Khoei Mosque* to represent our school, and bring a piece of our experiences to the matter of *BEING AN OUTSIDER*.

The day began with a speech from the former *Arsenal* and *Birmingham City* player, Fabrice Muamba. Fabrice spoke in great detail on how his father fled persecution in the Democratic Republic of Congo due to political differences. He then spoke of how religion became a part of his ability to integrate and a spark for his football career. Religion played a large part in the person he became; the way he spoke about his faith was enough to bring a few tears to our eyes. This truly emphasised the importance of religion in his life and kick-started the theme of the day.

This speech was followed up by presentations by each school. There were *three* Christian schools, *three* Jewish schools, *three* Islamic schools, and one Hindu school. Which meant that there was a burden on us to best represent our faith. We did it justice. We spoke of the basis of our school and illustrated the concept on how *religious* values permeate into every aspect of our education, giving us a unique stance. Our hosts were impressed and complimented us on our articulate and eager demonstration.

The day proceeded when the schools were 'shuffled' up, and we were put with students of other faith schools. We were asked to criticise examples of the media and cut through the manipulation of ideas. The examples were topical, and revolved around the Syrian conflict and its ramifications. We presented these ideas and discussed them in energetic debate. This

allowed us to establish the fact that society is intrinsically prejudiced and hence we are viewed as outsiders. Through this criticism, however, we began to notice springs of tolerance, and appreciation for one other. Additionally, as a result, we created ways to deal with society's ignorance towards religion.

The next task, which in my opinion was the most important, consisted of a heated discussion in which we compared each other's religions and identified the overlaps; there was much common ground. We created bridges between the differences, to unite us under one banner. The conversation brought a range of ideologies together, including that of *atheists* and *firm believers*. Each student from our school introduced an aspect of our faith and specifically illustrated our opinion with reference to the OUTSIDER, and what our religion preaches about the person in need.

This summary simply 'scratches the surface' of our experience. It was truly an enlightening and also a crucial conference in building up the tolerant world of the future by educating each other about our greatest differences and our greatest similarities. Bridging the ONE divide that sometimes seems to separate us the most.

Thank you to Ms Parshotam for giving us this opportunity and inspiring us to seize it. And also, a special thanks to Mr Ladwa for accompanying us and giving us the moral support we required.

### **Shared Transport**

Mr Manoj Sharma

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### **Learn to forgive**

#### **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**