

## **JFS JE Committee Meeting**

Minutes of Meeting (Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2014)

### **Governors Present :**

David Horowitz (chairman)  
Jo Coleman  
Jamie Peston  
Russell Boxer  
Michael Lee  
Ruth Renton  
Jonathan Miller  
Geraldine Fainer  
Rabbi Moshe Freedman

### **Also Present:**

Rabbi Mark Kampf  
Rabbi Howard Hirsch  
Rabbi Mark Silkoff  
Janine Maurer

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Michael Glass

#### 2. Minutes of the previous meeting

It was noted that there was not, as yet, an appointed clerk to the JE committee, who would be responsible for minute taking. JM suggest to the committee that this issue would need further consideration.

RR desired to return to some of the points raised in the previous minutes. JP suggested that the specific action points should now be noted in all committee meeting minutes, and RR/JC volunteered to passing on these action points to the chairman, which would be dealt with as matters arising in the following meeting.

#### 3. Update on Text Program – Rabbi M Silkoff

MS explained that one of the focuses of the JE text programme was to build confidence in Hebrew translation. 18 months ago, it had been felt that it was hard to gauge progress across KS3. The JS department has now included specific text skills in their Long Term SoW, however it was important,

in order to engage students, that teachers should provide a broad curriculum – and not just focus on skills. It was explained that text teachers used a range of strategies in order to assess students' abilities, and the newly revised assessment given to students at the start of yr 7 was shared with the committee. There was some concern as to whether the class test would provide enough data to make judgments about students (e.g. was this test too easy?).

RR pointed out that there was a wide range of starting points amongst the students starting Year 7, and she asked how the department had devised appropriately differentiated provision? MS explained that there were now two different ability sets for the teaching of texts on one side of the year. As well as this, certain G+T students were withdrawn and taught in smaller groups.

***Action Point - RR said she would be happy to feedback to the committee the various training she had received on the subject of differentiation.***

Long Term SoWs were shared with the committee. ML requested that in future lengthy documents such as these should be sent to the committee a week prior to committee meetings.

There was some talk of the impending Pikuach inspection. Concern was raised as to whether HH should update in more detail a number of governors as to how the department had developed since the previous inspection.

***Action Point – DH would email governors to invite them to form a sub-committee to be briefed on the last Pikuach inspection, and the departmental improvements since then.***

#### 4. JIEP Presentation MK

MK reported that JIEP's annual budget had been reduced, and that as a consequence there was no more free food at the majority of JIEP events. The number of students attending JIEP events had fallen as a result, however as significant saving had been made, which should allow more of the budget to be spent on education.

This year there was planned one shabbaton for year 7 students, as well as the long standing visits to Gateshead and trips abroad. 170 students had signed up for a Poland visit, and that this was a new school record.

Time had been spent developing a 'working team' for the JIEP office, and plans were being made to recruit a new head and or deputy of JEIP in the coming months. There were also plans for further 'volunteering opportunities' for members of the wider community to help with JIEP events, and that we would shortly be advertising for the position of 'JIEP madrachim'.

A rationale has been created to help define the educational purpose of the specific events that JIEP carried out. This rationale echoed a similar document used by the JE department.

'Lifeskills' remained an important part of the school's PSHE provision, however the way lifeskills was to be delivered in the school was changing. Two examples of this was the increased use of the acting company 'Tip of the Iceberg' and the 'Three Faiths Forum' charity. The Israel related programming was also changing. JP mentioned that, more recently the UJIA has opted out of funding Israel

education within schools, and that there seemed to have been a recent change in policy within this organisation.

***Action plan - MK would give an update on the changes to Lifeskills and Israel education at the next meeting of the committee***

There was then a discussion about the outside agencies which have been invited run PSHE sessions within the school.

***Action plan - MK would provide the committee with a list of the outside agencies used by the school, in order to help evaluate the quality of PSHE provision***

JM paid tribute to MK his managing of the JIEP department over recent months, whilst the 'Head of JIEP' position had been vacant.

JM also pointed out that it was extremely difficult to measure the impact of JIEP's work, although attempts had been made to include this work in the recent Ofsted Action plans.

JC raised concerns regarding the Ofsted focus on the quality of PSHE provision. JM explained as part of this, there was now a specific action plan for the delivery of homophobic bullying education.

