

King Solomon High School Newsletter

11 October 2024, 9 Tishrei 5785 (Erev Yom Kippur)



Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you are all well.

This fortnight's newsletter is dedicated to remembering October 7th 2023 and to Yom Kippur.

On Monday I wrote a heartfelt letter regarding the tragedy of October 7th 2023 in Israel, the unimaginable suffering that has followed for so many people across different communities and the community cohesion that we have seen over the last year within our school. In case you missed my letter, it has been included in this newsletter.

Yom Kippur

Today is erev (eve) Yom Kippur. Hopefully you read our wonderful special feature newsletter on the Jewish holidays, which was attached to our newsletter two weeks ago. If you missed it, it is attached to this newsletter also.

Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, begins this evening just before sunset, and ends on Saturday evening. Yom Kippur starts with the powerful and deeply moving prayer service Kol Nidre (means 'all vows'). Jewish people will abstain from food and drink for 25 hours. Fasting is part of the communal and personal atonement for sins committed during the

past year. Jewish people believe that on Yom Kippur G-d decides who will be inscribed in the Book of Life. Mrs Juggler has written an insightful D'var Torah (an interpretation of the weekly Torah portion) and this can be found on the next page.

Returning to the school's full timetable

At the end of last term, we took the decision to shorten the school day for years 7-10 twice a week, while we continue with recruitment and settle in our overseas teachers. Our overseas teachers are settling in well and we have had a positive start to the year.

We are planning to move some or all year groups back to their full timetable just before the end of the autumn term. I am not able to give the exact details right now, but I hope to be able to do so by the first week of November. We have recruited more staff this term, which is great news, but we are still going through the careful planning process of ensuring that all students have consistent teachers.

I wish everyone who observing Yom Kippur a 'Gemar Chatimah Tovah' (גמר חתימה טובה). This means 'A good final sealing'.

I hope everyone has a lovely weekend. Thank you for all your support.

Ms Phillips

Headteacher

Important Dates

SUKKOT - Wednesday 16th October - Early closure for the start of Sukkot 1:20pm

Thursday 17th and Friday 18th October - SCHOOL CLOSED

HALF TERM - Monday 21st - Friday 25th October

INSET DAY - Wednesday 6th November - SCHOOL CLOSED

Remembering October 7th 2023 - Open letter from the Headteacher (sent on October 7th 2024)

Today is one year since Hamas launched the deadliest attack on the Jewish people since the Holocaust. Young people, children, elderly people, families, tourists, all going about their lives, suddenly had their world torn apart. Over a thousand people in Israel were brutally murdered and 250 hostages were taken into the deep tunnels of Gaza, some of which have been released, some have been murdered and around 90 of these hostages are still unaccounted for.

The death, destruction and sorrow that has ensued across the Middle East since October 7th 2023 is heart breaking. The suffering and death of children and innocent people is always a tragedy.

For the past 365 days I, along with many people, have held a grief in my heart that feels like it has no end. Life feels like it may never be the same again for the Jewish people and for all the civilians caught up in this war. Despite the differing of opinions and beliefs, we must focus on what unites us and we must not let hate of any kind seep into our community.

King Solomon High School stands as a beacon of hope and light. We have held onto our strong Jewish values and foundations over the last year and kept focussed on our number one priority - our wonderful students, who need our care, our expertise and our support. We have had such a positive start to the year, and we will all continue giving our students the very best that humanity has to offer - a great education in a safe and inclusive setting, delivered by kind and caring staff.

Staff have been asked to be additionally sensitive today and to be aware that this is a difficult day for many people in our community.

May the darkness turn to light.

Kind regards

Michele Philips

Headteacher

Parasha Reflections - Mrs Juggler

As the Jewish community continues to make their way through this festival period, the weekly reading of the Torah continues apace ready for the celebration of Simchat Torah which falls during our half term.

