

Dear Parents

The state of the nation's schools is rarely far from the headlines, and the topic is there again this week thanks to Ofsted's Annual Report. It is right that the business of educating children has such a high profile in national debate, and disappointing that the UK on average appears not to be making progress on the international league tables. Even assuming that those tables measure everything that matters, one may wonder whether the UK's position is *despite* 3 decades of relentless change, or *because* of it, but certainly there is no shortage of views on what more changes are needed.

Sir Michael Wilshaw's own report suggests that National Curriculum tests should be reintroduced at age 7 and 14, but also says that schools can be distracted by such tests and fail promote a love of reading and creativity. Meanwhile, since the clear impetus is for schools to become Academies, which do not have to follow the National Curriculum, it is not easy to see what the way forward is meant to be. Sir Michael speaks of a "two-nation education system" – one for the 'lucky and one for the 'unlucky': if there are Headteachers out there who are not deeply committed to the success of their students I have yet to meet them, but it is hard to argue with the statistics.

If there is a divide between the lucky and the unlucky, JCoSS students must surely count among the lucky. They themselves, together with you their parents, make a community that is high in aspiration, rich in talent and generous in spirit. We are all hugely in the debt of the teachers and support staff at JCoSS who turn all of that potential into a reality week in week out. At the end of a term of high energy and achievement, a few highlights spring to mind. We have had another good Chanukah: the annual Concert was a wonderful array of individual and group talent. This year, in addition, we gathered the entire School community together at the end of each day for candle lighting and for a brief address from a member of staff or a visitor to the school. We "grew in holiness" during the 8 days, the practicalities and the ruach (spirit) of the occasion improving each day. For as long as space permits, I hope we will continue to use our "Heart Space" for this kind of gathering which embodies our ethos so powerfully.

This week I had the privilege (and agony) of selecting a JCoSS winner for the Jack Petchey "Speak Out" competition. Our Year 10 finalists faced the ultimate challenge of addressing their peers, plus the entire 6th form. The winner – Jamy Bristol James, who spoke in front of the great and the good at our formal Opening Ceremony in 2010, and has addressed massed crowds at Trafalgar Square last Chanukah – confessed that this week's gig was far harder than either of those! All three finalists were hugely impressive, speaking from the heart and with great poise and conviction, giving an insight not only into their personal passions but into the concerns of their generation.

Meanwhile the learning of students remains at the centre of our concern. Three year groups now have public exams firmly in their sights, with all that that entails in terms of managing stress, workload and expectations, and remembering to keep a sense of proportion and wellbeing alive too. It is a very difficult balancing act for the students, as it is for parents and for the school, and we must all stay on the same side – the side of our students. Of course we want them to do well, but I for one am unconvinced that 3 decades of change have brought us wisdom on this issue in particular. We need to balance measurable attainment with a wide vision of what a full human being should be. Above all we will need to keep a sense of humour and perspective.

May I wish you all a restful break, time for re-creation, and a very happy 2014.

Patrick Moriarty
Headteacher



Design Venture Competition

This term, the 'Able and Ambitious' students from the ADT Faculty took part in the Design Ventura competition run by the Design Museum. The students were given the theme 'Handy' and their brief was to create a prototype for a product that could be sold in the Design Museum gift-shop. They worked in teams to design, plan and make their ideas and pitched them to a team of in-house judges.

Mr de- Jong, Miss Nield, Miss Goldstien-Opasiak and Mr Moriarty were really impressed with both the quality and originality of the final ideas, which included the '**Cremzi Pen**' (an all in one pencil case in your hand) and the '**Simple Scoop**' (a heated ice cream scoop).



It was a really tough decision but the judges decided on a deserved JCoSS winner; '**Tatch**' – an eco-friendly multi-purpose strap that you can attach to any bag or use alone to transport your goods. Made from recycled plastic bags using the Polyfusion technique, it was a unanimous decision that this was a creative and ethical solution to the brief. **Congratulations to Gil Sherman, Charlotte Prevezer, Orli Vogt-Vincent and Jade Smith.**

Unfortunately, our team didn't win the national competition but the Design Museum judges commented on how impressed they were with the sustainability of the final solution. Watch this space next year!

