

# newsletter

טבת Tevet 5781 December 2020

Dear Parents

“20/20 vision” is one of the best ironies of this hideous year. A phrase meaning ‘perfect eyesight’ stood ready to be used in so many hopeful and aspirational ways in the year that bears its name. What initiatives, plans and bold endeavours could we start, and enhance by calling them our 2020 vision? It was a gift that promised to keep giving for 12 months.

But what a 12 months that has turned out to be. Far from any ideas of a clear-sighted ability to see things far off with precision, the year has often felt more like groping in the dark, lurching from one unpredictable change to the next, grappling with a virus that we didn’t understand, and with illness of body, mind and spirit twisting our lives out of true.

Not so much a vision as a waking nightmare, the only thing of 2020 I want to see clearly is its passing into history. Those glimpses we had in April of new possibilities for a calmer, greener life, reconnected to nature and to our localities, spending time and money more sustainably with fewer people and less acquisitiveness...even they seem to have become blurred as the weeks and months have ground on. It’s time to find my reading glasses and reach for some poetry.

Gerald Manley Hopkins, having described in his poem *God’s Grandeur* all the ways that the created world has been ‘seared, bleared and smeared’ over time, writes: “And yet for all this, nature is never spent; there lives the dearest freshness deep down things”. It’s a line I treasure not just in order to pep myself up but because I constantly find it to be true.

I find that ‘dearest freshness deep down things’ not just in nature but in the human spirit and especially in the spirit of young people. Despite all they have endured this year – school closure, months of isolation, week upon week of miserable news and miserable adults being miserably stressed, mounting uncertainties over their exams and their future livelihoods...the students of JCoSS (at least) have been a true tonic.

We’ve made them sit on floors between lesson changes, we’ve messed up their timetable, we’ve stuck their teachers at the front of the room, we’ve put them in masks, we’ve taken away most of their freedom and fun (even more than we do usually...) – yet for all this, they rebound.

They do so at different rates, and with different legacies of course: that’s something we are watching carefully, especially for the year groups that missed the most school over the summer. But as a community they have been as inspiring and impressive to me as their teachers who have achieved unbelievable and miraculous feats of endurance, flexibility, innovation, anxiety containment and creativity in truly exceptional times.

As always, the pages that follow give you a glorious taste of that inspiration. 3 of the 9 pages have been produced by a newly established extra-curricular newsletter team (don’t blame them for the poor material they had to work with in their interview) who have done a wonderful job in bringing our 10th anniversary to life. And I commend to you the pictures of Year 7 in the LRC – showing you that the next 10 years start full of promise. They may also reassure you that for all the abnormalities we continue to endure in many, many ways, life in school has continued as normal.

As we end 2020, the year that made any kind of vision hard to sustain and put so many dreams on hold, I thank the whole JCoSS community for sticking together so well. I look forward during 2021 to shuffling off the constraints, embracing that dearest freshness deep down things, rebooting the bold initiative which has brought us to our 10th anniversary, and kicking off the next decade.

Patrick Moriarty  
Headteacher

# Head Student Team

Following a significant recruitment process, we are pleased to announce the following appointments to the Head Student Team from Year 12.

- Hannah Smith and Adam Tyler – Head Students
- Tallulah Miel and Ruben Persey – Deputy Head Students: Event Directors
- Sam Redland and Leah Sholem – Deputy Head Students: Student Directors
- Andrew Ellul – Head Student PSRP (photo to follow next edition)

The field was wide and impressive and as always we could have appointed two or three high-quality teams from those who applied, but the chosen team has strength and depth, includes vocational and academic pathway students and we are looking forward to them taking on the roles from January.

Thanks to the outgoing team who have been wonderfully proactive and great role models in a challenging year.



## IJE at JCoSS

It's been a busy half-term for IJE. We have been adapting many of our usual activities to conform to current guidelines. Year 7s have begun their Yoni Jesner award volunteering. We also celebrated those students in Year 8 who completed their award hours before and during lockdown. Even though there was not a more formal awards ceremony this year, we wanted to recognise the accomplishments of our students and their efforts to help others. Year 8s have been engaging in the new format of our Year 8 volunteering programme. Yom Rabin was marked in school with a series of events and our JCoSS Rosh Chodesh programmes have continued in an adapted fashion. Now at the end of term, we are marking Chanukah in these times, with students being given doughnuts and Year 7 receiving a special Chanukah gift from us at the start of the festival. We look forward to many plans for next term going ahead in IJE and the Jewish life of the school.