It was mentioned that a parental survey was being planned as part of the school's response to the recent Ofsted inspection. However, it may not be possible to include JIEP specific questions in this survey, and perhaps an additional survey would be required. Some discussion was had regarding appropriate questions for a JIEP parental survey, with concerns being raised that 'ethos orientated questions' might be more appropriate than questions regarding specific events and activities. There was also some talk of surveying students, and suggestions were made regarding a 'pilot survey' or a focus group. JP highlighted that there was still a lack of academic research on the subject of measuring the impact of Jewish informal education.

***Action Point – Once the suggested Pikuach sub-committee had met with HH, they should consider making a proposal regarding surveying students and parents.***

## 5. JE and Ivrit: 2014/15 KPI report - Results analysis, DiP & Update

### *Staffing:*

HH informed governors that three members of the JS department would soon be taking maternity leave, and preparations were being made to cover these absences. One individual had been found so far to provide maternity cover however they would receive training before embarking on a full timetable, and there was the strong possibility of another replacement being found. If this additional replacement would not be found there would be some lessons that would be uncovered. In the Ivrit department, one member of staff will be leaving soon; one member of staff had a visa issue currently under appeal, and one member of staff was suffering from long term sickness.

Some suggestions were made about future ideas for recruitment: JP suggested that financial incentives could be given to sixth formers who were prepared to study Ivrit at university level, and

return to the school to teach. The suggestion was made as to whether MFL teachers could be trained up to teach Ivrit, and some discussion was had about the nature of Ivrit teaching – was it simply another MFL subject, or did the subject relate more closely to the Jewish ethos of the school.

#### *Results:*

GCSE and A-Level JS results were shared with the committee. It was agreed that there are some outstanding features of these results, although it was noted that GCSE results indicated that there was an 8% gap between the PP students and the rest of the year group. Some discussion was had about the necessity of our more advanced/religiously observant Year 11 students sitting these qualifications. It was argued that for GCSEs the best practice was to enter all students for the regular GCSE at the end of Year 11, but to enrich the GCSE curriculum for these students. A fast-track approach for students has been attempted in the past, but was not considered a success.

GCSE and A-Level Ivrit results were shared with the committee. These GCSE results are impressive, especially when compared with the results students gain for other MFL subjects. The overall trend shows improving results and an increase in the number of students who are opting for Ivrit. Mrs Maurer also suggested that there had been some inconsistency of marking for the AS examinations.

Attempts have been made to improve the KS4 SoWs. Ivrit teacher had been using a software programme developed by PaJeS, which had been introduced to sets 1 and 2. This software had some fantastic features, but there were also some shortfalls, and Mrs Maurer was planning to feedback her experiences to PaJeS at some point.

#### *DIPs*

DIPs for Ivrit and JS were shared with the committee.

#### 6. Terms of Reference of the Committee and Kashrus Policy

Owing to a lack of time, there was not an opportunity to discuss these agenda items in detail. It was however noted that the phrase 'monitoring and improvement' should be added to the revised terms of reference.

***Action point – it was suggested that the committee approve the amendments for the time being, and ensure that these items are included in the agenda at the next meeting.***

***Action Point – it was suggested that the committee's terms of reference should be cross checked against the terms of reference for the curriculum committee.***

#### 7. AOB

DH reported that a number of governors had attended the recent PaJeS governors training and that this event had been useful and informative.

Following the recent PaJeS governors training, there was some talk of the importance of governors visiting the department to meet with teachers and observe lessons.

***Action Point – RB requested that the number of governors visits should be reported as an agenda item in all future governors meetings.***

Governors reflected on ways in which committee meetings could be made more efficient. Two suggestions were made: that timings would be provided for each agenda item, and that where possible, questions could be submitted to the chairman in advance.

## JFS JE Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 5 May 2015

### Governors Present :

David Horowitz (Chairman)(DH)  
Steven Woolf (SW)  
Jo Coleman (JC)  
Jamie Peston (JP)  
Ruth Renton (RR)  
Jonathan Miller (JM)

### Also Present:

Rabbi Mark Kampf (MK)  
Rabbi Howard Hirsch (HH)  
Mrs Janine Maurer (JaM)  
Nina LeBlanc- Head of JIEP (NL)

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies: Michael Lee; Russell Boxer

#### 2. Agenda Order

DH explained that the agenda items would not follow the listed order as certain teachers were only available for the initial part of the meeting. The minutes would therefore reflect the changed agenda.

