

Dear Parents

December is always dark. The physical absence of light combines with the end of the longest term to make it a challenging month for all in schools. The lights of Chanukah have helped a little, as do the lights of Christmas, timed as they are to coincide with the winter solstice and to remind us that light will return. But it is still dark - and feels darker than ever this year. The intractable issues of Brexit are tearing parliament and country asunder, doing damage that – whichever way things go politically – will take a generation to heal; meanwhile anti-Semitism menaces the mainstream of public life in ways few thought possible just a few years ago. And the two are not unconnected: both start with demonising the ‘other’, one of the oldest tricks in the book of human nature when we feel under threat and out of control. Picking on the Jews as a convenient ‘other’ is just about as old. The Jewish community is the canary in the coalmine of freedom and when I hear members of that community articulating their anxieties about the future as strongly as I have recently, I fear for us all. (Parents may like to read my recent article on this topic in the Church Times)

It is of course a toxic fantasy of the anti-Semitic that removing the Jews would solve their problems, and in the same way it is a fantasy that either remaining in the EU or leaving it can really solve the problems exposed by the 2016 referendum. Divided and resentful, mistrusted and blamed, angry and confused, threatened and at the mercy of forces we can't control - the feelings run deep on all sides, and while they are worse after the last 18 months, they were not invented by the referendum.

Why we are feeling these things so acutely, why is demonising others so widespread? One easy answer to blame some activity or other and brand it as the root of all ills: in a different era it might have been alcohol or gambling, in our own it is more likely to be consumerism or social media. ‘If we could just get rid of that from society, life would be fine’, we say, not spotting that we are simply demonising an activity rather than a group, not admitting that it is more complicated than that and that we both despise and desire the activity.

The reality surely is that the line between good and evil, between destructive and creative, between light and dark, passes through every human heart. There is no us and them; there is us as we want to be and us as we all-too-often are. The solution to our anger does not lie in blaming that lot over there, which will only fuel the divisions further. It rather lies in forcing ourselves to acknowledge the validity of another person's humanity, however vile and unpalatable we might think they are. That's a big ask of ourselves, but I can't see another way.

This is what is powerful about having at the heart of this school community the notion of the Mensch – the decent and praiseworthy human being. It's not so much that human beings are decent and praiseworthy but rather that very often they aren't. The idea is not to aim at a brittle perfection and berate those who fall short. It is rather to put shared humanity at the centre, acknowledging that we all have the capacity for light and dark, and recognising each other as faltering fellow-pilgrims on the path to decency. If we can all admit to being confused works in progress, trying hard but frequently messing up, admirable but vulnerable people, perhaps we might have a chance of reconstructing a society that is a bit more liveable.

I hope you will find glimpses of these values in the pages that follow - perhaps most strikingly in the debate between JCoSS and Abrar Academy (p4), where our students were asked to oppose the right of Israel to use violence in the first intifada, and their Muslim peers were asked to defend that right. It was a wonderful example of using imagination to stand in another's shoes, and gloriously disconcerting to watch. These, surely, are the kinds of skills and experiences that the next generation will need to rebuild the future, whatever 2019 brings.

I wish you all a good holiday.

Patrick Moriarty
Headteacher, JCoSS

The Creative and Expressive Arts Faculty

Every term is always busy for the CEA faculty and this autumn has been no different. Over the course of the term students have had the opportunity to involve themselves in numerous extra-curricular activities and performances. Highlights include the Jazz Concert in October, visits from the Stanislavski Experience and Shalva Band, performances in the Shakespeare Schools Festival at the Arts Depot and at school with our own Shakespeare Festival as well as the upcoming Winter Concert on Thursday 20th December.

Shakespeare Festival @JCoSS

Following the performance at the Arts Depot students performed A Midsummer Night's Dream in school alongside Return to the Forbidden Planet, a modern musical based on The Tempest and using famous rock and roll songs. Performances involved students from Years 8 -13, some of whom were performing in a JCoSS show for the first time and the performances were full of energy and enthusiasm. We are grateful to the ADT faculty who created the set and props.

