First ever Teaching Judaism conference held in London

29.02.2016 | Board of Deputies of British Jews

February 23, 2016 - More than 90 religious education teachers from all over the UK this week attended the first ever Teaching Judaism conference aimed at educators teaching the new Judaism GCSE syllabus.

The full day seminar, held jointly by The Board of Deputies of British Jews and Partnerships for Jewish Schools at the Western Marble Arch Synagogue, was addressed by Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis and Lord Winston and was attended by representatives from all the main exam boards.

Rabbi Mirvis spoke about the essence of Jewish prayer while fertility expert Lord Winston gave a talk entitiled “Why Bother Learning About Judaism” in which he spoke about the interplay between faith and science. In a session led by JCoSS headteacher Patrick Moriarty, representatives from exam boards AQA, Edexcel, Eduqas and OCR answered questions about new GCSE requirements and changes to the syllabus.

As well as the main sessions there were workshops led by leading educators on various facets of the new syllabus which will be examined for the first time in 2018. There was also a market place for information and resources and access to teaching materials appropriate to the course which included a taster of the Board’s Jewish Living Experience (JLE) exhibition of Jewish life in the 21st century.

The Board’s Education Development Manager Sara Perlmutter said: “We are delighted to have hosted such a rewarding conference. The positive experience working with religious studies experts from across the UK and the hugely positive feedback made all the planning worthwhile. All the workshops were well received and popular.”

PaJeS Executive Director Rabbi Meyer said: “This important event helped has helped to give Religious Studies teachers from a variety of other faiths an insight into the vibrancy of Judaism, and an understanding of how this can best be conveyed within the GCSE syllabus. The resources prepared by PaJeS, the Board of Deputies, and other organisations will enable the teachers to convey this to students in a relevant and interesting manner.”

Source: The Board of Deputies of British Jews (BOD)