DH reminded the meeting that no clerk had been appointed to record the minutes. RR agreed to record the minutes of this meeting.

#### 3. Approval of November minutes

DH referred the meeting to the previous committee minutes and asked for comments. He referred the meeting to the appended list of action points contained in the previous minutes. The following items remained outstanding:

- Life skills/PHSE- update required regarding outside agencies and fulfilment of curriculum;
- JE Committee Terms of Reference – cross-referral to Curriculum Committee TOR (Adjourned to this meeting)
- Kashrut Policy (Adjourned to this meeting)
- Arrangement of JE Governor link visits

The meeting was also reminded that a number of points remained outstanding as deferred to November 2014 meeting. RR apologised as she had agreed to review this.

***Action Point 1: RR to review July 2014 JE Minutes Action Points to ensure incorporation for the next JE meeting (if applicable).***

There was some discussion recording the location of hardcopy signed versions of the minutes of the committee. DH stated that electronic versions of the minutes were uploaded onto fronter for review and information. Hard copies of signed minutes had not been retained.

***Action point 2: All previous JE minutes for the last two academic years to be printed, signed by DH as applicable and stored on a file in JM's office.***

The November JE minutes was then approved by the JE committee and signed by DH as the chair.

4. Ivrit Update (previous item 10- part)

JaM provided the following update:

- February 2015: The AQA examining board notified the school that after 2017 Modern Hebrew/Ivrit And Biblical Hebrew A-level will no longer be offered by the AQA.
- The AQA board's reasons were:
  - Insufficient examiners to set the exam questions;
  - Insufficient qualified /quality examiner markers to mark the papers; and
  - Insufficient candidates sitting the relevant exams. The AQA board mentioned a threshold requirement of 1000 candidates.
- This proposal was an issue being actively considered by the Board of Deputies and PaJes. A number of suggestions are actively being considered including:
  - subsidising the shortfall in the number of candidates;
  - opening up GCSE entry to external candidates including adults and children attending other schools;
  - a new type of Hebrew A-level qualification as a combination of Modern Hebrew and Biblical Hebrew.
- Currently 500 candidates sat the Ivrit GCSE and 150 the A-level Modern Hebrew paper.
- as regards JFS:
  - 15-25 year 12s are sitting the Ivrit A "S" level;
  - 7 candidates are sitting Ivrit A level
- This development could have a worrying consequence for pupils lower down the school as they may be deterred from embarking on Ivrit studies as they may not obtain external qualifications at A level.
- There are wider implications for the whole Jewish community. JM highlighted the significant investment made by the community/ PaJes into creating Key stage 2 and 3 Ivrit materials to assist in Hebrew teaching and to encourage the continued study of Ivrit at GCSE and at A Level. This investment could be wasted if A levels and subsequently GCSEs are abandoned.

Following this update there was significant discussion between the governors and staff including:

- Whether any other qualification/programmes were available for JFS candidates - eg BAGRUT. JaM felt that the BAGRUT qualification was too advanced for JFS students and there was insufficient time to increase levels of knowledge within the timeframe.
- Different methods of increasing Ivrit candidates.; and
- Whether further lobbying was required by JFS and/or whether any other external Jewish organisations could assist in lobbying eg NAJOS? JaM explained that this issue was being coordinated by Sara Perlmutter at the Board of deputies/David Meyer at PaJes who was liaising with all relevant organisations.

***Action Point 3: JaM Update at the next JE subcommittee meeting.***

#### 5. Religious Education/ Jewish Studies (RE) GCSE update (Previous Agenda Item 9)

HH summarised for the Committee the main aspects of the proposal dated February 2015 by the Department of Education (D of E) to change the RE GCSE curriculum. HH reminded the committee this document was circulated with the JE committee materials/agenda.

