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ENGAGEMENT REPORT

PROJECT | Jewish Life Learning Review

CLIENT | Carmel School

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VERSION | 1.3

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Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge the traditional lands on which this consultation was conducted and pay respects to the Noongar Wadjuk Community of Western Australia and their Elders past, present and emerging.

1 Introduction

As the only Jewish school in Perth, Carmel School needs to cater for a diverse range of cultural and religious expressions. The Jewish Life and Learning Program (JLLP) is one of the school's most important pieces of curriculum. This program defines the depth, breadth and format of the Modern Orthodox Zionist Jewish education that students receive all through their time at Carmel School.

A comprehensive engagement process is being undertaken to ensure the Jewish Life and Learning Program gets the balance right between the desired outcomes of the JLLP and the required student retention to ensure the school's viability into the future.

The engagement process has been designed in two concurrent stages.

- Broad community engagement: The broad engagement was undertaken between July and August 2022 and used the following approaches:
 - 1 x Online Survey (n348)
 - 4 x Community Interviews/ Workshops (n19)
 - 6 x 1-1 Interviews (n6)
 - 1 x Staff Workshop (n15)
 - 1 x Student Workshop (n10)

- Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG)¹ : The School community tasked a group of 26 representatives with providing recommendations to the school on the reviewed JLLP. This SRG has met once already prior to the commencement of the broad engagement and will meet twice more before the end of 2022.

A total of 398 people were engaged through the broad engagement and this report is a collation of outcomes of this process. This report, together with research into models in other jurisdictions being conducted by the school will be provided to SRG to inform the next phase of the process.

¹ A summary of the panel selection process can be found in Appendix One of this report.

1.1 Overarching Themes

Purpose of the Program/Carmel School

Carmel School was seen as having a critical role in shaping the sense of connection, desire, and capability of students in relation to their Judaism. Participants wanted students to leave the school with a connection with religion, the community, and a desire for this connection to continue into their adult years.

While there was recognition that someone's home life played a critical role in shaping this sense of connection, desire and capability, the role of the school was seen as essential. People saw the role of the school as helping students to have the skills and knowledge to express Judaism to their desired level of observance.

There is clear agreement that Judaism is the defining element of Carmel School, which for many would include fostering:

- A **love** of Judaism and what it offers to help people navigate modern life
- A **knowledge** of the history of Judaism and Israel
- An ability to **practise** Judaism at whatever level of observance they choose

There was a clear theme of people wanting the program to focus on **cultural, historical** and **community** aspects of Judaism more than the **religious** aspects.

There was a desire for the school to contribute to the sense of community. This desire included understanding and acknowledging the different levels of observance and preventing 'us and them' dynamics from emerging. Part of this separation is differences in students' and parents' choices on their levels of engagements with religious elements of the program.

Current Program Adherence vs. Revised Program Adherence

44% (n113) of the community want a decrease in levels of adherence to the ethos and practice of Modern Orthodox Zionist, with an average decrease of 24%. Prospective parents express this view most consistently across the different cohorts. 34% (n86) of people want an increase in the levels of adherence, with an average increase of 22%. Past students express this view most consistently across the different cohorts. 16% (n41) of people do not want any change in the levels of adherence and 6% (n16) of people were considered outliers².

As might be expected, the type of changes to the level of adherence of the JLL program was closely linked to the respondent's personal level of observance to Jewish customs and practices. The more religiously observant, the more likely respondents wanted to see an increase in the level of adherence for the program. The people who were less religiously observant, wanted to see a decrease in the level of adherence for the program.

² An outlier was defined as a change in scores that were outside of +/- 2 standard deviations from the average.

Taking the average across all scores, the community wanted to see a small decrease (3.40%) on the level of adherence to the ethos and practice of Modern Orthodox Zionist. However, this decrease is more a result of largely opposing views, cancelling each other out.

In terms of the different cohort of respondents, prospective parents were mostly consistent in their desire to see a decrease in adherence, most past students wanted to see an increase in adherence, while other groups were mixed in terms of changes in adherence.

As might be expected, the desired changes to the current program matched the respondents' personal level of observance to Jewish customs and practices. The more religiously observant, the more likely respondents were to want an increase in the level of adherence for the program and the less religiously observant they were, the more likely they were to want to see a decrease in the level of adherence for the program.

JLLP Program Outcomes (see page 8 for a description)

Comparatively, respondents rated outcomes that focused on Jewish Life and the general outcomes as more **important** than the other two outcomes of Tefillah and Torah/Tanach. This response was consistent across respondent groups and those observing Kosher homes to no affiliation. Those with close observance believed that all four outcomes were very important.

This suggests that if any decisions about where to focus the JLL program, respondents are suggesting that the emphasis be given to Jewish Life (cultural) and general outcomes more than the outcomes expressed for Tefillah and Torah/Tanach.

JLLP Program Elements (see page 9 for a description)

Across all groups, the top three program elements were cultural observance, community service/life and informal Jewish education. This response is consistent with comments related to the outcomes, where less importance is assigned to studying Torah, Jewish law and daily prayer. Of note this was consistent across respondent groups and most levels of observance, with only those with close observance suggesting that all elements were very important.

JLLP Program Informal Elements

Across all groups, Chaggim celebrations, Shorashim and Jewish Studies camps were rated as the most important informal elements of the program, and this was consistent across respondent groups. Those with a closer level of observance rated all elements as more important than other groups. Torah before school and Tzevet were generally rated as less important.

Level of Observance/What Is Mandatory

For many, the school needed to set the standard and offer students the skills, knowledge and experiences that might be more observant than students experience in their own homes. This was seen as required because it provides students with this foundational experience and thus choice into the future.

For others, the way that the standard is set and applied is the major concern and focuses on a level of observance being forced onto people, which could end up turning them off the religion and having the opposite impact of the desired sense of connection and identity.

It was also noted that there is a natural developmental phase that teenagers go through, where they challenge what they have been raised with. This was seen as an important part of how they develop their own world view. For some, this increased the need for the school to adapt its approach to how religion is taught and practised in the school, to avoid triggering this rejection. For others, this meant the school should 'stay the course' because it is where students need to be given the foundations, otherwise they are deprived of choice into the future.

While there were divergent views on the mandatory role of the JLLP in Years 11 and 12, there were concerns about the way in which aligning JLLP to a secular curriculum turned what is essentially a spiritual development into something academic.

More people expressed that the JLLP should NOT be mandatory in Years 11 and 12 AND that there should be some form of Jewish education throughout someone's education at the school.

How and Not What

For many, the focus should be less on what the content is but on HOW the content is delivered. This was closely linked to conversations about the differences between teaching something as an academic subject and giving students an experience of and connection to all that the religion can offer them.

Many noted the change in approach between primary and high school and while they appreciated the age difference, they expressed that the primary school fostered a warmer and more welcoming experience of Judaism. Notwithstanding the identified developmental difference for primary and secondary students, the disconnect of experiences between primary and high school was a point of concern.

Streaming the courses to provide a greater range of experiences for students was the solution offered by many participants. However, not all were in favour of this approach due the viability of class sizes and the potential to foster an 'us and them' culture.

Belonging and Being Jewish Enough

Something more difficult to articulate as a theme focused on people's experiences of being made to feel 'not Jewish enough' – particularly if they were not as observant as the school required.

Some expressed concern that other members of the community were seen as a threat to their desired form of expression of Judaism. This made some people feel 'not Jewish enough', which appears to sit at odds with the universally desired outcomes to foster a sense of community, of belonging and a positive experience of the religion.

Time Allocation to the JLLP Program

Overall, just under half the people suggested that 'about right' time is spent on the program. Close to a quarter of people said that too much time is spent on the program and the other quarter that too little time is spent on the program.

- 47% (n601) of scores were that 'about right' time is spent on the program
- 27% (n374) of scores were that too much ('too much' or 'far too much') time is spent on the program
- 26% (n329) of scores were that too little ('too little or 'far too little) time is spent on the program

Weighting of Program Elements

Learning Hebrew and cultural observance were given the highest focus. This was followed by informal Jewish education, studying the history and role of Israel, participating in the community, and studying Torah. There was less focus allocated to practising and adherence to Jewish law and daily prayer. These trends were consistent across respondent cohorts.

Those with closer levels of observance put more focus on religious elements (daily prayer, practising and adherence to Jewish law, and studying Torah). In contrast, people with lower levels of observance put more focus towards cultural elements of the program (cultural observance, learning Hebrew and community service).

The JLLP Program and Intention to Enrol at Carmel School

Overall, most people said that the program was the primary or one of the reasons for considering enrolment at the school. Parents and community members said it was the primary reason, whereas other groups said it was one of the reasons. Those with a closer level of observance (close observance and Kosher home) said it was the primary reason for considering enrolment, traditional observers said it was one of the reasons, whereas other groups said it did not influence their decision (traditional observance to no affiliation).

2 Current Program

2.1 Current Program Outcomes

At Carmel School we aim to develop thinking Jewish people who are actively involved in the Jewish community during their school years and, most importantly, after they leave Carmel.

We aim to instil in our students:

- a social, moral and ethical conscience
- a responsibility to become Jews who strive towards being upright and active citizens, wherever they live
- a commitment to living as Jews with a stable Jewish family life

We recognise that the performance of the mitzvot in the correct manner and spirit is a basic feature in the process of Jewish education, so we teach not only Jewish History, Torah and Tanach to our students, but at the same time encourage them, through our Jewish Studies program, to understand and strive to actively keep the mitzvot and to be engaged in Jewish life. As a Modern Orthodox Zionist Jewish Day School, we strive to teach our students the value of the Modern State of Israel and its place within the context of 3500 years of Jewish History. Through many topics in the curriculum, we make links to life in Israel today.

Our Jewish Studies program develops students' knowledge and understanding of each aspect of their Jewish heritage as well as their love for it. The Jewish ethos permeates the school, with the 'hidden' curriculum operating in the form of informal education, through daily Tefillah, assemblies, celebrations of festivals and special days.

Jewish Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Understand the basic halachot to leading an Orthodox Jewish Life, whether in relation to Mitzvot bein adam l'makom – Ritual laws between humans and God (such as Shabbat, kashrut and chagim) or Mitzvot bein adam l'chaveiro Interpersonal Laws (such as tzedaka, lashon hara and g'milut chasadim).- Apply the reason, concepts and values that underpin a Jewish way of life, including life-cycle events.- Participate confidently in Jewish life at home and in shule.
Torah/Tanach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Be familiar with stories from the Tanach and their application in life.- Understand how to use commentaries such as Rashi to gain a deeper appreciation of the Torah.- Appreciate the role and continuing centrality of the Torah in modern Jewish life.
Tefillah	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Navigate their way around a Siddur.- Feel comfortable and confident in an Orthodox synagogue (Shule literate).- Recite and understand the general meaning of the most important tefillot for weekdays, Shabbat and the Chaggim.- Appreciate the importance and relevance of prayer in their own life.
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Understand key events in Jewish History.- Feel connected to Jewish people around the world and the different minhagim/ customs.- Respect other cultures and the dignity of difference whilst maintaining a strong Jewish identity.- Maintain a strong desire to continue on the path of Jewish learning.- Develop, maintain and experience a love for Israel whilst also recognising and learning about its challenges and foibles.

2.2 Current Program Elements

Element	Description/Typical activity
Hebrew Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary School students follow the Yavneh program until Year 5. Year 6 students participate in Yesh va'yesh, an online program. - High School students study either the Yesh va'yesh or Bishvil Ha'ivrit curriculum, depending on their level. Hebrew is a compulsory component until Year 10. All Year 10 students are enrolled in the VET Cert II in Applied Languages in Hebrew Language. Hebrew is an optional ATAR subject in Years 11 and 12.
Studying Torah and Jewish Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary School students either attend Enrichment Torah (accelerated program) or mainstream Torah lessons which follows the JCP Torah curriculum. - The High School enrichment Torah Stream program involves Talmud study with Rabbi Ari Posner and/or group learning with the Tzevet as an elective before school each day. - The Jewish Life and Learning program contains units of study that are covered as part of a spiral curriculum. - Each year group (7-10) has units that cover Jewish History, Jewish values, chagim and life cycle events and Tanach. - The Carmel JLL program uses in house developed workbooks, online videos and other resources to deliver the content. Where relevant, guest speakers and experiential lessons are delivered. - From Year 11, students are enrolled in the Religion and Life course which provides them with opportunities to learn about religion and the interplay between religion, societies and people. Students develop an informed and critical understanding of this interplay by drawing from a detailed knowledge of Judaism and other religions.
Studying the history and role of Israel in Jewish Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the Primary School, we follow the Israel program developed by the Lookstein Centre in Israel (teaching through PowerPoint and interactive activities). - Israel studies are integrated into all Year levels in the High School during JLL classes and Zooz camps as well as a detailed Modern Zionism and Holocaust course in Year 10 in conjunction with Shorashim.
Cultural observance of festival and customs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the lead up to festivals, our focus is on preparing students for active engagement with the chagim at home and at shule. We teach songs, read stories, have interactive activities and each chag is celebrated in either a full-day event (e.g. Purim and Yom Ha'atzmaut) or during Jewish studies lessons (e.g., bonfire on Lag Ba'omer or seders before Pesach). Parent integration is important and each class has an opportunity to celebrate a chag or milestone with their parents/ guardians at school JLL events. - High School full-day experiences for Purim (run by the Year 12 students) and Yom Haatzmaut as well as a multitude of other experiential events coordinated by our JLL team and often implemented by our Informal Educators. These include our annual Shavuot dinner for Years 10 to 12 as well as Friday night Shabbat tefillot and dinners for a variety of year groups, Chanukah seminar days and more.
Practising and adherence to Jewish law in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All Carmel children observe the ethos of the school every day by participating in daily davening and living life as a young Jewish person in their interactions with others. - High school students experience a residential Zooz camp. For older students (Years 9 to 12) this includes a camp over Shabbat to allow them the opportunity to experience an authentic Halachic Shabbat with their peers.

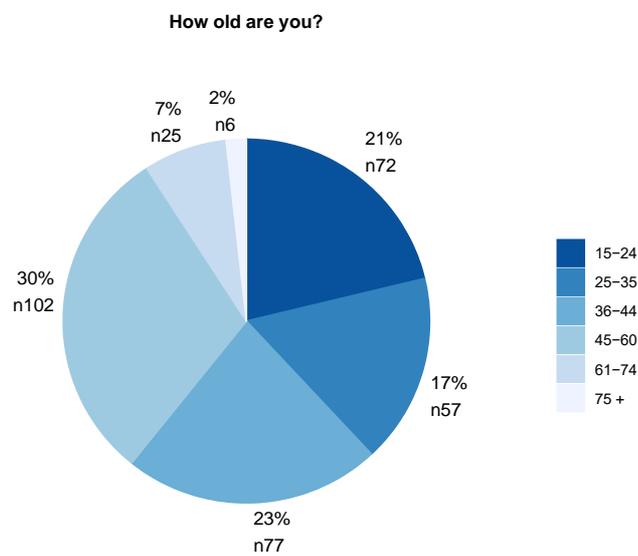
Element	Description/Typical activity
Daily Prayer in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On Monday mornings, the Primary School comes together for Havdalah in the hall. Each Friday, the children come together for Kabbalat Shabbat in the hall. During the rest of the week, each class is in their room with their teacher saying prayers and learning new ones. - Morah Posner runs an extended minyan for more observant students from Year 4-6 every day for 40 minutes (instead of the 20 minutes spent in mainstream prayers). - High School prayers are divided into the following main groups: - Full minyan – students from Years 7 to 12 opt in for a full Tefilla experience. Years 7-10 minyan – boys over barmitzvah are encouraged to lead the prayer and there is torah reading on Mondays and Thursdays. Discussions and Divrei Torah are integrated into tefilla by the teacher. - At times, smaller groups are taken out by madrichim or Tzevet for discussion groups. - Years 11-12 attend smaller Tefilla sessions with local Rabbis and other leaders.
Participating in Community Service/life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - COVID has meant that students are unable to attend the Maurice Zeffert Home for any visits. - Weekly club at Menora warehouse where Primary School children do jobs set for them by the volunteers. We constantly fundraise for Menora through our Purim charity, our Shavuot and Pesach food drives, our Elul charity project and our Rosh Hashana market. All money raised goes to Menora as well as the food. Year 3 run a charity drive in Term 3 for various causes in the wider community, including blankets for the homeless and a stationery drive. - In the High School, Menora Foundation visits form part of the Bar/Bat mitzva program. The Year 8 students participate in the Chesed program with Menora. - JNF volunteering Years 9 to 12. - Menora Charity – students volunteer in their own time on the weekends. - Carmel students are encouraged to play an active role in their community by volunteering for their shule, youth movements, Maccabi etc.

3 Online Survey

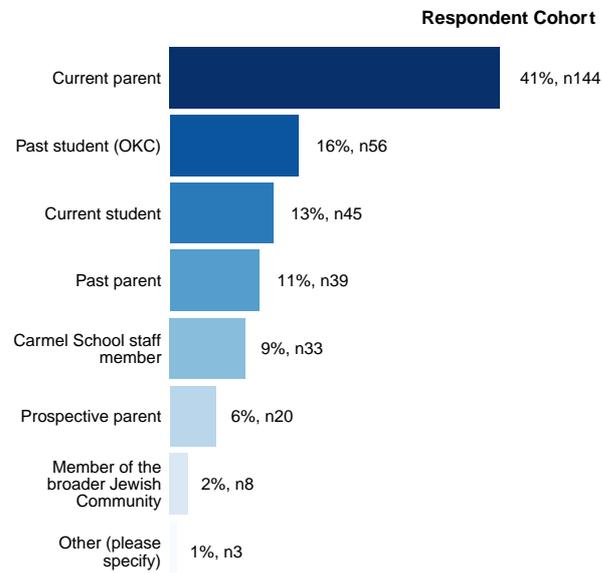
3.1 Demographics

Overall, 348 people participated in the online survey, with 63% of people identifying as female (n217), 36% as male (n125) and 1% (n3) as other.

The largest age group represented was 45-60 years, followed by 36-44, 15-24 and 25-35. There was relatively lower representation from those aged over 60 years.

