

Dear Parents

Just as we are beginning to get into a rhythm after the festivals, along comes half term...and yet despite numerous holidays since September, a week off still seems more than welcome. The Almighty did not of course consult with UK schools when planning the chagim at the dawn of time itself, so we can only joyfully submit to the eternal divine wisdom (and may I at this point issue another reminder to check the dates of our Pesach holiday before booking any trips for Spring 2016?).

With each year that passes, the school feels more fully itself and it has been very satisfying, at the various Open Events for prospective students this term, to be able to show real results rather than simply asking parents to trust us. Since all of you reading this newsletter did act on that trust alone, now seems a good time to thank you for doing so, and for joining the wonderful project that JCoSS continues to be. Presenting the school to outsiders is one of the joys of my role: the combination of aspiration and welcome, of deeply rooted and open-hearted Judaism, is one that is easy to communicate and finds ready acceptance among parents, occasionally to their slight surprise.

Our aim as an institution has always been to help shape a more united Jewish community for the future. Where there are two Jews, of course, there are at least three opinions. But I heard an addition to this quip at a poignant and moving occasion this week: there may be three opinions, but there is a single beating heart, and one that needs to be nurtured. The speaker was Bat-Galim Sha'ar, the mother of one of the Israeli teenagers whose kidnap and murder sparked the horrors of last summer's violence.

The occasion was a small gathering from right across the Jewish community at the home of Lord Sacks the former Chief Rabbi, arranged by the Israeli cross-communal organisation Geshar (the word means 'bridge'). Bat-Galim spoke with enormous dignity and passion of her experiences – both the agony of losing her son and the immense outpouring of support that followed it and buoyed her family through the darkness. It gave her a powerful sense of the unity of the Jewish people in times of adversity, and her prayer is that such unity might be strengthened in other times too.

Lord Sacks introduced her with the observation that the Jewish people have survived attacks by every major world civilisation over 5,000 years, and that the only thing that could destroy the community its own internal conflicts. We do not have to agree, the message was, but we do need to care for each other. These are values that are central to JCoSS, and we know that the commitment to those values is very strong amongst students, parents, staff and beyond.

Sociologists point out the difference, however, between *espoused values* (the ones we profess to hold) and *operative values* (the ones that we actually live out) and there is no place for smugness in the JCoSS community. I have reminded students in a podcast this week of the need to live out the welcome and mutual concern that we profess in the day-to-day business of school life. To use my particular examples, that means clearing up our own (and if necessary others') litter, and it means treating visiting supply staff with the same courtesy and consideration that our students routinely show to staff they know.

The most important slide of my Open Day presentation – as I say every time – is the one about our core purpose of building mensches. Get that right and the rest will follow, we have said for 5 years. Even now that the rest has emphatically followed, we need to hold fast to that core purpose and be sure to live it out at all levels of the school as best we can.

With best wishes for (yet another) holiday and for the rest of the term ahead.

Patrick Moriarty
Headteacher

News from Informal Jewish Ed

Succot at JCoSS

We had a wonderful Succot this year at JCoSS. Students were invited to participate in our annual Succot & Social Action programme. Activities included a session on the current refugee crisis with educator Ben Farleigh. Students designed their own welcome signs which were placed in the school's Succah. Our Year 12 students had the pleasure of an assembly with Rabbi Oliver Joseph ahead of his trip to Calais to give out vital resources to those living in refugee camps. Thank you for all the kind donations to this important cause.



Would you like to run the Marathon on behalf of a JCoSS charity?

Nicki's Smile, one of our JCoSS charities, is offering one place to a parent or a teacher to run the 2016 London Marathon on 24th April 2016. Nicki's Smile was set up in memory of Nicki Blake who tragically died from pancreatic cancer in 2010 aged 33. Nicki, a primary school teacher, left behind her 3 year old son Joshua and husband Dan who set up the charity in her memory. Running for Nicki's Smile you would help them raise money to invest in pioneering early diagnosis projects, as although pancreatic cancer is the 5th highest cause of cancer deaths it receives only 1% of research funding. If you are interested in gaining a place please email info@nickissmile.com. More info can be found at www.nickissmile.com. Deadline for entries is Friday 6th November.

The Apprenticeship Careers Show

A group of Year 11 students attended The Apprenticeship Careers Show at the Business Design Centre in Islington earlier this month. Students had the opportunity to speak with representatives from a range of companies about the apprenticeship opportunities they offer.