- The proposal was to expand the RE GCSE course so that candidates will be required to study two religions.
- HH provided a brief overview of the options of studying the two religions. While the Committee understood and accepted the need to educate the diversity of different religions a range of views were expressed including the limited time pupils already faced to study their own religion.
- The Committee discussed various options of utilising existing materials and teachers to work within the principles of the new proposals. It was possible teach the JE curriculum under the new format such that 75% in total of the GCSE could cover Judaism. HH referred the Committee to page 4 of the D of E proposal which referred to the possible option of a study of four topics from part one in relation to a primary religion equal to 50% of the overall qualification waiting and beliefs and teachings and practices from part one in relation to the second religion equal to 25% and a balance of 25% of textual approach to the Premier religion. However, the remaining 25% of the curriculum still required the study of another religion.
- There was significant discussion surrounding the proposed changes including the potential training need for new resources and expert teachers in the secondary religion of the syllabus. The meeting discussed the lack of expertise by the school in teaching an alternative religion in detail and the need to investigate alternatives to ensure quality teaching/materials. Suggestions included: possible teacher swap with another faith school to cover 25% "other faith" element.
- The Committee were also made aware that discussions surrounding the new proposals were being considered at community level and by the Office of the Chief Rabbi. NAJOs; the Board of Deputies and PaJes were also working together and coordinating community feedback. The lead coordinator on this was David Meyer, Head of PaJes;
- The meeting was informed that other schools within the community were also considering their own individual response to the RE GCSE Proposal and whether they would continue to offer this GCSE.
- The meeting discussed whether the ending election would impact upon this proposal. It was felt that the proposals reflected the intentions of all the main parties.

Governors were reminded that JFS' RE GCSE results was one of its best categories of GCSE results - the highest "a-c" results. There was also significant discussion regarding the potential reduction in motivation, attendance and behaviour of students if the school chose not to teach the new RE GCSE – pupils appeared to respond better to the goal of external accreditation. The Committee was referred to recent attendance and behaviour figures for the JE lessons by the JFS six form where there was no compulsory external Examination /verification requirement as evidence of this.

The governors also discussed alternative RE possibilities including entrance and sitting of the A(S) level qualification. HH felt this standard was too high for the majority of year 10 students.



There was further discussion as to whether JFS views were sufficiently represented by PaJes and whether liaison with the other Jewish secondary schools would be beneficial. It was agreed that HH/JE Dept representatives would make contact and revert to the Governors.

**Action Point 4: HH/JE Dept to contact and develop connections with other JS departments in the following schools: Yavneh; Immanuel College; JCoSS to ascertain their approach to the new proposals.**

**Action point 5: Autumn term update for Governors to consider possible curriculum changes to 2016 curriculum/ teaching expertise.**

6. Staff update (Previous Agenda Item 8)

*Ivrit Department*

JM informed the meeting of the following vacancies:

- One member of staff resigned; and
- An unfilled vacancy= two vacant posts.

JM stated there was a high volume of applications however, the majority of applications were of poor quality. The application process was ongoing and Mrs Maurer would update the governors at the next meeting.

JM reminded the meeting that sourcing quality Ivrit teachers was an ongoing issue and she/the school had looked at various different options. There was a lengthy discussion about sourcing applicants from alternative non-traditional sources including:

- offering a sixth form TEFAL qualification;
- Advertising one full time role to be split between two schools (secondary/primary).;
- Schools Direct Training Programme- currently zero Applications;
- Government's promotion of PGCE bursaries.

*Jewish Studies Department*

HH updated the meeting with the following information:

- Total team of 19 teachers excluding JIEP staff;
- one colleague returned from maternity leave;
- three further colleagues have left within this academic year to commence their maternity leave; and
- One colleague is due to return from maternity leave in September 2015 (next academic year);
- HH just been notified of a further colleague due to commence maternity leave in September 2015 (next academic year).

The JE department will therefore advertise for two positions:

- one permanent full-time role; and
- one fixed-term maternity cover role.

*JIEP*

3 educators:

- 2 male educators (one of whom is paid by Gesher);
- 1 female educator; and
- 2 full time admin staff.

Unfortunately due to reductions in funding, JIEP does not have the same capacity to provide the full spectrum of programs within the school. Eg:

- unable to follow up on Lavi/Atoi Israel programmes;
- no follow up of Gateshead Shabbaton programme for attendees. NIB informed governors that all students are invited to attend the Gateshead program although the boys trip is more successfully

attended. As a direct result of the recruitment of a JIEP female educator, there has been take up of girls to the Gateshead shabbaton programme;  
- no additional programmes for the whole school beyond the festivals; Yom Haatzmaut; morning prayers and minyan outings.

