THE GESHER GAZETTE

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JOIN THE CLUB









If you think our lunch breaks are just for eating, think again! With a wonderful variety of clubs running across the week, our students have been finding new passions, building friendships across different classes, and growing their confidence in spaces designed just for their interests. Perhaps the biggest headline of the term is the rise of Gesher's very own student-led playground clubs, with students taking the reins to run Sports Club, Magic Club, and Art Club during the lunch break. Speaking to the Gesher Gazette this week, Batsheva from Gevurah shared how she has been making the most of the term's lineup: "I go to Zen Club, Art Club (the one Miss Monique runs) and I've started to go to Girls Club. Maybe Girls Club is my favourite. This week we made bookmarks. We will get them next week." Inspired by her love of creativity, Batsheva has also stepped up as a club leader herself: "It's like an Art Club and I do it outside in the lunch break." Whether our students want to battle Pokemon cards, build bug hotels, or step into virtual reality, there is genuinely something for everyone and we can't wait to see the clubs flourish throughout the rest of the year!

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Shining Bright for Diwali

At our school, we believe that recognising, acknowledging and learning about the faiths and festivals of others is an important part of fostering an inclusive, respectful and understanding community. As a Jewish faith school, it is particularly important that we create opportunities for our students to learn about and appreciate the traditions, beliefs and celebrations of other faiths, recognising the richness that diversity brings to our community. We also believe that the best way to bring these experiences to life is to let our students take the lead and share their own stories, traditions and experiences. We were delighted to give both a primary and a secondary student the opportunity to create and deliver a presentation about their traditions and how they celebrate this special festival at home. Ariana said, "I made a Diwali presentation and I was proud to share how my family celebrates Diwali with my school." Our students also helped create a special Diwali menu, and there was plenty of excitement as they enjoyed sparklers to mark the occasion! Advait said "I enjoyed all of it." It was a wonderful opportunity for learning and sharing together, reminding us that understanding and respecting one another's differences helps us recognise all that we have in common.

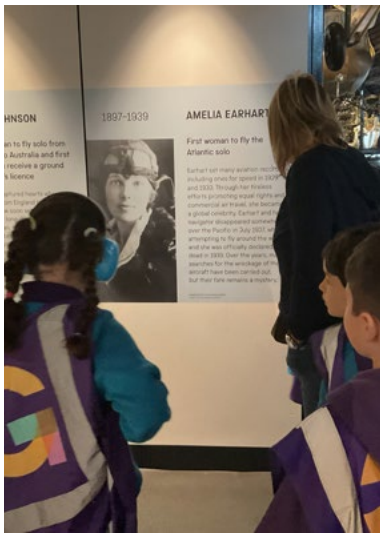






Seorah and Gefen Visit the Science Centre





Our recent trip sparked plenty of curiosity, wonder and excitement! From exploring the mysteries of space to discovering trailblazing aviation history, there was so much for our students to take in. Leora was especially inspired by what she saw, telling us, "We saw planets of the Solar System and Jack should have liked that. I saw a picture of Amelia Earhart at the Flight Gallery! She was the first woman to fly a plane! She was very nervous but VERY excited and now we fly planes to different countries!" It's brilliant to see how much the centre captured our littlest learners' imaginations.

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Heroes and Inspiration

This term, our Chitah and Tamar students have been exploring what makes someone a true hero by learning all about inspirational people, their incredible achievements and the lasting legacies they leave behind. Together, we dived into the stories of remarkable role models including Jane Goodall, Marcus Rashford, Nelson Mandela and David Attenborough. To bring their learning to life, the children headed off on an exciting museum trip where they even got to see David Attenborough! Alongside him, they spotted plenty of other famous faces, from the Royals and football icons Ronaldo and Messi to music legends Harry Styles and Michael Jackson. These all have sparked lots of brilliant conversations back in class.



Up, Up and Away!

Before we even set off on our trip, the excitement was already building! When asked what they thought they might see on their trip, one Rimon student said, "I don't know, maybe planes?!", while Nina predicted, "I think we are gonna see aeroplanes and stuff related to aeroplanes, like helicopters! Um... can I go now?" They couldn't have been more spot on. The adventure began the moment we arrived and were taken through a secret side entrance, which was super exciting! After refuelling with snacks, they explored giant planes from the olden days that towered right over them, climbing aboard planes, squeezing through small holes to peek inside and playing interactive games where they created their own planes and flew them until they ran out of fuel. After lunch, the fun continued as everyone got to play in a space filled with smaller aircraft that felt just like a massive playground of old planes! We rounded off a brilliant day with a lovely group game before heading back to school, leaving our learners buzzing from an unforgettable trip.





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Kodesh Corner

Last week we launched the Duke of Edinburgh bronze award for the first time to students and parents in year 9-11. There are 4 sections to be completed over 3 months - volunteering, skills, physical and expedition - the students have been very excited to be involved. If you are interested and would like more information, please go to JLGB's website here.

Next Sunday 22nd November is Mitzvah day (Good deed day) where individuals and families from various religions come together to do social action in their communities, like food packing, visiting the elderly and litter picking. At school, we will be learning about why it is important to do mitzvot and how our positive actions impact others and the wider community. Each class will also take time out of the week to help teachers and staff and get in a positive frame of mind of helping others.
For more information about Mitzvah day, please see this video.

If you would like to be involved in a social action project on Sunday 22nd November with your child/ family, here are some charities that you can contact to see how you can help.

