

Dear Parents

To compete or to collaborate? It's an opposition as old as time – certainly as old as life on earth – and yet it's probably not so much an opposition as a polarity or a paradox. To thrive and flourish, whether at the 'macro' level of a biological species, or at the 'micro' levels of an education system, of business or of politics, we have to combine them both. The dialogue between them nudges towards our best, obliges us to be reflective and creative, and helps us avoid tearing each other apart...but it only works if the dialogue is healthy and humane.

There is much to depress us at present. The presidential campaign in the US is more polarised than ever; the EU referendum campaign is similarly bitter and unpleasant, with many complaining there is far more heat than light; the behaviour of England fans makes one shamefully wonder why the EU would want us even if we vote to stay; and last weekend's killings in Orlando seem (whatever else lies in the heart of darkness that carried them out) to reflect an ever-widening rift between differing views of what it is to be human. Collaboration seemingly left behind, competition turns spiteful and ugly, and ends in a refusal to acknowledge any validity or (at the extreme) even any humanity present in the other. We must disagree, of course – it is a sign of life; but must it be so vicious and unedifying?

A couple of models have lifted my spirits in recent weeks. I was privileged to be part of a delegation of faith leaders to Israel and Palestine in May, run by the Council of Christians and Jews. Our itinerary included meetings with a rabbi in the Israeli settlement of Efrat, a representative of the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah and of the Israeli Government in Jerusalem, the Dean of St George's Cathedral, the UK Ambassador in Tel Aviv, and several other organisations working at the literal or ideological borders. To do all that and more in 3 days, and in a group combining Jews and Christians of many different traditions and political standpoints was an "Israel tour" like none other.

As many of you know far more intimately than I ever will, it is a beautiful, maddening and fascinating place – the very stuff of life itself, only more so. While we were there, another stabbing in edgy East Jerusalem; since our return, shootings in liberal, cosmopolitan Tel Aviv. One of our guides, a Palestinian from Bethlehem, spoke of how the different ways the law treats him and his wife, an Israeli Arab, made the logistics of simply picking the children up from school into a daily challenge. Did we find solutions? Of course not. Did we come back clearer about the problems? Not really. But we did fulfil the aim stated by one of the sponsors, to come back more confused and perplexed than when we went. Some might see that as a depressing aim, but healthy confusion has to be better than the terrifying certainty that characterises so many of the conflicts I've referred to above. And we also made friendships and partnerships to continue and deepen the dialogue into the future.

The second lift to my spirits has come from the very different task of choosing a design for the new House Trophy for JCoSS. You can read about the details, the winners and the design inside: it was only as I wrote that article that I realised we had turned competition into collaboration in a way that was as beautifully JCoSS as it was unplanned. The final design combines two entries, both of which captured different special features of the school's ethos. Without even intending it, we have enshrined pluralism in the trophy design, and in doing so we have embodied our motto "elu v'elu divrei elochim chaim" – 'these and these are the words of the living God'. Both entries expressed something true and important, and the competition has become an expression of our vision to find creative ways to combine the integrity of more than one tradition.

Read inside, too, about our celebrations of Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut; about our planned Iftar – when we host a meal to mark the end of the day's Ramadan fast; about how to care for a bearded dragon; about cross cultural dance... JCoSS has a thing or two to show the world about living with difference and integrity, about holding together belonging with confusion, about managing sometimes maddening plurality and finding creative and respectful ways forward. These are really precious and important skills for the future of our world – and our students model them wonderfully.

Patrick Moriarty

Headteacher

Tree Planting

Just before half term, a small group of students in Year 11 attended a tree planting ceremony. The idea was suggested by students in order to remember all the families who have lost loved ones since attending JCoSS and others who are continuing to experience medical challenges. The trees, donated by Rebecca Wilcockson and Noa Marson, were planted in a small area near the multiuse games area in the centre of the school. The Olive and Weeping Cherry trees will grow beside the students playing at break and lunch time, and will be there for future generations of JCoSS to appreciate.



National Theatre 'New Views' playwriting competition 2016

For the past six months 10 ambitious JCoSS student writers have been participating in the prestigious National Theatre New Views playwriting competition 2016.