As in any book, sacred or otherwise the ending is the authors last opportunity to remind the reader of the important messages contained within it. In the final chapters of the Torah, Moses gets ready to say goodbye to the Israelites as they prepare to enter the land of Canaan without him. He reminds people of their obligations to G-d and how they should rule each other and look after each other. Commentators often question why Moses was chosen to accompany the Israelites through the forty years in the wilderness but not into the Promised Land. One of the answers is written in the Torah. Moses goes against G-ds instructions to talk to the rock and hits the rock instead. You might ask why such a harsh punishment? Both ancient and modern commentators have a variety of theories but perhaps the most pertinent is the idea of transitional leadership. These leaders are never permanent, they exist solely to help a group of people move from one state to another. In the case of the Israelites, Moses had taken them out of Egypt, into the wilderness where they had received the Torah.

In those wilderness years, they had had rebellions, plagues and wars with neighbouring tribes. They had been nomadic and rootless. As they prepared to settle, they would become an agricultural people, they would learn to farm the land, not fight for it. And Moses, as inspiring and charismatic as he was, was not the leader to oversee that.

The Torah ends with the verse “Never again did their arise in Israel, a prophet like Moses who G-d singled out face to face (Deut 34:10). Why does the Torah end this way? Why don't Moses' sons take over? Like every verse, this final one has meaning as well. Moses was special, there is no doubt about that, but he was also human. He made plenty of mistakes, had anger management issues and had a poor relationship with his wife and children. Moses is important but he isn't G-d. Jews don't pray to Moses, they pray to G-d and Moses' death at such an important time in the Jewish story reminds us that Moses, whilst important is not G-d. He was the perfect leader for a specific time, not forever.

With Moses' death at the end of the Torah, we go right back to the very beginning and start reading the Torah again. We learn that although the Torah itself is permanent that it is G-d not Moses who brought it to us.

Behaviour and Expectations - Mr Tomene

Here at King Solomon High School, we aim to provide our students a world class education in a modern orthodox Jewish setting. We are committed to creating an environment where exemplary behaviour is at the heart of school life, so that all students can achieve their full potential. Good behaviour creates a calm and safe school where students can learn, feel safe and thrive.

Our school values of learning, charity and community centres everything we do as a school. They set out our expectations of students in a supportive way and develop good character, preparing our student for later life and becoming positive members of the community.

We have started the academic year with the same high expectations for each of our students. This is expressed from the start of the day when they enter the school gates and are greeted by our headteacher, Ms Philips, throughout the day as their teachers remind them of our classroom behaviour expectations, and at the end of the day when they are dismissed. It has been a great pleasure witnessing our students engage with our procedures, take great efforts in working well in lessons, share spaces across the field and positively engage with one another. This year we are raising the profile on rewards and Heads of Year are sharing this message with their year groups, so we expect our achievement points count to continue rising as the year continues. We look to recognising and celebrating students.

We continue to focus on classroom behaviour this year, so that students are able to fully engage in their learning. We will also be monitoring attendance to detentions, so that students are able to face the consequences of their actions and learn from it. I ask that you continue to have conversations with your children on positive behaviours, meeting the schools' expectations and presenting themselves in the best way.

I have now entered my second academic year at King Solomon, and I am still excited about the journey we are on. I have been welcomed by a lovely community of parents and students, and I hope that we can all continue to work together and support one another for the betterment of our young people.



Enrichment Programme

Over the past few weeks, we have loved witnessing all the exciting projects that students have been working on during their period 5 enrichment sessions. Students are being given the opportunity to explore their creativity in various subjects and it has been wonderful watching them enhance their skills as the weeks have progressed. We have seen Drama enrichment encouraging students to learn routines to various musical numbers, Food Technology cooking up some delicious pancakes, DT working hard on their woodwork skills, Art working on their Hebrew alphabet drawings and not forgetting lots of magic tricks being taught which students have loved showing off to their teachers and peers. It has been great watching our students benefit from these enrichment sessions and seeing them develop their confidence in various skill sets.



Attendance - Information for parents

Please be advised that all appointments, lateness to school or absences on behalf of your child, needs to be reported via the Synergy Parent app. Please refrain from using the info@kshsonline.uk mailbox, staff members direct email addresses or the telephone absence line. The latter is in the event of technical issues with the app on any given day. If you have not yet activated your Synergy Parent app account, please do contact us on 0208 4981300 for your activation code.

Your assistance in helping us streamline our communication processes is greatly appreciated.

