



Message from the Headteacher

We were delighted to welcome 450 visitors to our recent Open Evening for entry to the Sixth Form in September 2009. The list of A levels on offer next year will increase to fifteen: English literature, drama & theatre studies, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, psychology, government & politics, history, geography, religious studies, Modern Hebrew, ICT, business studies and PE. The closing date for applications is 4 December 2008.

The new block being constructed at the rear of the site is growing fast, as the photo below illustrates. The refurbishment works are also going well, with large swathes of the buildings having their windows replaced and internal walls being moved and re-plastered.



Since moving into the main teaching block, we have experienced ongoing technical problems with the telephone system, which have resulted in outside callers failing to get through to the school office and voice messages not being picked up. Work is now underway on an upgrade which we hope will result in a much-improved service.

We are concerned about the number of children who fail to take sufficient care when crossing roads, despite being warned on many occasions in assembly that it is dangerous to dash out in front of cars or to cross when engrossed in a mobile phone conversation. All of our children are old enough to be allowed to cross a road without adult supervision; parents, please ensure that your child knows how to do so safely.

All parents have been notified that there will be a meeting on Tuesday 13 January to discuss security matters and concerns raised by Tesco's with respect to inconsiderate parking by parents. We hope that all parents will attend this important meeting.

The Year 7 Shabbaton last weekend was a wonderful experience for all those who took part. Almost the entire cohort of 150 children participated, enjoying Shabbat services in our beautiful new shul, enormous quantities of tasty food at every mealtime, stimulating activities run by our lively band of madrichim – which included, for the first time, Yavneh College sixth formers – and ice skating on Motzei Shabbat. Organising and running an event of this nature is a huge undertaking, so I am most grateful to Rabbi Davis, Miss Bharier and their colleagues in the JS Department and other members of the teaching staff who gave up their time to make this possible.

It is with great sadness, therefore, that I must inform you of an incident that marred the closing moments of the Shabbaton. In line with school policy and our duty of care towards our pupils, Rabbi Davis and his team of staff organised the return of the children to their families in the approved manner i.e. rather than simply open the gates and let the children go off en masse, they are returned to their parents only after they have first confirmed that the adult claiming them is indeed their parent. For this purpose, the children are kept on the school side of the gate and parents are kept on the other side, as we cannot let a mass of unidentified adults on site for security reasons. The same procedure is used on the July Induction Day each year and was used at the end of last year's Shabbaton, with no problems.

However, on this occasion around a dozen parents became angry about the process, crowding around the gates, pushing other parents and demanding that all the children be released straight away because they didn't have the time to wait around. Despite having the reason for the process explained to them, they continued to be abusive, causing distress to a number of staff. Other parents present were noticeably shocked by their behaviour.

I am appalled at this attitude towards staff who had voluntarily given up their free time to work very hard, without much sleep, to provide a fabulous Shabbat experience for their children. I can, however, inform you that we have been contacted today by some of these parents, who have asked us to pass on their apologies to the staff concerned.

Thank you to those Year 7 parents who took a few minutes to complete the recent questionnaire which sought their views on the induction process for new pupils. Year 7 pupils also completed a questionnaire on this topic. As always, both questionnaires were anonymous. The outcomes are reproduced elsewhere in this newsletter. The feedback that we receive through such questionnaires is very important to us, enabling us to continue to improve our systems, for the benefit of our pupils. On some occasions, the feedback also raises a smile, such as the plaintive sentence 'This school is too strict' written by the only child who took up the offer of adding a comment on the back of the questionnaire.

Year 9 Parents and Pupils Important dates for your diaries:

Parents' Evenings: *Our apologies for having to re-schedule these at short notice, following the withdrawal of SATs by the DCSF.*

9HS	Tuesday 9 December 2008
9AM (A-K)	Tuesday 9 December 2008
9AM (L-T)	Monday 15 December 2008
9IT	Monday 15 December 2008

GCSE Options Evening:

Wednesday 21 January 2009

Essential information and help making choices about which GCSE options would be best for your child will be available on this evening.

Please keep the date free. Further information will be available nearer the time.

CHANUKAH CONCERT TICKETS

There are a few tickets still remaining for the Chanukah Concert on the evenings of Tuesday 16 and Wednesday 17 December.



Please return the reply slip sent out or contact the school office as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.