Having submitted the final drafts of their plays we were delighted to hear that three Year 12 students, Kezia Niman, Louis Gershon and Jordan Rubinstein, made the long list from a field of 330 scripts received from schools nationwide. While they didn't reach the shortlist of ten plays, it meant they had their work read by a distinguished panel of judges which included Rufus Norris, Artistic Director at the National Theatre.

As part of the competition process, students participated in a series of after-school workshops in which they were taught the fundamentals of playwriting. In these sessions they also benefited from the support of Mr Alexander and Ms Matesanz from the English department, both of whom are professionally trained actors.

A professional playwright – Paula B Stanic – has visited JCoSS twice, once to lead a workshop and on the second occasion, to hold 1:1 tutorials with students in which she fed back on the first drafts of their plays. Additionally, we have been to see two National Theatre productions, Timberlake Wertenbaker's 'Our Country's Good' and the acclaimed 'wonder.land.'

The New Views competition challenges students to write a 30 minute play about a challenging issue that matters to them. Louis examined the existence of God in 'As We Know It', while Jordan, also on a religious theme, explored the virtue of faith and by extension the legitimacy of religious redemption in 'The Forgiveness of our Trespasses'. Kezia's 'Wilderness' explored the fate of four characters in a magical realist setting.

The other students taking part were: from Year 11; Judy Benichou, Abi Wander, Eve Rhodes and Noa Clare-Rees; and from Year 12: Max Stapleton and Dana Nitzani.

We congratulate them all on their achievements.

Rebecca Kellaway

English teacher

IJE Round-Up

Last half term was a very busy one for IJE with the season we like to call 'The Yoms'. Yom Ha Shoah (Holocaust Memorial Day) was marked in school with a whole school ceremony, which this year highlighted the diary entries of three young people living in Nazi occupied Europe. Whilst all our students know about Anne Frank, there are a number of other diaries which were written by young people and which survived the Shoah. Many thanks to the students who read in the ceremony and to Mr Brookman and the JCoSS Senior String group for their musical contributions.

A week later we were back in the Heartspace marking Yom Hazikaron (Israel's National Remembrance Day) in a beautiful ceremony presented by Hebrew speaking students and Ophir Shay. Ophir is an Israeli Scout who is spending a year in the UK as part of a Jewish Agency programme which brings a small group of scouts to volunteer in the community. He has been bringing Israel to JCoSS all year through a variety of programmes and activities and spoke very movingly about Yom Hazikaron in Israel. Ophir returns to Israel in the summer to begin his service in the IDF and we wish him all the best. Many thanks also to Hannah Kieve, whose rendition of the song 'Million Kochavim' will remain in everyone's memory for a very long time.

Finally we had a wonderful celebration of Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel's Independence Day) in school on Thursday 12th May, with a new programme called 'Windows to Israel' devised by the IJE department. Students spent a day off timetable exploring a huge range of Israel related themes and ideas as diverse as the amount of salt actually needed to float someone in the Dead Sea, to a ground-breaking effort to teach ballroom dancing to Jewish and Palestinian children in Jaffa. During a whole school assembly members of staff shared their personal relationships and histories with Israel in an intimate and moving ceremony. Our traditional lunchtime fair and Heartspace Dance Party rounded off the day with another truly 'only at JCoSS' moment, when students discovered that not only is Miss Sumner a fantastic science teacher, but an extremely talented and dynamic performer of traditional Israeli dance.

As an added bonus, this year at Yom Ha'atzmaut students competed to earn house points as they took part in each of their activities. The forms started off with a specially themed edition of the weekly House Quiz, in which 10R and 9Y got a particularly impressive 15/15. During the rest of the day forms got a score out of ten in each of their activities. Huge congratulations go to 10S who got a clean sweep with a total score of 70. Overall the winning house for the day was Baer, closely followed by Yonath, with Winston and Sagan taking joint 3rd. Well done to all the students for joining in so enthusiastically and earning lots of points for their houses.

Finally, we welcome a new member to the IJE team, Mr Benji Rosenberg. He will be replacing Mrs Vicky Rose as Social Action co-ordinator and we are delighted to have him on board. Best of luck to Mrs Rose in her future endeavours – she has been a member of the IJE team since the school opened and will be very much missed.

