

# Jewish Pluralist Ethos

JCoSS is a pluralist Jewish learning community that provides young people with an excellent Jewish Education. We encourage debate and dialogue in a respectful and meaningful way. The words **אלו ואלו** (*Elu v'elu divrei elohim chayim*) – 'These and these are the words of the Living God' reflect our commitment to teaching the students from a variety of opinions and perspectives.

We embrace diverse approaches to Jewish belief and practice that coexist comfortably within our school. We celebrate the ideological diversity that exists within our community, and create an atmosphere that is welcoming, open and tolerant.

Our students reflect diverse ideological viewpoints and are expected to participate in dialogue, think carefully about how these interactions might enrich their own views, and yet remain confident enough in their own individual identities to resist the forces of assimilation or homogenisation. We use **מחלוקת** (*machloket/debate for the sake of heaven*) as a tool for discussion.

We are wholeheartedly committed to educating students as literate Jewish and British

citizens, well-grounded in the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to contribute to community life and to make a significant contribution to the Jewish and wider community. Our unique pluralist approach builds and informs students' sense of Jewish identity and aims to inspire the students and to nourish their commitment to a life-long Jewish journey.

Our diverse Jewish environment fosters an atmosphere of mutual respect and our students learn about and from the whole spectrum of Jewish beliefs and practices. We enthuse our students to acquire the textual skills necessary for a serious engagement with and inspiration from a full range of Jewish sources, and a rich variety of Jewish texts in both Hebrew and English. We encourage an appreciation of shared tradition, strong and robust ethical convictions and a commitment to **תיקון עולם** (*tikun olam/social action*).

Our students use texts and the arts to explore and reflect upon their own relationship to God, to Jewish history, to Israel and to the Jewish community, with the aim of deepening their commitment to and love of **קלל ישראל** (*clal yisrael/the Jewish people*).