## Maths Department

Our focus this term was on Students' long term retention of Mathematical Techniques and skills. A consistent approach to tackling any gaps in students' knowledge and getting them to practice a variety of problems, at the start of every Maths lesson, was the key effort made by our Maths teachers this term. We have also created a UKMT Junior Maths club on teams and Instagram, where students from year 7 attempt a weekly quiz. This is being run by our sixth form student ambassador. As a result, students have been rewarded with R5s for correctly completing the puzzles each week.

We have also run the Senior UKMT Maths challenge where our AS and A Level Maths students have participated. They received Bronze, Silver and Gold medals, with one of our student being selected to participate in the British Maths Olympiad. Our Year 12 students attended the Maths in Action Webinar this term, where they had the opportunity to meet a team of mathematicians, engineers, statisticians, architects, code-breakers and data scientists for an ultimate educational experience.

Our Maths team knows that being able to solve problems flexibly is a key ingredient of what it means to be a good mathematician and students are always provided with endless opportunities every term to showcase their talents.

## Art News

Year 9 art students were delighted to welcome Jo Gilbert into the classroom via zoom to listen to a presentation and learn about how to become an artist and what inspires her. Jo presented a PowerPoint describing her work and personal influences followed by a video of her working in her studio. Jo showed students her current work and described how she uses paint and colour and we were able to see some previous work exploring architectural shapes as well as her installations. It was great seeing a glimpse of her sketch books too. Scarlett Becker then chaired a Q&A session and students were invited to ask questions. These included 'can artists use black paint in their work?' 'what digital media do you draw with?' and 'do you manipulate your photographs before you use them?'. This presentation gave students a real insight into the mind of a practising artist and an opportunity to learn beyond the classroom. Please do look at Jo's website (<https://joannagilbert.com/>)



## Autumn Term in the Science Faculty

Like so many things this year, Science club has had to adapt and change to enable it to run in a Covid secure way. No longer can young science enthusiasts meet at lunchtime to do some fun practicals, but instead our new Technician Wesleigh Dawsmith is working on a virtual science club.

Initially this is being directed at sixth form students and Wesleigh will be making videos to upload, but this will hopefully develop into devising some science practicals that younger students can do at home. Students will need to join a team to take part and anyone interested can speak to Miss Meisel.

We also would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Wesleigh who, since joining us in September, has passed his PhD. Well done Wes!

### A Level Biology Fieldtrip 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020

Despite this year not being normal in so many ways we were still able to take 14 of our Y13 'A' level Biology students on their 2 day field work study at High Beach, Epping Forest. Epping Field Studies Centre (FSC) was operating as a Covid secure educational establishment with strict regulations in place. That said the majority of the course was spent outside collecting data, with a return to the classroom only for lunch, and to complete the statistical analysis of the data.

The 2 days took place in the last week before the autumn half term. It was hoped that we would have the perfect weather for appreciating the beauty and warmth of the autumnal colours. Instead the first day it poured with rain continually. This proved a little challenging for the students trying to record and keep their data dry, writing on a clip board inside a plastic bag. At lunch they tried to dry off their outer wear on radiators in the classroom, but the rain had seeped through to all layers of clothing and after lunch they had to replace their cold, damp coats which had hardly dried out at all.

Strangely the offer in the morning for the loan of a very fetching white plastic poncho had only seen one student take this up. In the afternoon practically all students were donning these less than fashionable garments. It is amazing how time outdoors spent in inclement weather can change your views on what it is acceptable to be seen in!

Fortunately the second day was dry, and a little sunny and altogether much more pleasant. The FSC tutor gave a 'tour' of some of the forest and imparted some of her wide knowledge about the trees. In the forest there are ancient trees (very old), veteran trees (those that are old and have survived some type of catastrophic damage such as a lightning strike) and phoenix trees (those trees that should really be dead having fallen over or snapped off near to the ground but have survived due to a small amount of living root). It is the best time of year for fungi and amongst many observed was the distinctive red and white toadstool Fly agaric. Spotting that one had obvious tooth marks, was followed by a little discussion on whether various fauna like to have a little nibble or 'fix' for their hallucinogenic properties.