Employers who attended included KPMG, Lloyd's of London, RBS, Hob Salons and Gro Academy, the Dorchester Group, Starbucks, the armed services and Transport for London. Students came away with contact details for the employers who caught their interest and added their contact details to mailing lists for information about vacancies which will be coming up next summer.



Theatre Trip - Our Country's Good, by Abi Wander Year 11

Last week, a small group of JCoSS Students went to see 'Our Country's Good' by Timberlake Wertenbaker at the National Theatre on the Southbank. With music composed by Cerys Matthews, the play recounts the story of the first convict ship arriving in Botany Bay, 1788, crammed with England's convicts. The Trip is part of the National Theatre's 'New Views' playwriting competition in which students are required to write short, 30 minute plays about challenging issues that mean something to them. After the show we were lucky enough to be invited to meet JCoSS parent and actor Paul Kaye, who is one of the stars of the show.

I have thoroughly enjoyed participating so far and feel so privileged to have been offered this incredible opportunity....now I just can't wait to get writing!



Careers Mentoring Programme

Year 12 students could find themselves watching a surgeon perform in an operating theatre or sitting in on high-level client meetings with a top law firm, by signing up to the Jewish mentoring programme organised by JUMP-ORT. The organisation's co-ordinator, Mia Lyons, was at JCoSS earlier this month to introduce students to the programme, which provides mentors across a wide range of careers including medicine, music technology, engineering, media and law.

Mentors, many of whom are in high-profile positions within their careers, offer their time on a voluntarily basis. They spend five hour-long sessions with students in their workplace during the academic year and the relationship has led to a number of students finding their first job after university with the employer who mentored them. Mentors talk to students about their careers and arrange for them to get first-hand insights into their day to day work.

"Even if we don't have a mentor on our list in an area the student wants to work in, we will try to find someone", explained Mrs Lyons. "All students need is a commitment to get the most out of the programme."

The programme is ideal for students who already have an idea about what career they want to pursue and provides excellent material when it comes to writing the Personal Statement section of university applications.

Indeed, one of the mentoring sessions focuses on just that.

Year 12 students Ryan Peltz, Bailey Plaskow, Molly Schiller and Zoe Hamlyn who have signed up to the programme



LRC News

Once again, we are pleased to be part of the “Bookbuzz” scheme this year, kindly funded by the JPA, where all Year 7 students receive a free book from a list of specially selected titles.

After half term, we will be running a competition about these books. If you would like to find out more about this scheme, please look at their website <http://www.bookbuzz.org.uk/> which is packed with book ideas and competitions.



Scholastic Book Clubs/Book Fair

Thank you to those who have placed orders. For every order over £10, the LRC receives 20% of the amount in free books.

Our half price book fair will take place at the beginning of December and it is a very good opportunity for students to buy books suitable for their age group at **half-price** and/or to buy some Chanukah presents.

Parent help needed for Book Fair



Our popular Half-Price Book Fair is coming to JCoSS from Monday 30th November to Friday 4th December 2015. If you could spare some time during the day to help us run the Fair, please contact Mrs Mulkis in the LRC. Many thanks in advance.

Amazon Wish List

If you would like to donate a book to commemorate your child's birthday, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, or any other occasion, we have a wish list on Amazon which is frequently updated.

To access the list, log on to www.amazon.co.uk and click on "Wish list / Find a wish list". Enter "JCoSS" into the name bar.

Select the book(s) you would like to buy and put it into your basket.

Tick the gift box and note the student's name and the occasion of the gift to enable us to put a commemorative plaque in the donated book(s).

Many thanks and we look forward to receiving your gifts!



The LRC Team

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR ALL PARENTS

Early Closing - Winter Fridays – 1.30pm

Please remember that with effect from Friday 6th November and each subsequent Friday, up to and including, Friday 15th April, school will close at 1.30pm.

School coaches will run to the 'Winter Friday' timetable.



Our New 6th Form Centre

With thanks to the generosity of our donors, we are delighted to have opened our new 6th Form Centre complete with kitchenette, iPads, pool table, TV screens and table football. Suffice to say it has gone down very well with our students!