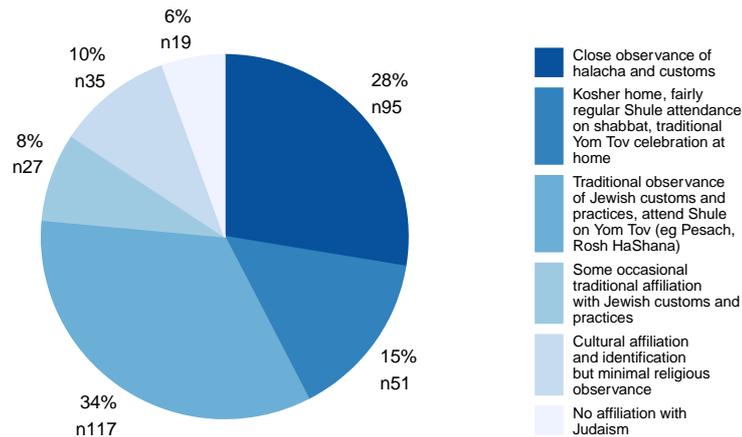


The group was represented a number of cohorts. Current parents (41%) were the highest, followed by past students (16%), current students (13%), past parents (11%) and staff (9%). There was relatively lower representation from prospective students (6%), the broader community (2%) and other groups (1%).

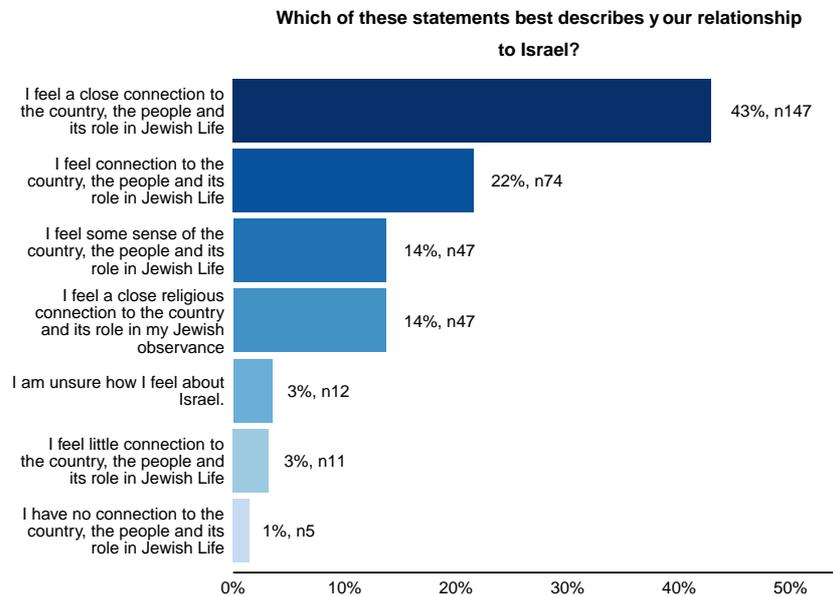


In terms of levels of observance to the Jewish customs and practices within the household, 34% practised traditional observance and 28% practised close observance. From there, 15% were a Kosher home, 10% had a cultural affiliation, 8% had an occasional affiliation and 6% of people had no affiliation with Judaism.

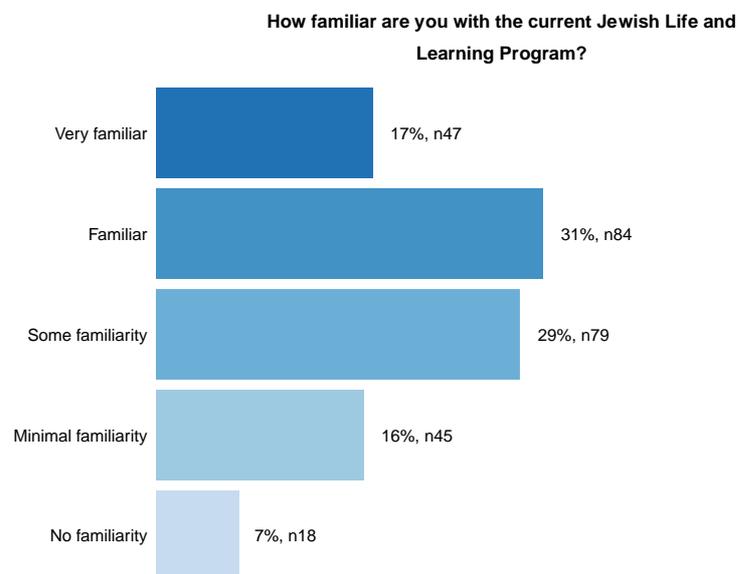
Which of these statements best describes your household?



When asked about their relationship to Israel, 43% felt a close connection to the country and 22% felt a connection. This was followed by 14% having some sense of the country and 14% having a close religious connection. Some people were unsure about how they felt (3%), felt little connection (3%) or no connection (1%) to Israel.



When asked about familiarity with the current program, the majority reported some level of familiarity – 17% were very familiar, 31% were familiar and 29% had some familiarity. People also reported minimal familiarity (16%) and had no familiarity (7%).



Overall, there was a good representation of the subgroups within the community. A wide range of ages were surveyed, and there was sufficient data across respondent and observation types to analyse differences between groups. There was lesser representation from those who were unsure or felt little to no connection to Israel. Most of the community had at least some familiarity with the current JLLP program.

3.2 Current Program Adherence vs. Revised Program Adherence³

Thinking about the different levels of adherence to the ethos and practice of Modern Orthodox Zionist Judaism, people were asked to rate from 0 to 100 where the current program is pitched ('current adherence') and where the revised program should be pitched ('revised adherence').

44% (n113) of the community want a decrease in levels of adherence to the ethos and practice of Modern Orthodox Zionist, with an average decrease of 24%. Prospective parents express this view most consistently across the different cohorts. 34% (n86) of people want an increase in the levels of adherence, with an average increase of 22%. Past students express this view most consistently across the different cohorts. 16% (n41) of people do not want any change in the levels of adherence and 6% (n16) of people were considered outliers⁴.

As might be expected, the type of changes to the level of adherence of the JLL program was closely linked to the respondent's personal level of observance to Jewish customs and practices. The more religiously observant, the more likely respondents wanted to see an increase in the level of adherence for the program. The people who were less religiously observant, wanted to see a decrease in the level of adherence for the program.

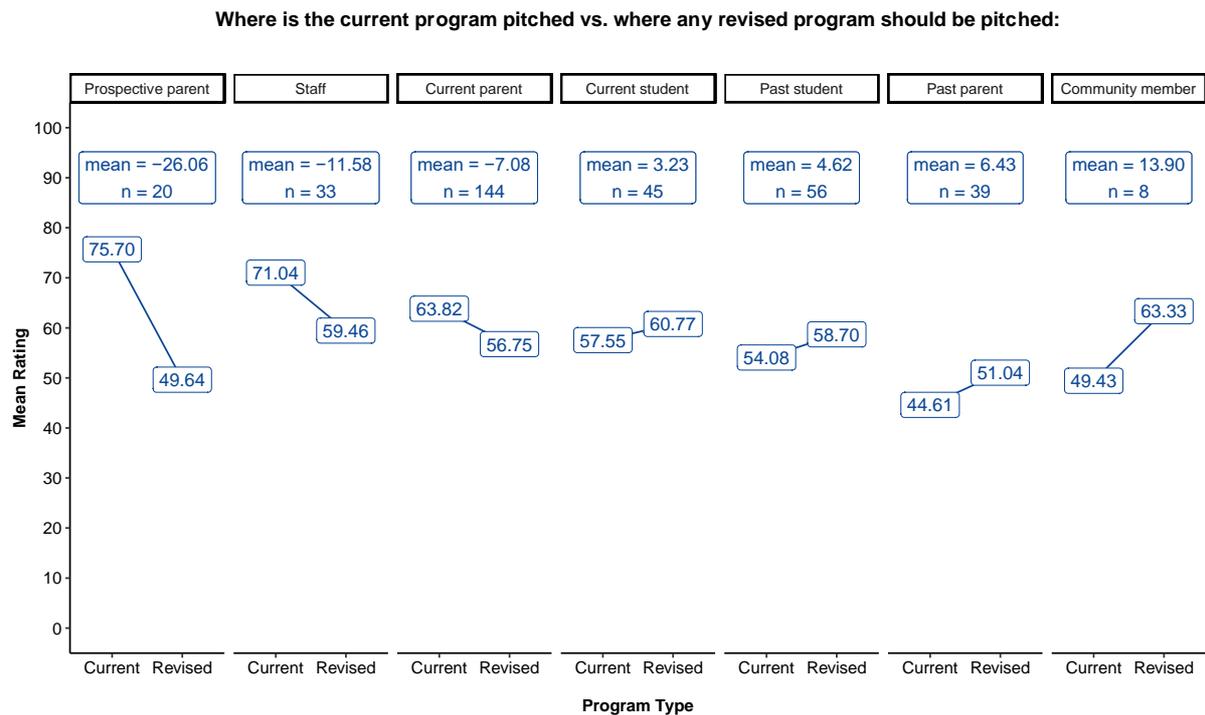
Taking the average across all scores, the community wanted to see a small decrease (3.40%) on the level of adherence to the ethos and practice of Modern Orthodox Zionist. However, this decrease is more a result of largely opposing views, cancelling each other out. This was followed up by looking at differences in respondent cohorts and levels of observance.⁵

³ Please see appendix two for more detailed analytics.

⁴ An outlier was defined as a change in scores that were outside of +/- 2 standard deviations from the average.

⁵ Outliers were not removed when examining differences in subgroups.

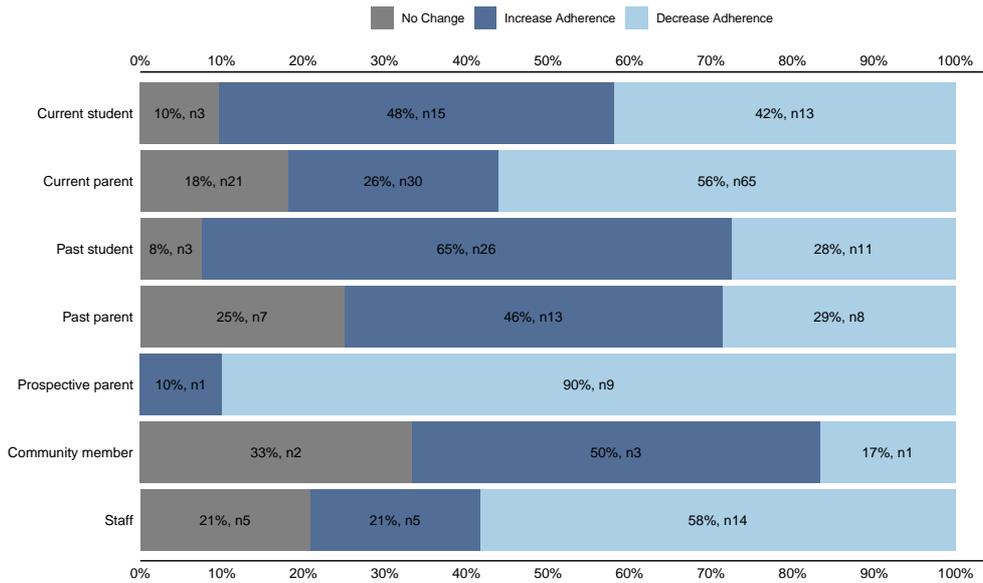
The following plots the average of current scores and revised scores for each respondent cohort, as well as the mean difference and number of scores.⁶



Prospective parents suggested the highest reduction adherence (-26% change), followed by staff (-11.58 change) and current parents (-7.08). In contrast, the wider Jewish community (+13.90), past parents (+6.43), past students (+4.62) and current students (+3.23) suggested that any revised program should increase the level of adherence.

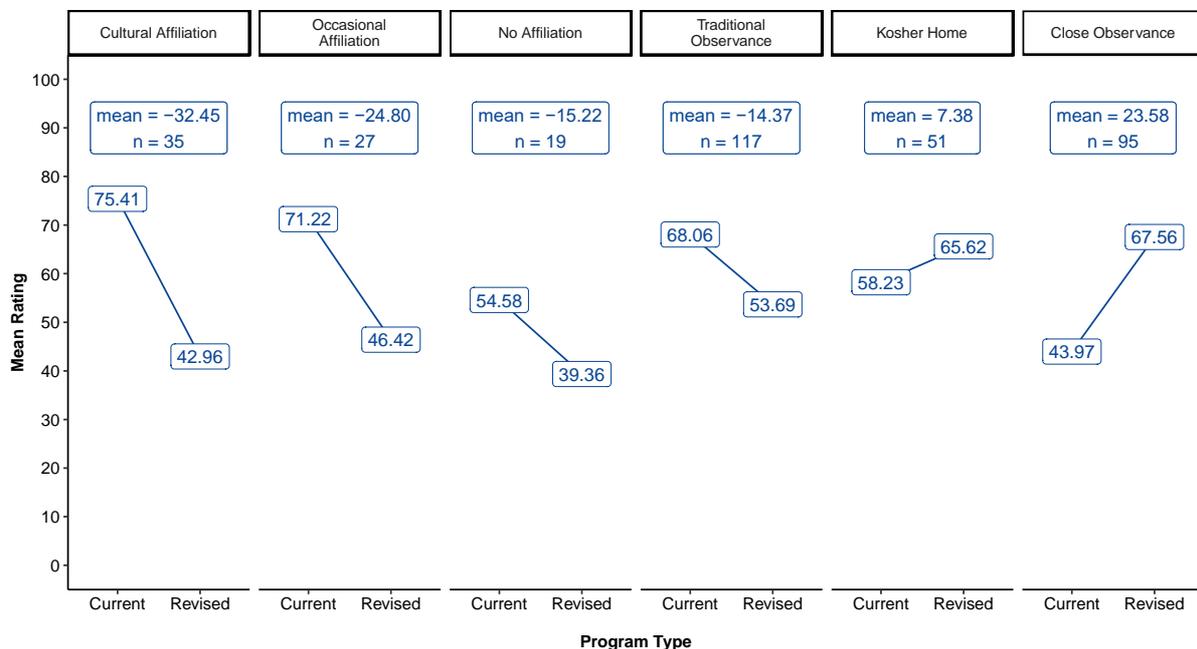
The following plots the number of people who suggested an increase, decrease or no change in score for each respondent group. Prospective parents largely wanted a decrease in adherence, and most past students wanted an increase in adherence. Other groups were mixed in terms of changes in adherence.

⁶ Note. Only one score was provided from the 'Other' group, and so the group was removed from the analysis.
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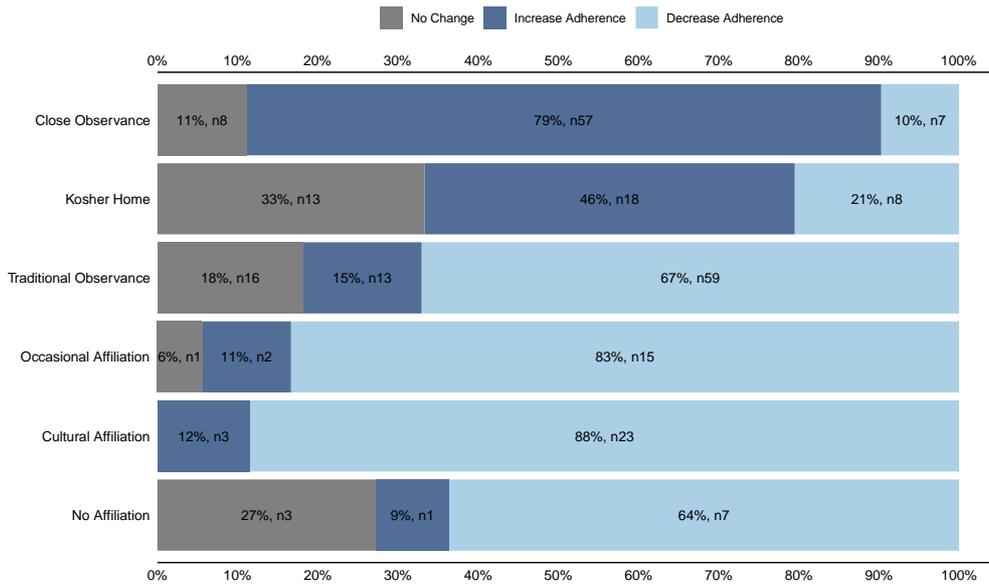


In terms of observance groups, those with a cultural affiliation suggested the highest reduction in level of adherence for any revised program (-32.45), followed by those with an occasional affiliation (-24.80), no affiliation (-15.22), and traditional observers (-14.37). In contrast, those who observe a Kosher home, past parents (+7.38) and close observance (+23.58) suggested that any revised program should increase the level of adherence.

Where is the current program pitched vs. where any revised program should be pitched:

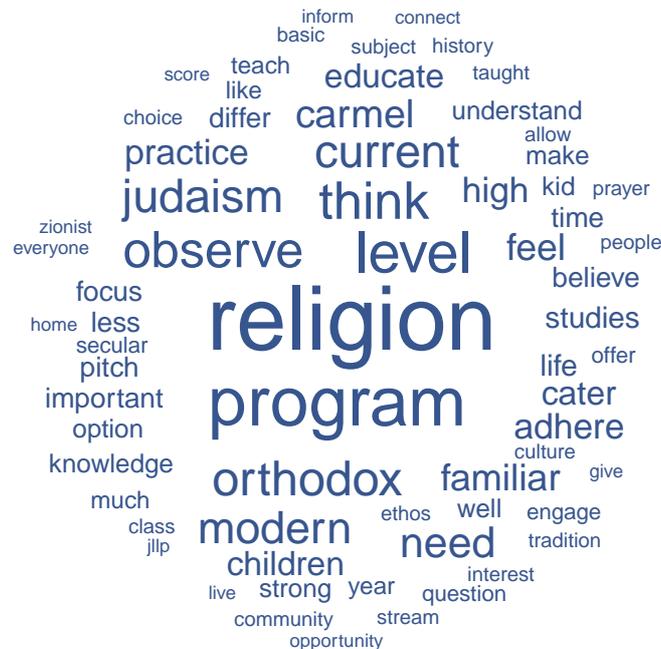


There was a clear disparity among levels of observance. Most people with a close observance wanted an increase in adherence, whereas those with a traditional observance to no affiliation largely wanted a decrease in adherence. Those practising a Kosher home were mixed.



