

NEWSNOTES



Friday 6th January 2017 8 Tevet 5777 Parashat Vayigash

Shabbat begins tonight at 3.50 p.m. and ends tomorrow evening at 5.07 pm

Dates for your diary

Please check the calendar section of the school website for more detailed information.

January

Monday 9th

Yr 4 to London Zoo

Yr 6 to the Science Museum – postponed due to London Underground strike to the **23rd Jan**

Thursday 12th

School photographs

Monday 16th

Dental checks – Rec and Year 1

Tuesday 17th

Headteacher ‘meet the parents’ meetings
9.10 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

Wednesday 18th

Year 5 to the London Aquarium

Wednesday 25th

Year 3 assembly to parents

Friday 27th

Year 6 singing at Holocaust Memorial Service

February

Wednesday 1st

Year 4 assembly to parents

Wednesday 8th

Year 5 assembly to parents

Friday 10th

Fruit Seder

Saturday 11th

Tu B'Shevat

Mon 13th – Fri 17th

Half term break

27th – 3rd March

Book week

March

Wednesday 1st

Nursery/Reception assembly to parents

Thursday 2nd

World Book Day

Sunday 5th

Purim Disco (PTA)

Friday 12th

Purim celebration in school

Early closure on Friday ends 17th March

Headteacher's message

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to a new term at Simon Marks! We've had a positive start to the term and some very exciting events have already happened: Year 4 were invaded by Romans, Anglo-Saxons and Vikings today and Year 3 had a visit from a circus yesterday, with the Ringmaster demonstrating her magical touch to the class. Please check the dates on the newsnotes and website - further events and trips will be organised and added over the next few weeks.

This term our priorities are to embed the good teaching, planning and behaviour we saw last term, to share this good practice and to enrich the curriculum with events, trips and 'hooks' into learning so that children are excited about what they are learning. Last term we said farewell to some staff members but new staff have already begun to enthuse children with their ideas, energy and creativity.

Today an additional letter has been sent with this newsnotes about the Scopus Jewish Educational Trust becoming a part of the United Synagogue – please read the announcement in newsnotes and/or the letter about this important development.

I like to let you know that next Tuesday morning the PTA will be holding a meeting in school at 9.10 am to which all parents are invited. Please come along if you can offer help and support to the PTA, or if you'd like to find out what their plans are. The following Tuesday Mr Thomas will be inviting all parents to meet with him at either 9.10 or 6.30 p.m. to discuss the progress made and future plans at Simon Marks.

I wish you a happy weekend,

Debra Crouch (Interim Deputy Headteacher)

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Press release:

Scopus Jewish Educational Trust Joins the Family of United Synagogue Schools

The Scopus Jewish Educational Trust, which acts as the foundation body for Mathilda Marks Kennedy, Simon Marks and Rosh Pinah, is set to become part of the United Synagogue (The US) family.

The intention is to create a stronger connection between the Scopus Schools and The US. This will ensure that the character and ethos of the schools is protected and strengthened.

The trustees of The US have been appointed as trustees of the Scopus Jewish Educational Trust. Peter Ohrenstein, Chairman of the Scopus Jewish Educational Trust, has agreed to stay on as a trustee.

Peter Ohrenstein said: **“The stronger relationship with the United Synagogue will make a very positive contribution to the Scopus schools. The US expertise and resources will ensure the continuity of an excellent Jewish education for future generations of Jewish children.”**

The new arrangement will mean that The US, through Tribe, will be offering its range of educational and support services to the three Scopus schools as it currently does to other US foundation schools. Such support is in addition to US provision to schools that operate under the auspices of The Chief Rabbi but which are not associated with The US foundation body.

US President, Stephen Pack said: **“We are incredibly excited that the Scopus Jewish Educational Trust will be joining The US. Mathilda Marks Kennedy, Simon Marks and Rosh Pinah are valued parts of our community and they will be a fantastic addition to The US Family. Education is a key priority for The US and we look forward to working with the schools and their governors in the future.”**

Howard Pallis, Chair of Governors of Simon Marks said, "After many years under the skilled guiding hand of the Scopus Jewish Educational Trust, we look forward to a similarly healthy relationship with the US: we know the US will cherish the unique character and welcoming ethos that make Simon Marks so special."

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Environmental issues

We are constantly reviewing our policies on how we contribute and deal with waste, and support efforts to be more environmentally friendly setting a positive example to the children.

To this end, we would like to know whether parents need the weekly newsnotes in paper form, or whether they would be happy to receive them via email (newsnotes are also uploaded on to the website). In addition to this we could display a small number of paper copies in the reception area for parents to collect, should they wish to.

Please let Debra Crouch know whether you would like to continue to receive a paper copy each week.

Thought for the Week – Parashat Vayigash

In previous parashat we learned that Jacob had many children; two from his beloved wife Rachel, Joseph and Benjamin. Joseph was his favourite son, and to demonstrate his love for him he made him a coat of many colours, something that his older siblings did not appreciate and therefore they took a dislike to Joseph especially when he came to them with his dreams.

They plotted to get rid of him by selling him to some travellers on their way to Egypt to be their slave. Joseph became famous for his wisdom, so much so that the king bestowed on him the honour of becoming the ruler of land of Egypt. Sometime later there was a famine. Jacob sent his sons (but not Benjamin) to Egypt to buy some food. They came before Joseph the ruler and he immediately recognised them, although the brothers did not recognise him.

Joseph accused them of being spies and they protested, “No we are brothers, in fact we were twelve brothers, one got lost in Egypt

and one remained with our father at home.” He was sad to see that Benjamin was not with them as he missed him a great deal. Joseph thought of an idea of how he could see Benjamin again. “If you want to prove that you are telling the truth one of you will go back to bring your brother”. The brothers were frightened of how their father would react, but Jacob, with heavy heart, sent Benjamin to Egypt.

Joseph was delighted to see his little brother, he invited all of them to a meal and while there Joseph instructed his son to put his silver cup in Benjamin’s sack; later Benjamin was accused of stealing the cup. Joseph was desperate to keep his brother with him, and that was the plan behind the stolen cup. The brothers were horrified; they begged Joseph to let Benjamin go, “Take one of us instead” they pleaded, explaining to him what it would do to their father if Benjamin did not return, “how can we bear to see our father’s grief yet again, he has already lost one child?”

Joseph could not keep the secret any longer. “I know where your lost brother is, he is right here before you: I am Joseph your brother.” The brothers were puzzled and ashamed. “We will be punished and rightly so for the way we behaved.” Joseph reassured his brothers that no harm would come to them and he would not take revenge. He was eager to see his father. “Please tell father that I am alive and well and bring him over to Egypt, I will look after all of you.” One can imagine the excitement when father and son were reunited.

What we learn from this

The art of forgiveness resonates and has more impact than revenge. Blood is thicker than water.

Shabbat Shalom.

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URGENT REMINDER

Please would all parents abide by the school policy and not bring any snacks/food/drink apart from fruit and water onto school premises, including the playground. This is important, not only to ensure that we follow Kosher rules, but it is essential in ensuring the safety of children with severe allergies.

Viking Day

Year 4 were invaded today! After a huge battle, Mr Gilani finally regained control and the class performed Viking Kenning poetry – the videos are amazing!



Don't they look threatening?

Achievements

Once again there has been a very positive start to the term and children and staff have returned full of enthusiasm for learning.

We will resume the celebration of individual achievements next week.

