

MINUTES AND CORRESPONDENCE OF THE RELIGIOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Religious Advisory Committee comprised the Ministers of the four big Synagogues in Liverpool – Childwall, Greenbank, Allerton and Princes Road. I would regularly meet with these Ministers and after a time I insisted that Minutes be kept of these meetings. Copies of these minutes were given to the Chairman of the Governors and the Headmaster. On several occasions these minutes resulted in correspondence being exchanged between the Chairman of the Governors and this Committee.

RELIGIOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
OF THE KING DAVID SCHOOLS

Minutes of Meeting of above Committee held on Tuesday
9th December 1975 at 3.30 p.m. in Beth David.

Present: Rev. Malits (Convener)
Rabbi Turk
Rabbi Dr. Simons

Apologies: Rev. Abenson (Funeral).

4th and 5th Year Timetable

The question of the timetables of the 4th and 5th years was discussed and Mr. Beebe came to this part of the meeting to give his views on the subject.

A letter from the Chairman of Governors dated 2nd May 1975 to the Headmaster was read to the RAC: It stated inter alia

" During these years of the 8 periods only 3 are in the regular time-table, the other 5 precede the normal school day.

"The Committee again reaffirmed its view that this was an unsatisfactory situation and that at least two of the 5 Assembly periods should be brought into the regular school day. The Governors' representatives who were present accepted (as we have in the past) the force of this recommendation. For myself I believe it is a reasonable indeed unanswerable request.

"I would therefore like you to accept that we have committed ourselves to the proposition that two of the Assembly periods in the 4th and 5th years should be incorporated in the regular school-day...."

The RAC hoped that this commitment would be honoured as soon as possible.

Senior Jewish Assemblies

Very great concern was expressed that above the third year, there are no Jewish Assemblies (although there are for Christian pupils). As a result of this, many pupils stop laying Tephillin and davening when they reach the 4th year. The RAC reaffirmed that the practice of Yiddishkeit is an integral part of a Jewish school and strongly urge that senior Jewish assemblies be introduced into the school.

Registration

The RAC is very worried by the fact that there are a number of cases of non-Jewish pupils being registered as Jewish and being admitted to Jewish Religious Instruction, and hope that a more effective system of registration will be devised.

The Meeting was then adjourned.

RELIGIOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE
LIVING DAVID SCHOOLS.

Minutes of Meeting held Tuesday 3rd February 1976 at 3 p.m.

Present: Rev. Malits (Convener)
Rev. Benson
Dr. Goldberg
Rabbi Dr. Simons

Apologies: Rabbi Turk.

1. The co-option of Dr. M. Goldberg was confirmed. The name of a further person to be co-opted was agreed upon and he would be invited to join the RAC. It was also agreed to make further co-options.
2. The RAC fully concurred with the points on the Jewish Studies Staff association Minutes of 13th January 1976.
3. The RAC decided to set up a sub-committee of professionals teaching Religious Instruction to look at the question of syllabuses etc.
This sub-committee would be comprised as follows :-
 - The RAC (conveners)
 - Directors of Jewish Studies of the Primary and High Schools.
 - One member of Religious Instruction Staff of Primary School
 - One member of Religious Instruction Staff of High School
 - Principal of MATT
 - Principal of Yeshivah
4. Concern was expressed regarding religious observance in certain areas of the schools' programme. In particular, the following recommendations were made :-
 - (i) washing facilities for Netillat Yadayin should be installed in the Primary School, (other Jewish Primary Schools have them).
 - (ii) It is important that senior Jewish services (4th form upwards) should take place in the High School. Great concern was again expressed by the RAC that from the 4th form upwards there are no services and Tephillin laying and even Festival activities are almost at vanishing point. The Ministers were concerned that children of their members were, because of this, not laying Tephillin and davening.
5. Rev. Malits gave a report on the meeting of the Foundation Sub-committee dealing with registration of non-Jewish pupils as Jewish. He reported that it had been decided to ask for details of the date and place of marriage of the parents of pupils enrolling in the schools. The RAC suggest the following format for these forms, which should now be sent to parents of pupils proposing to enter in September 1976.

Name of Pupil
Address.....
Father's full name
Mother's full name Née
Date of marriage.....
Place of marriage

The RAC passed the resolution that all pupils who are not
Halachically Jewish should not be given Jewish Studies lessons.

The Meeting was then adjourned.

27, DALE STREET,
LIVERPOOL, L2 2HD.

12th February 1976.

Dear Mr. Maltis,

You have sent me a copy of the last Minutes of the Religious Advisory Committee to the High School. May I make it clear immediately that I must express my disagreement with the steps taken or proposed.

The R.A.C. is a body set up by the Governors to advise it in religious matters: it consists of and is restricted to Senior Ministers of the four major Synagogues. No question of co-option can therefore arise without consultation with the Governors. If the R.A.C. chooses unilaterally to change its composition it ceases to be the body set up to advise the Governors. I must therefore have your assurance that no step will be taken to change the recognized composition of the R.A.C.