People were given an opportunity to provide an open-ended response to help understand their thinking. The responses were analysed using keywords and are shown using a wordcloud below; the frequency of keywords is indicated by the size of the text.

The key themes were **Judaism** ('religion', 'orthodox', 'secular'), **education** ('education', 'think', 'studies') and **culture** ('tradition', 'history', 'culture'). Examples of statements are provided below.⁷



Judaism

“I think that one Jewish day school in WA needs to cater for EVERY student in our school.”

“I feel that Carmel caters solely for the religious Jews in the community and their level of observance and participation in the religion and community. There is not enough of the program catered to a large proportion of the current Carmel family that may or may not be Jewish in their entirety but that lead a more secular life and don't necessarily live a religious/devout life.”

“School needs to be more secular and offer strong adherence at a high level for those that are interested.”

“I think it needs to be a bit broader to assist the different levels of observance in the Jewish community.”

⁷ Note. All wordclouds removed frequently used words that were not very informative (Jewish, Hebrew, School, Student, Learn).

Education

“Too much Jewish studies and emphasis on Hebrew/Judaism for the majority of the children at the school. It creates a disconnection between home and school. It should be streamed so that religious can learn more and non-religious less.”

Culture

“There should be some scope for learning about other cultures and religions.”

“It is so important that students are given opportunities to learn more about the culture rather than Judaism as a religion.”

“My children are in primary school and I believe a strong education in cultural and traditional practices is needed before high school.”

3.3 JLLP Program Outcomes⁸

People were asked to review the current outcome and to think about their importance. The question was presented on a 7-point Likert scale. To assist with the interpretation of the results, the scores were converted to numeric values to calculate average scores. The results are presented across all groups. Please see appendix 2 for the detailed charts, breaking down results by respondent cohorts and levels of observance.

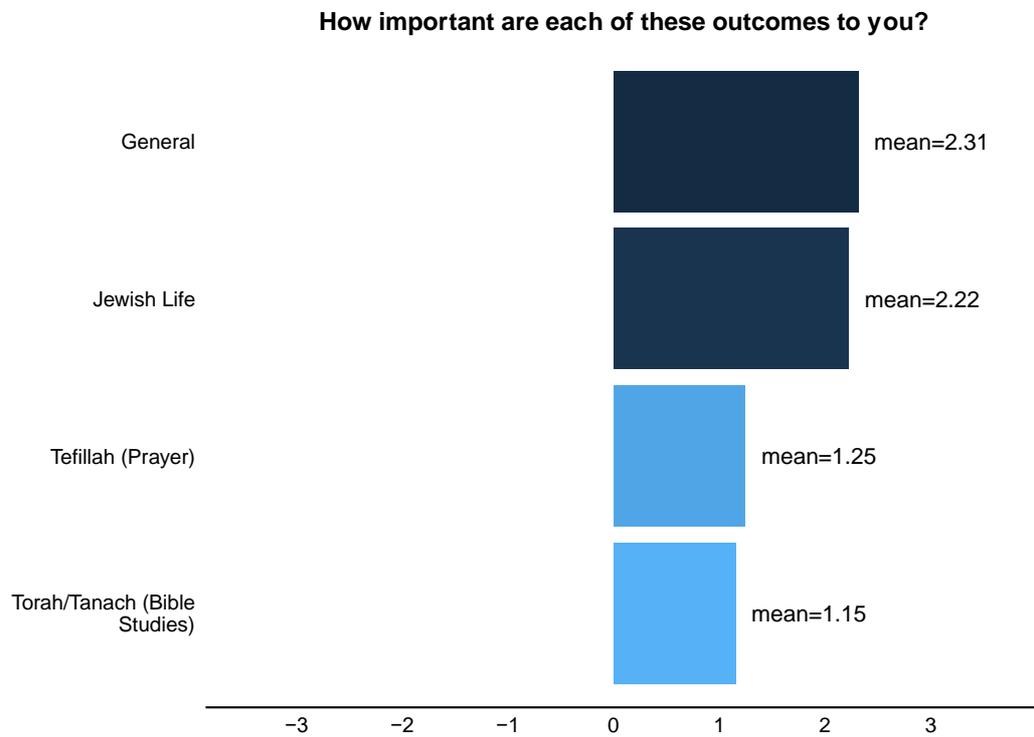
Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3

People were asked to rate the importance of the current outcomes of the JLLP program (see page 5). Overall, General Outcomes and Jewish Life Outcomes received the highest average ratings and were seen as important. This result was reflected by most respondents.

On average, Tefillah and Torah/Tanach were seen as somewhat important. However, this result was less supported by prospective parents, rating them as ‘neutral’.

⁸ Please see appendix two for more detailed analytics.

Those with higher levels of observance rated all four outcomes equally as 'very important', and ratings decreased with lower levels of observance.



People were asked if there are any other outcomes the program could be aiming to achieve. The key themes were **education** ('knowledge', 'think', 'tech'), **culture** ('connect', 'culture') and **community** ('community', 'world', 'life'). Examples of statements are provided below.



Education

“A knowledge and appreciation of Jewish texts, as these form the basis of Judaism.”

“Put more focus on the history of the Jewish people and their impact on the whole world.”

“A broad lens-based approach to informal experiential Jewish education.”

Culture

“‘Respect other cultures and the dignity of difference’ - very important outcome, for cultural acceptance/awareness, and should extend not only to other religions but also other ways of practising Judaism.”

“Building strong connection to Judaism, the Jewish people and Jewish culture.”

Identity

“Creating a connection and love of the language of the Jewish people, and a feeling of connection so they don't hate it (like a number have in the past years).”

“Tefilla should be optional – if the kids have no idea why they are praying or what they are saying, they just have to ‘sing songs’ it doesn't have the right connection or purpose. Understanding how to be a mensch, the traditions of what we do at home as a Jew (not necessarily ultra-religious) would be better.”

“Judaism around the world: How one can feel connected to Judaism without necessarily being religious and how you can use modern Judaism to inform secular life.”

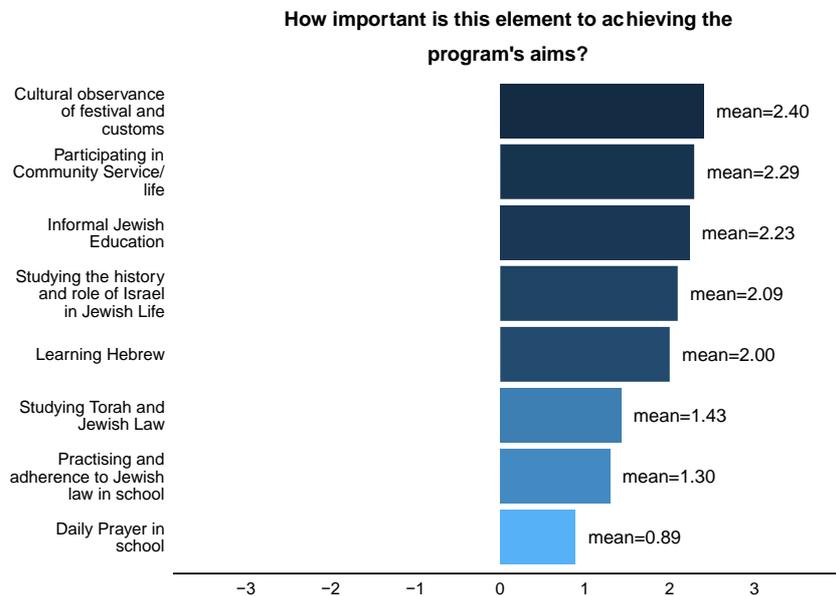
3.4 JLLP Program Elements⁹

People were asked to consider the main elements of the JLLP program and rate how important each element is to achieve the program aims.

Several elements were seen as important, including cultural observance, community service/life, informal Jewish education, studying the history of Israel and learning Hebrew.

Studying Torah, Jewish Law and daily prayer were seen as somewhat important.

The trends were consistent across respondent cohorts and were mostly consistent across the levels of observance. Those with a closer observance rated all outcomes as very important, and ratings decreased with lower levels of observance.



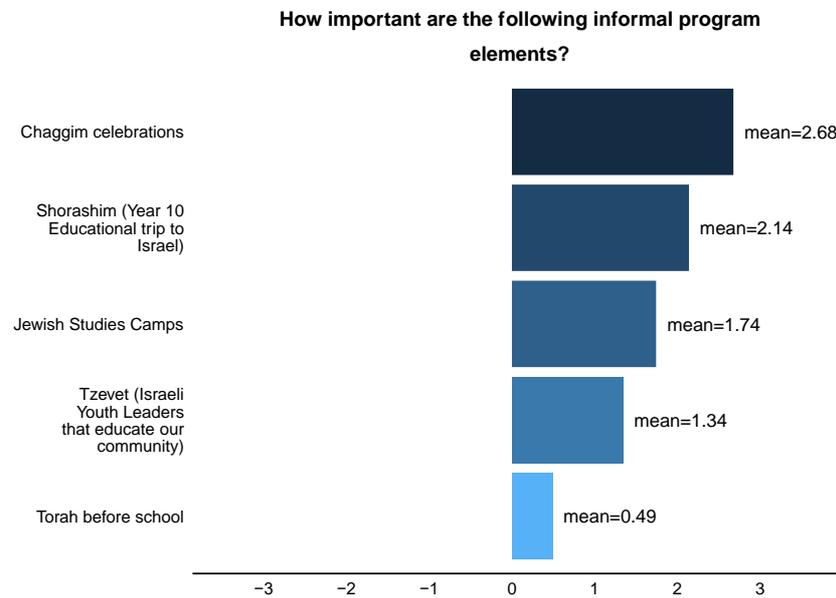
⁹ Please see appendix two for more detailed analytics.

3.5 JLLP Program Informal Elements

People were asked to consider the informal elements of the JLLP program and rate their importance. Chaggim was seen as very important, and Shorashim and Jewish student camp were seen as important. Tzevet was seen as somewhat important, and Torah before school had a neutral score.

These trends were consistent across respondent cohorts and levels of observance

Those with a closer observance gave higher scores on all elements compared to other groups, and ratings decreased with lower levels of observance. Notably, those with a cultural affiliation and no affiliation rated Jewish Studies, Torah before school and Tzevet as being between neutral and unimportant.



People were asked if anything else should be included in the program. The key themes were **education** ('education', 'teach', 'student') and **community** ('community', 'life'). Examples of statements are provided below.



Education

“More Education regarding Jewish Literature, customs, and more informal education. Every Jewish festival should be used as an opportunity for both formal and informal education regarding its origin and halakhot.”

“More focus on 4 pillars – school, youth movements, shul, home. Carmel is the centre of the community. Most Rabbis would agree a community begins and ends with education.”

Community

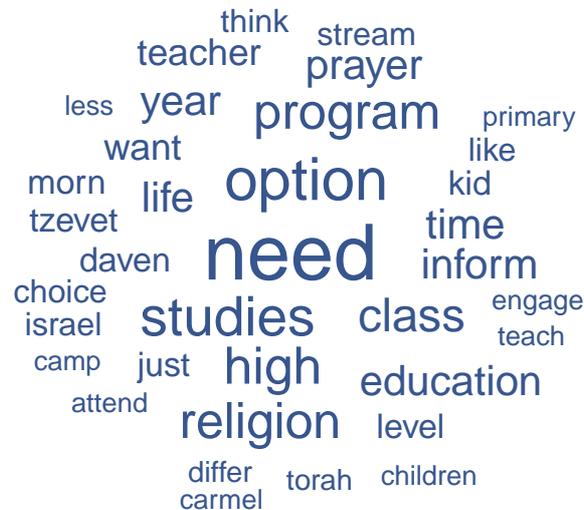
“I would like to see some family engagement in the high school.”

“Community connection with Jewish agencies.”

“Maybe some form of parental involvement/education to assist in more 'home support' on Jewish studies matters?”

“I think a bit more engagement with the youth movements or OKCs coming back to help run activities.”

People were asked if anything should be changed about the current program. The key themes were **education** ('stream', 'student', 'studies') and **Judaism** ('Israel', 'religion', 'torah').



Education

"Give parents and children the choice to do less or more Jewish studies and also the choice as to the type of Jewish studies."

"I think for High School there needs to be greater flexibility in pathways, allowing students and families for whom the depth of JLL study is beyond their own observance/interest to either select more culturally relevant JLL options or to select alternative secular options."

"Hebrew in the high school should be voluntary."

Judaism

"Daily Tefillah should be optional. – In my high school experience, I never found the Tzevet from Israel to add any value to my Jewish learning and those funds could be spent elsewhere."

"I believe focus on Jewish laws and the way it is framed 'Jewish people do x, y, and z' should be changed. Maybe teaching kids that there is a spectrum of observance and that these are all valid family choices that need to be respected."

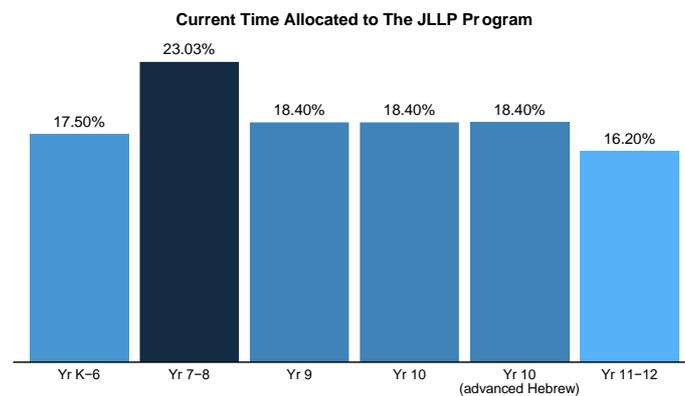
"Reduce the stress on forcing kids to pray in the morning. It has never worked and it will never work. I'm speaking as an orthodox religious Jew who prays 3 times a day."

3.6 Time Allocation to the JLLP Program

People were asked their views on the current amount of time allocated to JLLP program for each year level (note: the weekly time allocation includes Hebrew language classes). The 5-point Likert scale was converted to numeric so that averages could be calculated – a higher score means that more time should be allocated to the program (i.e., ‘too little’ or ‘far too little’ time is spent on the program).



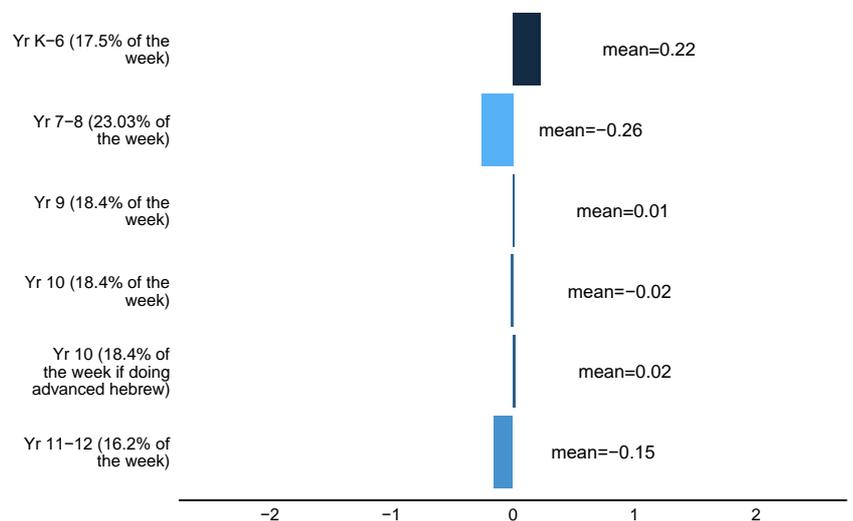
The current times allocated are as follows:



Overall, just under half the people suggested that ‘about right’ time is spent on the program, while close to a quarter were too much time and the other quarter too little time.

- 47% (n601) of scores were that ‘about right’ time is spent on the program
- 27% (n374) of scores were that too much (‘too much’ or ‘far too much’) time is spent on the program
- 26% (n329) of scores were that too little (‘too little’ or ‘far too little’) time is spent on the program

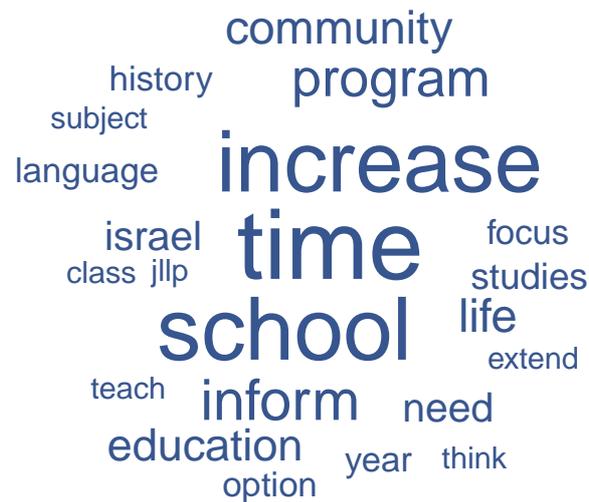
What is your view of the current allocation he overall to time allocated to JLLP the program?



Those with closer levels of observance said that too little time is spent on the program, whereas those with lesser affiliation to Judaism suggested that too much time is spent on the program.

People were asked, 'if the amount of time dedicated to JLLP were to be increased, how could the program be extended?' The key themes were **education** ('focus', 'inform'), **language** ('language', 'Hebrew') and **community** ('community', 'life'). Examples of statements are provided below.

Note: Some people took this as an opportunity to re-emphasise that they believe the time allocated should not be increased.



Education

“Further studies on Gemara and halachot.”

“More informal education seminars, discussion groups, lectures, camps, experiential learning.”

“More time to Jewish History and connection to Israel.”

Language

“More time learning the Hebrew language so that they can interact with other Jewish people around the world in a common language.”

“I think more Hebrew for everyone and not just advanced students.”

Community

“As before, greater consideration of what it means to be Jewish in a non-Jewish country.”

“On fun experiences for the kids, on creating a sense of community. Less so on Jewish law.”

“Studying the history and role of Israel on Jewish life & cultural observance of festivals and customs.”

People were asked, 'if the amount of time dedicated to JLLP were to be reduced, what are the must have elements of the program?' The key themes were **education** ('learn', 'inform') and **community and culture** ('community', 'life', 'festive'). Examples of statements are provided below.



Education

“Hebrew language and conversation, chaggim, Israel and Jewish history. The religious aspects are important but can be increased for more religious families.”