LRC NEWS

Mrs Kaiser, Librarian



The LRC has received a number of donations of new or nearly new books from several pupils and parents this term. All donated books have been inscribed with the name of the donors. We are very grateful for these welcome additions to the LRC. If you would like to donate books, please contact me via the school office.

We would be grateful if parents of Year 8 and 9 pupils would encourage their children to check at home to see if they have any books belonging to the LRC. Any books that are found now or in the future should be placed in the 'Returns' box on the librarian's desk.

The winter edition of the Book Clubs catalogue was recently distributed to pupils. All completed order forms should be returned by 8 December to ensure delivery before Chanukah! Further copies are available in the LRC. Thank you to all the parents who are supporting the Book Clubs. Your orders have already enabled us to obtain over 60 new free books for the LRC.

LRC EVENTS FOR SPRING TERM 2009:

(Further details to follow)

TIMES BOOKS FOR SCHOOLS: January - December 2009

We will be participating in *The Times* & *Sunday Times* 'Books for Schools' campaign. Tokens cut out from these newspapers can be redeemed by the school for free books. If you don't read *The Times*, perhaps your relatives, friends or neighbours do? Please collect and send in as many tokens as you can to the LRC.

JUBILEE BOOK FAIR; 2-11 February 2009

A Book Fair offering a selection of contemporary and classic fiction, reference books and study guides will be open at breaks and lunchtimes for pupils to 'browse and buy'. It will also be open to parents at Year 7 Parents' Evenings on 2 and 10 February.

YEAR 7 TRIP TO JEWISH BOOK WEEK: 25 February 2009

All Year 7s will be attending this event to hear talks by two leading children's authors.

WORLD BOOK DAY: 5 March 2009

As part of WBD, all pupils will receive a £1 book voucher. This may be spent in bookshops on special £1 books published for WBD or to obtain discount on other books. Pupils may also choose to spend vouchers on books from Scholastic Book Club March catalogue or at the Scholastic Book Fair.

SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR: 17-24 March 2009

A Book Fair (as above) will be open at break and lunchtimes. It will also be open at the Year 8 Parents' Evenings on 17 and 23 March.

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Ms.Lovett

Year 9 studied 'Anthem for Doomed Youth' by Wilfred Owen, a sonnet written in iambic pentameter about his experiences during the First World War. Pupils then wrote their own sonnet, using a traditional rhyming scheme and the iambic meter. The results were astounding and we would like to share a selection with you:-

Pain

The cries of people and the streams of blood,
The corpses now sent through to heaven.
The dead martyrs causing the solemn mood,
And small eyes of those left behind redden.

The world holding hands: praying for more peace,
What war gives off such sweet brightened smiles?
Alas how will G-D get the wars to cease?
And those who find the great wars so vile.

Yet how will the dull minds of people live?
The words tremble on the lips of the loved.
And such pain they go through if they survive,
As whiteness settles in heavens above.

The cries of those who want their dead ones back,
With blue parts in their heart holding a crack

Sasha Hilton 9HS

Never is too late

*He'd never kissed his mother for the last time,
Left a wife empty while off to war,
Left, without a father, his child in prime
For peace: he will never love and adore
Never has the bugle pierced his ears,
Calling him to battle - to fight, to die:
Running, tripping over bodies, through the fears
Of his seventeen years, summed there, outcry.
He'd never wept with bullets stuck in his chest,
Lying in shallow graves while soldiers
Trample him, limbs blue, sunken eyes: a nest -
Of death, of agony, prey—for vultures.
He has not suffered, died for you in war
But he'll never know what he did it for.*

Rachel Kass 9

The Iraq War

Life's dark; when blood and bullets cross your eyes,
A friend, or not, would scream; shout 'Help!' then drop,
When infants leave their soul-mates, full of cries,
All bitter day, you'd kill, and never stop.
The heat flaking; it burns from the red sun,
For G-d, who can; he must, wipe out this war,
If missiles rage, even the brave will run,
As masses dead, they need to restore.

Some taste the cold, bone-chilling depth of air,
Those boys shed tears; like ice and filled with prayer.
A splintered life, when love is taken from men,
When peace is lost the world seems to collapse.
The start of death is hope; a dream perhaps,
Their thoughts of home, of England, never again.

