

Dear Parents

Poland threads its way through this edition of the newsletter. As you will read, our Year 12 students who visited earlier this year spoke movingly at our Yom Hashoah commemorations – a powerful occasion which is still being talked about; Mr Rosenberg reports on a parents' visit that he led, and which was his own first visit; I too visited earlier this month as part of the first interfaith group to take part in March of the Living.

The sites of the Nazi Holocaust, and the scale of the horror they represent, confound one to silence. But the experience of visiting compels one to talk: the camps are unforgettable in their chilling bleakness: the vast expanses of Birkenau (where no grass grew, a 90-year old survivor told us, because any blade would have been eaten, so desperate was the hunger); the concentrated horror of Belzecs where the killing machine was so efficient that there was no need for bunkhouses because Jews were herded straight from the trains into the gas chambers; the lush forests of Zbylitowska Gora which belie the mass graves of 900 children.

Any visit to these sights is full of complexity and leaves one with as many questions as answers. To do it in a company including Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus as well as Jews and Christians added even more to the depth of the experience. The discussions we were able to have about victimhood and responsibility, forgiveness and redemption, the nature of heroism and the splintering of the soul were simply extraordinary. This was not the kind of interfaith dialogue that involves polite interest and shallow agreement over tea and cake. Our diversity forced us constantly to entertain multiple narratives, while the sites we saw tugged us relentlessly back to the raw brute facts.

In a trip packed with intense discovery, the last day (Yom HaShoah itself) held some of the greatest poignancy and perplexity. In the company of 10,000 people, we walked from Auschwitz to Birkenau, symbolically reclaiming that path of darkness, hatred and death for the forces of light, hope and life. Marchers gathered between the chilling brick barrack buildings of Auschwitz, just along from where the use of Zyklon B gas was tested and perfected, and our group walked arm in arm under the famous iron gate of Auschwitz that bears the words 'Arbeit macht frei'. The march ends following the railway line, through the hideously iconic archway that alone was the gateway to death for 1.1m Jewish men, women and children.

One of the group had learned only the previous day, while touring the camp, that several members of her family had perished there. So in our hands we carried plaques with their names written on them, to leave between the railway tracks at Birkenau; on our lips and in our ears was the Jewish song Barcheinu Avinu ('Bless us, our Father, all of us together, with the light of your countenance'. And in our hearts burned what those words express, a yearning for unity, for courage, for the light of God's blessing, and for hope. On my return I learned that the particular name I had written on my plaque was the great, great aunt of two students at JCoSS.

Just before sitting down to write this, I went out to cast my vote in the European elections, which seems a fitting moment to record my overriding impression from the trip, namely that the intolerance which, if unchecked, leads to killing and depravity lurks in every human heart. It festers in every society and in every generation, and it takes its chance wherever good people remain silent, where the strong are allowed to oppress the weak, and where a single dominant narrative shouts down the gentle, complex and diverse voices of the human soul.

Patrick Moriarty
Headteacher

IJE this term

It has been a short but extremely busy half term in IJE, with the season of Yom Ha Shoah, Yom ha Zikaron and Yom Ha Atzmaut upon us. Yom Ha Shoah was marked in school by a ceremony led by students who have just returned from the Poland Trip, and who brought their own personal reflections from their experiences of the camps and the museums to the assembly. While we are often proud of our students, the depth of their reflection and beautiful words they composed made for a truly meaningful commemoration that surpassed even our own high expectations.

Yom Ha Zikaron was marked by another beautiful ceremony in school which was planned and led by the Israeli Scouts who volunteer at JCoSS. Here for the year, they will be returning to Israel to begin their own Army service in the summer.

Yom Ha Atzmaut was, as always, an exuberant day of learning and celebration in school. Students took part in up to 8 workshops through the day, as well as celebrating Israel through music, song and dance. Year 8 completed a stunning mural which is currently on display in the Heartspace and, in a JCoSS first, the whole school came together to rehearse and sing a Hebrew song in honour of the day. Anyone familiar with the large group performances of Al Kol Eleh will know the sort of thing.



Congratulations to our Year 9 team who represented JCoSS for the first time in the Etgar Israel inter-school quiz. They worked very hard and distinguished themselves well in a hard fought competition, coming 4th. They also received second place for their Israel-Themed 'mocktail', proving that our students have multiple skills in all kinds of areas and making them the highest placed school overall.



As if all of this was not enough, another JCoSS first took place over Lag b'Omer. 65 Year 10 students made their way to the wilds of Surrey to mark the festival with an overnight camp, taking part in the traditional activities of bonfire making and archery. Traditionally a break in the mourning period which defines the Omer, Year 10 certainly made sure that the celebrations were both meaningful and suitably raucous!

Up for Debate – Regional Champions!

Last term we were given the fantastic opportunity of taking part in the PiXL Up for Debate debating competition. We made our way to Ibstock School, along with 34 other schools, who had gone through the same continuous training as we had in the months before.