“Chaggim and informal learning of history and traditions.”

“Less in-depth teaching of Torah for non-religious students.”

“Definitely the informal education and Zionistic education which includes learning Hebrew.”

Community

“Informal Jewish education, participating in community events, learning Hebrew and cultural observance of festivals.”

“Understanding of Jewish culture and key festivals and community service.”

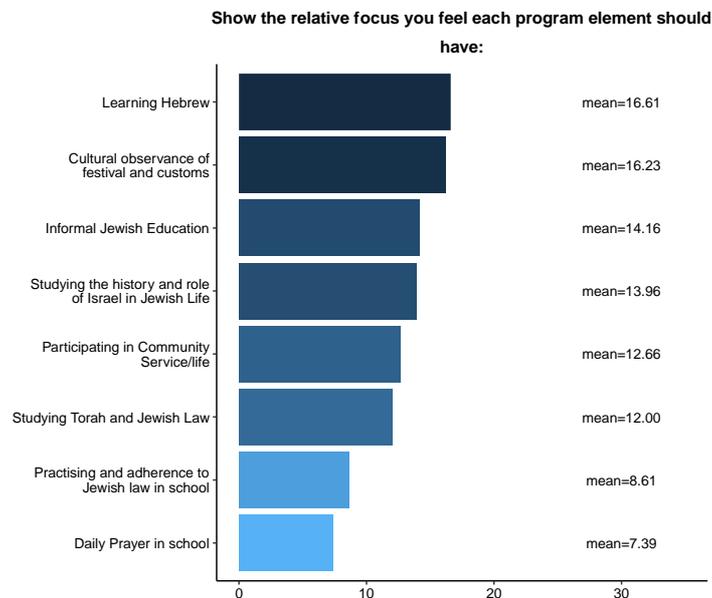
“Festivals and customs are important. Learning to be a good citizen and participating within the wider community with good values is important.”

3.7 Relative Weighting of Program Elements

People were asked to consider the eight elements of the program and allocate 100 points across the elements to represent the relative focus they should have.

Learning Hebrew and cultural observance were given the highest focus. This was followed by informal Jewish education, studying the history and role of Israel, participating in the community and studying Torah. Practising and adherence to Jewish law and daily prayer were given the lowest focus.

These trends were consistent across respondent cohorts. Similarly, the results were mostly consistent across levels of observance. However, compared to other groups, those with closer levels of observance allocated higher focus to religious elements: daily prayer, practising and adherence to Jewish law, and studying Torah. In contrast, those with lower levels of observance put more focus towards cultural elements of the program: cultural observance, learning Hebrew and community service.



People were asked to explain why they had allocated their points in this way. The key themes were **education** ('studies', 'educate', 'inform'), **Judaism** ('prayer', 'religion', 'torah') and **community** ('culture', 'life', 'connect'). Examples of statements are provided below.



Education

“Asking children to pray is largely a waste of time. Focus on Israel, focus on the history (not Torah).”

“Practising and adherence come from the home. prayer doesn’t need to impinge on the school day. Community service is not a school subject, Torah incorporates the other areas.”

Judaism

“My child needs more sleep. Make daily prayer optional.”

“Jewish way of life and behaviour [are] more important than intense religious study.”

“It's hard to find the right balance. I feel less Torah and prayer and more practical Hebrew and community work will forge a stronger bond with Judaism in the long term.”

Community

“Learning Hebrew is most important and then cultural festivals and Israel in daily life.”

“I put the highest allocation to informal Jewish learning as I think this is needed to consolidate any formal learning that occurs. Judaism is deeply personal and informal learning allows students to focus on how they relate to things and their own emotions/opinions.”

“Less formal Torah observance, more focus on the importance of laws around being a compassionate and active member of the community.”

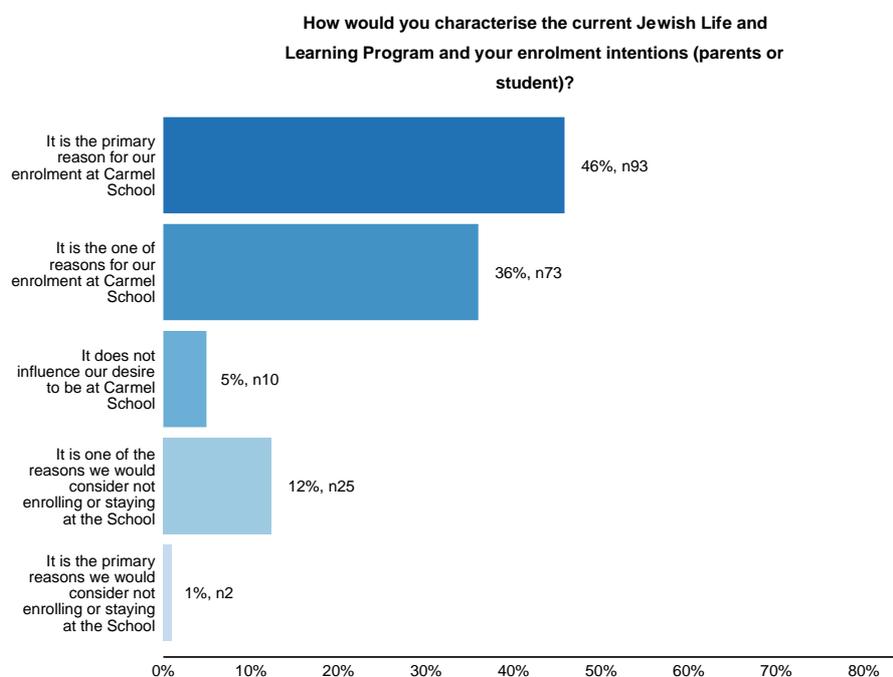
“It is focussed around preparing a student for life as an adult with a Jewish identity and Jewish values.”

3.8 The JLLP Program and Intention to Enrol at Carmel School

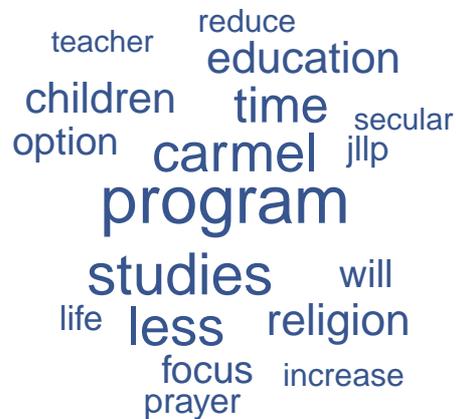
People were asked to consider the current JLLP program and how it influences their intentions to enrol in the Carmel School. Most people said that it was their primary reason for enrolment (46%) or one of the reasons (36%). In contrast, 12% said it was one of the reasons they would consider not enrolling, and 1% said it was the primary reason. Some people said that the program did not influence their intentions (5%).

There was variability across respondent groups, with parents and community members saying the program was the primary reason for enrolling, whereas the other cohorts said it was one of the reasons for enrolling.

Having a closer observance was associated with the program being the primary reason for enrolling in Carmel School, whereas those with an occasional to no affiliation said the program did not influence their decision.



People were asked what changes to the JLLP would increase their motivation to enrol or considering enrolling at Carmel school. The key themes were **education** ('education', 'inform') and **Judaism** ('prayer', 'religion'). Examples of statements are provided below.



Education

“Recognising Jewish and Hebrew studies are the heart and soul of Carmel School.”

“Keep the program current and engaging and allow students to form their own Jewish identity based on their learning and family life.”

“More real world education about being Jewish in today's society. More focus on community involvement and community sustainability.”

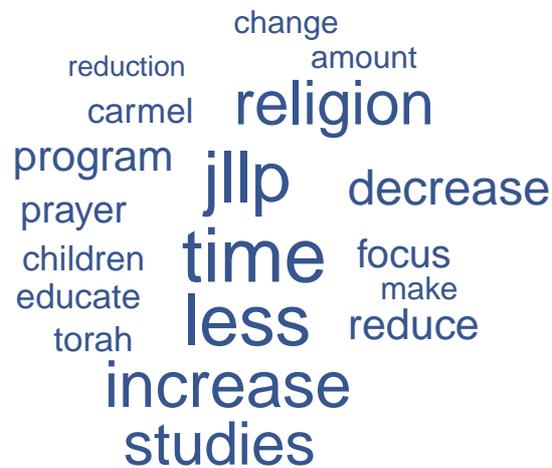
Judaism

“More opt-in choices for religious families so non-Jewish and non-Orthodox families feel more comfortable sending their children to Carmel. The school needs more students!”

“Provision of alternative secular pathways and greater intercultural understanding.”

“Choices for my child and the level at which Jewish studies is taught to them and the expectation to be living an orthodox religious lifestyle.”

People were asked what changes to the JLLP would decrease their motivation to enrol or considering enrolling at Carmel School. The key themes were **education** ('learn', 'inform') and **Judaism** ('prayer', 'religion'). Examples of statements are provided below.



Education

“If the emphasis on Jewish life and learning was decreased, I would probably find Carmel less desirable and look at schools with stronger academic options.”

“Reducing the amount of Jewish Education.”

“Watering things down, less focus on rigorous learning. You need to have knowledge before you can make an informed decision about anything.”

Judaism

“If you increased the amount of JLL in particular around Torah studies and prayers.”

“Greater focus on orthodox religious beliefs, more prayer daily, enforcing rules at school, less engagement in community.”

“Increased emphasis on religious observance and/or Zionism.”

“If the program was diluted so heavily that there was barely a focus on Judaism, then we would consider other schools.”

4 Workshop and Interview Summary

A series of 1-1 interviews and workshops were conducted during the consultation period.

- 6 people participated in 1-1 Interviews
- 19 people participated in one of 4 group workshop/interviews¹⁰
- 15 people participated in a staff workshop
- 10 people participated in a student workshop

Some people interviewed expressed a reluctance to attend the workshop format, for fear of the conversation being confrontational and diverse views not being accepted. As such, the following thematic summary combines the interviews and workshops notes to provide a clearer presentation of the diversity of views, as opposed to an expression of the minority/majority view.

In the majority of instances, the session and/or interview notes were circulated to participants post workshop to confirm the accuracy of what was recorded.

4.1 Key Outcomes of a JLLP

When it comes to the desired outcomes for Carmel School from a JLLP, there was strong alignment across all the sessions and interviews.

In essence, people want students to leave the school with a depth of connection to the religion and both the desire and capability to continue this connection into their adult years, whatever level of observance is involved.

“There is one outcome – The number of students who graduate with a strong and positive Jewish identity who want to marry Jewish and build Jewish families. (For those more religious, can add, ‘and who desire to live observant Jewish lives’.)

“Feeling proud of being Jewish but recognising that being Jewish isn’t perfect.”

“You should not feel as though you can’t celebrate being Jewish if you are not Orthodox.”

While there was recognition that someone’s home life played a critical role in shaping this sense of connection, desire and capability, the role of the school was seen as essential. It was also seen as the primary element that distinguishes the school from other private schools in Perth.

For some, this meant that the JLLP and by default the religion should not be treated as a commodity and seen as something that is somehow negotiable and could or should be calibrated to suit fluctuating community sentiment. There was concern that taking an

¹⁰ One person attended two workshops

approach that redefined what the religion was, would send the wrong message about what is and isn't important in life and contribute to an ongoing decline in what was on offer.

“There needs to be a strong standard – which is a level of orthodoxy that prevents it from being watered down.”

“If you take out the Jewish, we are an underperforming private school.”

For others, the very notion of modern orthodoxy was all about the need to make Judaism contemporary and central to what made the religion and the community strong.

“The future of Jewish life is a stronger acceptance of all forms of participation in Jewish life. If the definition becomes so narrow, then it's not going to grow the community because those who don't fit the mould feel alienated and lack a sense of belonging.”

Overall, there is clear agreement that Judaism is the defining element of Carmel School, and the way the content is delivered was critical.

“We need to deliver people what they are looking for, rather than what we want for them. (Without leaving our core values, yet still recognising that they are our customers and if we want to exist, we need to provide for them.)”

“Recognise that building positive Jewish identity requires positive Jewish experience and a positive classroom environment. Certainly not one that is negative/ fear-based or forced.”

“This is not about making people practise the religion – but that people feel a sense of belonging to the Jewish community. Eg: For many people going to Shule is a community engagement more than religious.”

“It is possible to have a strong Jewish identity and be secular in your approach – these are not contradictory positions.”

For some, the concern was that focusing too heavily on the Jewish curriculum and not student overall academic performance and broader curriculum offerings, left the school vulnerable in a competitive market.

“For many parents, continuing their children's Jewish education in high school was not as much value as what the other schools could offer.”

“What do I get for my \$25k, and what would my child be offered by the 30% of that fee that is spent on JLLP and has the potential to limit their outlook on life and could result in them regarding Jewish people as apart from all other cultures and groups.”

People wanted students to leave the school with three key outcomes:

- A **love** of Judaism and what it offers to help navigate modern life.
 1. A desire to continue the faith (e.g. whom they marry and their daily practice).
 2. An appreciation for the richness that Judaism offers in modern life and that it is more than a set of rules to be followed.
 3. A sense of identity, belonging and connection to a wider community that is accepting of difference.

“Something that recognises that our connection to community/each other is through the religion.”

“Kids should be proud of their heritage and Judaism – many of the concepts that are trendy already exist within Judaism.”

“Have opportunities for different forms of exploration – foster the overall love and passion.”

- A **knowledge** of Judaism and its history and practice.
 1. The understanding of the lineage and story of Jewish people across the ages.
 2. The important role Israel plays in Jewish life, both historically and in the present day.
 3. Knowing and living the core values of what it means to be Jewish and part of a Jewish community.

“The religion and culture are intertwined – they may not need to practise the detail of the religion, but they do need to understand what it is – So there is an appreciation of the depth of history and what the religion actually is.”

- Able to **practise** Judaism at whatever level of observance they choose.
 1. Having the Hebrew skills to know what they are saying during prayer and understand its meaning.
 2. The ability to walk into a Shule anywhere in the world and participate.
 3. The ability to use the base texts to find answers to the questions that challenge them the most about life.

“More valuable than learning how to pray, is to learn what the prayers mean.”

“Walking away with the ability to speak Hebrew and understanding the text.”

4.2 Level of Observance/What Is Mandatory

It was recognised that some people would identify as an orthodox Jew who follows the halachic practice quite closely, others would equally identify as an orthodox Jew but felt fulfilled through their cultural connections and observance of the high holidays.

It was very clear for people, regardless of how the JLLP is delivered, that fostering a belonging to their religion and the community sat as the heart of the desired experience.

“Building a sense of belonging and positive experience of the religion is predicated on having a place where people feel safe to have these discussions within the wider community.”

“The sense of belonging – being ‘Jewish’ enough regardless of the level of observance – needs to be factored into the curriculum.”

“Sense of belonging in some capacity is what is critical.”

“The reality is that Carmel is the only Jewish Day School in Perth. As such, it is a communal school. It needs to serve the broader community and not simply a subset of that community.”

“There is no need for the school to set the benchmark for what modern orthodoxy is. Level of observance and belief comes from the home. Children would benefit from being taught that tolerance and authenticity are important.”

“Everyone should be empowered to learn Judaism at their level – because that will help build their sense of connection and meaning. Pitched too low – religious kids wonder why others don’t get something so simple and it offers them no real learning. Pitched too high – kids find it too hard and that reflects on the whole religion – which turns kids off”

“Need to ensure children are not penalised for wanting to do more detailed study. It should be mandatory to do something. There are kids and families that want more, rather than less.”

For many interviewed, the school has a leadership role in setting a standard of what it means to be a Modern Orthodox Zionist Jew and how to live a Jewish life. This means that the school needed to offer students the skills, knowledge and experiences that might be more observant than students’ experience in their own homes. This was seen as required because it provides students with this foundational experience and thus choice into the future.

“What is important is that the student has enough of a foundation to pick this up at any time in the future.”

“It doesn’t feel like there is a stable orthodox environment in the school. It currently feels like a watered-down version and I feel like it shouldn’t be watered-down anymore.”

For others, the way that standard is set and applied is the major concern.

“The problem is not how religious the JLLP is, but how it gets taught.”

“Cohesiveness of the overall environment is more important than the specific focus on different pieces of curriculum.”

The concerns expressed focus on a level of observance being forced onto people, which could end up turning them off the religion and having the opposite impact on the desired sense of connection and identity.

“Kids get scared of punishment for leaving tefillin at home, so they don’t bring it home and therefore only lay tefillin at school.”

“Forcing people to do Tefillah is not advised as this causes more rebellion and resentment towards the religion.”

“Building positive Jewish identity requires positive Jewish experience and a positive classroom environment. (Certainly not negative/ fear based/forced.)”

“Trying to force people to be religious can have the opposite effect.”

“The religion and culture are intertwined – they may not need to practise the detail of the religion, but they do need to understand what it is.”

“Being Jewish is about asking questions. Forcing compliance creates a negative Jewish identity.”

“Coming to the school is not often the child’s choice, it’s the parents’ choice. Does this mean kids resent having to do stuff at school that they don’t do at home?”

“To have Judaism explored as more than a set of rules is essential; it is a way of life that has meaning in modern life.”

“The level of observance is a family/personal issue. Building blocks of how to learn are important – i.e. reading, writing, learning from the Chumash, Mishna etc., but not indoctrination.”

“School shouldn’t see its role as forcing tefilin on kids. This is up to parents and kids. School can incentivise but there is a negative outcome if it’s forced.”

For others, the level of observance was no different to requiring standards of uniform, attendance, classroom manners, etc. and no different to what is expected in other orthodox schools.

While there were divergent views on the mandatory role of the JLLP in Years 11 and 12, the majority of people agreed that there should be some kind of Jewish education throughout someone's education at the school. Notwithstanding the concerns about feasibility of class size, many people expressed the need to have some kind of streamed experience that gave those who wanted to extend their learning the chance to do so, and those who wanted more of an applied experience to have that.

“If you've not got the corner stone understanding by Year 10, then making Yr11/12 compulsory becomes redundant. It is an important choice to have but should not be a compulsory element.”

“No, it should not be ATAR compulsory, but have a Jewish learning class, less time intensive but brings this practical experience to life.”