Over the 2 days the students did various types of quadrat sampling, comparing light and dark areas. A 10m transect investigating the effect of trampling on the growth of sorrel, and a 30m transect investigating succession. This work and the subsequent statistical analysis (T-Test, Spearman's Rank) forms one of their required practical's at 'A' level.

Despite the weather on the first day the students remained motivated and good humoured throughout. On the second day they were 'rewarded' by visiting the FSC very captivating resident albino axolotl (critically endangered amphibian) and seeing him being fed.

Thanks goes to Tracy Wise for driving the minibus on the second day – dropping us off and returning later to pick us up.

Karen Hancock. Senior science technician.

And finally...

Science again maintains some normality by continuing with its nominations for student of the month across the year groups. Our congratulations goes to the following 4 students who have each had 2 nominations since September. Well done and keep up the good work – Gabriella Stern Y10, Isaac Reuben & Jake Grayson Y11 and Aran Haber Y13.



*As part of the newly formed extra-curricular newsletter team, a group of students have come together to write the articles on the following 3 pages. Congratulations to the team: Amelie Pittack- editor; Simon Postyn - illustrator; Milly Bryk, Ofira Brunert, Dana Thomas - Interview with Mr Moriarty and interview with year 9 students; Emily Litvack: Team leader and Researched recipe from Ms Toff; What students like article - Eva Yacobi, Milly Bryk, Ofira Brunert, Dana Thomas; Tom Ehrenstein – Ten Favourite things article*

## Ten Favourite JCoSS Things



You would think that with all the subject knowledge floating around teachers' heads there would not be room for anything else. But when I asked them for the ten things they liked most about JCoSS, to celebrate the school's ten-year anniversary, some of the results were expected while others not so much. For example, Purim came up frequently, which makes sense. Once you are over the stress of running round various charity shops in order to find anything vaguely like the character you are trying to create. You are then free to inhabit that persona. To be that character for the day. A period of wild food, ridiculous activities and a video in which staff are seemingly in a competition with each other to see who can embarrass themselves the most. A time of escapism, and in a year where we have been stuck indoors, relying on a computer screen for any form of human contact, we need that now more than ever. Another favourite thing I was not surprised to hear was the Sixth form and staff Café. Having started longingly at the café a lot myself, I can understand why teachers like it so much. Who would say no to a slice of pizza? Or any of the other delicious things that I wish they served at the canteen. It is not just the cuisine I am jealous of; the seats are also far more luxurious. Comfy sofas in place of the cold stools. No wonder JCoSS achieves such high GCSE grades in order to get into the Sixth Form. That café is a powerful motivator.

As much as I expected many of the responses, a few caught me off guard, sticking out like a sore thumb. This was ironic, considering this favourite thing is how the school building looks like a hand, with the heart space being the palm. A place for all the students to come together. Where they can be passionate and creative about the things that interest them the most. Like the music at the end of term assemblies, another favourite thing. Whether it is the performance of a new piece from the theatre or One Day for the fifty millionth time. Yet no matter how many times I hear that song, I always find myself swaying along with the crowd, singing along with them. Swept up in the powerful sense of community.

That sense of community feeling is a teacher's favourite thing. Alongside the JCoSS mantra, students saying "thank you" at the end of every class and asking teachers how they are doing. These unexpected favourites may sound like marketing talk at an open evening. And yet. Those things are not just empty promises, but true.