The school is looking at other funding methods to maintain this department. The Governors discussed the necessary informal work carried out by JIEP and commended the JE Department, MK and NL for their efforts with JIEP.

#### 7. Lavi Update (previous Agenda Item 3)

HH informed the meeting that:

- 2014/2015 Lavi group intake comprised 52 students with over 100 applicants. This was viewed by the Lavi students as a success. While Lavi 2014/2015 has been judged a success by attendees, the school remains disappointed with the opportunities/trips available to the attendees.
- Lavi 2015/2016 there were 67 applications for 60 places. This was a significant drop in the number of applications though this would mean that a higher proportion of applications would be successful.
- There was limited follow-up for Lavi attendees by JIEP due to funding constraints/number of workers.

#### 8. Israel Education Update (Previous Agenda Item 10)

MK informed the meeting that:

- Over the previous year MK had contacted the following external organisations to provide Israeli Education/Input within JFS. JFS has tried to utilise the expertise within these organisations to impart their knowledge of Israel to JFS students. Many of the organisations seek to charge a fee for their services, which based on funding issues JFS may be too expensive for JFS. Recently, the fee quoted was approximately £6,000. Traditionally, the cost of this was paid for by UJIA and the Jewish Agency.
- JFS does not have sufficient funds to extend Israel education to the classroom. Education generally takes the form of assemblies/fairs.
- MK summarised the relevant organisation's response:
  - Bnei Akiva – internal politics and issues within this organisation, unable to provide support/individuals or programmes;
  - JNF – unable to provide assistance;
  - United Synagogue –unable to provide assistance;
  - Gesher?- Insufficient expertise in this area;
  - Jewish Agency/UJIA – provided assemblies to JFS across all years for Yom Haatzmaut – student feedback very poor; also delivered assemblies with their own religious agenda and gave their own views on Judaism which was against the agreement with JFS- unlikely to repeat the experience next year; Year 12 – Fair well received. Possibly other fairs lower down the school?
  - Tribe – unable to assist.
- MK also mentioned the visit of the Israeli ambassador on Yom Haatzmaut in which he and his family explained what Israel meant for each of them. The visit was well received by the students.
- The meeting discussed other possibilities/sources of funding including:
  - US – New Living and Learning Team/ David Collins; and
  - Other external organisations.

## 9. Pikuach Report (Previous Agenda Item 7)

HH referred the meeting to the recent Pikuach report in which JFS JE Department had been given an Overall finding/Judgement of: Good. The report had been previously circulated to the Governors.

The Chair/meeting congratulated HH and the JE Department on their successful result.

HH referred the meeting to pages 4 and 5 of the report which looked at the required areas of improvement for the school to reach an outstanding finding.

HH referred in particular to the following points which Pikuach already recognised as outstanding:

- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development – Diversity and difference are valued and celebrated within the school. A positive climate for learning;
- Some teaching is outstanding;
- Curriculum – well planned and developed linking Jewish learning to everyday lives ;
- Leadership and management of Jewish Studies and JIEP.

HH highlighted the following items that Pikuach stated were not yet outstanding:

- Teaching;
- Greater monitoring of assessment for learning in the classroom, particularly exercise books;
- Number of students including within the Sixth form need to show greater progress;
- Lack of daily collective worship;

HH stated that the new SIMS tracking system will be able to provide further evidence of tracking and attainment. HH referred to the areas of improvement stated by Pikuach and how the new SIMs recording system could be utilised:

- Continue to develop the current system of monitoring progress. HH spoke about new strategies to mark and record classwork and receive student feedback. This was part of the school's overarching approach to marking. Teacher will now need to provide evidence that stated lesson objectives of lessons had been achieved;
- Consistency in marking/behaviour. HH referred to the current separate homework and class exercise books. The new suggestion was to integrate both books to highlight continued learning and feedback on that subject. HH also referred to gold slip recording in SIMs as evidence of positive feedback to students as tracked and recorded by SIMs;
- Improve monitoring strategies for assessment of learning. HH highlighted new plans for tracking the gifted and talented progress as well as general progress; review of exam results;
- Daily acts of worship – HH referred to the voluntary minyan which was available to all students to enable the practise of worship. However, HH explained that though a faith school it was too logistically difficult to compulsorily provide this throughout the school as part of the daily timetable; and
- Raising quality of teaching for staff. HH explained that the department's Observation Support Team was currently reviewing existing requirements to evidence outstanding teaching. The meeting was informed that HH had himself qualified to carry out Pikuach inspections and would therefore be able to gauge/obtain further evidence from other schools of the requirements of outstanding teaching.