Ms S Levan
Informal Jewish Education Co ordinator



Shavuot

Students celebrated Shavuot at JCoSS with a milkshake challenge, where they needed to commentate on Megillat Ruth as well as contribute to the new 'JCoSS 10 commandments' in order to win a delicious freshly made milkshake. In addition we sold fresh and delicious produce from our organic garden, celebrating JCoSS' own first harvest!



Yoni Jesner Graduation

30 JCoSS students celebrated their Yoni Jesner award at a special ceremony celebrating students who have completed over 20, 30 or 50 hours of volunteering in the community. Special mentions go to Elie Saïpe and Oliver Abrahams who have achieved over 200 hours of volunteering this year. Well done to all.

Faith and Fashion

Year 8 students visited Eden Islamic School this week to complete the third 'faith and fashion' workshop of the year. Over the year a group of year 8 girls have got to know each other through a series of workshops and visits to each others' schools. We look forward to taking the project further next year.



Alan Senitt Graduation

Year 10 students celebrated their graduation from the Alan Senitt programme this week at a ceremony in Rickmansworth alongside students from Watford Grammar Boys School, Eden Islamic School, Copthall School, Guru Nanak Sikh Academy, Nower Hill School, Emmanuel College and Yavneh College. Each school presented their community social action project and the students, Parents and teachers celebrated their success together.



JCoSS EDIBLE GARDEN

Spring has sprung and the Edible garden is flourishing due to the brilliant hard work of our JCoSS head cleaner Valerica Kurtui. Building on the initial success of the garden last year Valerica, together with the senior science technician and a few inspired students (Adam Lee Y10 and Dylan Rackham in particular), have made yet another good start to the gardening year. Enrichment classes take place each week in the garden with students learning about the benefits of organic gardening and growing vegetables. In recent weeks we have already harvested some spring onions, lettuce and spinach and a further harvest of carrots, parsley and beetroot was celebrated and on show at the Shavuot fair just before half term – appropriately since Shavuot is one of the traditional harvest festivals of the Torah. This was offered to staff for a small contribution which will hopefully go towards sponsoring a honey bee hive for a year. It seems appropriate to help (albeit in a small way) the honey bees (*Apis Melifera*) who play a major part in the pollination of the plants we rely on for food. In recent years there has been a serious decline in bee populations due to disease, pesticides, lack of biodiversity/monoculture, climate change etc. Respecting bees and the environment, together with organic gardening can all come under the umbrella 'Tikkun Olam' repairing our world.

See below a picture of students showing the wonderful bright purple roots of the beetroot plant before it was transplanted into the soil.



JCoSS hope to adopt a hive and maybe have our own in the future.

We have also approached our catering company to ask if they would like to use some of our produce in their lunches. To start with we will be donating some spring onions for them to use as a salad garnish.

By K Hancock
Senior Science Technician

Spanish Trip, by Hadley Shapps

No sooner had we arrived at our hotel in Torremolinos, than our packed day was to start.

First was our visit to the nearby Malaga. We went to the Gibralfaro Castle, a medieval fortress built to scare the enemies arriving from Africa. It gives a great overlook of Malaga and its coastline. Then, some free time by the water as well as visiting the Picasso museum which was our last stop after our gruelling first day which started at 4am.

The second day of our Andalucian visit was to Seville which is home to the third largest Cathedral in the world. Our day began with a rooftop tour of the Cathedral with a view of the historic city as well as a downstairs walkabout which included the remains of Christopher Columbus.

Day three was a trip to Cordoba which involved going to a medieval synagogue and a mosque. The mosque was originally a Cathedral but is now predominantly Islamic architecture, and the synagogue contained a statue of Maimonides. We also visited the Casa de Sefarad, a museum about the (often dark and troubling) Jewish history of Spain, and a Jewish music tour.

Our last trip was to Granada to see the world famous Alhambra which has grown from a small 9th century fortress, into a royal palace and a bustling tourist site. It took many hours to tour the vast site, with its 100,000m² boundaries and UNESCO status.

The last day included free time (yessss!) in Torremolinos as well as walking down to the beach before heading back to Malaga airport for our journey back. The trip was brilliantly organised by Mr. Fernandez, as well as Miss. Santos, Mrs. Shamash and Mr. Marco who accompanied us on the trip.