Parents and friends of the casts, and staff enjoyed the performances...

Thank you all for a wonderful Shakespeare themed evening both on Tuesday and last night. Our son is loving all the amazing music and drama opportunities at JCoSS and you are all providing such fabulous creative opportunities for all the students and at the same time really enhancing the community involvement in the school.

There are times when I love my job and last night was one of them!

It was wonderful to see...the students in two fabulous productions. The exuberance of the students participating in both pieces was palpable - the excitement and joy generated about Shakespeare will stay with those students for ever. They may not remember their exam text but they will remember being in a performance.



Shakespeare Schools Festival @ The Arts Depot

We were proud to take part in the Shakespeare's School Festival - the world's biggest youth drama project. Students from Years 8-11 performed A Midsummer Night's Dream at The Arts Depot on Tuesday November 20th. We joined 900 schools and 30,000 students across the UK participating in the festival. The students were fantastic and the production was a roaring success!

Shalva Band

We were really pleased to host the Shalva Band from Israel who performed an afternoon concert for Year 10 on Tuesday 20th November. We had visited the Shalva school and centre when we were in Israel in June, and were really excited to invite them to JCoSS to perform one of two school concerts in the UK (the other school they visited was Eton!). The Shalva Band is comprised of 8 talented musicians with disabilities and performs to the highest musical standards. They were a real inspiration.

Jazz Evening

Our first ever Jazz Evening took place in the Heart Space in October. Performers included the Senior Jazz Band, a sax quartet, some vocal solos and an extended set from the Sixth Form Jazz trio. An evening of great music and exceptional performances was enjoyed by all, and we received outstanding feedback from the audience.

I just wanted to drop you a line to thank you for the "Jazz in the Heartspace" event yesterday evening. I am a parent of a new year 7 JCoSS pupil and as a regularly gigging jazz pianist I decided to come along to the event. I was very impressed by the standard of musicianship, all the pupils seemed enthusiastic and were also enjoying the session, which is great to see. I thought the two piano trios in particular were very talented. I just wanted to let you know how taken I was with the standard and to keep up the good work!

Stanislavski Experience Workshop

Year 11 Drama GCSE students were fortunate enough to participate in a two hour drama workshop led by The Stanislavski Experience. An in depth, practical exploration of the key areas of the Stanislavski system focusing on Objectives, Action, Imagination, Free body Communication and Tempo Rhythm. The workshop gave the students extra tools needed to successfully create a character, explore and structure their devised work. The students were challenged to work at a high level and to maintain a professional focus.

Winter Concert

This takes place on the last evening of term (Thursday 20th December) and we will report back in the next school newsletter. Tickets for this are available from Reception £5/£3 or by emailing music@jcoess.barnet.sch.uk. We look forward to seeing you there.

Extra Curricular Activities

The Faculty will continue to run a vast array of extracurricular clubs, bands, choirs and instrumental ensembles when we return after the Winter break. We look forward to welcoming as many students as possible to all of these. Lunch passes are provided so students can collect lunch and then attend the activity.

	Music - Lunchtimes	Drama - Lunchtimes	Dance
Monday	Chamber Choir (by audition) JCoSS Singers (Yr7) Junior Jazz Band		BOP Dance (After School)
Tuesday	Woodwind Ensemble Drum Ensemble Guitar Ensemble	KS3 Drama Club	
Wednesday	String Ensemble Senior Singers (Yr8 - 11) Senior Jazz Band		
Thursday	Ukulele Group Percussion Ensemble	Drama Club (Yr8 - Yr13)	Dance Club (Lunchtime)
Friday	Music Technology Club		

Informal Jewish Education Round-Up

It has been a busy half term for IJE with a range of our regular activities underway and a few special projects taking place too. Our Year 8 volunteering programme has started, with students undertaking to volunteer in our neighbouring primary school or a local Jewish Care day centre. The intention is that each student in Y8 does an hour of volunteering with school over the year and hopefully is inspired to continue in their own time.

Students are also involved in cooking for a local homeless shelter on a weekly basis at school through our Manna from Heaven programme which takes place at lunchtime.