We had been told in advance that our first debate would be on the broadcast of criminal trials, but we had not been briefed on our second impromptu debate, or whether we would be proposing or opposing. When we arrived, we were gathered into the main hall, where the final would later take place, and told our rooms, stances for the first debate, and how the rest of the day would be planned out. We were lucky enough to not be the first debate in our specific room, allowing us to see how it would actually take place, with an actual team who had prepared as much as we had in opposition.

As the day went by, we grew increasingly more confident with our debating skills, winning both our first planned debate, and our second impromptu (on the topic of “This house would make modern foreign languages mandatory up to the age of 16”) and feeling rather positive about our chance of being in the final. We were given feedback after all our debates, able to see the other competitors’ techniques, as well as improving our own. Not only did we increase our already evident love for debating, but we also continued to learn and develop our skills for later in our school or adult life.

When we were all gathered into the main hall for the final announcements of the top 5 schools, the top 2 going head-to-head, tension rose within the space. At last, they announced the top 2 schools, which to our surprise (maybe not a big one) included us! The first, second and summary speaker were sent into a separate room, while Ms Armon, Ms Politzer and the supporters waited in the hall. We had 15 minutes to prepare, but as the tension increased, so did our confidence. Finally, we walked on stage and debated against the opposition. After the judges left to go over the scores, they returned with a unanimous decision that our team was victorious! We were given our trophy, and then told we would go onto nationals, and even have master masterclasses in debating.

Overall, the experience was incredible. We developed our skills, techniques and even sportsmanship. It was an incredible event that we're incredibly grateful for, and if you have an opportunity to take part in it, we highly recommend it!

Written by Scarlett Sherman, Alex Bentwood and Adam Jacobs (Yr 9)



JCoSS Staff participate in Tough Mudder!

Earlier this month members of JCoSS staff participated in the London West 5K Tough Mudder. I think most of the team would agree that they don't call it 'Tough Mudder' for nothing! Despite the FREEZING weather and being SOAKED through with muddy water, we managed to pull together as a team and cross the finish line. The Team work and camaraderie were essential and without it we would not have been able to complete the obstacles and raise over £1000 for charity! Boundaries were definitely crossed and I can safely say I know certain colleagues a lot better than I did before! Massive well done to everyone who took part and faced their fears. As they say, "you can get by with a little help from your friends"!
by Miss Sumner



Spanish Trip

Our trip to Spain was spectacular! We travelled the whole of the south of Spain, including Malaga, Cordoba, Granada and Sevilla. Our trip started with a 3-hour flight from Luton to Malaga and from there we travelled to our lovely hotel for the trip, where we were looked after and given some AMAZING food for breakfast lunch and dinner. Our days started at breakfast, where we were briefed on what we were going to be doing that day, then we were given our packed lunches and we then hopped on the coach. Because we were staying near Malaga our coach journeys were long (about 2 hours!) but they were filled with a lot of sleeping, music and singing, until we eventually arrived at our destination for that day. My personal highlight of the trip was our day in Sevilla, where we saw incredible architecture, and one of the most beautiful churches. During free time we did some shopping and we saw fresh oranges being shaken off the trees. Overall my time in Spain was great, I felt safe (especially with Mr Marco head counting all the time!) and happy and I know I am talking for all of my peers when I say that it was an amazing trip.

By Zac Taylor



Ex- JCoSS Student receives a top honour in the IDF

We are delighted to learn that Yoni Coriat who left JCoSS two years ago to serve in the IDF was awarded a presidential citation on Yom Ha'atzmut for distinguished service to the IDF.

The annual award is given to the top 120 soldiers serving in the IDF and presented by Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Rivlin.

We are very proud of Yoni, whose career now opens out before him.



Krakow and Aushwitz-Birkenau

Over the weekend of 5th May, my wife and I were privileged to join a group of parents on a very special journey - a journey that enabled us to travel back in time to witness Jewish life in Krakow as it was, and the indescribable hideousness of the Nazi oppression in Aushwitz-Birkenau – but also the renaissance of Jewish life too in the Krakow JCC.

For us it was our first time and we were in some trepidation as to how our emotions would hold up: we were certain that over the next few days and those following, there were other feelings that would emerge. But as parents (and as grandparents) there is an absolute necessity to ensure that we continue to tell the story, to warn of the dangers of baseless hatred, and to ensure that the next generation never have to suffer as those who went before.

I'd also like to thank Marcel Manson from West End Travel for sharing his stories and organising the various and complex elements of the trip.

As teachers we carry some of this responsibility for the next generation, but it works so much better if we can work together and that's why these parental trips are so vital; it also spurs me on to continue my passion for family and community learning and education and I shall be seeking opportunities to find ways to work together across generations to continue to tell our stories, creating memories for the next generations.

I am so proud and pleased to be working at JCoSS; it's more than a school. It is itself a place where memories are formed and where we prepare our students for an ever changing and increasingly fractious world, but predicated on the principles of menschlichkeit and inclusivity.

By Mr Laurie Rosenberg



Congratulations

Congratulations to Hannah Bentwood Y12 for reaching the Grand Final in the prestigious 'Making Links Schools Challenge' from a field of 440 entrants. The competition, organised by Linklaters, was designed to give UK state-school 6th Form students the opportunity to develop the skills needed to become the commercial lawyers of the future, whilst also winning prizes for their school and themselves.