STUDENT OF THE MONTH FOR SCIENCE (incl. Psychology)

Student of the month nominations appear on the notice board outside the science office. Well done to all these students for all their hard work (April & May have been combined due to April being a short teaching Month)

Please look out for future nominations on the board or in the newsletter

APRIL/MAY

| Year | Class | Student Nominated |
|------|------------|----------------------------------|
| 7 | T1 / T4 | Sam De Pomeroy Legg / Amy Newman |
| 8 | T1 / T4 | Maya Rockman / Ethan Stoller |
| 9 | V3 / V4 | Evie Blitz / Max Krut |
| 10 | Biology | Gabi Vides / Hayley Riback |
| 10 | Chemistry | Simone Silver / Ella Nourmand |
| 10 | Physics | Daniel Donovan |
| 11 | Biology | Abi Wander |
| 11 | Chemistry | Charlotte Levine |
| 11 | Physics | Grace Paydon |
| 12 | Biology | Dana Nitzani |
| 12 | Chemistry | Vivien Guiloff |
| 12 | Physics | Mark Schmeid |
| 13 | Biology | Talya Kamara / Hadassah Wolf |
| 12 | Psychology | Rebecca Jackson |
| 13 | Psychology | Emma Aroesti |

JCoSS Science School Pet

Since last September we have had a school 'pet' in science. Located in one of our science labs, our Bearded Dragon named POGO has been a welcome addition to the science Faculty.

Each break, students are able to come and see, touch, feed and interact with him. We have a core group of POGO devotees, particularly Y8 girls. These include Lara Sticher 8Y (pictured with Pogo below) who has also taken him home for one of the school holidays. Other 'fans' are Maya Wegier 8N; Tammy Berlinsky 8W and Ellie Saipe 8B.

Y12 student Isabelle Aron also likes to pop in occasionally for a cuddle and finds it a relaxing antidote to the pressures of studying.



Pogo contemplating a Dandelion leaf



And...eating it!

By K. Hancock
Senior Science Technician

Able and Ambitious at JCoSS - STEM Aspire Days - 2016 Three STEM Days – ‘Target Mars’, ‘Bunkered’ and ‘Dead on Time’

A large cohort of students from Year 7, 8 and 9 participated in an Aspire STEM event at JCoSS for 3 days earlier this term. The workshops were run by *Inspire More Able Thinkers in Education* and were designed to give students the opportunity to work with a subject in a non-classroom situation, applying their knowledge and stretching their thinking skills to solve problems and come to reasoned conclusions.

Students performed very well during these challenging events, with the Year 7 JCoSS students involved achieving the highest ever team total in Target Mars for JCoSS. They are also currently the top score in 2016 and this means they are in the top 10 teams of all time! Year 8 students involved achieved the third highest score for JCoSS in their Bunkered challenge and the Year 9 students involved achieved the highest team total ever for JCoSS in the event Dead on Time. As for Year 7 this is currently the top score in 2016 and this means that they too are in the top 10 of all time!

Students performed incredibly well in these STEM Days, with the organisation stating; ‘Students from JCoSS continue to demonstrate the highest levels of enthusiasm and motivation through a series of challenging activities, impressing us with their communication skills within a team and dedication to task. Each year, we see JCoSS set the benchmark for other schools to aim for and this year has seen some very impressive targets set. For a team to rank in the top-ten of all time is very rare – but JCoSS students achieved it in two different events this year. They were extremely impressive and a joy to work with.’

Adam Tobiansky, JCoSS Year 8 student, commented ‘I really liked how it was challenging and really pushed me to think about things in a new way. I also worked with new people. Lastly, I really liked how there were bits of creativity and also being organised. I would rate it 10/10.’

Monday 27th June 8pm
JCoSS Iftar



JCoSS enjoys a hugely positive reputation for its interfaith work, and this month will see again the Interfaith Tent going up in front of the building as a focus for our work in this area. It is timed to coincide with the Muslim month of Ramadan, traditionally a time for Muslims to focus on growing and deepening spiritually. The month is marked outwardly by fasting throughout the hours of daylight, and because Islam follows a lunar calendar, Ramadan moves gradually through the seasons of the solar year. When it falls in winter the fast is not so demanding, but at present it falls when days are at their longest and hottest and the challenges are even greater.