We have also had some interesting and challenging visits to school, including the organisation Parallel Histories who organised a fascinating debate between boys from Abrar Muslim Academy, Lancaster Grammar School and JCoSS students on different elements of Israel's history. The challenge was that the students had to speak for the 'other' side, and challenge themselves to debate thoughtfully and respectfully for a position they may not personally agree with.



In a similar vein, we were also visited by another debating organisation, this time from Israel, called Debate for Peace. The students from this organisation represented a wide range of Jewish and Arab life in Israel and spent the day at JCoSS modelling the discussion and debating skills they had learned through weekly engagement with each other in Israel, taking frank and often wildly opposing positions but always with thought, respect and honesty.

Informal Jewish Education Round-Up cont.

We were also delighted to welcome representatives from all the Zionist youth movements to school to promote their Israel tours. Year 11 might feel that the summer is a long way off, but they were here to remind them that it really is just around the corner.

Our second cohort of the JCoSS 6th Form Leadership Academy is also underway, with students coming together once a fortnight to develop their leadership skills and to work on projects both within and beyond school. Now in its second year, the Academy continues to offer high level leadership training for JCoSS students to be able to implement in all aspects of school life and beyond. The first cohort, now in Y13 also took part in a follow up seminar which included visits to both J-Hub and JW3, giving them a chance to look at models of leadership in practice within the Jewish community. It was a stimulating and inspiring day for all involved.

Our Alan Senitt Leadership programme cohort for Year 10 have now been selected and have started on a series of seminars which all take place within an interfaith context - allowing them to learn and work with students from a wide range of other schools on a social action project.

We continue to offer a range of interfaith opportunities for students, with our annual Interfaith week project taking place in conjunction with Lady Nafisa School. Students worked together to create meals for a foodbank as well as getting to know each other with a series of activities.

Our ongoing school linking projects are also taking place in Years 8 and 9 with students having the opportunity to get to know their peers from other faith schools in a series of meetings over the school year.

Finally our Chanukah celebrations this year had a big emphasis on fundraising for the school charities. With the great JCoSS doughnut sale (over a thousand doughnuts sold!), a special Yom Tzedakah and a non uniform day, record amounts were raised over the festive period.



And last, but certainly not least, a huge welcome to the IJE team to Ms Luz Toff, our newest Informal Jewish educator.

Seneca – a new revision and homework platform

All students and teachers now have free access to Seneca - a revision and homework platform making studying more fun. Seneca is an interactive way to learn official course content. Their web app covers 150+ exam board specific courses condensing what students need to know for their exams. The software is able to identify gaps in learning. For instance, when you get a question wrong, the platform will repeat the topic in different formats and their smart algorithm is proven to make students remember topics 2x faster. Seneca is totally free for students, teachers and parents and last year's Y11 used it extensively to great effect.

You can sign up via <https://www.senecalearning.com/>

JCoSS PE Department

Another amazing start to the year, bringing great successes, heart rending losses and some brilliant team spirit.

As usual, the PE Department hit the ground running with lots of fixtures and tried to pack in as many as possible, before we lost the light after October half term as the clocks went back!

It is amazing to see so many students ready, willing and able to join in the JCoSS team spirit.

We are lucky to have such talent at JCoSS and started the year with a new Y7 student, Skye Crewe, who was awarded 'Female Performer of the Year in Sport' for all primary schools in Barnet. It was given to her for her sporting achievements during the past few years at Akiva at primary level in all sports. She is particularly talented at football, playing for Arsenal Ladies for the past 3 seasons.

Netball: So far, our Y7, Y8, Y9 & Y10 teams have played four other Barnet schools in league matches, with a mixture of wins and losses. Our senior team played in the Barnet tournament where they played really well and came 2nd. More matches to play next term as well as tournaments.

Girls Football: The Y8/9 team played seven matches in a tournament winning 4, drawing 2 & losing 1 and showing their great football skills and excellent communication as a team. Our Y10 team have played only two matches, won 1 & lost 1 and showed great determination.