**Action point 6: Once JE department had reviewed objectives/requirements this needs to be inserted in Department Improvement Plan which will then be inserted into School Improvement Plan.**

**10. Terms of Reference of the JE Committee (Previous Agenda Item 4)**

The Chair highlighted the need for the Committee to agree/approve its terms of reference at this meeting. The Chair reminded the meeting that the terms of reference had been discussed at the first meeting of the year but it was redrafted for this meeting. The Chair reminded the meeting that all the committees' terms of reference required FGB approval at the the end of year FGB meeting in July.

A long discussion then ensued about the overarching remit and objectives of the JE Committee, its impact and responsibilities. Many views were expressed regarding the remit, ethos and objectives of the committee; the volume of matters currently covered by this committee; and its inability to complete its agenda/objectives within the scheduled time frame.

It was stated that certain existing components of the committee were more applicable and relevant to the Curriculum Committee – eg review of RE/Ivrit exam results; staffing updates etc. The view was expressed that these components could potentially be separated from the JE Committee to enable it to focus on Jewish ethos principles which affected the whole school eg kashrut.

The meeting agreed that there was an exciting and new opportunity to reconsider the remit and objectives of this committee. To allow sufficient time for views to be expressed and considered, HH and MK would start this process of consideration by circulating a new list of items, terms of reference and objectives for a revamped JE Committee to non-staff governor members of the committee at least two weeks before the next JE meeting in July for continued discussion and agreement at the next meeting.

**Action point 7: New objectives to be circulated by relevant JE staff to non-staff JE governors at least two weeks' before next JE meeting.**

**11. Kashrut Policy ( Previous Agenda Item 5)**

The Chair referred the meeting to the kashrut policy. The following comments were made:

- There should be a separate school trips policy which states the requirements of taking any JFS pupils on trips. This policy would include references to kosher food. References to kashrut on trips in kashrut policy to be removed;
- Allow for sentence to be inserted allowing for fruit/water to be removed from dining hall to place all children on an equal footing – currently pupils can bring fruit/water into school but fruit/water items purchased through caterlink could not be taken out of school hall.
- Speak to Caterlink about ensuring that pupils remaining after school (after school clubs/ have sufficient food/drink without the necessity of bring this from Tesco/costa.
- Discussion of teachers brining non-kosher food onto school premises – was this allowed?
- Discussion of enforcement if pupils bring non-kosher food on-site – need for cross-referral pf ladder of consequences.

**Action point 8: The meeting resolved that a further version of the kashrut policy would be circulated to the meeting taking into account the above.**

**Action point 9: Separate trips policy required.**

12. AOB

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned.

## **Minutes of the JFS Jewish Education Committee Meeting**

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

**Governors present were:** Mr Steven Woolf (chair) (SW), Mrs Ruth Renton (RR), Dr Charlotte Benjamin (CB), Mr Jamie Peston (JP), Mr Jonathan Miller (JM), Mr Michael Lee (ML), and Mrs Anne Shisler (AS).

**Also present were:** Rabbi Howard Hirsch (HH), Mrs Janine Maurer (JaM), Mr J Silkoff (JS).

### **1 Apologies for absence**

Apologies received from: Mrs Jo Coleman.

### **2. Minutes of previous meeting (5<sup>th</sup> May 2015).**

**2.1** ML noted that this was the first meeting since May 2015 and the committee were struggling to get through agenda items. RR explained that the summer term meeting was cancelled due to illness and acknowledged the committee needs to meet more frequently to more make progress with its work plan. RR said the remit of the JE committee needs to be reviewed and the terms of reference (ToR) is on the agenda.