Miss Druckes and Miss McCarthy, ADT.



JPA NEWS

A big thanks to all who helped at the Year 7 disco.

Lots of fun was had by all and the evening raised £800 towards playground equipment.

Save the date – Sunday 9th March for the annual Supper Quiz.

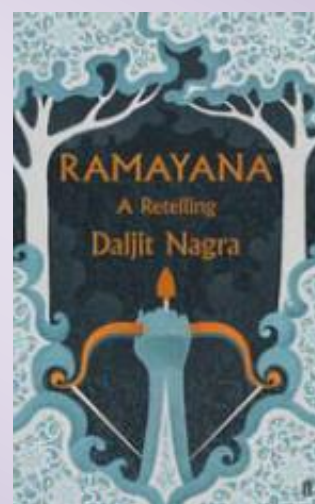


Shadowing the T.S. Eliot Prize for Poetry 2013



T.S Eliot Prize for Poetry 2013

English A Level students have been participating in the TS Eliot Prize Shadowing Scheme. They have been reading shortlisted poets and discussing them in class. We were lucky enough to have a visit from one of the shortlisted poets, Daljit Nagra, who read some of his work from his new book, *Ramayana*, and talked about the experience of writing poetry. We then voted in an online poll for our favourite poet and students were encouraged to enter a competition giving their rationale for who should win the prize. The winner will be announced in January at an awards ceremony at the Festival Hall.



Chanukah at JCoSS

Chanukah was celebrated in style at JCoSS this year with daily candle lighting in the Heart Space for the whole school. Each day we were inspired by a different speaker before being led in the Chanukah blessings by a member of the school community. Many thanks to Laura Marks from Mitzvah Day, Jude Williams from Tzedek, Melanie Klass from Jewish Childs Day, Ivor Goldberg from Shir and our own Ms Robinson and Mr Moriarty for their inspiring words. In addition students were invited to exercise their creativity at lunchtime, and made wonderful chanukiyot and candles as well as playing dreidel. Members of the school community also dressed up for Chanukah, raising funds for our chosen school charities and remembering those in need at the time of our celebrations. We were also thrilled to welcome Norwood to the school in order to celebrate their annual Chanukah party. Many thanks to the Year 7 and 8 students who volunteered to help out with the party – without you it couldn't happen.



Parents needed for 5 or 10 minutes for Telephone Research

We would like to carry out market research with parents regarding the JCoSS website and how they currently use it. Your input will be invaluable when developing the new site.

Please contact Jenny Cohen, jcohen@jcoess.barnet.sch.uk JCoSS marketing manager if you could spare 5 or 10 minutes to have a telephone conversation.

Many thanks

Informal Jewish Education at JCoSS

Fables and Dreidels

Our parents, siblings and grandparents celebrated Chanukah this month with a wonderful Fables and Dreidels evening, the latest instalment of the Fables and Bagels programme. The evening featured live music and dancing by Shir, a pinhole camera workshop, a study session led by Mr Moriarty and of course plenty of food and drink! Masterminded by our own Mr Rosenberg, Fables and Bagels is JCoSS's flagship family education programme which aims to bring our learning and celebrations to our nearest and dearest. Look out for the Pesach event on April 7th.



Alan Senitt Community Leadership Programme

We are delighted that JCoSS has now become a part of The Alan Senitt community leadership programme. This amazing programme brings together Year 10 pupils from 6 different schools to gain skills to enable them to make a difference within their local community. The course which is run in conjunction with Maccabi Streetwise and The Three Faiths Forum, brings the pupils together for seminars once a month where they take part in sessions about leadership skills and inclusivity. The course brings all the skills together that they learn in seminars to enable them to run a project to enhance their local community. JCoSS students hosted the first of these seminars for this year's groups which includes students from JCoSS, Immanuel College, Yavneh College, Watford Grammar Boys School and Guru Nanak School.