David Shaw 9

October 2008 Parental questionnaire: Year 7 Induction

33 Year 7 parents responded:

	Agree strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree strongly
The 'Welcome to Year 7' booklet helped me to understand the school's systems	39%	52%	9%	0%	0%
The 'Welcome to Year 7' booklet helped my child to understand the school's systems	27%	61%	12%	0%	0%
The individual meeting for me and my child with the headteacher provided a useful opportunity to share information to help my child settle into the school	49%	39%	9%	3%	0%
The July Induction Evening for parents helped me to understand the school's systems	55%	39%	6%	0%	0%
The Year 7 Induction Day at the beginning of term helped my child to settle in to school life	48%	32%	16%	3%	0%
The workshop run by Streetwise in the first week of term provided my child with useful training in personal safety	13%	65%	19%	3%	0%
My child is happy at school	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%

October 2008 Pupil questionnaire: How well do we look after you?

136 respondents

	Yes	No
1. Are you happy at Yavneh College?	100%	0%
2. Have you made new friends here since you joined the school?	100%	0%
3. Have you been bullied here?	11%	89%
4. Have you seen anyone being bullied here?	10%	90%
5. If you were worried or unhappy at school, do you feel that you would be able to speak to a member of staff about it?	82%	18%
6. If you answered 'Yes' to Question 3, briefly describe what sort of bullying took place.	11 reported verbal taunts (10 on one occasion, 1 on a number of occasions) 4 reported being pushed once 2 reported being hit once	
7. If you answered 'Yes' to Question 5, which member of staff would you speak to?	54% said their form tutor 27% said Mrs Spelman 14% said any staff 5% said Mrs Nemko	

If you would like to add any written comments, please use the back of this questionnaire.

Only one comment received: 'This school is too strict.'

PLEASE FIND ATTACHED TERM DATES FOR 2009/2010

Important dates for your diary!

9HS Parents' Evening	Tue 9 December
9AM (A-K) Parents' Evening	Tue 9 December
9AM (L-T) Parents' Evening	Mon 15 December
9IT Parents' Evening	Mon 15 December
Chanukah Show	Tue 16 and Wed 17 December
End of Autumn Term	Friday 19 December
AS examinations and mock-examinations	Week commencing 5 January 2009
CST & Governors' Security meeting for parents	Tue 13 January 2009
Yr 8 Shabbaton	Fri 16 and Sat 17 January 2009
Yr 9 Parents and pupils' GCSE Options Evening	Wed 21 January 2009
Yr 7 Parents' Evenings	Mon 2 February & Tue 10 February
Yr 8 Parents' Evenings	Tue 17 March & Mon 23 March

Please note that for the school year 2008/2009, Winter Fridays (school ends 1.15pm)
will finish on 20 March 2009



Am Echad the charity committee of the school are creating the first-ever Yavneh College kosher cookbook 'Yummy Yavneh' to raise money for three worthy charities. Parents, please email your favourite recipe to admin@yavnehcollege.herts.sch.uk and include your name and your child's name.

Thank you!

Mrs Jacobson

Art Department News

Mrs. Massias

Year 9 pupil Ryan Fairbanks was asked by the Rotary Club to design a cartoon for the talking newspaper for the blind. His poster will now be displayed in local doctors surgeries and pharmacies in the locality. Well done Ryan!



Nancy Tauber, a highly qualified fashion designer, currently working with Victoria Beckham, visited Year 9 pupils to carry out a fantastic workshop. Some amazing, imaginative designs are being created. This club will continue until the project is completed.

Thank you very much to Mrs Alfon who came in and gave a wonderful, inspirational talk to some of our Year 7 pupils. She showed us her paintings and explained how she loves doing Art as a hobby.

Congratulations to our competition winners:-

School calendar -

Winner: Maya Kaye
Runners-up: Amy Schuster and Orli Gilmore

Designing borders -

Borders were designed for the Prayer for the State of Israel and the Prayer for the Royal Family to be placed in the new shul. The artist Robert Budwig judged the competition and chose Dani Travis as the overall winner. Congratulations to Dani whose design is now up for everyone to see.

Winner: Dani Travis
Runners-up: Jordan Rinsler, Rachel Kass, Charlotte Sint, Georgia Inerfield, Jessica Tray, Noga Maya, Lauren Shrier, Shoshanna Hertz, Jake Rinsler

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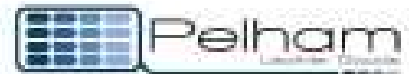
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