At the end of the fast each day there is a celebratory meal known as the Iftar, and in very recent years these have started to be hosted by churches and synagogues as a symbol of solidarity between peoples of faith and a mark of religious welcome. We are proud to be breaking new ground this year by holding our first ever Iftar at JCoSS. As well as the food, the evening will feature Scriptural Reasoning, a form of multi-faith scriptural study based on the Jewish practice of chevruta: small groups of Jewish, Christians and Muslims (or other faiths) meet to share and discuss short passages from their sacred texts. To lead this activity we are delighted to welcome Julie Siddiqi – founder amongst other things of Sadaqah Day, a Muslim equivalent of Mitzvah Day; Miriam Lorie – a former student of Mr Moriarty who now works for Cambridge Interfaith; and Mr Moriarty himself who as you know is training as an Anglican priest.

The event will last from 8 pm to 10 pm, with the breaking of the fast at 9.20.

Please reply to erobinson@jcross.barnet.sch.uk if you intend to join us so that we can inform security and cater accordingly.

The Buzz of Bollywood

The start of the summer can only mean one thing - fun, sun and lots of dancing! JCoSS is no exception to this and whilst the typical British weather does its best to dampen our spirits, the sun was well and truly shining when The Bollywood Company came to visit at the start of term.

A group of 60 able and ambitious Dance students in Year 7 and 8 took part in a vibrant, energetic Bollywood workshop. Students were treated to a variety of styles including Bhangra, Bollywood, and Kathak.

It was a real pleasure to see such high levels of engagement from all students and it was noted by the external practitioners how truly wonderful the students were to teach. From the student feedback forms, all students judged the enjoyment and learning experience as 'excellent' or 'very good'. A common thread was that students enjoyed learning about another culture and genre of dance which got me thinking about where to go next...Salsa, African, Capoeira?

We still have a long way to go with building student confidence in this area. The vast majority of students shared a joint interest in wanting to be included in future opportunities for Dance but less than a ¼ considered performing in front of their peers.

I am hopeful that more and more students will step outside of their comfort zone and take up the opportunities available to them here at JCoSS. After 3 years, we now have a junior and senior dance company which have performed in professional settings.

All KS3 students are invited to attend dance club on a Monday lunchtime. It is a fun, relaxed atmosphere where we support and encourage each other. So what's to lose? Don't scratch your head thinking about it. Come and join and you never know...you might just enjoy it!

Mrs Gustard-Brown

Head of Department - Dance



LRC News

Lit Quiz Competition

Congratulations to our five Year 7 students who represented JCoSS and competed against 9 other Barnet schools in a Lit Quiz competition that took place at JCoSS last month. Students were Tabytha Shapps, Ariella Kaplan, Matan Golanni, Ethan Kessel and Noah Graff. Ariella commented that "Although Henrietta Barnett School ended up winning, it was a great experience where not only did we get to learn about some new books, but we met new people".



Carnegie Shadowing

A group of enthusiastic Year 8 and 9 students have been meeting on a weekly basis to discuss the books shortlisted for the Carnegie Book Award. Ten of them will attend a Barnet event on the 10th July, alongside 10 other Barnet Schools. They will give a short presentation on the book "There Will Be Lies" by Nick Lake and they will receive the opportunity to listen to Tanya Landman, author of "Buffalo Soldier" who won last year's award.

If you would like more information about the Carnegie Children's Book Award, log on to: <http://www.carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/>



Mrs C Mulkis
Librarian

Maccabi Athletics Tournament

Lee Valley Athletics Centre in Essex, was the epicentre of the Community's young athletes on Monday as Maccabi GB held the annual Secondary Schools Track & Field Tournament, one of the highlights of the school's calendar.

JCoSS took a team from Year 7, Year 9 and Year 10 and we are delighted to announce that we received 8 Bronzes, 7 Silvers and 1 gold won by Sophia Godfrey for 800m.

Congratulations to the whole team.

Union Dance Workshop

GCSE students were visited by professional dancers from Union Dance Company in an intensive 2 hour workshop guaranteed to leave bruised knees and burns on feet. With 'Dance Tekk Warriors' set work on the current GCSE Dance specification, students were exceptionally fortunate to be taught by dancers who were in the stage production.

