

Temple Judea of Manhasset

**RELIGIOUS SCHOOL
HANDBOOK**

**Temple Judea
333 Searingtown Road
Manhasset, New York
(516) 621-8212**

**TEMPLE JUDEA OF MANHASSET
RELIGIOUS SCHOOL**

Dear Parents,

It is a great honor for us to be able to transmit the Jewish heritage to your children. Our job at the Religious School is important and sacred. We have the privilege of spending a few hours a week with your children and hopefully, making Judaism come alive for them.

Teachers and parents are a team in making this experience a positive one for your child. Please read this handbook so that you are aware of our goals and our mission. Please be aware, that all rules and standards are designed to make your child's time with us both educationally rewarding and safe.

Please feel free to call me at my office, 621-8212, should you have any questions or concerns. I welcome your suggestions and comments.

*B'shalom
Ellen Gastwirth*

ONE: REFORM JEWISH EDUCATION

Temple Judea is a Reform Jewish congregation, affiliated with the Union of Reform Judaism (URJ), the umbrella organization of our movement. Reform Judaism approaches religion, religious life and thought, in a liberal and dynamic manner. It values the lessons of Jewish texts, history and customs, but does not necessarily view them as immutable. Reform Judaism defines itself as an ever-changing, ever-adapting movement.

Reform Jewish Education is the process of communicating these values and Jewish knowledge to the students. Learning can be defined as the ongoing activity of being exposed to educational material, values and knowledge; being offered the opportunity to examine and evaluate the material; and, finally, guiding the pupil to absorb this material for him/herself.

The essential goal of the Religious School of Temple Judea is to enable students to identify themselves as Jews and to express this connection to the Jewish people and Jewish faith.

A series of specific educational goals of Reform Jewish education has been outlined by the Commission on Jewish Education of the Reform Movement:

The Commission on Jewish Education calls upon every synagogue to provide a program of Jewish education, which will allow its members to become:

- Jews who affirm their Jewish identity and bind themselves inseparably to their people by word and deed.
- Jews who bear witness to the brit (covenant between God and the Jewish people) through the practice of mitzvot (commandments) as studied in the Torah and the classic Jewish literature it has generated, and interpreted in light of historic development and contemporary liberal thought.
- Jews who affirm their historic bond to the land of Israel.
- Jews who cherish and study Hebrew, the language of the Jewish people.
- Jews who value and practice tefila (prayer).
- Jews who further the causes of justice, freedom and peace by pursuing tzedek (righteousness), mishpat (justice), and chesed (loving deeds).
- Jews who celebrate Shabbat and the festivals and observe Jewish ceremonies marking the significant occasions in their lives
- Jews who esteem their own person and the person of others; their own family and the family of others; their own community and the community of others.
- Jews who express kinship with K'lal Yisrael by actively seeking the welfare of Jews throughout the world.
- Jews who support and participate in the life of the synagogue.

Such Jews will strengthen the fabric of Jewish life, ensure the future of Judaism and the Jewish people, and approach the realization of their divine potential.

TWO: WORSHIP SERVICE ATTENDANCE

The world is sustained by three things:

Torah, Worship and Acts of Loving Kindness

Al Shelosha Devarim HaOlam Omed:

al HaTorah, v'al HaAvodah, v'al Gemilut Hasadim

This teaching from our tradition informs all that we do in our School. Our programs include:

1. The Study of Torah and Jewish knowledge
2. Acts of Loving Kindness in our community and our world
3. Worship Assemblies during school hours.

In addition, to these three aspects of our School Program, students & their families in all grades are expected to attend Shabbat Worship Services at Temple Judea.

In order to fulfill these expectations, the following guidelines have been adopted by the School Committee:

- Students in Primary Grades (Kindergarten through Grade Three) are expected to attend their grade-level Friday Evening Service and two additional services during the year.
- Students in Grades Four, Five and Six are expected to attend their grade-level Friday Evening Service, one Shabbat Morning Service and two additional services during the year.
- Students in Grade Seven are expected to attend their grade-level Friday Evening Service, two Shabbat Morning Services and two additional services during the year (in addition to any services they attend for "Mitzvah Points" in the Seventh Grade Program).
- In all grades, a parent or another adult family member should accompany students to Temple.
- Students who attend the expected number of services will be recognized in the Temple Bulletin and appropriately honored.

THREE: CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

THE PRIMARY GRADES

Our youngest students are introduced to the fundamental symbols, rituals and values of Judaism: the Temple, its surroundings and its leaders; the cycle of Jewish holidays; the mitzvot (commandments); and the message and stories of the Torah. Music and craft projects highlight their classroom learning.

Kindergarten - First Grade

Introduction to Judaism, Holidays & Celebrations

Introduction to Hebrew Letters

Second Grade

Jewish Living & Mitzvot; Israel, Holidays & Celebrations

Introduction to Hebrew Letters

Third Grade

Introduction to the Bible: Torah

The Holidays

Israel

Hebrew Reading Readiness

HEBREW IN PRIMARY GRADES

Students in these grades are introduced to the letters of the Hebrew language in an informal manner. Since students are not REQUIRED to attend classes until Fourth Grade, students begin reading Hebrew in Fourth Grade.

THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES

The Judaica classes in Grades 4 through 7 include lessons in Jewish history and holidays, Jewish identity and current Jewish issues. A special Seventh Grade Program is offered in our School, as described below.

Students in Grades Four through Seven receive instruction in the Hebrew language. The primary focus of the four levels of Hebrew instruction is on the language of the Jewish Prayerbook. Fourth Graders receive their own copy of Gates of Prayer (our Reform Movement's Prayerbook) during a special ceremony in January of the school year. Thereafter, all grades utilize the prayerbook.

Students, who may have difficulty learning the Hebrew language, may attend the "Hebrew Resource Room," during regular class hours. This Program offers a more individualized learning environment than the grade level classrooms. Parents may speak with the Educator about the Resource Room.

Fourth Grade

Holidays

Events in the Jewish Life Cycle

Israel

Hebrew letters and alphabet & Reading from the Siddur

Fifth Grade

The Land of Israel

Jewish Values

Holidays

Siddur Hebrew and Prayers

Sixth Grade

The Hebrew Bible
The Weekly Torah Portions
Jewish Ethics
Siddur Hebrew and Prayers; Chanting

Seventh Grade

The Holocaust
Hebrew Conversation
Jewish Women in History
Understanding God

THE SEVENTH GRADE PROGRAM

The Seventh Grade Program focuses on the experience and meaning of becoming a Bar Mitzvah or Bat Mitzvah. The Program consists of weekly Wednesday evening class sessions and a "Mitzvah Points" program. One of their classes is called, "The Mitzvah in My Bar or Bat Mitzvah." With the evening hour, parents are able to participate for special family learning activities on occasion. Students design their own mitzvah program under the guidance of their teachers. They fulfill the commandments of Avodah (worship), Talmud Torah (learning) and Gemilut Hasadim (acts of kindness). A complete guidebook for the Seventh Grade Program is distributed to these students and their families. A Celebration is held in the spring of the year for seventh grade students and their families; all students successfully completing the program are honored with a Certificate of Achievement.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT BAR/BAT MITZVAH
LESSONS

Individual Bar and Bat Mitzvah portions are NOT part of the school's curriculum. Families have private meetings with Rabbi Chizner in the months preceding the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. Students attend private tutorial sessions with the Cantor for several months prior to the service, as well. The Cantor assigns Torah and Haftarah portions directly for each student. The Cantor schedules these private tutorial meetings with each student. Parents may contact Cantor Adelman or Rabbi Chizner directly.

GRADES EIGHT THROUGH TWELVE

An essential goal of these years is to enable the students to consider and to articulate their faith and philosophy. Through discussions, special projects and guest speakers, they explore various contemporary issues.

Students in Eighth and Ninth Grade are part of the "Pre-Confirmation Program." Their classes are held bi-weekly on Wednesday evenings. They participate in various classes during the year. In recent years, topics have included such titles as: "Exploring my Jewish Identity," "Mitzvah Heroes," "Current Affairs," "God Talk," "Gossip in Judaism," "What's So Funny: Jewish Humor." The program also includes special events and guest speakers. The Tenth Grade meets weekly on Wednesday evenings with Rabbi Chizner. Their year culminates with Confirmation Services celebrated in the spring.

Eleventh and Twelfth Grade students meet during the year in students' homes for informal discussions and evening sessions. A graduation service is held at the end of the High School years.

FOUR: SPECIAL PROGRAMS

ARTS ENRICHMENT: An Arts Enrichment Specialist conducts activities for various classes during the year. The craft projects are selected and designed to enhance the class curriculum.

BIRTHDAY BOOKS: Parents are invited to donate a book for our Library's Children's Collection in honor of a youngster's birthday. A special bookplate is placed in the book to record the special day.

FAMILY EDUCATION: The School offers various programs in many grades in which students and parents join together for family learning experiences throughout the year.

FAMILY WORKSHOPS: During the course of the school year, students in certain grades are invited to attend a special Family Workshop with their parents and siblings. These are held on Sunday mornings. Each workshop focuses on one of the Jewish holidays. The activities include special art projects, cooking and musical celebrations.

LIBRARY ENRICHMENT: Classes and individual students have the opportunity to utilize the Temple's Library throughout the school year. Classes visit the Library periodically to select books for reading at home and to enrich their classroom studies.

MUSIC PROGRAM: During school time, students in

Kindergarten through Grade Six join together with their music and classroom teachers for music sessions. These sessions are held approximately twice a month for each grade. The students learn songs for the holidays and for the synagogue; they are also introduced to Israeli folk dancing.

SHABBAT SERVICES: Students are expected to attend Shabbat Services with their families during the school year. Once a year each grade participates in a Shabbat evening Service in the Temple's Sanctuary. The dates of these Services are listed on each year's calendar. Reminder notices are also sent home.

FIVE: THE VALUE OF TZEDAKAH

The Jewish tradition teaches:

"Because of tzedakah, the world is maintained."