Boys Football: A lot of the boys' football takes place in the first half term, with lots of great teamwork and sportsmanship. The Y9 team is through to the quarter-final of the Middlesex Lyle Cup and both Y8 & Y11 teams are through to the semi-final of the Barnet cup.

We also have some talented footballers at JCoSS with Adam Kaffel playing u/14 Middlesex schools county level and Aden Brazil playing at u/16 AFA schools level.

Badminton: QEG hosted four tournaments for KS3 & KS4 girls & boys. All our teams played really well with the KS4 girls coming 4th out of 13 teams and our KS3 boys winning and acclaimed as Barnet Champions. It was a fantastic show of endurance and skill.

Table Tennis: Our U13 & U16 boys and girls went to Enfield to compete in table tennis tournaments. The teams played amazingly well with both our U13 & U16 girls teams beating the opposition to become North London Champions & our U16 boys ending as Runners Up – it is a tribute to the extraordinary talent we have within JCoSS.



**KS3 Boys Badminton
Barnet Champions**



**KS4 Girls Table Tennis
North London Champions**



**KS4 Boys Table Tennis
North London Runners Up**



**KS3 Girls Table Tennis
North London Champions**

JCoSS PE Department cont.

The current England rankings for our outstanding players are U15 Millie Rogove 3rd (19th U18), Scarlett Anders 1st (U14), 6th (U15), 34th (U18) & Jake Grayson 27th (160th U18). Millie also has a World Ranking of 243 and European Ranking of 101 – very impressive.

Well done to all students who have participated in any event. We look forward to next term when we will be playing in the Y7 and Y8/9 basketball league as well as more football and netball and some much anticipated Maccabi tournaments!

Cross Country: The Barnet Champs cross-country event was a hard battle with some tough competition. We were lucky to have two students qualify to represent Barnet in the Middlesex Schools cross-country event on 24 January at Harrow School, namely Jack Davis-Black who came 1st and Millie Aslan who came 5th. Elijah Jaffe had a near miss, coming in at 9th place. It was a fantastic afternoon, with all our students enjoying the event and cheering each other on right to the end.



Finally: This year we introduced our Student Sports Ambassadors – 3 girls & 3 boys in Y8, Y9, Y10 & Y11. They have been gradually learning their role and what is expected, and have done this with great enthusiasm, in particular running Boccia sessions to the students in the PSRP.



Keep up-to-date at:

Twitter @JCoSSPE

Facebook JCoSS Sport

Student Sports Ambassadors and PSRP students after a Boccia session

Armed Services Show Year 8 How Science is Used in Careers

The last day before the October Half-Term break saw the whole year group off-timetetable tackling Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) challenges set by all three of the Armed Services..

Representatives from The British Army, the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy spent the morning leading a variety of fun and exciting activities from using science principles to design the ideal helmet to working with Royal Navy engineers on experiments with propulsion.

Students were put through their paces on an army fitness challenge and there were talks about life in the armed services by speakers including Lieutenant Commander John Littman who is a member of the Jewish community.

The day was organised following the success of our first subject-specific career event for Year 8 last year which focused on careers using art and design. In a practical, hands-on way, these events serve an important purpose in educating our younger students about how the subjects they study at school relate to the outside world and potential careers.



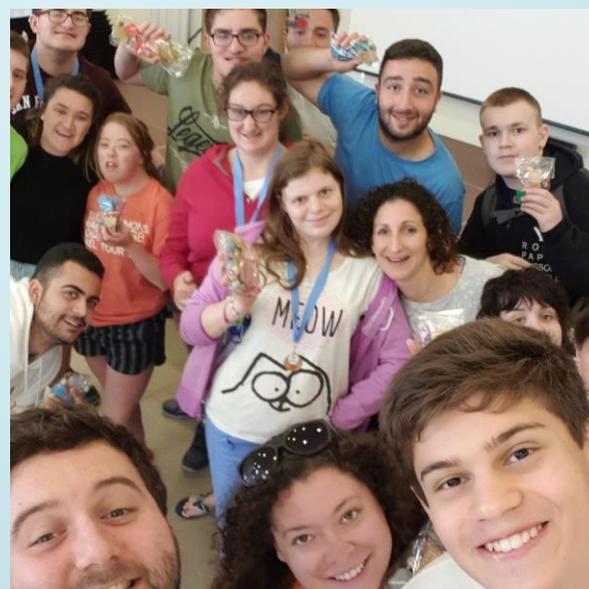
In today's competitive job market it is vital that students coming to the end of their school education consider the best ways to make themselves employable, whether it be for holiday jobs, internships or post-school or graduate employment. Resource, an organisation that supports the community into employment and Streetwise, a charity that delivers programmes into schools, came together to provide a free workshop this week to support 20 JCoSS students in their preparation for employment, specifically around self-marketing, networking, CV writing, and social & business media.