Union Dance promotes identity and inter-cultural understanding through a mix of Contemporary, Street and Martial Arts styles. With Tom Luxon known to have some b-boy tricks in his back pocket, it was exciting for students to experience a real fusion of different styles. So often people try to define Contemporary Dance as one thing but the real beauty of Contemporary is that it can be blended with music and dance of all genres.

As so often is the case with this GCSE class, they were like sponges, taking in every bit of information and guidance. And whilst they were somewhat perplexed by some deep breaths and chanting in the beginning, they managed to find their flow and became totally engrossed by what they were doing. Gerrard the facilitator thoroughly enjoyed working with the students and was impressed by their learning attitudes and passion for dance. The students, on the other hand, were particularly impressed by the physical strength of the dancers which was obvious to see when looking at the definition of arms, abs and legs.

Miss Gustard-Brown

"We were taught 3 motifs from a professional piece of works which will help form the basis of our unit 3 performance piece. It is fantastic that Mrs Gustard-Brown provides us with the opportunities to work with professionals. Not only does it help us improve our own dancing skills physically but we also got to observe their technical abilities and performance skills. I am very fortunate to get the chance to witness other dancers and their unique interpretation and style. I know that this workshop will help us for our GCSEs and for the future as it is important to work with a range of people." Darcey Gilston 10S

"It was an amazing experience! It was great having 2 such experienced teachers to inspire us in such a short current of time" Evie Raphael 10B



Able and Ambitious at JCoSS

The Brilliant Club 2016 – Excellent results achieved!

This year twenty-four of our Year 9 and 10 students have been taking part in the Brilliant Club, a programme aimed at developing the independent research skills of talented and academically able and ambitious students in the fields of STEM and Arts and Humanities.

The Scholars Programme, which is run by the educational charity called The Brilliant Club, is delivered by trained PhD tutors from a research university or institute, and involves two university trips and four in-school tutorials. The in-school tutorials take place over consecutive weeks and last for one hour each. The tutorials follow a course which has been designed by the PhD student and based on their own, cutting-edge research. These are designed to push the students to develop the academic skills they will need to secure places at highly selective universities. Students finish the course by writing a 2000 word assignment, which is marked using criteria from the Key Stage above their current level and students are then given a university-style grade (1st, 2.1 etc.), along with extensive feedback from their tutor to allow them to reflect on and improve their performance. JCoSS students performed incredibly well in their assignments, with all twenty-four students achieving highly and completing their assignments and with ten students achieving a 1st for their final assignment!

The two University trips which are a Launch trip and a Graduation Ceremony trip are at the start and end of the Programme and each is to a different Russell Group University. The Launch Trip this year was to St. Hugh's College, Oxford and students had the opportunity to spend a day in the College learning about typical College and University life, having a tour of the campus and facilities and meeting with current students who could answer questions related to life at the University. The day also involved a talk about admissions to the University and what highly selective Universities are looking for, meeting the PhD tutors, a study skills session and the first of the PhD tutorials. Students have also now attended the Graduation Ceremony Trip at Clare College, Cambridge where they participated in further study skills sessions and reflected on their experiences, as well as having the opportunity to learn about the College system at Cambridge and enjoy a tour of the historic Clare College. This trip culminated with the Graduation Ceremony where students were taught how a Graduation Ceremony works and they graduated from the Brilliant Club programme and received their certificates.

Josh Yonish, Year 9, who participated in the Brilliant Club 2016 said of the experience;

'I am extremely happy that I was able to take part in the opportunity of the Brilliant Club, and it was an experience that I will never forget. What started with a nerve-racking essay and selection process ended with new knowledge, certificates and a trip to Clare College Cambridge to top it all off. On the launch trip, which was to St. Hugh's College Oxford, we were assigned topics (either STEM or Arts and Humanities) and met our PhD tutors for the first time. Over the next few weeks our PhD tutors taught us and guided us through our courses, this culminated in a 2000 word assignment based on what we had learnt. A few weeks after this we had a feedback session where we looked at our results, and analysed how we could have improved, the final closing of our experience was a graduation ceremony at Cambridge University. Overall, my friends and I really enjoyed our experiences, our new understanding of what it's like to be at University and our self-assurance and confidence in our work leading up to our GCSE's. I would highly recommend this experience to anyone if they get the opportunity, it is really something not to miss out on and will greatly improve your confidence leading up to important exams, further education and University.'