The setting up of a sub-committee as envisaged in your Minutes seems to me quite ill-conceived. The syllabus for Jewish Studies is the responsibility of appointed staff at the School who are responsible to the Headmaster and ultimately to the Governors. There is further a Jewish Studies sub-committee to guide and advise Governors and Managers, on which the R.A.C. is represented. No other self-appointed body can claim any advisory role and I fail to see what purpose there can be in a further body, such as is suggested, in the structure of the Schools.

Some time ago when the R.A.C. sought representation on the Governors which was not accepted I pointed out to you that the Governors as a body and I personally as Chairman are always ready to receive the R.A.C. or a representative to discuss matters within the advisory purview of

the R.A.C. I may say that we have received no such request. What is happening at the moment is that the R.A.C. seems to meet and deliberate but then fails to communicate with the Governors as to any representations it may wish to make or advice it may wish to tender. May I therefore repeat that if the R.A.C. is to fulfil its role it should be prepared to communicate and advise: c'est son metier. At the moment the proceedings of the R.A.C. seem to take place in a void: let us bring this to an end.

I am sorry to write in strong terms but I am anxious to clear the air and ensure that the R.A.C. does become an effective force in the School.

Sincerely

Henry Lachs
HENRY L. LACHS

(Chairman of Governors)

12, Ballantrae Road,

Liverpool, 16.

29th February, 1976.

Henry L. Lachs, Esq.,
Chairman of Governors,
King David High School,
Liverpool, 16.

Dear Mr. Lachs,

Thank you for your letter of the 12th February.

With regard to the composition, powers and functions of the Religious Advisory Committee, it would be helpful if the minute recording its establishment some years ago could be traced, in order to know what is and is not ultra vires.

Over the past few years the great advantage of co-ordinating the syllabi of the various Jewish educational institutions in the community has often been stressed but nothing beyond that has been done. Co-ordination would prevent any appreciable duplication of syllabus by the King David Schools, MATT, and the Yeshiva, and would ensure that valuable teaching time is not lost or otherwise wasted.

This highly desirable objective needs a detailed and skilled study, and the most suitable people are professional educationists who are qualified to draw up and put into practice such syllabi, together with the Senior Ministers of the community, who are responsible for its religious welfare and spiritual awareness and who realise what is involved in Religious Instruction. A constant review of the best teaching methods is also essential.

Such an overall task is clearly beyond the scope and indeed the authority of the Jewish Studies sub-committee, apart from its composition, its duty being confined solely to guiding and advising Governors and Managers of the King David Schools.

In [respect of] representation of the R.A.C. on the Governors, it is normal procedure with any denominational school for a minister of religion to serve on its Board.

See below for
"uncovering" the
Paragraph

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As to the question of communication between the Governors and the R.A.C., the records show that there has been such communication on matters of importance over the years, e.g., the integration into the timetable of extra periods for Jewish Studies, and the very important issue, at present sub judice, of Jewish Studies being taught to non-Jewish pupils.

In agreeing with you that the R.A.C. must be an effective force, I would add that it must be seen to have an important role to play.

Yours sincerely,

M. MALITS
(Convener, R.A.C.).

RELIGIOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE KING DAVID SCHOOLS

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 7th APRIL, 1976

- 1) Governors Special Sub-Committee to discuss Jewish Studies Syllabuses.

The R.A.C. feel it is most essential that representatives of the R.A.C. should be invited to such meetings.

- 2) Resolutions.

The R.A.C. would like the following recommendations to be discussed at the next J.S. Sub-Committee meeting:

- a) washing facilities for Netillat Yadayim should be installed in the Primary School (other Jewish Primary Schools have them).
 - b) It is important that senior Jewish services (4th form upwards) should take place in the High School. Great concern was again expressed by the R.A.C. that from the fourth form upwards there are no services and Tephillin laying, and even Festival activities are almost at vanishing point. The Ministers were concerned that children of their members were, because of this, not laying Tephillin and davening.
 - c) On occasions when it is necessary to start school late for one reason or another, or it is necessary to have a form period or collect dinner money, then it should not as hitherto be at the expense of the Assembly period (i.e. Service, Jewish Studies or Modern Hebrew lessons) but the time lost should be distributed amongst the various lessons during the course of the morning.
- 3) The R.A.C. was concerned that pressure had been put on some pupils who attend the early morning service in the Beth David. As a result of this, on some days there has been no Minyan.
- 4) The O-level reports on all the schools taking Rabbi Dr. Simons's syllabus for Scripture Knowledge, and Rabbi Young's reply to it were discussed and it was suggested that the Directors of Jewish Studies of the schools taking this syllabus should get together and ask for a meeting with the Joint Matriculation Board.
- 5) It was hoped that the forms had already been sent to parents of pupils proposing to enter in September, 1976, asking for the details of their date and place of marriage.

The meeting was then adjourned.