**2.2** ML asked why there was no action point for the Israel education update (point 8).

RR explained that there had been no outstanding action and the plan had been for Rabbi Kampf to keep the committee updated regularly and look for alternative funding streams.

ML suggested Rabbi Andrew Shaw be approached as he has joined Mizrahi UK (a religious Zionist education organisation). JM said he has spoken to Rabbi Shaw who is keen to get involved with schools and will wait to hear from him once he has started the new role.

### **3. Ivrit Department Improvement Plan (DIP)**

JaM gave an update on the Ivrit DIP.

**3.1 Ivrit GCSE** – GCSE results last year were outstanding 73% A-A\*. Numbers are increasing with 50 students in year 10 and year 9 has 32 students.

Sarah Purlmutter (Education officer for the Board of Deputies) has provided an update on the new Ivrit GCSE syllabus. The decision is between Oxford Cambridge and RSA (OCR) and the Board of Education. The new syllabus will begin in 2017.

The accelerated Ivrit class in Year 7 is working to the current syllabus but hopefully the new one will not be too different.

**3.2 Ivrit A Level** - The existing Ivrit A Level will be cancelled and currently no new specification is available but there is no reason to think there won't be in the future. Options are OCR or the Board of Education. The main issue is uptake for Ivrit at A Level. JFS is trying to increase the number of

entrants and Board of Deputies is trying to increase numbers of entrants elsewhere including adult education.

In the Yr 10 group there are approximately 11 students and 7 in Year 12 studying the AS level. More English as first language speakers are coming through but the exam continues to be geared to Ivrit as first language students, which is why there was a dip in grades at AS level last year.

**3.3 Staffing** – Out of the possible 193 teaching hours for Ivrit, 169 hours are staffed but all classes are being taught. In year 9, 6 sets have been merged into 5 to ensure teachers for all sets.

2 new teachers from Israel have been recruited and one existing JFS teacher is teaching Ivrit as supply. Interviews are planned for a Key Stage 6 teacher.

JCP ran a training course for the 2 newly qualified teachers along with 7 teachers from other schools.

Additional support for Ivrit teaching has come from the Shinishinim who are working with JIEP. They help with small groups for reading or conversation in Yr 8 and GCSE with speaking.

**3.4 Yesh v'yesh** – new teaching programme for year 7 top sets last year and the Ivrit department are now trialling the current year 8 groups with the next book in the series.

**3.5 FACE themes** – the dept. are focusing on starting points for each group, re-enforcing seating plans, identifying specific needs and the starting points for each class. There is also a gifted and talented programme at KS3.

JM said the governors should be aware of how challenging the staffing situation has been for the Ivrit department to manage despite the calm exterior and they have done a very good job. SW seconded this.

JaM left the meeting due to a prior commitment.

#### **4. JE Department Key Performance Indicators (KPI)**

**4.1 Staffing** – Full complement for the department is 19 staff and currently they have 18. 2 members of staff are due to go on maternity leave in the next 6 months. 2 teachers are newly qualified and 2 are doing the QTS programme. JM noted the significant increase in qualified teachers in the department over the last 5 yrs.

**4.2 JS GCSE** – An increase in A-A\* but slight drop in A\*-C grades. HH said this reflects the wider spectrum of ability in that year's cohort.

**4.3 JS AS/ A level** – AS A-C grades increased which reflects the success of a range of strategies the dept. put in place. A2 grades dipped and HH said this reflects the staffing difficulties which led to two classes being merged.

SW asked if JS GCSE is seen as an easier subject so potentially weaker students go through to 'A' level and then struggle. HH agreed and said the A level is more challenging than students realise and other schools have a similar issue.

**4.4 Drop in Yr 7 students in text programme** – HH said there had been a noticeable drop in the number of students opting for the text stream this year. This is the first year numbers have dropped. Staff noticed a reduction in pupils coming from feeder schools who would traditionally opt for the text programme and a general reduction across all pupils from the Jewish feeder schools choosing the text option.

CB said that the numbers should be increasing year on year if pupils with older siblings who chose the text option were following suit, so suggests they are not doing this. May need to ask if the text programme is providing what this group of students want. RR said anecdotally she has heard that some feel the text programme is not sufficient and may need to be developed further or to a higher level. CB offered to support the JS department to promote the text stream.