A couple of people talked in very positive terms about the way in which the school worked with a student who transitioned while at school. While it was recognised that things were not perfect for these people, it was an example of how modern orthodoxy can approach life as it is in 2022 and not as it was thousands of years ago.

These people saw the school involve the Rabbis and present a response that was not an automatic 'no' and they suggested this as an example of how the school can be adaptable with how it presents its JLLP.

“We need to put the modern, back into modern orthodoxy.”

4.3 This risk of making JLL too academic

There were concerns about what happens to a topic like JLL, once it become enmeshed into an academic structure and linked to grades and university entrance.

“If you treat JLL like all the other subjects, students don't end up retaining the knowledge, because it makes the focus on getting the grades and that means we will foster it quicker – JLL is life knowledge and should be done for the language.”

“Don't just treat it as an academic subject – because this makes it harder to be flexible in how it gets delivered.”

“Judaism is an incredible 'product'/'identity'. If it is taught in a shallow, unappealing manner, it doesn't matter how many hours and resources you devote to it or how informal it is taught, it will never help achieve the outcome. The change required is not in altering how Jewish the school is or how much time is needed to be given to Jewish life and learning, it's in re-defining the goal and lifting the quality of the education and the educators.”

“Jewish identity doesn't come from the text – it comes from experiential learning.”

“JLL trying to create identity within student and ultimately behavioural change. Attitude towards it matters, unlike mathematics where one needs to know rather than connect with and want. Math success = high ATAR score, JLLP success = joy and desire to apply the principles of the religion in daily life (regardless of level of observance).”

“The ATAR gives the school a boost in the overall ranking – but the narrative in how the course is delivered, that ends up suggesting that the religion goes against modern society – these are secular issues that religion is responding to – rather than a focus on the really integral elements of Judaism, e.g. family, education, connection to God/community/Israel.”

It was noted from that historically the previous JLLP had a much more experiential focus and the shift to a more academic footing was in response to feedback saying it was too experiential.

For some people interviewed, while the JLLP was essential, the overall academic performance of the school should take precedence as this is one of the key reasons people leave towards high school and upper school.

“Even if JLLP is not an ATAR subject, there need to be options to continue studying and extension for those who want it.”

“Should not be compulsory ATAR, but this doesn’t mean there should be no Jewish learning if they are not doing this as ATAR – a dedicated program to continue their learning about Judaism to maintain this connection (just having a Purim party isn’t enough).”

4.4 Belonging and Being Jewish Enough

Something more difficult to articulate as a theme, focuses people's experiences of being made to feel 'not Jewish enough' if they were not as observant as the school required. There were two distinct approaches people and groups took to this conversation.

- Those who explored the topics from different perspectives with a view to identify a way forward.
- Those who strongly advocated against any change to the school's level of observance and saw the discussion (and those asking for a different approach) as a threat.

"This has worked for 5000 years because it's not been flexible. The integrity needs to be maintained – this is what makes us a Jewish day school. Don't act desperately – otherwise the tail wags the dog."

It is this perception of other members of the community as a threat that seems to foster what others expressed as being made to feel 'not Jewish enough', which appears to sit at odds with the universally desired outcomes to foster a sense of belonging and a positive experience of the religion.

"There is a culture of segregation – religious/non- religious. This is a broader culture that needs to be changed. There are basic pillars (kindness, acceptance, etc.) that need to be an underlying thing."

"Part of the reason for the current issue of us and them – is the way the program is taught. If taught well, many classes can be together. Better to spend \$ on one GREAT teacher who can work with both sides, than pay two staff for 2 streams."

"Tolerance and diversity are important qualities in this day and age. Religious and less religious children (and non-Jewish children) should all be tolerant of each other."

"At the moment it is not as relatable to me – it has a very heavy focus on the religious expression of Judaism and not a broader view of Judaism."

"The focus on culture helps me explore the path I want."

"The people who don't want to do more religious studies, are still interested in being Jewish."

"Teach the value of every Jewish person (themselves and others) to all students, no matter the level of observance. This becomes a whole course in itself that is backed by Torah/Kabbalah etc. and speaks to the essence of Judaism."

"Some members of the community have not felt fully welcomed by other elements of the school community. If we can't be accepting of different forms of Judaism, how can we apply understanding and make critical choices in other parts of life."

4.5 Teenager Development and Choice

Many noted the change in approach between primary and high school and while they appreciated the age difference, many expressed that the primary school fostered a warmer and more welcoming's experience of Judaism. The disconnect between experience between primary and high school was a point of concern.

It was noted in a couple of groups that there is a developmental phase that teenagers go through, where there is a natural desire to challenge what they have been raised with. This was seen as an important part of how teenagers develop their own world view.

For some this increased the need for the school to adapt its approach to how the religion is taught and practised in the school, to avoid triggering this rejection. For others, this meant the school should 'stay the course' because students need to be given the foundations at school, otherwise you have deprived them of choice into the future. Others reflected on their own teenage experience and suggested, 'Kids don't know what they want at that age', the implication being that it was more important to give students a consistency of experience than trying to make people happy.

For many, streaming the courses was the obvious solution to be able to provide a greater range of experiences for students. Though not all were in favour of this approach.

“Streaming would give you the ability to provide for the different styles of learning and different capabilities and interests.”

“You could end up undoing the benefit gained in primary school in term of cohesiveness between different people.”

4.6 Specific Program Elements

The program elements (see page 9 for the description) were discussed in most sessions, with the following commentary:

Element	Comments
Hebrew Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hebrew language was broadly seen as an essential element of what is offered by the school. • Learning any language was seen as a positive outcome from a developmental point of view and Hebrew made the most sense based on the nature of the school. • For some this meant the ability to speak Hebrew (conversational) and people wanted a stronger focus on this. • For others it is to have enough understanding of the language to know the meaning of the various prayers and be able to go to the source documents (Tanach, Midrash, etc.) • There were some concerns that language was stronger in primary than high school. • Use immersion programs where there is the intensive (Hebrew only) experience to speak modern Hebrew. <p style="text-align: center; color: #0070C0;">“Language is important if not critical – being able to understand what they are saying in prayer makes the prayer more meaningful.”</p>
Studying Torah and Jewish Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were mixed views on the what and how this topic is covered, with many noting that without Torah and/or Jewish Law there is no religion. • Some suggested that while it is important to know Jewish law, the study of law is not as important as the practice of the religion. Which means that it is more important it be presented as practical application. • Others felt that Torah and Tanach are too specific and too specialised in Jewish Learning, saying that from Year 11 onward it should not be mandatory, especially if you only have limited subjects which can be better used. <p>Most of the comments focused on how this section of the curriculum is approached:</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #0070C0;">“Should be called ‘meaningful Judaism’ – the focus on the relevancy/ meaning/ spiritual depth/ practical application in the modern world.”</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #0070C0;">“Show students how the things that students value are contained within the Torah and how to make this part of Jewish life.”</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #0070C0;">“The Full Minyan can be a learning session and less rushed.”</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #0070C0;">“Torah should not be taught for the sake of knowledge – it needs to add to our perspective of Judaism and Life. Judaism is not something I do, it is who I am, something that brings me a deeper understanding of life.”</p>

Element	Comments
	<p data-bbox="512 286 1445 387">“You can’t expect someone to be enriched by sitting in a text based class. Text and experiential learning delivers a much more engaging outcome”</p>
<p data-bbox="204 443 416 589">Studying the history and role of Israel in Jewish Life</p>	<ul data-bbox="453 443 1517 544" style="list-style-type: none"> • While it was recognised that a school can’t cover everything and that some things half taught might be more damaging than not taught at all, there was a desire to see the richness and some of the struggles (need to see the full picture). <p data-bbox="491 584 1465 651">“The picture we can give about Zionism is not the whole picture – who the people were (e.g., they didn’t want a religious state).”</p> <p data-bbox="475 707 1481 842">“The Zionist focus can muddy the waters – and can confuse things – with Israeli values. There is a risk of idealising the way in which Israel is taught (being in Israel is good, being in the diaspora is bad); this negates the value of the Judaism that we live.”</p> <p data-bbox="480 902 1477 1003">“Connection to Israel is important (history and controversy) – the Zionist outlook is important but it is important that students are given a full picture of what the country is (the good and the bad).”</p> <p data-bbox="501 1061 1453 1162">“The one-sided view of Israel that is presented (e.g. intifada) and students leave the school and end up feeling like they have been lied to.”</p> <p data-bbox="504 1220 1453 1288">“While the primary has an Israel program, in high school this doesn’t seem to start until Year 10 and then culminates in Shorashim.”</p> <p data-bbox="493 1346 1461 1413">“Jewish life in Israel and Jewish History. But this then takes away from the daily practical understanding of why we do what we do ...”</p> <p data-bbox="480 1471 1477 1639">“For the same reason it doesn’t work to teach this type of history about Australia, teaching a colonialist version of Israeli history doesn’t help people look at hard things and doesn’t change society for the better. For people to become peacemakers they need to be given skills to have hard conversations; people need to be able to be honest about the past.”</p> <ul data-bbox="453 1688 1517 1756" style="list-style-type: none"> • Others felt that while a focus on culture and society is needed, it is more important to explore what our response should be. E.g., treat it as a humanities subject. <p data-bbox="480 1794 1477 1861">“Being an Australian Jew and being supportive of Israel doesn’t mean we need to wave Israeli flags all the time.”</p>

Element	Comments
Cultural observance of festivals and customs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This element was seen as important to deliver, because of the way that it contributes to a sense of belonging and community. • This is something many people saw that the school did well, particularly in primary school. • Some suggested that this element loses focus as it moves into high school as there is more scaffolding of the delivery; they wanted to keep the relevance and focus as students get older. <p>Each festival can be given a theme that can then explore the practical life application, beyond just the observance of the festival.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were mixed views on the Tzevet program <p style="text-align: center;">“Maybe look at more of a cultural focus, rather than religious – more traditional rather than religious.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Without the Tzevet, it would feel like a normal school. They add a Jewish atmosphere to the school that is important.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is also a desire for the school to build greater inclusion into its practice to make allowance for the involvement of single parents and mixed marriages. - E.g., the bar-mitzvah program gives fathers and sons the chance to do something, but single mothers miss that experience. <p style="text-align: center;">“How does the mother feel included in the process?”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“There is a gender problem in the religion – I am raising amazing women, should we look at balancing the experience of Bar and Bat Mitzvah?”</p>
Practising and adherence to Jewish law in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As has been explored earlier, there were mixed views on the role of adherence to Jewish Law in school, with the discussions focusing on the impact of forced vs. voluntary compliance with certain laws and practices. • Some people felt unsure about what this element meant on a practical level.
Daily Prayer in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of people talked about the need to decrease the focus on daily prayer in high school (okay in primary). • Some felt that the ritual and practice of orthodoxy is okay for a more advanced stream. Children who are not in the advanced stream probably don’t need much more than a working knowledge of such matters. <p style="text-align: center;">“More valuable than learning how to pray is to learn the prayers.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Forcing the prayers becomes hard – and can push people away.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“There is merit in not forcing things too much at that 14/15 years age group – yet boundaries are important to create safety”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Others felt that prayer is a foundational skill that every Jew needs.

Element	Comments
	<p data-bbox="480 286 1474 353">“Being able to pick up a siddur and participate is important, however, how it gets done isn’t great.”</p> <p data-bbox="480 405 1474 472">“It is important to know how to pick up a siddur and know how to navigate the territory.”</p> <p data-bbox="451 517 1385 551">There was a number of suggested changes to how this element is approached.</p> <ul data-bbox="451 591 1481 730" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="451 591 1481 692">• Making it practical and relatable to Jewish life and express with love and joy about what they are living. Bringing better emphasis on the why – explore the source and make the learning fun. <li data-bbox="451 696 1345 730">• Making the Minyan attendance optional and run it before school hours. <p data-bbox="475 770 1485 936">“Prayer is obviously very important but competence in it is hardly the primary goal of a High School. A Jewish adult who can pray but can’t or doesn’t connect someone to Jewish thought in all other aspects of their life (e.g. business ethics, pedagogy, literature, biomedical ethics, etc.), has really missed out.”</p> <ul data-bbox="451 987 1050 1021" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="451 987 1050 1021">• The Tefillah program can be difficult to deliver. <p data-bbox="461 1055 1506 1122">“Harder to go into depth when someone isn’t interested, especially getting into the deeper spiritual meaning on ‘Tuesday at 8:00am’.”</p> <ul data-bbox="451 1162 1166 1196" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="451 1162 1166 1196">• Some suggested not doing mandatory Tefillah every day. <p data-bbox="475 1234 1481 1335">“Do it twice a week, but still use this time as an extended mentoring period (have people talk about their Judaism, make it relatable, practical and accessible)”</p> <p data-bbox="469 1346 1485 1447">“Rather than 30min in the morning – do 10min after lunch (shorter, simpler, still gives the element of prayer) – do the mincha service – becomes a way to regather after lunch.”</p> <p data-bbox="480 1458 1474 1525">“Offering some kind of Jewish connection (currently offered in Yr 11/12) – could be extended in the lower high school.”</p> <ul data-bbox="451 1570 1493 1783" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="451 1570 1493 1637">• It was suggested that a more structured approach for the Tzevet is needed so the conversation is more scaffolded. <li data-bbox="451 1682 1493 1783">• The use of local madrichim (youth leaders) was suggested by a number of people. Some talked about B’nei and Habonim and others suggested leaders beyond groups with specific ideology. <p data-bbox="491 1816 1465 1850">“Pair Habbo/B’nei madrichim with teachers to model true collaboration.”</p>
<p data-bbox="204 1906 405 2007">Participating in Community Service/life</p>	<ul data-bbox="451 1906 1509 2007" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="451 1906 1509 2007">• Overall there was support for the importance of this element of the JLLP, with people recognising the need for students to understand their role in being an active part of the wider community and learn life skills that are about assisting others.

Element	Comments
	<p data-bbox="491 286 1469 353">“This is where the whole spectrum of Judaism can be experienced, rather than just the religious observance.”</p> <p data-bbox="491 405 1469 472">“It becomes a way to connect with different people in the community and different generations.”</p> <ul data-bbox="453 521 1501 589" style="list-style-type: none"> • Many wanted to see the focus move beyond the Jewish community and for students to be involved in the wider non-Jewish community as well. <p data-bbox="491 627 1461 694">“You end up getting into the Jewish bubble and it’s harder to branch out when you leave.”</p> <ul data-bbox="453 743 1465 875" style="list-style-type: none"> • Others were concerned that going wider would undermine the learning about the shared responsibility to keep the Jewish community strong. • Some suggested that this is less important in schools and should be something students learn at home.

4.7 Informal Education

The informal Jewish education was seen as an important way to transform how the learning is done and the program delivered.

“Camps and shabbatons are great for kids to experience an orthodox shabbat.”

“The use of Habbo and B’nei Madrichim could take this to the next level – this not just about recruiting for their organisations.”

“Some camps are good as there is not enough opportunity to get to know people across year groups; the community is so small that this is an important part of keeping community together.”

“It allows for incidental learning that is interesting, Fun and engaging. It allows for topical subjects to be raised (e.g. election).”

“Friday night dinners – see the teacher enough and why pay to have to interact with a hierarchy of power that they are not enjoying during the daytime.”

“At the moment it is mostly B’nei and Dianella Shule, and should be more diverse in who is involved.”

The most common feedback was a desire for a better structure within these elements.

- Giving Madrichim time to plan and prepare
- Using Habbo and B’nei builds a sense of pride and belonging in being Jewish (relatability of Jewish and Australian culture) and fosters that sense of community belonging
- Even though this is considered ‘informal’, the team should be working towards a certain goal

“It becomes too informal and didn’t result in a cohesive program.”

“Masada in North Sydney *have* specific staff/team with clear tasks and roles – they can make things happen.”

“There needs to be stronger continuity of informal learning between primary school and into high school.”

4.8 Other Comments

Concern was expressed in several sessions that the JLLP appeared to be the only subject being reviewed in this manner and that the reasons for low levels of enrolment were not just about the JLLP. People cited concerns with other areas of the curriculum and school culture as potential contributing factors to current enrolment levels.

“Would like to spend as much time talking about all the other programs. JLLP becomes an easy target that is only one part of a holistic approach.”

“Parent interviews should be compulsory for Jewish studies (should not be lumped into sports – it sends the wrong message).”

Others were concerned about the confusion and potential disruption this review will cause for current students who have already made subject selections.

The other consistent comment related to the school was not being scared to define what it wants to be and not to get lost trying to please everyone.

“The school needs to shape a clear identity as to what it stands for. Carmel is the only Jewish Day School in Perth, whereas (for example) Melbourne has a number of different Jewish Day Schools, each of which has its own identity and Jewish ethos (think Bialik compared to Scopus compared to Yavneh compared to Yeshiva compared to King David).”

“By leaning into claiming what you are (the standards), people will be more attracted to this. This makes it more equal – take it or leave it. By trying to appeal to all – all the people will all be dissatisfied.”

5 Conclusion

The JLLP is one of the school's most important parts of the curriculum as it is the key point of difference, being the only Jewish school in Perth. The results of this comprehensive engagement process suggest that the school has a critical role in shaping the student's sense of connection, desire and capability of Modern Orthodox Zionist Judaism.

The defining elements of the program focused on the following three principles:

- A **love** of Judaism and what it offers to help people navigate modern life
- A **knowledge** of the history of Judaism and Israel
- An ability to **practise** Judaism at whatever level of observance they choose

Overall, the results suggest some form of decrease in the level of adherence of the JLL program to the ethos and practice of Modern Orthodox Zionism. The level of this decrease varied depending on how the data was collated on aggregate the degree is in the order of 3.4%, yet this is not the result of a consistent view of respondents, but rather disparate view between different respondent groups (44% wanting a decrease, 33% wanting an increase, 16% wanting it the same and 6% were considered outliers).

This result suggests the school as a strategic decision to make on where to pitch the program, as the current pitch is only meeting 16% of the community's needs.

Should changes be made to the people generally wanted the program outcomes to focus the **cultural, historical** and **community** aspects of Judaism rather than the **religious** aspects (Daily prayer and Torah/Tanach studies). This view was reinforced in responses for the program elements where the top three elements were cultural observance, community service/life and informal Jewish education. Additionally, people expressed a preference for more focus on learning Hebrew and cultural observance.