Rosh Chodesh

We celebrated Rosh Chodesh Tevet in school through a wide range of prayer services and welcomed leaders, Chazanim and Rabbis from all the major Jewish streams. Rosh Chodesh gives our students the opportunity to experience prayer in a truly pluralist environment – and to either choose to attend services which are comfortable and familiar or to challenge themselves with something new!

Fundraising

We are pleased to report that through various fundraising efforts the school community raised over £1,000 for Typhoon Haiyan Relief, which will be sent via one of our school charities for this year - Save the Children.

JCoSS Sport

JCoSS Year 7 Netball vs East Barnet WON 13-6

The Year 7 girls Netball team demolished East Barnet with a 13-6 thrashing. Emily Cohen scored a double hat trick. Not to be out done, Zoe Harris notched up 7 in this goal fest to sit JCoSS loftily at the top of the league.



BASKETBALL

JCoSS Year 8 vs East Barnet 02.12.13

JCoSS lost by the narrowest of margins in this first league encounter. After the first two quarters the scoring was nip and tuck; 12-10 to the bad after 20 minutes. After missing 8 consecutive shots in the third quarter JCoSS were left to rue their chances as EB finished strongly to take the game 18-12. However, the lads must take positives from the game as they played moved the ball about well and dictated the game for long periods.

Well done to the following students: Or Rapaport, Jonathan Jennycloss, Ethan Earle, Saul Shimoni, Luka Janjic, Ben Felt, Tom Hyde, Jonny Brown, Itay Yaniv



For the other Sports news and all the latest news, go to our JCoSS Sport Facebook page



Year 10 Globe Theatre Trip

On a grey, rainy Monday, a group of Year 10 Shakespeare enthusiasts made the journey south of the river to Shakespeare's Globe where they were treated to a stage sword fighting demonstration, a tour of the theatre and a performance based workshop on our controlled assessment text, 'Romeo and Juliet'.

The sword fighting demonstration was spectacular! Two highly trained actors performed fight scenes from various plays (all of which ended in staged death) using a variety of weapons on which the commenting fight choreographer had an astounding wealth of knowledge. He was able to shed light on the kinds of swords Mercutio and Tybalt would have been fighting with, thus illuminating parts of the dialogue in 'Romeo and Juliet'. Group favourite - the massive sticks from a fight scene in Henry IV, and the rather gruesome death portrayed at the end of it. Gripping stuff.

After the excitement of Renaissance duelling, we were taken on a tour of the theatre. Our guides explained some of the history of the Globe; we were taken back stage and had the opportunity to walk out onto the stage as many a great actor before us has. What was striking from the stage was the intimacy of the theatre - there is very little distance between the performers and the audience - which is part of what makes the Globe such a unique performance space.

In the afternoon, we had our 'Romeo and Juliet' workshops where our year 10 students made us very proud with their eager participation. It was so valuable to lift the words from the page and explore them through performance, as they were meant for. Every student was involved, using Shakespeare's language and exploring the conflict of the drama.

Our hosts at The Globe were extremely complimentary about our students who did a fantastic job representing the school. And so a grey, rainy Monday ended up being a fabulous day for a group of Year 10 Shakespeare fans!

Miss Cipriano
2nd in English

OLD INSTRUMENTS WANTED

If anyone has unwanted musical instruments they wish to donate to the school, we would be very grateful. We are looking for instruments such as guitars, clarinets, saxophones or flute.

Please contact Mrs Goddard for more information: Kgoddard@jcross.barnet.sch.uk

Many thanks in advance

SCHOOL STARTS AT 9.30AM ON MONDAY 6TH JANUARY

Please be reminded that school starts with lesson two (9.30am) on Monday 6th January.

Many thanks

Krav Maga is here

every Friday lunchtime at JCoSS

Would you like to improve your confidence,
self-esteem and general fitness?

Join our **STREETWISE SELF-DEFENCE** sessions

- Krav Maga sessions
are **FREE OF CHARGE**
- **EVERYONE IS
WELCOME**
- Dress code: trainers,
t-shirt and tracksuit
bottoms
- Please contact
Mrs Miller to register



Maccabi GB registered charity number 1088200
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