## What the students like about the school and some memories

To celebrate JCoSS's 10th anniversary we also asked some year 8 students to discuss some of their favourite memories or parts of the school for the newspaper. Purim was enjoyed by a lot of students including many other holidays. Students seemed to enjoy all the fun, food, songs and photo booth. The food places and the talent show were enjoyed by a lot of students as well as the video the teachers made and the circus workshop. The year 7 shabbaton was a hit, shortly followed by enrichment day. A lot of students mentioned the shinshinim and some students have said "the ShinShinim are so sweet they make every Hebrew lesson feel fun, and they make lots of fun games for us to play." other students I interviewed said enrichment day was great they loved the arts and crafts activities and the fake news clubs especially. "the school has great teachers." Marissa says "shoutout to Mr Tilley for being a great maths teacher." And someone else said "love that some of the teachers give us great lessons that can be fun yet educational," "I like the festivals because of the sense of the community, what I love about the school is the inclusion and how they won't tolerate negative behaviour which has made it feel like a second home, I like all my friends and all of the friendships are amazing, I like that the students and the teachers get along very well. The LSAs are all so nice, helpful and friendly" and "thank you JCoSS for making me believe that I can do anything".



## **Mr Moriarty's Interview - Moriarty's Perfect 10.**

With keeping a school running through a pandemic, educating over 1300 students, managing staff and undertaking his role as an ordained Church of England Priest, Mr Moriarty is a very busy man. So, we were delighted to be given a few minutes to interview our headteacher about JCoSS's past, present and future.

### **How has JCoSS changed in ten years?**

PM: JCoSS gets better every year. When we opened, there were only 150 students and we now have 1332 and similarly, we had 15 teachers and now we have over 150 staff. I think JCoSS is now a more vibrant, exciting and self-confident place than it was in 2010, partly because there are older students and partly because as we have gone along, we have developed our own voice.

### **Where do you see JCoSS in the next 10 years?**

PM: I hope that we will still be as good as we are, if not even better. I think we may have some more buildings. I hope that we will have some of our alumni (old students) coming back and sharing their experiences with us, with some even becoming members of staff. I also hope that we will be famous throughout the country!

### **How did your school life differ from JCoSS School life?**

PM: I was at a private boys' school, which had great facilities. However, I think we had a very different relationship with our teachers. They were more distant. Here, there is more friendliness and openness with staff and much more emphasis on wellbeing and on student voice.

### **What is the one thing you wish you knew about running a school when you became a Headteacher?**

PM: One thing I wish I had known is how much fun it is. It is hard work and there are a million different things to do but the variety of challenges that I can deal with during a single day is great. Having a great team around me means we have so much more fun, more than I would ever have imagined.

### **What has been your highlight of the last 10 years at JCoSS?**

PM: It is difficult to decide: the first day we opened was a highlight; the point where we got our first sixth formers in; the summer of 2017, when we achieved our first GCSE results and we opened our vocational provision in the sixth form, and then last year being awarded The Sunday Times Award for the Best State school in London.

### **What makes you most proud about JCoSS?**

PM: The combination of all the awards and accolades that we have and the way we deal with inclusion and our community spirit.

### **What was the most challenging thing about running a new school?**

PM: The constant change and doing something different every year for seven years was challenging. However, every year comes with its new challenges to contend with. This year a pandemic, who knows what it will be next year!

### **If you taught a subject, what subject would you teach?**

PM: Religious Studies. That is what I have taught for the whole of my teaching career. Even here, I have taught some Jewish Education, which is quite interesting as a Christian priest.

### **How has it been running a Jewish school as a Christian priest?**

PM: Wonderful. What I find all the time, is the more I discover about Judaism, the more I explore my own Christian faith and Christian priesthood. In JCoSS, we equally value all denominations of Judaism so, nobody can say to me that you are siding with the reform or the orthodox or progressive because I am none of these.

It ought to feel weird, but it has never ever felt weird. It has always just felt that this is the right place for me to be and the conversations that I have had with Jewish colleagues, friends and students that I have met here have been really profound, so I have enjoyed every minute of that aspect.

### **What has been the most important thing that you have learnt whilst being at JCoSS?**

PM: I think the best way to lead an organisation is not to try to be the kind of leader that you are not, and instead, to focus on the kind of leader that you are. Try to be the best you can be rather than trying to be someone else whom you are not.