The qualitative data revealed that people had a preference towards allowing students and parents to decide on their level of engagements with religious elements of the program. There was a clear desire for there to be some kind of streamed approach, not withstand the desire to avoid fostering an 'us' and 'them' culture in the school and ensuring the viability of class sizes.

While the community might share different views on what it means to be "Modern Orthodox Zionist Jew", what they share is equal passion for their Judaism and send children to school to be among a community of fellow Jews. In many regards, it was not the program outcomes or elements that people had issue with, but on the weight of emphasis given to various program elements and how those elements got delivered. Even those advocating for a decrease in mandatory nature of the JLL program and /or a reduction in the focus given to some elements of the JLL program were still strong in their desire to see some kind of Jewish learning for students.

Stepping back from the critical role of the JLL program, everyone wanted to see a vibrant, successful school that played its role as part of maintaining a connected, engaged and caring Jewish community.

Appendix One: SRG Recruitment

As well as a broad scale engagement program, a stakeholder reference group (SRG) has been convened and comprises of representatives from the following groups:

- Carmel School staff
- PHC, Dianella Shule Mizrachi and Chabad WA
- The Carmel School Board
- Parents from various student age ranges (current, past 5 years and prospective)
- Current and alumni students
- Different types of religious observance

The SRG includes n27¹¹ people and was recruited in two ways:

- n10 (37%) by direct invitation to ensure various key organisations are represented
- n17 (63%) by an open expression of interest (EOI) process

Other essential criteria to be eligible for selection included:

- Can commit to all activities¹²
- No known conflicts of interest in their involvement in the process
- Meets one or more of the following primary demographic criteria
- Provide proof of COVID vaccination and/or willingness to wear a mask if required

A survey was used to collect demographic data, with n32 community members completing the EOI.¹³

¹¹ Two additional places were added to boost representation of different views prior to the commencement of the group.

¹² Workshop One (3 hours) 19th June; Workshop Two (full day) 11th September; Workshop Three (3 hours) 16th October.

¹³ n40 people registered for the survey, though n8 people did not complete demographic information and so were removed from the dataset.

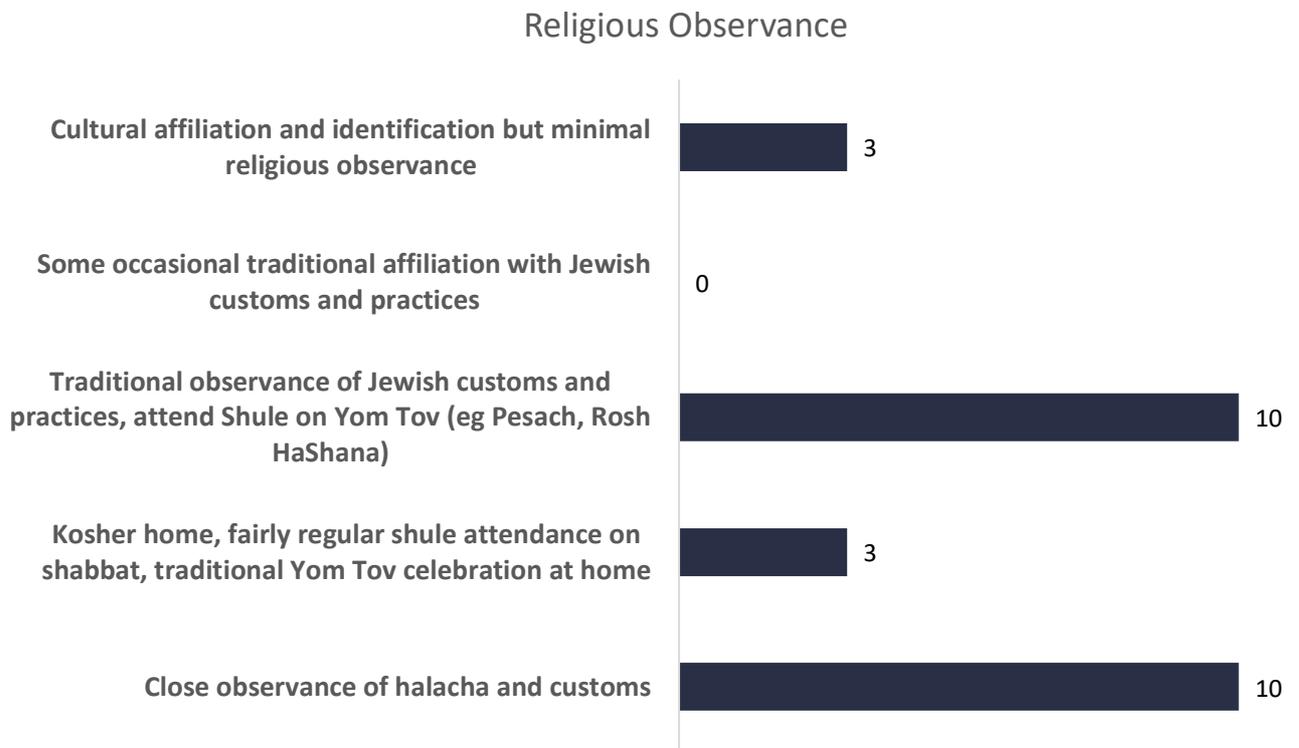
Stratification Selection Process

The EOI places were selected using a balanced sampling.

As there is no available detailed demographic for the Perth Jewish community, the selection process seeks to achieve a balanced representation across the selected criteria. The criteria were given an order of importance:

- Types of religious observance
- Parents and past students¹⁴
- Country of origin
- Gender
- Age

Types of religious observance¹⁵¹⁶¹⁷



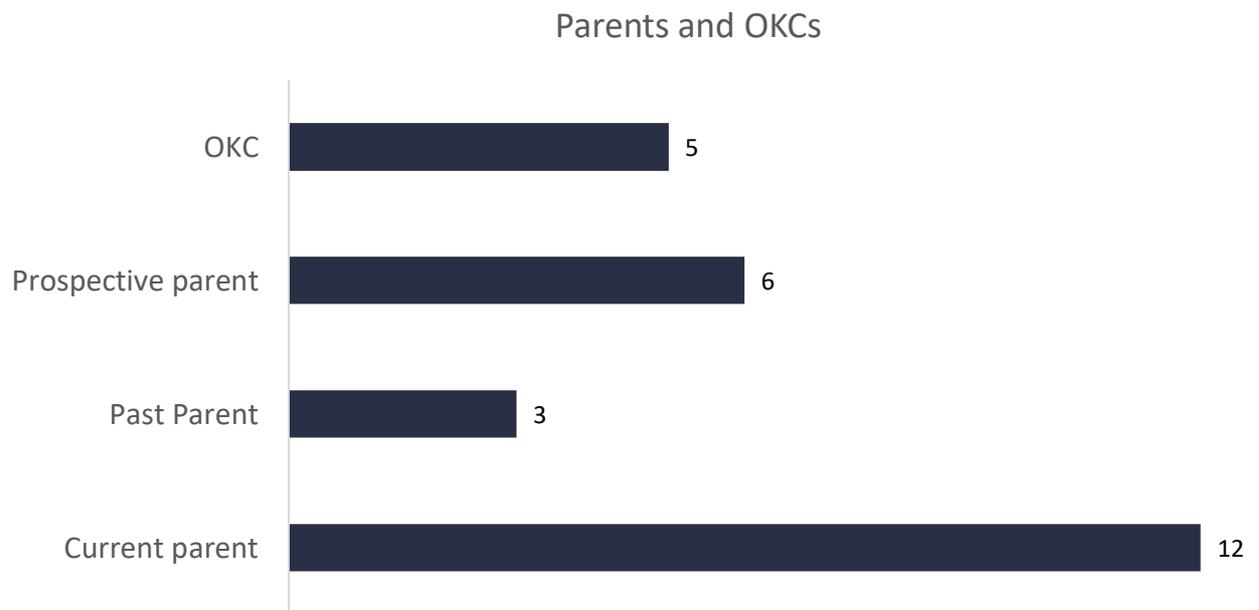
¹⁴ No EOIs were received from current students.

¹⁵ No EOIs were received from people with 'some occasional traditional affiliation'.

¹⁶ Only 3 EOIs were received from people with 'cultural affiliation'; as such, they were automatically assigned to the SRG.

¹⁷ One panel member is not Jewish as such, total for this criterion is 24.

Parents and Past Students (OKCs)^{18 19}

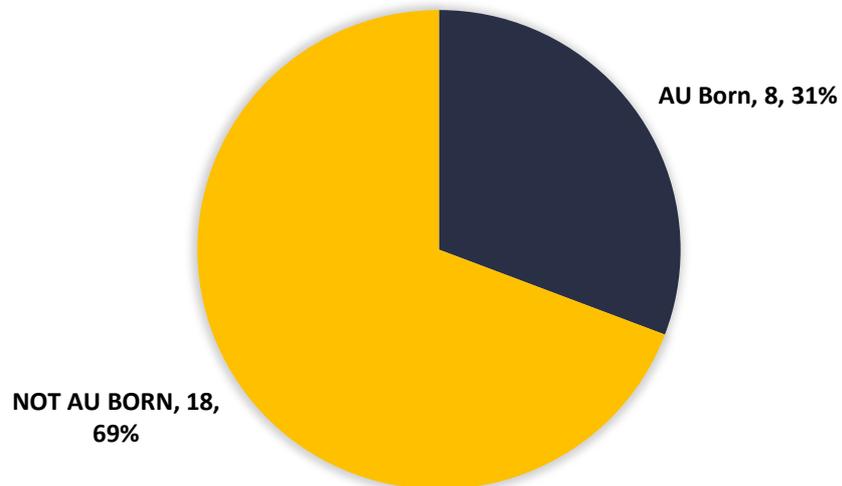


¹⁸ Number does not equal 25 due to some respondents meeting multiple categories and some not meeting any (e.g., the school principal, rabbis, etc).

¹⁹ No EOIs were received from current students.

Country of Origin²⁰

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

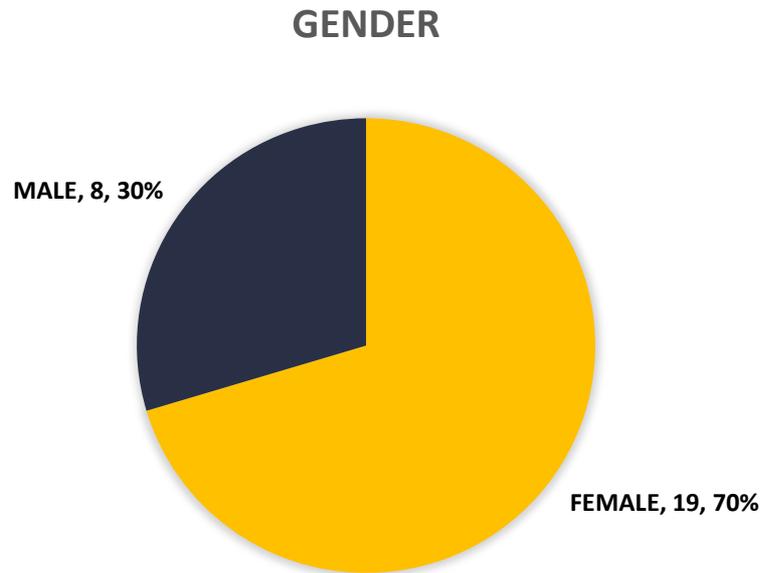


Breakdown of those not born in Australia:

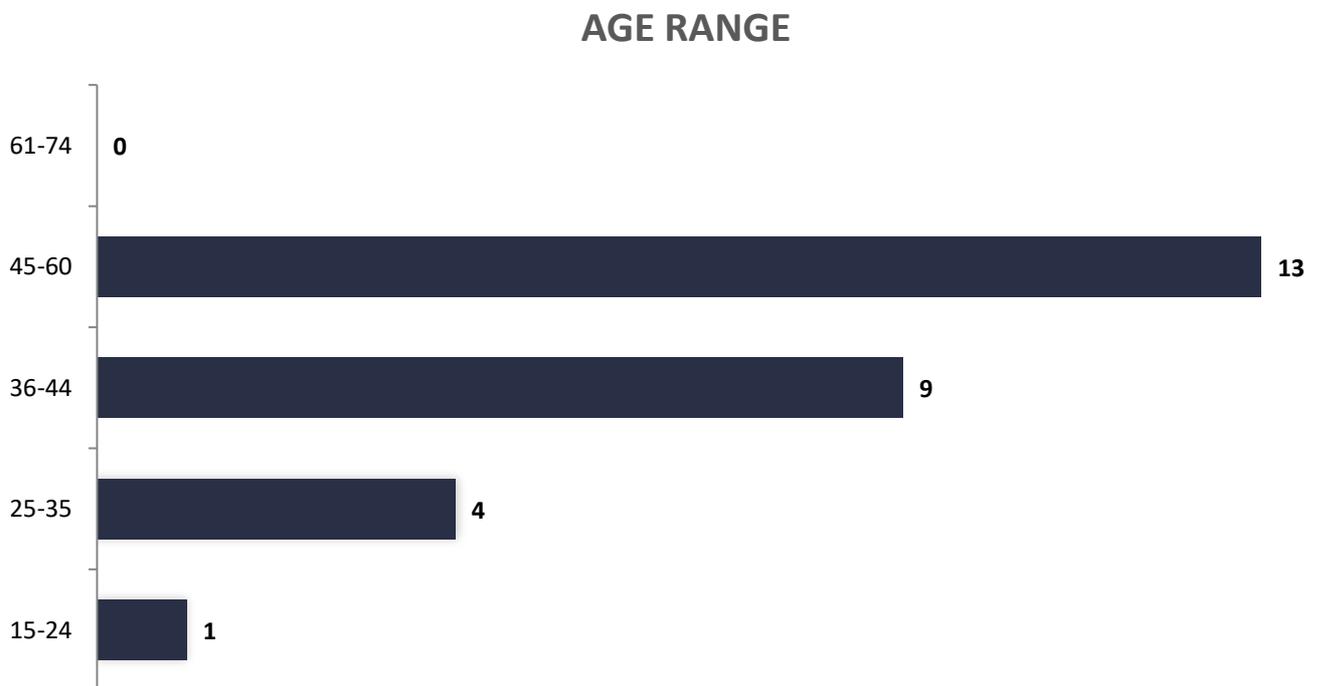
South Africa	9
UK	6
Israel	1
Portugal	1

²⁰ Note: There were 21 applicants born overseas and 11 born in Australia. The selection attempted to offer a range of countries of origin.

Gender²¹



Age²²



²¹ Unable to achieve gender balance without affecting the balance of other higher priority criteria.

²² Only 1 person from 15-24 age range applied and 3 of 4 people from the 25-35 age were assigned to the SRG. Assigning all 4 individuals would impact the balance of other higher priority criteria.

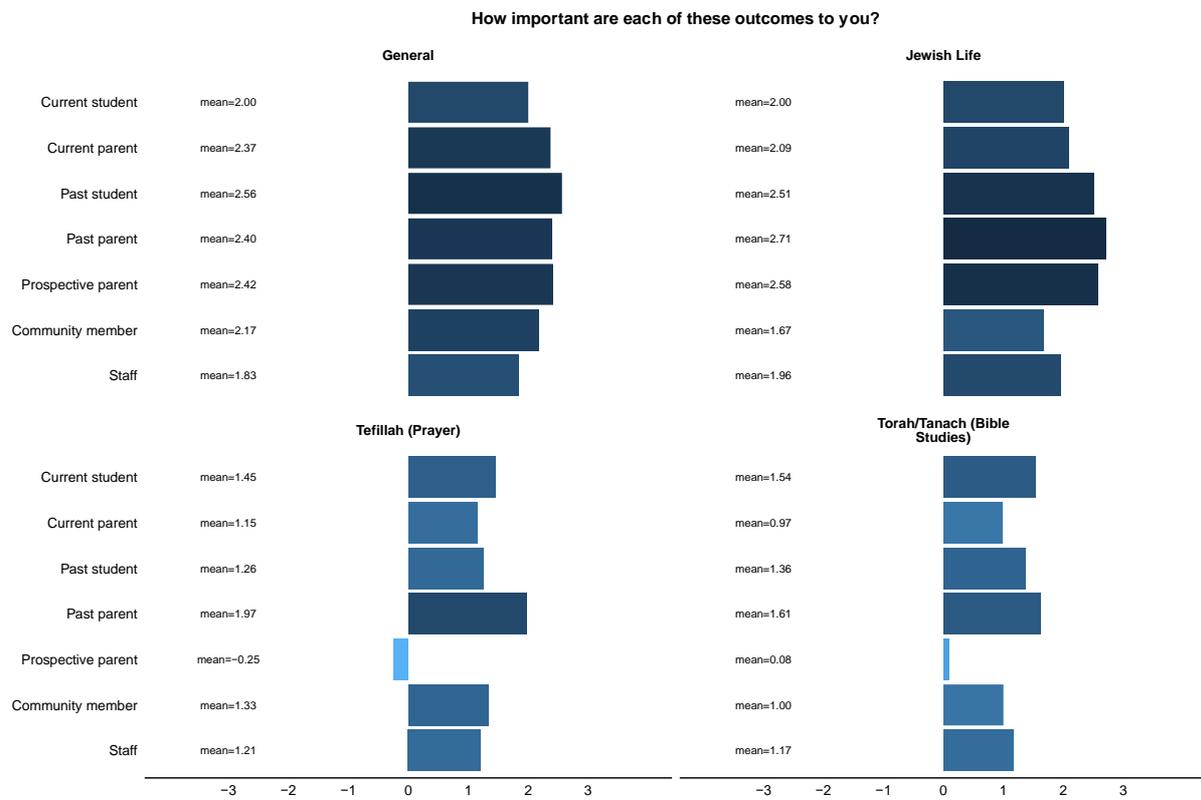
Appendix Two: Data Analytics

JLLP Outcomes

The importance of general outcomes and Jewish results was consistent across the different roles people have in the community.