Study Room



Common Room



JCoSS Key Dates – Second Half of Autumn Term

| Date | Time | Description |
|--|---------------|--|
| Mon 2 nd November | 8.30am | First Day Back At School |
| Tues 3 rd November | 4.30-7.30pm | Year 10 Parents' Evening |
| Thurs 5 th November | All day | Year 11 Double Science ISA |
| Mon 9 th November | All day | Year 11 Triple Science ISA |
| Wed 11 th November | 2.05pm | Early Closing for Staff Twilight |
| Thurs 12 th November | 6 – 8.30pm | Sixth Form Open Evening (All current Year 11s and their parents invited) |
| Tues 17 th November | All day | Year 8 Interfaith Trip |
| Wed 18 th November | 4.30 – 7.30pm | Year 8 Parents' Evening |
| Tues 24 th November | Morning | Year 8 Girls' HPV Vaccination |
| Wed 25 th November | All day | Year 11 Double Science ISA |
| Thurs 26 th November | 3pm-5pm | Grandparents' Afternoon for grandparents of Year 7 students and students new to the School |
| Tuesday 1 st December | All day | Year 11 Triple Science ISA |
| Sunday 6 th December | 6.30 – 8.30pm | JPA Year 7 Disco |
| Mon 7 th Dec – Tues 15 th Dec (incl) | All day | Year 11 Mock GCSEs |
| Mon 7 th Dec – Mon 14 th Dec (incl) | All day | Chanukah. Candle lighting and activities in school. Timetable as normal. |
| Thurs 10 th Dec | All day | Year 10 Triple Science ISA |
| Mon 14 th Dec | Evening | Chanukah Show |
| Fri 18 th Dec | 1.30pm | End of Autumn Term |

School begins again on Monday 4th January 2016 at 8.30am.

(Please note that the Science Department will give further details about the dates and timings for Science ISAS)

School Closes at 1.30pm on all Fridays until the Spring half term.

Which House are you in?

We all know the form our children are in, but what do the letters mean? This year, we are developing our form groups into traditional Houses. These Houses will bring together students across different year groups, so that anyone in a 'B' form is in Baer, 'F' is Franklin, 'N' is Noether, 'R' is Rothschild, S is Sagen, 'W' is Winston and 'Y' is Yonath. These are all named after highly successful and influential Jewish or Israeli scientists in line with our ethos commitment to scientific learning and pluralist Judaism.

The Houses are in competition with each other for points, with the winning House at the end of the year receiving a trophy and the pride of being the best in the school.

The points can be won from a whole raft of different places, such as sporting competitions, quizzes, creative competitions and science fairs alongside points being awarded to Houses that have the most achievement points and least behaviour points.

Which House will win the inaugural trophy? The race is on...

Mr J Foreman



Congratulations to Tal Pelmont and Aidan Raphael, Year 11, for qualifying to represent Barnet in the English Schools Cross Country championships.

Mana From Heaven

JCoSS are proud to continue our Mana from Heaven programme this year, supporting the local homeless charity HAB with freshly made cakes each week. Students can volunteer on Monday lunchtimes and should sign up in the IJE office. If you would like to sponsor a Mana From Heaven bake session on the occasion of a student's birthday or barmitzvah the cost is £25. Please contact vrose@jcoass.barnet.sch.uk for more details.

JCoSS wins national Good Schools Guide Award for performance in psychology at A level.

JCoSS has been presented with an award by The Good Schools Guide for out-performing all other English schools for girls' performance in Psychology for our recent A Level results. The prestigious annual awards are based on a detailed analysis of the most recent examination results, and are designed to highlight consistently good teaching.

We are absolutely delighted to be acknowledged in this way for our excellence in our girls' performance in Psychology at A Level and we are sure it will inspire and encourage our current students who are working toward their A Levels.

Ralph Lucas, Editor of The Good Schools Guide, commented, 'Our annual awards scheme is designed to recognise and reward excellence in teaching in every subject area at both GCSE and A Level or equivalent. Our awards give individual teachers and departments where teaching is at its very best the recognition they deserve.'

The Good Schools Guide Awards are based on a series of calculations which take into account relative popularity and performance of the subject, absolute performance, and percentage of pupils taking the subject.

Trip to the Copperbox

A group of year 9 girls were taken on a trip to the Copper box in the Olympic Park to watch the World Wheelchair Rugby Challenge.

The students were lucky enough to watch Australia, the current Paralympic champions, and meet some of their players after the match.