**Action point:** Increased efforts to be made to encourage students to apply for the text programme when incoming students are sent the options letter.

**4.5 Gap Year** – Numbers of students taking a gap year in Israel has dropped. Challenges of cost continue. There are 5 students going this year (6 went last year).

ML asked if the school should be doing something to help with funding.

JP said due to the high cost, anything the school could contribute is unlikely to be sufficient to make the difference for pupils to be able to afford to go.

JM said in Year 9, 250 out of 300 students from JFS went on one of the Israel trips this year. JP said numbers may drop next year due to the situation in Israel at the moment.

#### **5. Jewish Studies Department Improvement Plan – no issues raised.**

Rabbi Yoni Golker has been appointed 6<sup>th</sup> Form Kodesh lead and he is setting up a programme. The governors would like to congratulate Rabbi Golker on gaining Semicha.

RR said the committee should consider setting up a 6<sup>th</sup> Form JS link governor.

#### **6. Religious studies GCSE**

The new GCSE needs to cover 2 religions split 75%/25% and has provided a list of 5 religions.

The Chief Rabbi has provided guidance. Jewish schools can teach other religions. After consideration with Dayanim and other interested parties, the recommendation of the Chief Rabbi would be Islam. The Koran can be quoted from but not learnt from. Inter-faith activities can proceed as has always been the case as one-offs and not on-going arrangements.

Challenges include: training for JS teachers in another religion to a high enough standard, scheduling issues, additional resources (books/photocopying) may be needed, possible student recruitment and JS staff recruitment issues.

JM said the decision to offer the new RE GCSE is an ethos based decision and needs to be discussed by the governors. It was suggested once the specification for the new syllabus is finalised the JS dept. work with other Jewish schools to develop resources. It is due to begin Sept 2016.



JM said students would welcome the opportunity to study another faith as student surveys often ask for more multi-faith teaching. The JS Dept. was praised for taking such a positive stance towards the new syllabus.

**Action points:**

1. Parents to be told about syllabus changes at the Yr 9 open evening in January 2016 along with changes to the standard grading system for GCSE.
2. HH to give a brief update at the next JS committee meeting on the development of the new GCSE course.

**7. Kashrut Policy**

There was a discussion about changes suggested in the draft policy circulated to committee members. A number of changes were agreed and will be adopted as the updated Kashrut policy.

**Action points:**

1. HH to make the agreed changes and circulate to JS Committee and then full GB.
2. Kashrut for trips will be moved to the Visits Policy and will be discussed by the Joint JE/Curriculum committee in the spring term.

**8. Agree reps for JE Committee to join the JE/Curriculum meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2015**

SW will attend and RR will be the rep from the JE Committee.

**9. Terms of Reference (ToR).**

The JE Committee is looking for a chairperson. There is a vacancy on the GB for a foundation governor and the GB is keen to appoint a Rabbi if possible but it may be a challenge to find someone. JM and RR are in the early stages of identifying suitable candidates (would need to be a United Synagogue Rabbi).

The ToR have not been reviewed yet.

**Action point:** HH to complete a draft, get it agreed by the JS staff then bring back to the JE committee for review.

HH, MS and JP left the meeting.

Graham Silas 23 November 2015 22:39

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#### **10. Future advertising plans for SLT position (held previously by Rabbi Kampf).**

SW said this appointment is an opportunity to review and decide the future direction of JS in the school. It should reflect the vision of the Jewish dimension of the school.

JM said the role must incorporate more than the JS role element as the post is part of the SLT. There was a discussion about whether the post holder needs to be a rabbi or not, whether they should be qualified to teach another subject in addition to JS and where to advertise the role. ML asked if there is a previous job description or generic targets for this role to work from, to help governors understand the previous parameters of the post.

#### **Action agreed:**

1. JM will write a brief history to the post and his view of what is required from the role which will be circulated to governors.
2. All governors will be invited by email to send SW their views and ideas about the future Jewish dimension of the school and this role.
3. SW, RR and JM will use these views to inform the creation of a job description and vision of Jewish dimension to the school.
4. Post will be advertised early 2016, with a view to appointment beginning September 2016.

**Date of next meeting: 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2016**