Miss S Goldstein-Opasiak

Information from London Borough of Barnet, Education Welfare Team

Holidays in School Time

Parents are reminded that rules on holidays in term-time are still in force and the law has not changed. Barnet's Education Welfare Team will continue to issue fixed-penalty notices (FPNs) to parents who take children out of school without leave when schools and academies request them.

The Education Welfare Team visits some family homes when it appears that children have been taken out of school before the end of the summer term. Where parents tell us that their children are ill, an Education Welfare Officer would expect to find those children being cared for at home. If this is not the case, parents should expect to receive FPNs once their children are back in schools, unless they can explain their circumstances.

The arguments about holidays are sometimes in the news and individual stories can create misleading pictures. Parents can best support their children and their school by abiding by the rules. Education is not free: it is paid for by taxpayers, including teachers, parents and people without children. Head teachers are required to apply rules firmly and fairly and are held to account by government. It is therefore much appreciated if all parents act responsibly and plan holidays and family visits when school is closed.

House Trophy Competition

We are excited to announce the winners of the House Trophy competition. Students were invited to submit designs that reflected the character and ethos of the school and which would make a fitting and impressive trophy to emphasise and embed the importance of the house system at JCoSS. Entries were judged by Mr Moriarty, and Jeremy Kosky our Chair of Governors.

Amongst the entries, two stood out: Sydney Stone (9F)'s design beautifully reflected the Jewish heart of JCoSS, featuring the Magen David, and also incorporated the symbols of our 7 houses, which were themselves designed by students in the current Year 11 when they were in Year 7. Charlie-Luca Gruzd (7W) very creatively reflected our science specialism in the interlocking circle design which was inspired by the models of the molecular structure of Oxygen devised by Niels Bohr, the Danish Jewish Physicist after whom all our "B" forms are named.

Charlie-Luca explained: "Oxygen sustains life; it's the reason why life exists on Earth. Oxygen must have been one of the elements in the 'breath of life' described in Genesis 1.30 which is why some people also refer to it as 'Breath of God', so it ties the trophy to Science and Judaism – two leading elements of JCoSS."

In the end we liked both so much that we gave the design company the challenge of combining both into one. We are delighted by the final combined design as shown, which is currently being turned into an 11" high trophy, to be presented to the winning house for the first time at the end of this term.

We are hugely grateful for the donation that has made this possible: it has been made in memory of Mr Kosky's parents and father in law. Congratulations to the winners and thanks to all who entered.



Ace opportunities for 6th formers on the JCoSS Virtual Learning Environment

Careers information and news of fantastic opportunities for 6th formers, from conferences for would-be medics to prep days for aspiring Oxbridge applicants and university taster sessions in everything from engineering to theatre production, is available via our Virtual Learning Environment (currently Fronter, but due to change soon – see below).

Since September, the careers department has been steadily adding resources to the Careers section and folders are now available covering a wide range of work and Higher Education areas, including work experience.

Information is updated at least once a week and students receive weekly emails to their school addresses, alerting them to updates.

In the past two weeks, information added has included an excellent opportunity for would-be medics to get a real insight into what studying medicine is like, in the form of a day-long conference at Imperial College in September at a cost of just £10 per student, free Masterclasses and Gateways conferences in everything from anthropology and architecture to neurology, space, politics and philosophy at University College London in July, a Property Summer School, prep days and reading lists for those considering Oxbridge and a seminar for students interested in studying at US universities. Many events are free or low-cost.

There is also information about a paid legal internship with a North London firm and apprenticeship opportunities in business and finance, among others.

A new folder has just been set up featuring regularly updated information about forthcoming University Open Days.

Please remind your son/daughter to check the Careers section on Fronter regularly to find out about the many relevant opportunities available and encourage them to apply. Signing up for relevant activities can give them a real head-start when it comes to applying for university and work – and provides excellent material to draw on when writing CVs for jobs and Personal Statements for university applications.

Please note that from September, JCoSS will be moving to a new Virtual Learning Environment – Moodle, which will replace Fronter. Students will still be able to access the careers resources and information described above with greater ease and all the same great content.

Ms H Lewis
Careers Advisor