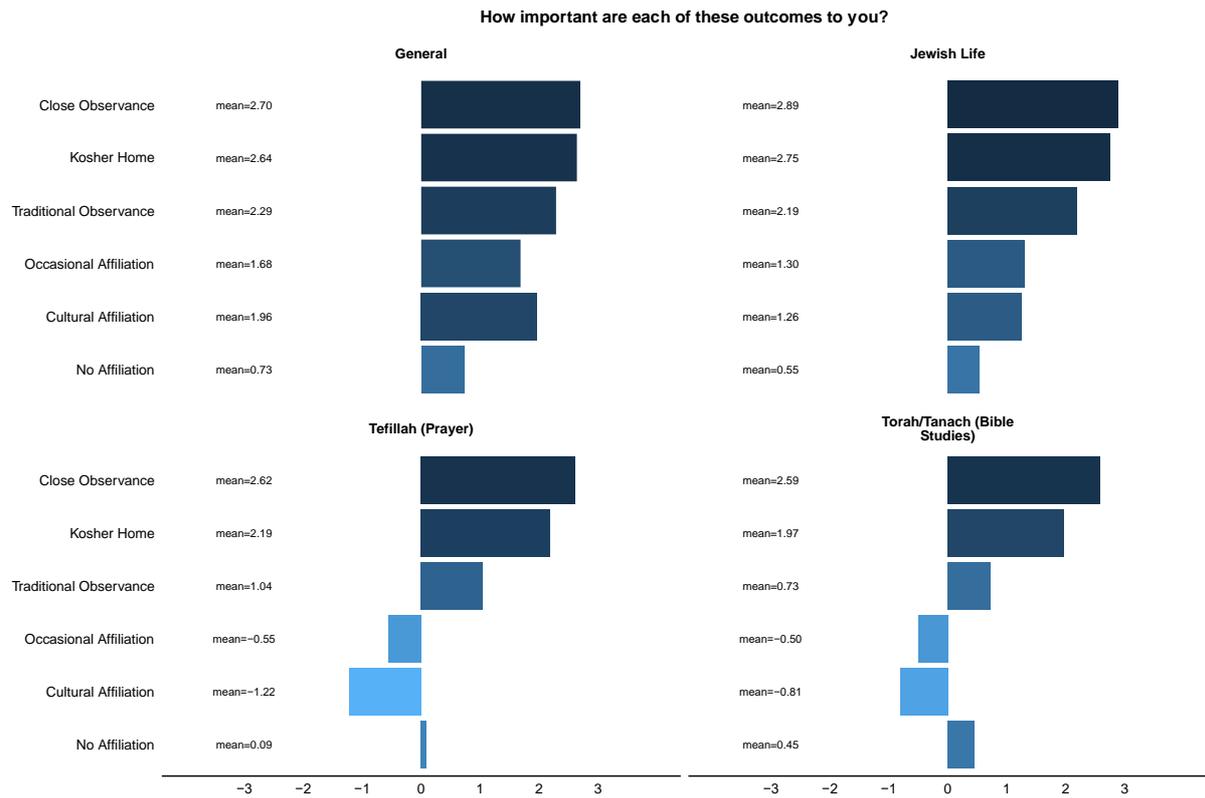
Most groups believed that Tefillah and bible studies ranged between being somewhat important to important, except for prospective parents who rated them as neutral.

Note: The 'other' group was removed from analysis since only one score was provided.



In general, the closer the observance of Jewish customs and practices, the greater the perceived importance of the JLLP outcomes. All groups thought that general outcomes and Jewish Life were important, with those having a closer observance reporting higher levels of importance.

Those with a close observance and kosher home believed that bible studies and Tefillah were very important, like general outcomes and Jewish life. People with a traditional observance thought that bible studies and Tefillah are important. People with an occasional observance and cultural affiliation trended towards a somewhat unimportant sentiment, and people with no affiliation were neutral.



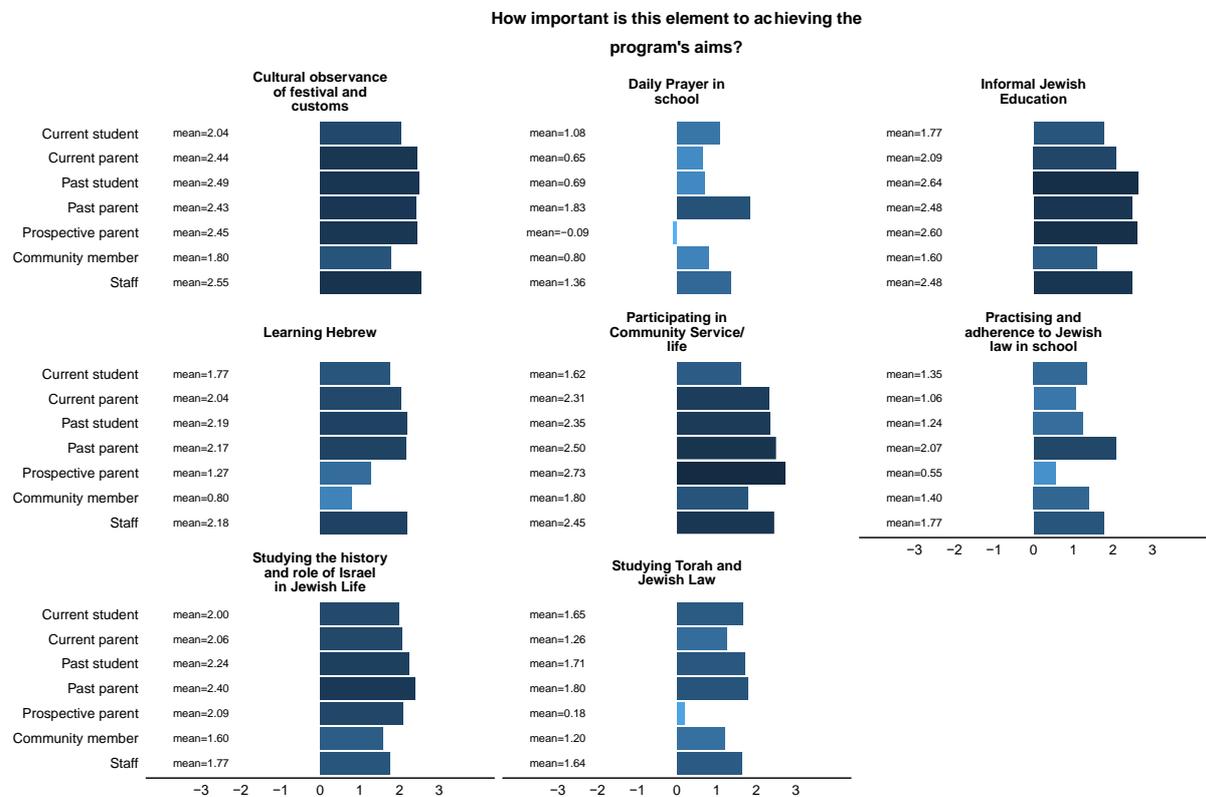
JLLP Elements

When looking at respondent cohorts, some elements were consistently rated as important to very important across groups: cultural observance of festivals and customs, informal Jewish education, participating in community service/life and studying the history of Israel.

Learning Hebrew and studying Torah were generally seen as important, though prospective parents and community members rated these elements as somewhat important and neutral.

Daily prayer was seen as important to past parents, whereas the remaining groups rated them between somewhat important and neutral. Similarly, practising adherence to Jewish law was seen as important by past parents and staff, while the remaining groups rated them between somewhat important and neutral.

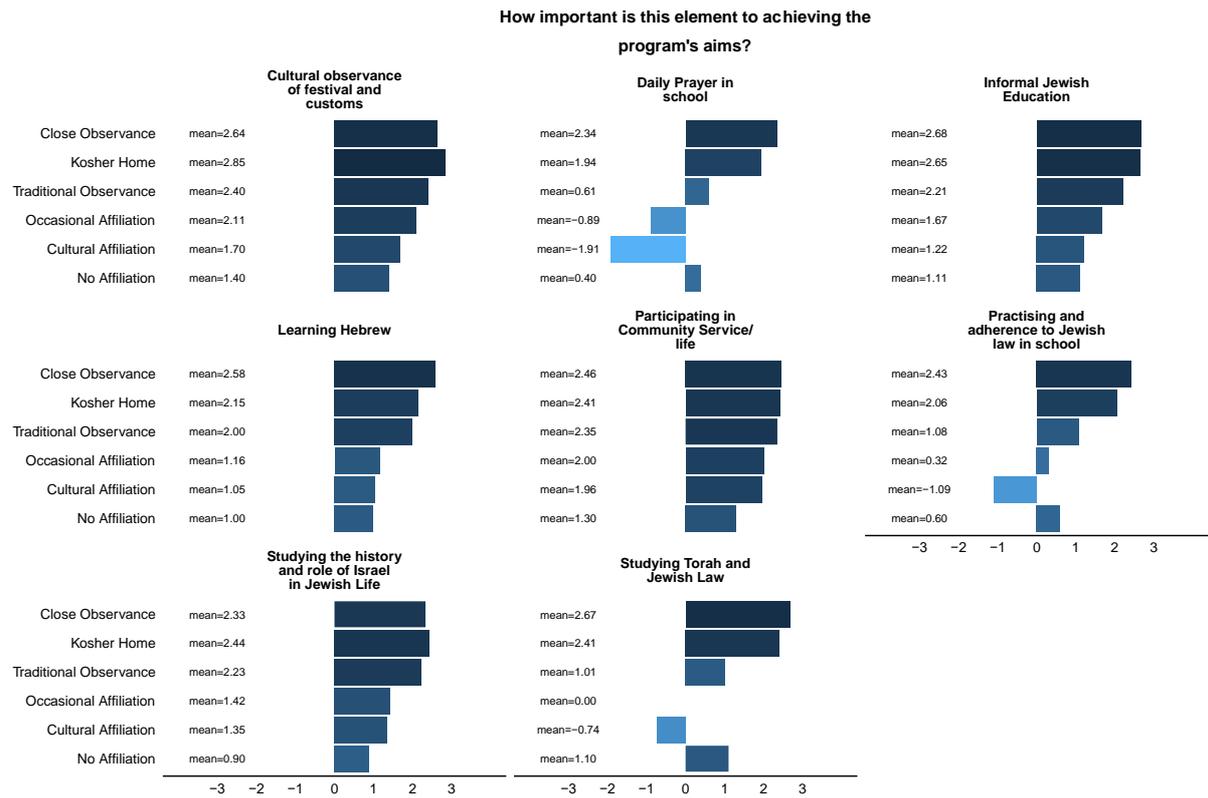
Note: The 'other' group was removed from analysis since only one score was provided.



When looking at observance groups, those with closer observance rated all outcomes as very important, and ratings decreased with lower levels of observance.

Some elements were consistently rated as somewhat important to very important: cultural observance of festivals and customs, informal Jewish education, learning Hebrew, participating in community service/life and studying the history of Israel.

Three elements were important to those with a close observance and kosher home but were seen as neutral to unimportant for other groups: daily prayer, Jewish law and studying Torah and Jewish law.



JLLP Informal Elements

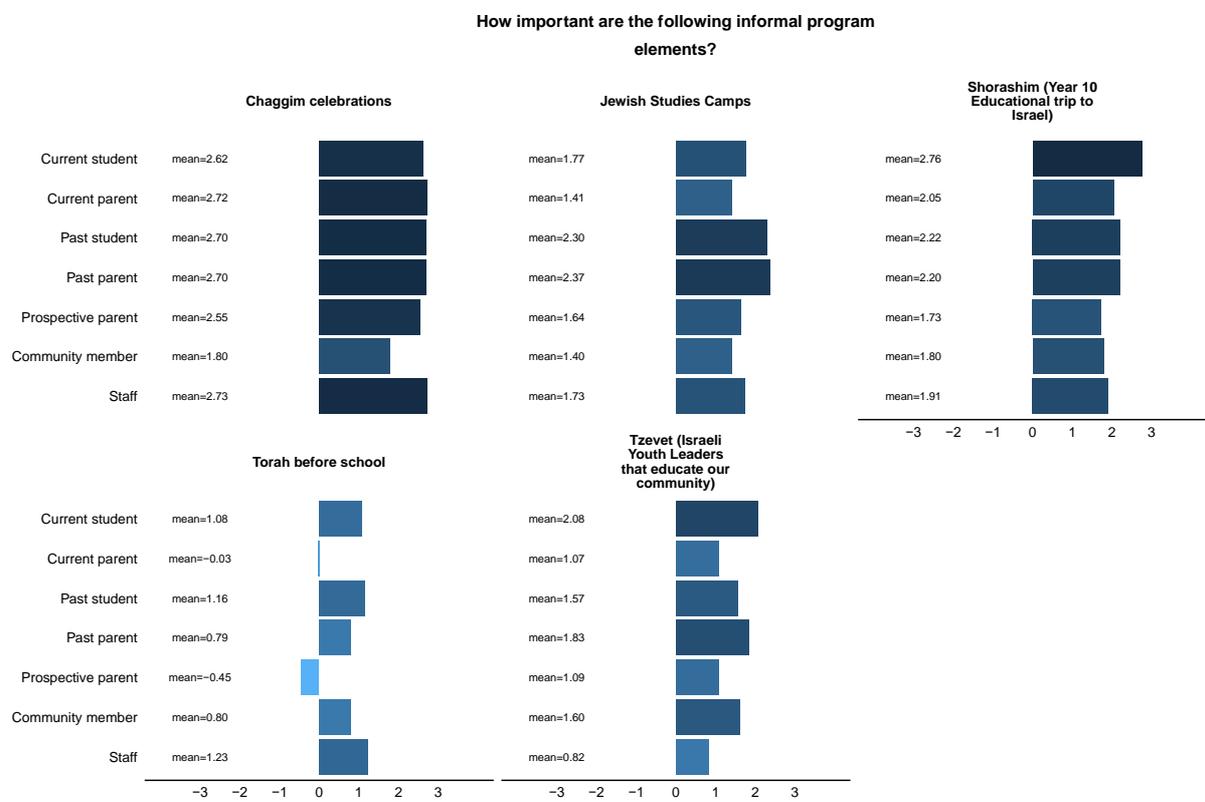
When looking at respondent types, Chaggim celebrations and Shorashim were rated as most important, with all groups rating them as important to highly important.

Jewish studies camps were seen as important, with higher scores from past students and past parents.

Torah before school scored between neutral and somewhat important, with lower scores from current parents and prospective parents.

Tzevet scored between somewhat important to important, with higher scores from current students.

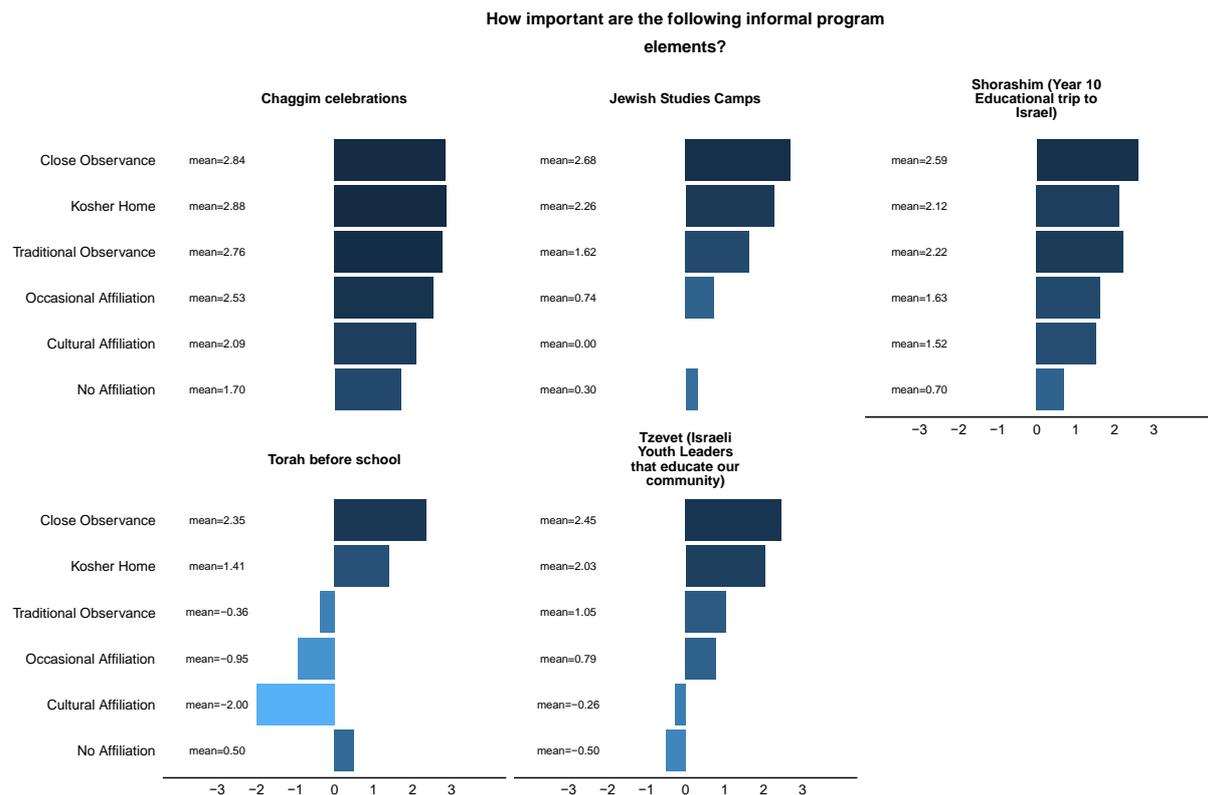
Note: The 'other' group was removed from analysis since only one score was provided.



Those with a closer observance rated the informal elements as being more important compared to the other groups.

Chaggim celebrations were rated as most important, with all groups seeing it as important to highly important. Shorashim was also seen as important to highly important, though to a lesser extent than Chaggim celebrations.

