



Shri Venkateswara(Balaji) Temple of UK

DUDLEY ROAD EAST, TIVIDALE, WEST MIDLANDS, B69 3DU, ENGLAND
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 326712
TEL: 0121 544 2256, FAX 0121 544 2257 temple@venkateswara.org.uk

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are pleased to open the applications for the Balaji Youth Summer Camp 2017 for all children aged 8 and above.

The theme for this year's camp is 'Am I a Hindu?'. As always, the theme is a statement created and embedded into the core of every annual camp. It allows us to focus on certain aspects which Hinduism so richly provides, that can be explored throughout the week and most importantly how these teachings can be applied in modern society.

We aim to bridge the gap between Hindu traditions and modern values. Why do we have rituals? Why do we go to the temple? For some, modernity can be interpreted as embracing the new and rejecting the old. However, core values such as social equality, democracy and feminism which are seen to be 'contemporary' did indeed exist in Ancient India, coexisting alongside Hindu culture and tradition.

From speakers to seva, we hope that this camp will be a rewarding experience for them and will encourage their curiosity to understand and explore more about Hinduism; to incorporate these values into daily life and help build upon their ever-present characters of kindness, altruism and generosity. After all, it is the children whom will pass these virtues onto future generations to come. Above all, this week has always been a highlight for many in their summer holidays and welcomes all new campers with open arms!

As a committee, we wish to give our campers a well-rounded education about the religion of Hinduism and our culture. The week's schedule will entail a variety of supplementary lectures, interactive workshops and debates delivered by inspirational and distinguished speakers from India and across the country. On the last day, it is a tradition for the youth to put on a wonderful cultural programme incorporating what they have learned from the week with their talents into one final showcase that all parents are invited to attend.

The camp will run for 8 days from Wednesday 26th of July to Wednesday 2nd of August for all children aged 12+ and 18+.

Children that are **8-11 years will attend for 4 days and** have been split into **two separate groups** running in **two distinct periods** of camp of which they may attend **one**. This is done to accommodate as many children as possible. The dates of the **two distinct periods** are as follows:

Group 1 - Wednesday 26th of July - Saturday 29th of July;

Group 2 - Sunday 30th of July to Wednesday 2nd of August.

Therefore, on the *8-11 years application form* please specify the **preferred period of attendance**. We are unable to confirm the group your child has been allocated into until applications have closed. This is to ensure an equal number of children are present in both groups. The **price** for camp will be:

- **£150** for the 12+ and 18+ age groups; (8 Days)
- **£100** for the 8-11 age group. (4 days)

Accommodation for boys and girls are in separate dormitories. All food provided is cooked on-site by volunteers and will be vegetarian, including a mixture of English and Indian cuisines. Accommodation and

food costs are fully included in the price of the camp.

As with every year, we will try to accommodate as many children as possible, however, we have been hugely oversubscribed for the past few years and cannot always guarantee a place. Please do not worry if you have never been to the temple before, as the application process will be anonymised and made as fair as possible. We will be accepting applications (attached below) until **Saturday 1st of April** after which no further applications will be accepted.

You can submit your completed forms via email to temple@venkateswara.org.uk, post, or drop it off at the temple office: **Youth Camp 2017, Shri Venkateswara Balaji Temple, 101 Dudley Road East, Oldbury, West, Midlands, B69 3DU.**

We will announce the list of successful applicants by email, on our Facebook group (search: Balaji Youth Group), and on the temple noticeboard in mid-March 2017.

We will then ask for payment on the **1st week of April 2017**. If we have not received payment within one week of the date of notification of a place, it will be re-allocated to the next person on the waiting list. Once the payment has been made, it is non-refundable and non-transferrable – despite cancelling close to the time. If you are unable to attend, please let us know ASAP as we can then offer the place to someone on the waiting list.

Due to new regulations, campers within the 18+ age group now also require a **CRB check**, which the temple will facilitate for you. Further information will be sent out to all whom this concerns by the temple once they have been allocated a place at camp.

In summary, we realise that this new system can be difficult and we ask for your cooperation as we aim to make coming to camp a fair process. If you have any queries about this process, or about anything to do with the camp in general please feel free to get in touch via temple@venkateswara.org.uk or call [0121 544 2256](tel:01215442256).

We look forward to seeing everyone this summer,

Aishwarya Nambiar, Rahul Gonglore, Shivani Chaudhari, Abhijeet Oswal and Purvish Thaker
BYC 2017 Leadership Team