As part of the Grand Final students had tours of the office, and networking sessions with lawyers and other professionals at the firm. In addition, they took part in workshops focused on innovation, personal brand development and application, and interview technique from experts at the firm.

Hannah received a personal prize and was also awarded a £2,000 for our school. The theme of the competition was 'Innovation' and Hannah's essay explored the #metoocampaign.

This is an incredible achievement and it is thoroughly deserved.

Barnet School's Lit Quiz

On Wednesday 1st May our school competed in the Lit Quiz. The Lit Quiz is a competition where teams of students from schools in the Borough of Barnet put their book knowledge to the test. There were seven rounds, each one based on books (obviously!). In order to create the team, every Year 7 student participated in a minor quiz and as a result five students were chosen: Madison Grant–Gold 7B, Oliver Juggler 7B, Matilda Kester 7F, Zed Gordon 7R and Dylan Elman 7R.

The event took place at Chipping Barnet Library where the team competed against five other teams: East Barnet, The Archer Academy, QE Girls, TTA, St James and JCoSS. In each of the seven rounds there was a subject based on books for example: Character and Author names, Book titles and any film adapted books. Overall our school came 2nd with 61 points, only just being beaten by Archer. We enjoyed the experience and were proud to compete.



By Madison Grant-Gold and Oliver Juggler

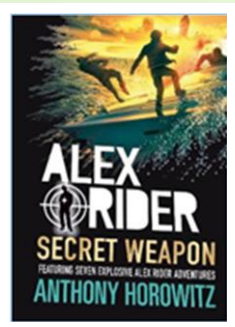
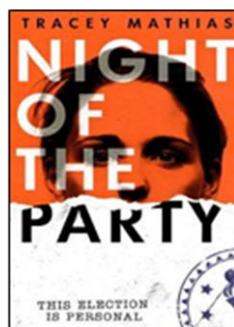
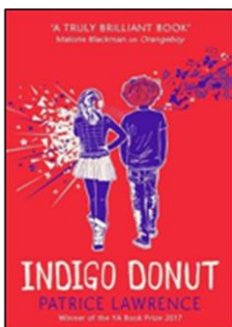
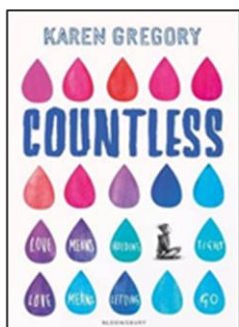
Read4Barnet2019

17 Year 7 JCoSS students are participating in the Read4Barnet reading project, in what is now becoming an annual event. The aim is to encourage students from schools across Barnet to read and review 6 books which have been chosen by librarians from the participating schools. The students' reviews will be posted on a Read4Barnet website: <https://read4barnetwebsite.wordpress.com/>

On 27 June students taking part from the 8 participating schools will meet at Wren Academy in North Finchley for a day of author talks and activities. Students will meet 4 of the shortlisted authors, attend presentations and get copies of their books signed. In previous years students have voted for their favourite book and prizes have been awarded for the best reviews. JCoSS students have featured highly in these awards in the past so we hope our current year 7 students can continue this exemplary tradition!

By Mrs Rice and Ms Levontine, LRC Staff

The 6 novels selected for Read4Barnet this year are:



JCoSS Key Dates – Second Half of Summer Term 2019

Date	Time	Description
Mon 3 rd June	8.30am	Return to school after half term break.
Tues 4 th June	All day	Rosh Chodesh – school timetable as normal.
Sun 9 th – Mon 10 th June	All day	Shavuot. School closed on Mon 10 th June.
Tues 11 th – Fri 28 th June	As per exam timetable	Year 10 exams. School timings as normal.
Thurs 13 th June	Day & Evening	Y12 Higher Education Day. Meeting for parents in the evening.
Mon 17 th June – Fri 28 th June	All day	Year 9 Programme/Israel Journey. Israel Journey leaves on Sun 16 th and returns on Sun 30 th June.
Mon 17 th June – Fri 28 th June	As per exam timetable	Year 12 exams
Wed 3 rd July	All day	Rosh Chodesh – school timetable as normal.
Mon 8 th July	1.45pm	Early closing for staff training.
Wed 10 th July	Evening	Celebration Evening
Tue 16 th – Thurs 18 th July	Evening	School production – Bussy Malone.
Wed 17 th July	Sports Day	For students in Years 7 – 10. Further details to be e-mailed through SchoolPost.
Sun 21 st July	All day	Fast of Tammuz
Tues 23 rd July	1.05pm	Early closing for last day of summer term.

- Timings follow a normal school day unless otherwise stated
- School closes at 2.15pm on all Fridays until the end of the school year (unless otherwise stated)
- Incoming Year 7s and Year 12s (current Year 11) return to school on **Wednesday 4th September** and Year 8s to Year 11s (current Year 7 to 10s) and Year 13s (current Year 12s) return to school on **Thursday 5th September**.