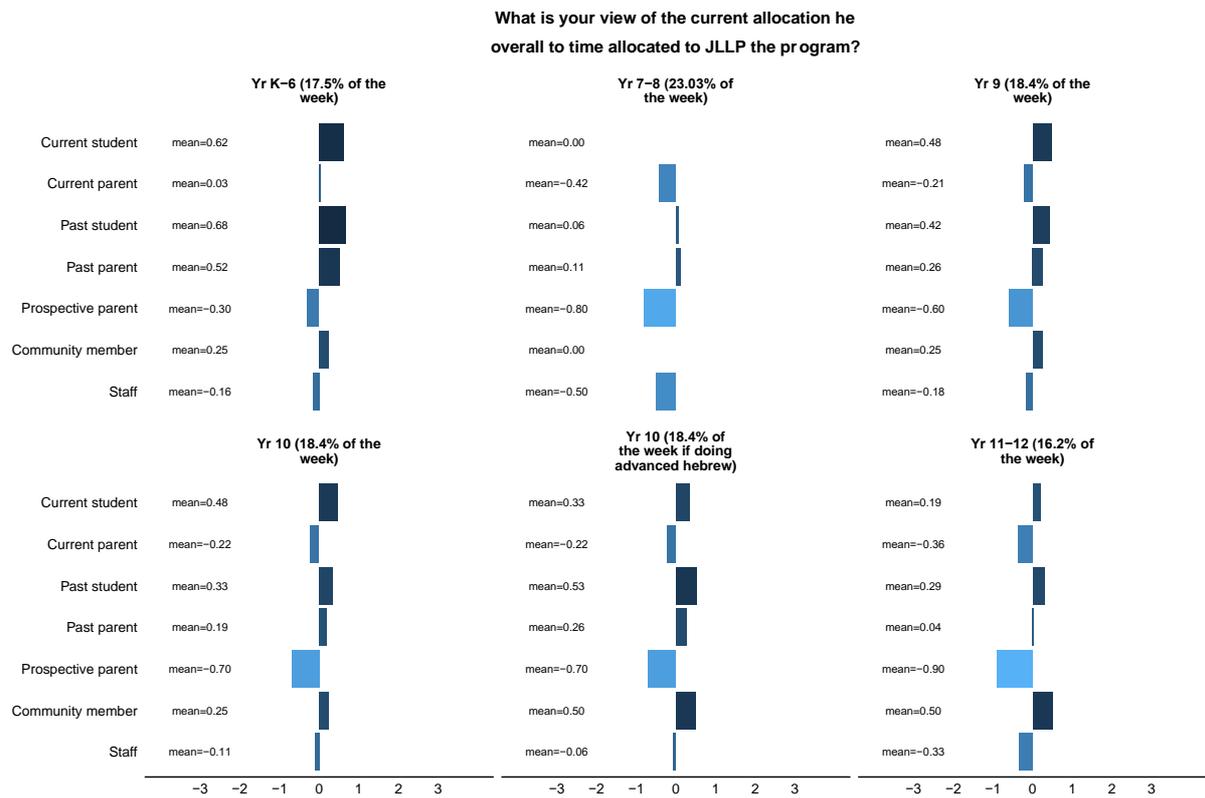
Jewish studies camps and Tzevet were rated as very important to those with a close observance or kosher home, whereas other groups rated them as neutral to somewhat important. The same was true for Torah before school, though the other groups rated it as neutral to unimportant.



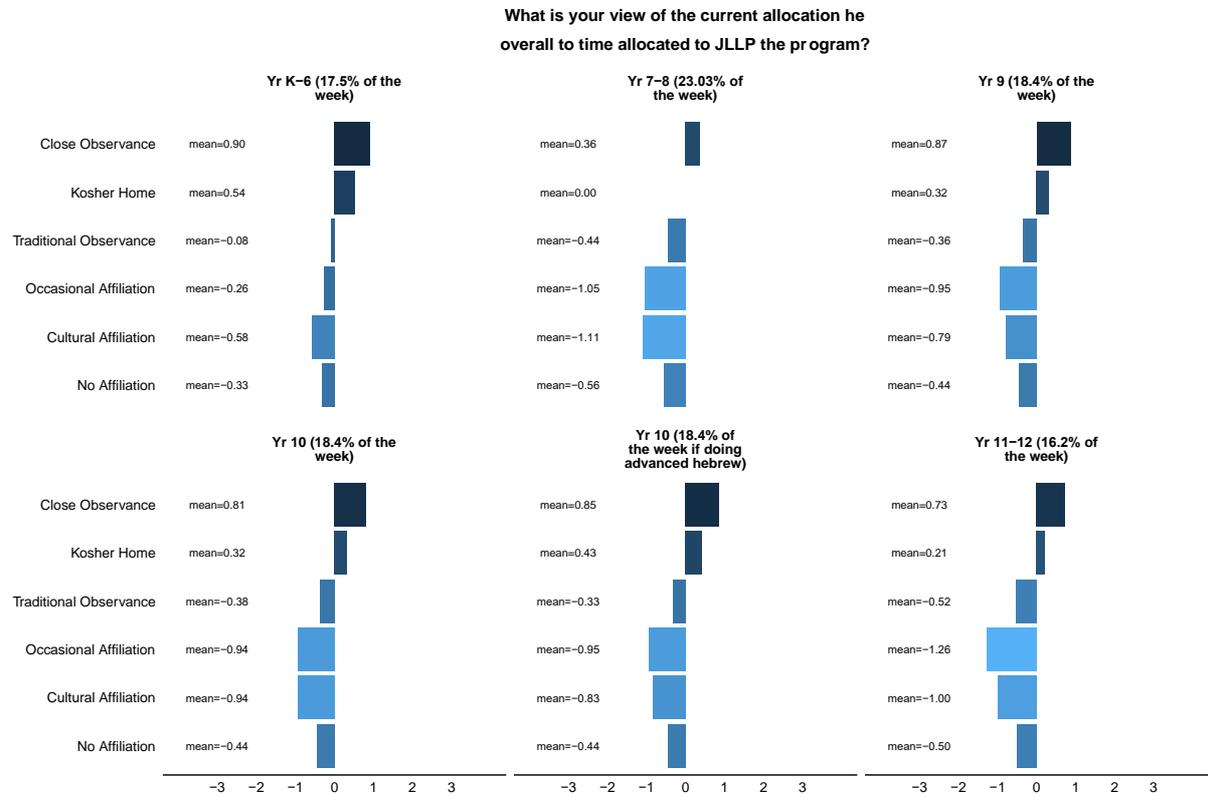
Time Allocation to the JLLP

When looking at respondent groups, there was generally a consensus that the time spent on the JLLP is 'about right' for all year levels. There was a slight trend for current and prospective parents suggesting that too much time is spent on the program.

Note: The 'other' group was removed from analysis since only one score was provided.



When looking at different levels of the observance group, there was a trend where closer levels of observance suggested that too little time is spent on the program. In contrast, there were stronger views from those with lesser affiliation to Judaism, suggesting that too much time is spent on the program.



Relative Weighting of Program Elements

When looking at respondent groups, learning Hebrew and cultural observance consistently received the highest scores.

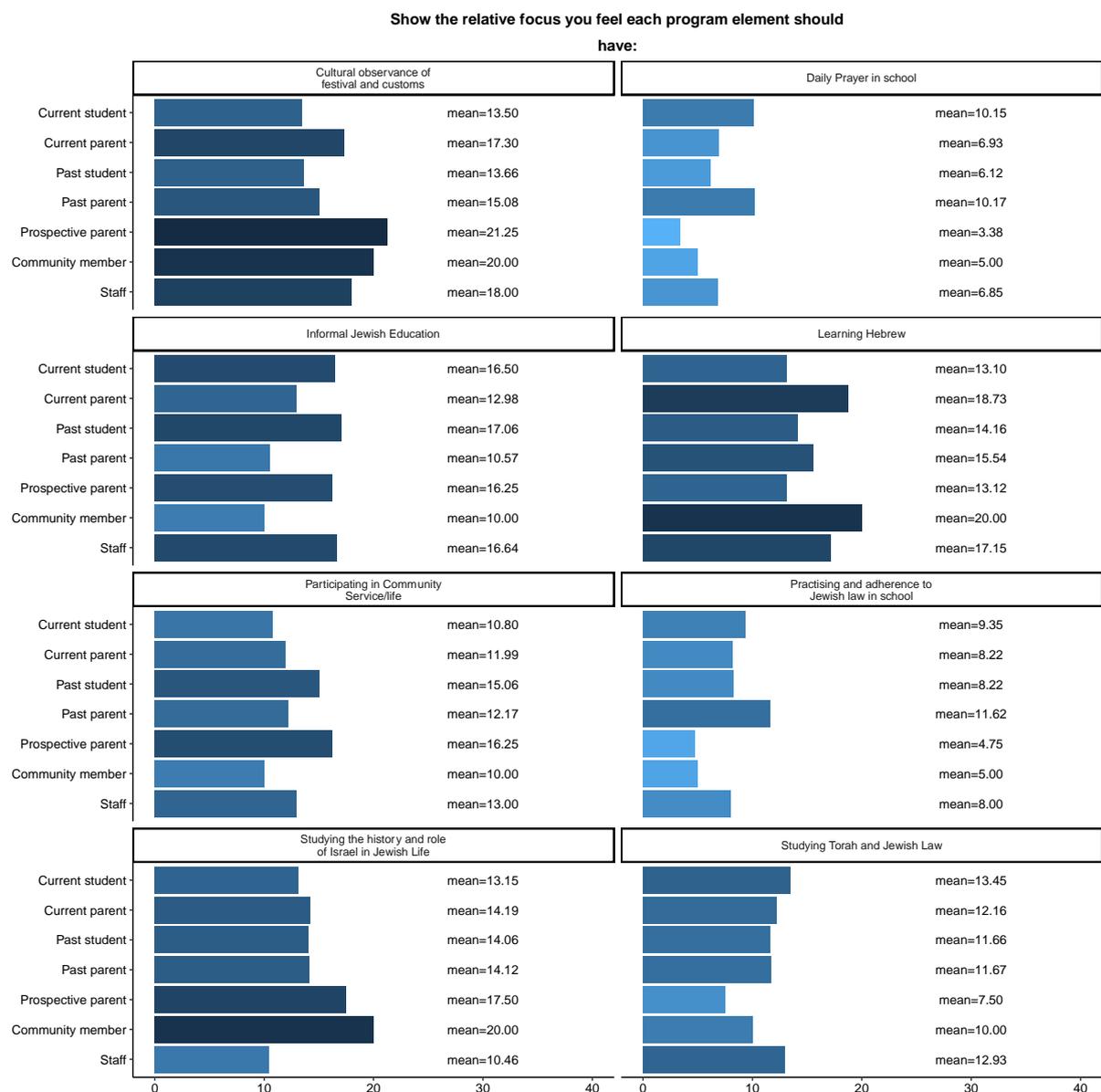
There were generally consistent scores between groups for studying the history and role of Israel, studying Torah and participating in the community.

Daily prayer received higher scores from current students and parents compared to other groups.

Practising Jewish law received lower scores from prospective parents and community members compared to other groups.

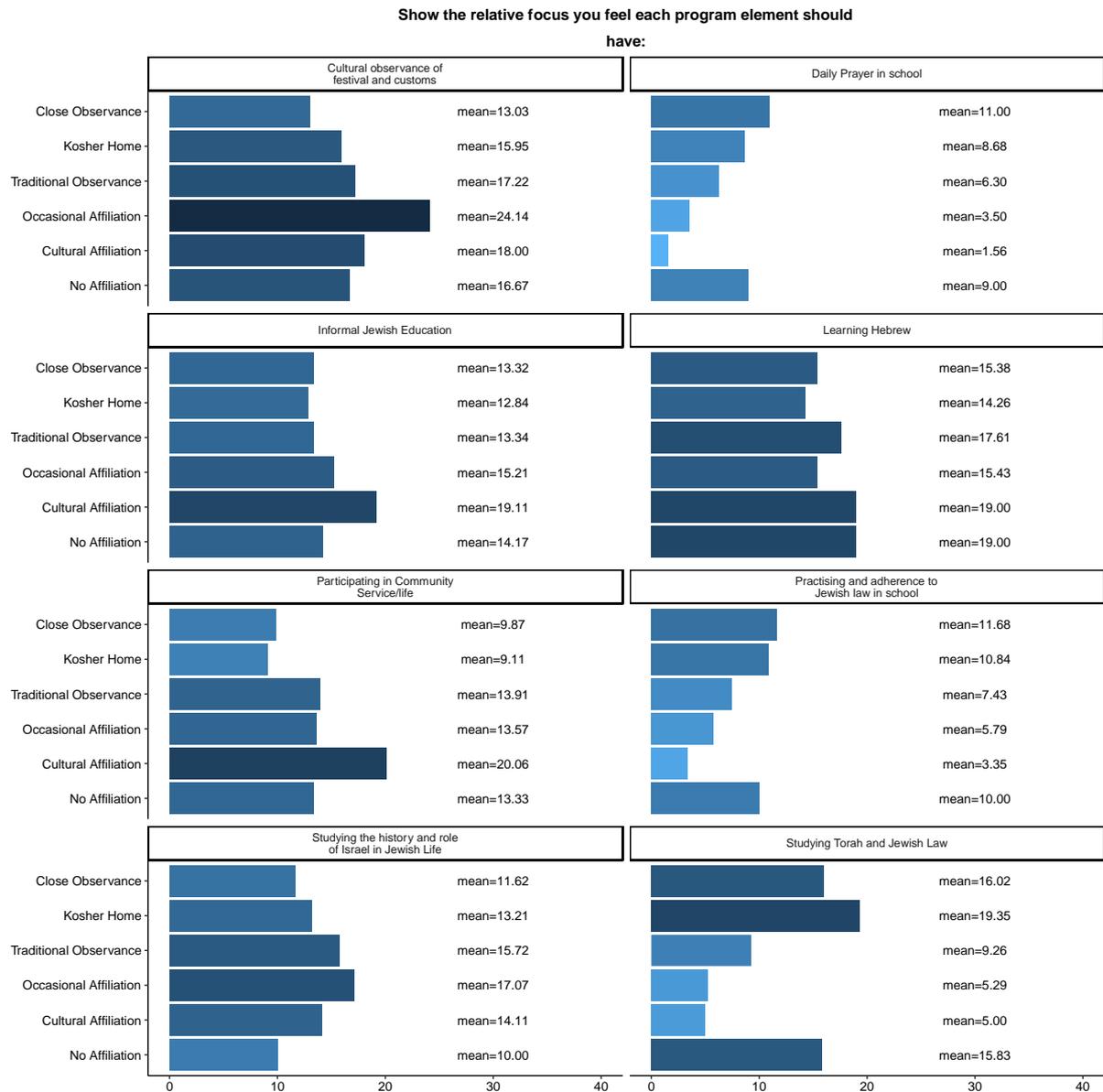
There were mixed opinions for informal Jewish education.

Note: The 'Other' group did not provide any scores and were removed from the analysis.



When looking at observance groups, learning Hebrew, cultural observance and Jewish education received high scores across all groups.

Those with a close observance and kosher homes also placed a high focus on studying Torah and Jewish law, whereas the other groups put more focus on studying the history and role of Israel and participating in the community.

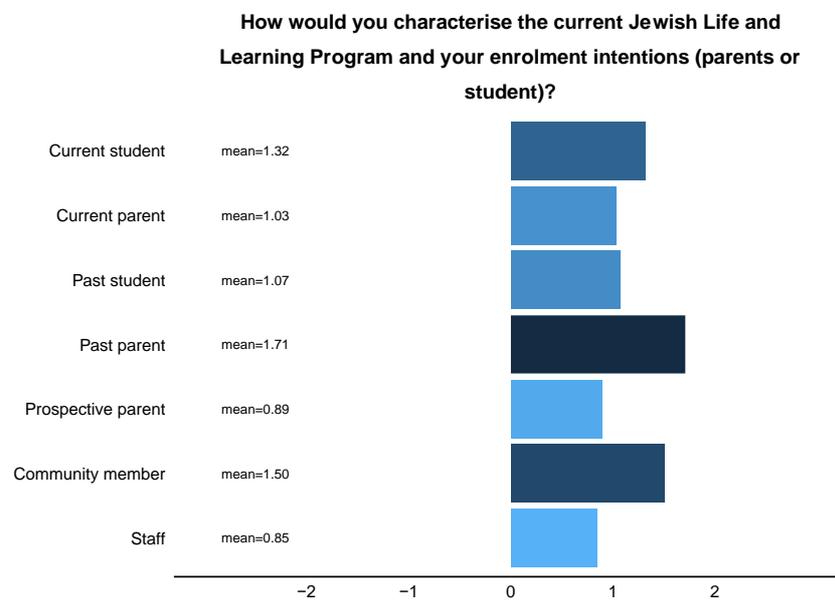


The JLLP & Intention to Enrol at Carmel School

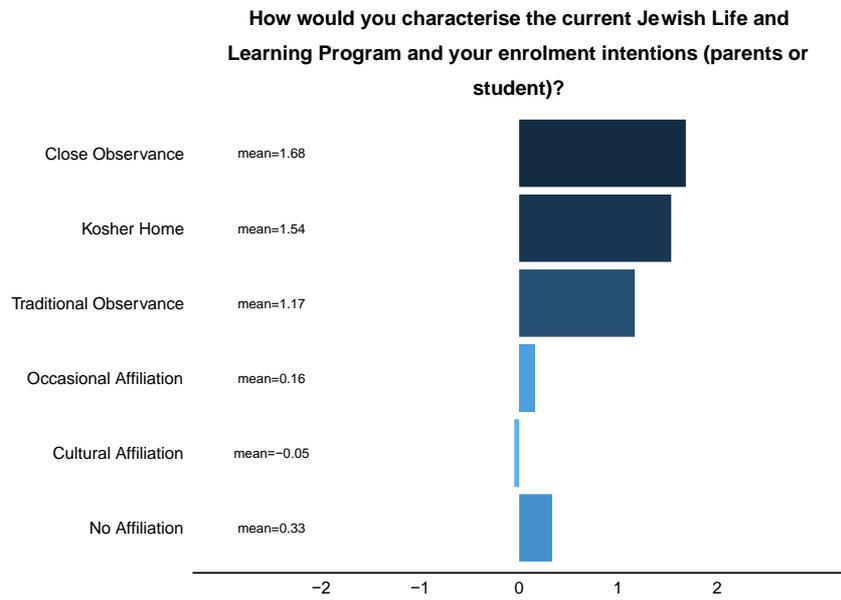
To assist with the interpretation of the results when looking across groups, the scores were converted to numeric values to calculate average scores.

Primary Reason: Not Enrolling	One reason: Not Enrolling	No influence	One Reason: Enrolling	Primary Reason: Enrolling
-2	-1	0	1	2

Past parents and community members said that the program was the primary reason for enrolment, whereas the other groups said it was one reason for enrolment.



Having a closer observance to the Jewish faith was associated with the program being the primary reason for enrolling in Carmel School. For those with occasional affiliation to no affiliation, the program did not influence the decision to enrol.



– END –

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