Sukkot - Redbridge Food Bank collection

One of the themes of Sukkot is temporary shelter and it is because of this that we encourage students to think about those who are not fortunate enough to have a permanent home or some of the other essentials we take for granted such as food and heating, especially at this time of year as the weather begins to turn colder.

This year, we have once again partnered with Redbridge Food Bank to take part in a desperately needed collection of many items of food for those who find themselves in temporary accommodation across the borough.

On Monday 14th October and Tuesday 15th October, we are organising a school-wide collection, and we are asking you to bring in one item from the following:

Instant noodles, dried mash potatoes, dried milk, ring pull tinned items such as baked beans, sweet treats, crisps and individual packs of fruit juices.

The items do not need to be kosher but please do not send in anything perishable or any meat products.

Please deposit the items in the foodbank bins which will be stationed outside the canteen. If you cannot locate them, please give your items to your period 1 teacher.

We are excited to celebrate Sukkot by making a positive impact on people's lives through the simple act of chessed (loving kindness).

Get to Know

Mr Joseph Schneider



Greetings! My name is Joseph Schneider, and I am tremendously honoured to have been brought on as a teacher of English here at KS. It is my hope to transmit my passion for language and literature to all my students, and so inspire in them a lifelong love of learning.

My journey to this role has been anything but direct. After earning my bachelor's in theatre from UCLA, I made my living as a magician and mentalist. I immersed myself as fully as possible in magic and its kindred arts, earning my Magic Castle membership in 2003. I later graduated from the Sideshow School at the historic Coney Island Midway, where I studied escapology, fire-eating, and other arcane arts of the American carnival.

I began my teaching journey as an Imperial Society ballroom dance instructor in the late aughts, with a focus on international standard (waltz, tango, Viennese waltz, foxtrot, quickstep), although I grew to prefer social styles and wedding dance choreography. When my wife and I moved from LA to the Bay Area a few years later, I found myself leading enrichment courses at a local primary school. When I earned my master's degree in 2015, I was offered a full-time post as a multi-subject teacher.

I adored teaching primary school, but after eight years I felt a change was due. I had wanted to live in the UK since I was sixteen and had already made several friends here through my work in magic. As somewhat an authority on cards and their use in both entertainment and subterfuge, I had been made a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Makers of Playing Cards, one of London's royally chartered craft guilds. I was later granted Freedom of the City and inducted as a Liveryman with my company. (Look out for me in the Lord Mayor's parade this November! I will be dressed as playing card, of course.)

Apart from my work in teaching, I am the author of the LAPD Detective Tully Jarsdel murder mysteries. The second in the series, *What Waits for You*, was named Best of the Month by Apple Books and earned a starred review from *Publisher's Weekly*. I am also an inveterate cinephile, so if you would like to spend an hour (or six) talking movies, you will find me a most willing participant.

I absolutely couldn't be happier to be at KS, and I thank all of you for making me feel so welcome.

Ms Racquel Barclay



Hi! I am Racquel Barclay and I am from the sun-kissed island of Jamaica. A little over a month ago, I traded the Caribbean breeze for a new and exciting adventure in the UK, after spending a year teaching in Japan. I suppose you could say that my life is like a 'cultural smoothie'.

In counting the years - and making the years count - I have been teaching for eight years and I get tremendous joy and fulfilment from sparking creativity and critical thinking in my students.

When I am not in the classroom, you will find me whipping up culinary delights in the kitchen, diving into an interesting novel, wandering through art galleries or perfecting my tennis serve.

A fun fact about me is that I can speak and write Japanese (katakana).

My hope for the future is to help my students to develop a genuine appreciation for language and learning in general. Ultimately, I want my students to realise that their voices can make a difference, while being cognisant of the responsibility that comes with using our voices.

My personal ambition is to pen a book, "*A Playful Guide to Teaching English* by Racquel Barclay" - sounds appealing, does it not? Of course! Because teaching and learning should not be a chore.

Finally, the ability to effectively express one's ideas through language, is arguably one of the most useful skills an individual can possess. After all, the pen is mightier than the sword.