For more information about Resource visit www.resource-centre.org

For more information about Streetwise visit www.streetwisegb.org

Maccabi GB Challenge Israel Tour

In November a group of JCoSS sixth form students from the PSRP joined young people from Langdon (a Jewish learning disability charity) on the Maccabi GB Challenge Israel Tour. The young people toured around Israel with madrichim (leaders) including our very own Mr Abram, Mr Joyce and Mr Griffin. Over 12 days, they travelled around the country, visiting many of the places that others in their year group have just visited on youth movement Israel Tours. They spent Shabbat together in Jerusalem, went surfing in the Mediterranean Sea and decorated chocolate on Kibbutz Deganya. The trip was a resounding success and it gave the young people an opportunity to build life-long friendships.



LRC News

Bookbuzz

All students in Year 7 chose a book from a selection as part of the Bookbuzz promotion, organised by BookTrust. The books have been delivered and the students were delighted to receive their books in their LRC lessons. Many thanks to the JPA for supporting this venture to encourage reading for pleasure.



Scholastic Half-Price Book Fair

There was real excitement in the Heart Space last Monday - the Book Fair had arrived. The Fair ran all week with students visiting at break, lunch times and during their LRC lessons. The Fair was so popular that the books were selling fast and we had to order more copies to be delivered. Thank you so much to everyone for supporting the Fair – it was great to see the students so excited about reading.

Apart from students being able to purchase books at half-price, the school was also entitled to 10% of the total sales of the Fair, redeemable in free books. This will mean many new titles for the LRC. JCoSS runs one of Scholastic's most successful Fairs in the country. A big thank you to the parent volunteers who offered their free time to help us sell the books, and to the student helpers and staff for all of their support.



Abi's Bat Mitzvah Walk for Emunah

Year 7 student Abi Caplan walked 13km between JCoSS and her home while raising over £1,000 for Emunah. Abi twinned her Bat Mitzvah with a girl from Emunah's Sarah Herzog Children's Home in Afula and has been writing to her. Abi was inspired by the JCoSS 'Walk to School' day which she could not do, as she lives too far away to get here for 8.15 am! So, she came up with the idea that she would walk home from school on a Sunday afternoon. She completed the walk in three hours and 20 minutes.

British Emunah Director Deborah Nathan said:

"Well done Abi for taking the initiative to raise money for children who are less fortunate – we truly appreciate your efforts."



JCoSS Key Dates – First Half of Spring Term 2019

Reminder – School closes at 12pm on Friday 21st December 2018

Date	Time	Description
Mon 7 th Jan (Week Two)	8.30am	First half of Spring Term starts. Rosh Chodesh Sh'vat – school timings as normal
Wed 9 th Jan	4 – 7pm	Year 11 Parents' Evening
Mon 21 st Jan	All day	Tu B'Shvat. School timings as normal
Thurs 31 st Jan	1.45pm	Early closing for staff training
Tues 5 th Feb	All day	Rosh Chodesh Adar. School timings as normal
Thurs 7 th Feb	Evening	Year 9 Options Evening
Fri 15 th Feb	All day	Last day of first half of Spring term

School Closes at 1.45pm on all Fridays until the second half of Spring term

Students return to school after the half term break on Monday 25th February at 8.30am (week 2)