Reminder: For Mitzvah day we have arranged a school collection for next week and welcome everyone's support, so please remember to send your child in next week with the following:
1 x Piece of new-ish, unstained clothing for All Aboard
1 x Unopened Kosher cereal box for GIFT - click here to check Kosher cereals
1 x New Toy for Camp Simcha toy drive

We also look forward to welcoming you in for the Chanukah Enrichments and Chanukah Lighting next month.

For more information about Chanukah, please see this video.

Please see here for a GIFT Shabbat overview, ideas and conversations for families on this week's parsha (Torah portion) - Toldot.

Have a great Shabbos and weekend.

Remembrance Day

Our school community came together to mark Remembrance Day and reflect on all those who have served and sacrificed. A huge thank you goes to our wonderful students, who did a brilliant job selling poppies across the school to raise money for the Poppy Appeal. It was so lovely to see our learners taking such pride in this important tradition and helping everyone show their support!



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ADVAIT'S ANGLE!

Hi there gang! This week's Gazette is about my experience of being president! I have found it very very good and fun! I've enjoyed doing things like selling poppies around the school! I'm excited about our first school council meetings next week! On reflection I could be more lenient and patient with my friends and kids in the school. Being a good president means learning from mistakes. Overall I am learning to do good leadership!

Our 10 Minutes of Madness Continues

We kept our tenth-year celebrations rolling this month with another unforgettable 10 Minutes of Madness, and this time, we DANCED! These monthly bursts of fun are always such a lovely way to bring the whole school together, lift everyone's spirits and share a moment of pure joy. Students and staff wasted no time hitting the dance floor, showing off their best moves and laughing along to the music. Olivia summed up the energy perfectly, saying, "It was quite a lot of fun!" Leon also shared his highlight and issued a special challenge to everyone reading: "My favourite dance was the robot. I think all the readers should do the robot dance for 10 seconds, just like us!" We can't wait to see what surprises next month's 10 Minutes of Madness will bring!



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Give It A Go

Following Your Child's Lead:

When playing in a therapeutic setting the most powerful tool we use isn't a special toy or a complicated task, it's following the lead of the child. Giving your child undivided and non-directive attention for just 10 minutes can strengthen your bond and lower their anxiety. When we take a step back from instruction or directing the child what to do, the child can use their play to process and communicate their feelings which they might not have words for.

Try It At Home

1. Set a timer and remove YOUR distractions. Tell your child they have 10 minutes of special play where they can choose what to do.
2. Let the child lead. Resist your urges to suggest ideas or fix things. If you are handed a toy or given a role to play, just go along with it without changing their storyline.
3. Become a 'Sports Commentator'; instead of praising the play or asking questions simply describe what is happening. For instance 'you put the red block on top of the white block', instead of 'why did you do that' or 'good stacking!'.
4. Match their energy and mirror. Children say a lot non-verbally, by mirroring the child it helps them feel emotionally seen and understood.
5. Use warmth to wrap up the play. Give them a warning to say the play is coming to an end. Thank them for playing and showing you their world.

When you first try this it might feel a little unusual. But stick with it, as when you practise this regularly you will notice how the child's play may change. As they trust the dedicated time to play more, they will build confidence, process bigger emotions and explore through play more freely.

Teenagers and secondary students benefit from non-directive connection just as much as the younger children. You can swap traditional play methods for shared activities like video gaming, drawing or kicking a ball about together. By letting them set the pace and resist the urge to give advice or ask questions, you can give them a zero pressure time to explore themselves. By joining their world for 10/15 minutes in these side by side moments, it can give the child their safest space to process emotions.

Staff News

We are sending all our love and warmest wishes to Miss Emily as she heads off on maternity leave a little early, and we can't wait to welcome her and Mr Bradley's new baby very soon!

Student Jokes

Rimon Student:
Why did the toilet paper roll down the hill?
To get to the bottom!

Aaron from Tiferet:
Why did the banana go to the hospital?
Because it wasn't peeling well!

External Professional Support Services

Norwood

We currently provide a Family Support Service in collaboration with Norwood, a fantastic organisation with extensive experience in this area.

Norwood provides a range of early intervention groups and services and specialist help and advice to neurodiverse children and their families. This partnership aims to provide a range of support opportunities for Gesher families, including one-to-one sessions and structured courses, delivered at Gesher, designed to offer practical guidance and support. Click here to find out more about Norwood's services.

Family Support Guide

Please see the Norwood Family Support Guide here, which contains Norwood's full range of support for neurodivergent children and their families.

Dr. Sophia Bergen

Hello, I'm a clinical psychologist and parent of an autistic child, and I'm very passionate about supporting the wellbeing of other parents and carers of children with SEND navigating this journey.

I wanted to let you know about a series of webinars I have created to help parents and carers manage the emotional impact of their own journey.

Drawing on CBT and ACT (alongside my lived experience), the sessions offer understanding and validation together with practical strategies for:

- Understanding the unique stress that SEND parenting can bring
- Navigating feelings of grief and moving towards acceptance and adjustment
- Managing worry and uncertainty
- Recognising unhelpful thinking patterns and building self compassion
- Reflecting on the impact on your sense of identity and values

The webinars are pre-recorded so that parents and carers can watch when they have time and are intended as supportive psychoeducation rather than a replacement for individual therapy.

Watch the free intro here.

Explore the website and webinar series here.

With thanks,
Dr. Sophia Bergen
Clinical Psychologist