Staying Safe - a message from our Safer Schools Sergeant

At the start of every new academic year, we focus our efforts on reducing the seasonal spike of robberies of school children, especially new Year 7 students.

Please take note of the below crime prevention/awareness information aimed to help students be more aware of their surroundings and stay safe on their journey to and from school.

STAY SAFE GOING TO AND FROM SCHOOL

We want children to be as safe as possible on the school journey.

- Stay aware of your surroundings when walking.
- Try not to walk along with your phone or valuables out on show.
- Plan your route and use forms of transport others are using.
- Avoid shortcuts in isolated places.
- Don't confront a thief or risk your own safety.

Robbery is a serious crime that should be reported, this includes any attempts to rob victims of their property.

**IF YOU SEE A ROBBERY TAKING PLACE OR HAVE JUST BEEN ROBBED CALL 999.
OR REPORT IS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE ON 101 OR AT MET.POLICE.UK**



ROBBERY IS A SERIOUS CRIME THAT SHOULD BE REPORTED

If your child is robbed, calling 999 on a friend or trusted adult's phone is their best chance of an immediate response.

This gives police the opportunity to catch the suspects, recover stolen items and make sure they're safe.



Safeguarding Contacts

If you are concerned about your child's wellbeing or the wellbeing of any other student at King Solomon High School, please contact the school on 020 8498 1331 or email the DSL at safeguarding@kshsonline.uk. This email address can also be used for students, parents and carers to share any safeguarding concerns or to request support.

If you are concerned that a child has been harmed or is at risk of being harmed and school cannot be contacted, please contact Redbridge Children's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 020 8708 3885, and all the police on 999 straight away.

Helpful numbers and websites

- **Childline:** 0800 1111
- **NSPCC Helpline:** 0808 800 5000
- **The Police:** (if you are in danger): 999.
- **LGBT Switchboard:** 0300 330 0630
- **Kooth:** www.kooth.com - support service for student's wellbeing
- **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (emergency team):** 020 8496 3000
- **Barnardos:** 0800 008 7005

Let us know . . .

- If you feel upset or worried about anything at all (even if you think it is not important)
- If you feel anxious or unable to cope
- If someone has hurt you physically, emotionally, or mentally.
- If you feel upset or worried about anything at all (even if you think it is not important)
- If you feel worried about someone at home
- If you are being threatened or forced to do things
- If someone has done something to you without your consent
- If you feel unsafe in school, at home or on the streets
- About anything else worrying you

Student medical needs

If your child needs to take regular medication in school, please request a [Medicines Consent Form](#) from the Admin office to give the school consent to administer medication to your child.

All medications that are kept in school must be stored in the medical room.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

We are continuously working hard to improve our understanding as a community of mental health, to enable us to provide the best possible outcomes for the young people in our lives. If you are ever concerned that your child is at risk due to very poor mental health, please inform the school. You can also contact one of these numbers to seek support from a specialist. The Crisis line is there to offer guidance if your child may be having suicidal thoughts and is possibly in immediate danger. If you do ever find yourself in a position where you need to use these resources for your child, please make the school aware so we can provide appropriate support within school for your child.



Urgent mental health support - 24/7 crisis lines

Every mental health trust in London has put in place a 24/7 crisis line for people of all ages - children, young people and adults. The lines which are free to call can provide advice to those in a crisis. These crisis lines are supported by trained mental health advisors 365 days a year.

You can find the 24/7 crisis line numbers using the NHS Service Finder ([link below](#)) but the table provides all of the telephone numbers in London.

<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline>



Area	Boroughs covered	24/7 crisis line number
North West London	Brent, Hillingdon, Harrow, Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster	0800 0234 650
	Ealing, Hounslow and Hammersmith & Fulham	0800 328 4444
North Central London	Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey and Islington	0800 151 0023
North East London	City & Hackney	0800 073 0006
	Newham	0800 073 0066
	Tower Hamlets	0800 073 0003
	Barking & Dagenham, Havering, Redbridge and Waltham Forest	0300 555 1000
South West London	Kingston, Merton, Richmond, Sutton and Wandsworth	0800 028 8000
South East London	Croydon, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark	0800 731 2864
	Bexley, Bromley and Greenwich	0800 330 8590