*Thank you, Mr Moriarty, you are truly inspirational and a role model for JCoSS students and thank you for undertaking the Headteacher's Question Time, December 2020.*

# Delicious Chanukah Doughnut Recipe

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons active dry yeast
- 1/2 cup warm water (100 degrees to 110 degrees)
- 1/4 cup plus 1 teaspoon sugar, plus more for rolling
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 2 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 3 cups vegetable oil, plus more for bowl
- 1 cup seedless raspberry jam



## DIRECTIONS

1. In a small bowl, combine yeast, warm water, and 1 teaspoon sugar. Set aside until foamy, about 10 minutes.
2. Place flour in a large bowl. Make a well in the centre; add eggs, yeast mixture, 1/4 cup sugar, butter, nutmeg, and salt. Using a wooden spoon, stir until a sticky dough forms. On a well-floured work surface, knead until dough is smooth, soft, and bounces back when poked with a finger, about 8 minutes (add more flour, if necessary). Place in an oiled bowl; cover with plastic wrap. Set in a warm place to rise until doubled, 1 to 1 1/2 hours.
3. On a lightly floured work surface, roll dough to 1/4-inch thickness. Using a 2 1/2-inch-round cutter or drinking glass, cut 20 rounds. Cover with plastic wrap; let rise 15 minutes.
4. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, heat oil until a deep-frying thermometer registers 370 degrees. Using a slotted spoon, carefully slip 4 rounds into oil. Fry until golden, about 40 seconds. Turn doughnuts over; fry until golden on another side, another 40 seconds. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to a paper-towel-lined baking sheet. Roll in sugar while warm. Fry all dough and roll in sugar.
5. Fill a pastry bag fitted with jam. Using a wooden skewer or toothpick, make a hole in the side of each doughnut. Fit the pastry tip into a hole, pipe about 2 teaspoons jam into doughnut.

# News from JCoSS LRC

The LRC is still open. This term we started a new book reservation system, or 'Select and Collect' service, and this has been popular with students eager to obtain a book. We are still purchasing many new titles and students can search and reserve via Accessit our new LRC website by logging in with their school email address and password. Find Accessit at <https://uk.accessit.online/jcs00>

## Bookbuzz

The Bookbuzz books have arrived in school and were given out – one book per student – to all students in Year 7. This was a very welcome gift from the JPA which the students were very happy to receive and will contribute towards literacy in Year 7. (see photos below)

## Ebook and audio book trial

We are very excited to launch a trial of FREE eBooks and audio books for students and staff. Please follow the link and take a look. If successful we will be purchasing a package in the new year. There are 100's of eBooks and audiobooks available, and the trial features fiction and Wellness titles.

Link to eBook and audiobook trial <https://uk.accessit.online/jcs00>

Sign in with your JCoSS email address and password. Up to two items can be issued for 2 weeks and can be renewed. If you have any feedback or problems please email us at [LRC@jcss.barnet.sch.uk](mailto:LRC@jcss.barnet.sch.uk).

Happy new year to everyone and enjoy reading over the holiday.

LRC Staff, Mrs Rice, Mrs Levontine & Mrs Pragai





## PSRP Hanukah Candle Holder making

Year 9 PSRP students enjoyed making candle holders for Hanukah last week. The lesson was led by one of our students, Ariella Boyd and broken down into two sessions: the first for making the candle holders out of air-drying clay, and the second for painting them. All students thoroughly enjoyed the activity.



## JCoSS Key Term Dates – First Half of Spring Term 2021

Date	Time	Description
Mon 4 <sup>th</sup> Jan	8.30am	Start of Spring Term (Week Two)
Thurs 7 <sup>th</sup> Jan	4-7pm	Year 11 Parents' Evening
Tues 19 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Morning	Year 9 Immunisations (details to be sent to Year 9 parents)
<b>Wed 20<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>	<b>1.45pm</b>	<b>Early Closing for Staff Training Day</b>
Mon 25 <sup>th</sup> Jan to Fri 5 <sup>th</sup> Feb	As per exam timetable	Year 13 trial exams
Thurs 28 <sup>th</sup> Jan	All day	Tu B'Shvat (timetable as normal)
Tues 2 <sup>nd</sup> Feb	4 – 7pm	Year 8 Parents' Evening
Wed 10 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Evening	Year 9 Options Evening

School closes at 1.45pm on all Fridays until after the February half term

Half term break is Mon 15<sup>th</sup> to Fri 19<sup>th</sup> Feb. Students return to school after half term at 8.30am on Mon 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb (week two)

All parents' evenings and meetings will be virtual