The term, tzedakah, literally means "righteousness." It is commonly understood to mean "charity." However, the Hebrew word actually comes from the word, tzedek, "justice." Our religion teaches that all Jews can help restore justice and fairness to the world by offering assistance to those in need. Tzedakah is the privilege and obligation of all Jewish people -- adults and children alike.

The students in our Religious School collect tzedakah money in their religious school classes each week. This is also called Keren Ami, "Fund of My People". In recent years, students supported the following organizations with funds collected through Kerin Ami:

- LifeLine for the Old
- Children's Village
- Coalition for the Homeless
- Israel Cancer Research Center
- JNF Fund
- Mazon: A Jewish

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Response to Hunger • North Shore Animal League • Ronald McDonald | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> House • Temple Judea's Holocaust Center |
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SIX: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

CLASS SCHEDULE

(classes offered pending appropriate enrollment)

<u>Kindergarten & Grade 1:</u>	Sunday	9:30-11:30 AM
<u>Grade 2:</u>	Sunday	9:30-11:30 AM
<u>Grade 3:</u>	Tuesday	4:15-6:15 PM <u>OR</u>
	Wednesday	4:15 - 6:15 PM
<u>Grades 4 - 6:</u>	Sun.9:30-11:30 AM & Wed. 4:15-6:15 PM	
	<u>OR</u>	
	Tues. 4:15-6:15 PM & Thur 4:15-6:15 PM	
<u>Grade 7:</u>	Wed. (weekly)	6:45-8:30 PM
<u>Grades 8 & 9:</u>	Wed. (bi-weekly)	6:45-8:30 PM
<u>Grade 10:</u>	Wed (weekly)	7:00-8:30 PM

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL: Students are expected to arrive promptly for all classes. All students are dismissed when the school bell rings. When students must leave school early due to an emergency, parents are required to come to the School Office to pick up their children.

ATTENDANCE: The School maintains a series of Attendance Standards and Guidelines, as endorsed by the Education Committee of the Temple; these are listed in full below.

CALENDAR: The School Calendar is distributed to all families in August. When preparing the Calendar, the staff reviews the schedules of several local public school districts and the Jewish holiday calendar. Every effort is made to avoid scheduling conflicts for our students and families. The Calendar lists all school vacations and special events.

CLASS PLACEMENT: The School is committed to creating an educationally productive environment for all of our students. In creating class groups in Grade 4 and above, the School considers various factors including secular schools, gender and optimal class size. Faculty members provide extensive guidance and input about returning students regarding class composition. **Parents' requests are NOT accepted.**

DISCIPLINE: Students are expected to behave appropriately in Religious School. Students whose behavior is consistently disruptive may be suspended from classes.

HEALTH and SAFETY: Please inform the School Office of any health or medical situations. The School does NOT have a nurse on duty. Therefore, in the event of a medical concern the Office staff will contact a parent during class time.

PLEASE NOTE! Our school is a **NUT FREE** environment. We have children in our school who are severely allergic to nuts. Please do not send any peanut or nut snack to school with your child. Please check ingredients when sending in any food, as a trace of nuts can be dangerous.

HOMEWORK: Homework is assigned in the upper grades. Its purpose is to reinforce classroom material. It is

particularly important for students to regularly review Hebrew language material at home.

PARENTS' MEETINGS: "Meet the Teacher" Night is held each fall. Teachers and the Rabbi-Educator are always available to discuss students' progress. Parents may contact teacher/s directly through the School Office.

PARKING LOT AND TRAFFIC: In order to ensure the safety of all students, the School maintains rules and procedures for the Parking Lot. Specific instructions are distributed to all parents before the school year begins.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND "SNOW DAYS:" In the event of inclement weather or another emergency school closings may occur. "Class Parents" are notified to call other parents. An announcement is made on the School answering machine (621-8212) and on News12. Although every effort is made to contact all families, it is incumbent upon parents to contact the School for this information.

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS: Progress Reports are prepared for students in Kindergarten through Grade Seven twice during the year.

TEXTBOOKS: Classroom teachers distribute textbooks to students at the beginning of the year. The charge for books is included in the Registration Fees.

SEVEN: ATTENDANCE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES
(as endorsed by the School Committee)

- Prompt and regular attendance is a necessary part of any Religious School Program. Only illness or extenuating family circumstances should keep a student home from school. Students are responsible for all classroom material and assignments.
- After several unexplained absences from class, the student's parent/s will be contacted.
- In cases of prolonged absence due to illness or extenuating family circumstances, the school office or the Rabbi - Educator should be notified. Each situation will be carefully reviewed and evaluated in order to determine the most acceptable arrangement for all concerned.
- Students in Grades Four, Five, Six and Seven may not miss more than TEN class sessions during one academic year.
- Students who exceed the number of permitted absences in any grade will be given a "Make-Up Assignment" to be completed prior to the beginning of the new academic year.
- Students who fail to meet these requirements, will be contacted by the Educator.

EIGHT: IN CONCLUSION

Talmud Torah, the study of Judaism and Jewish knowledge, is among the highest values in our tradition. All of us at Temple Judea of Manhasset and its Religious School invite parents and students to join us in the process of learning and enrichment. Please contact us at the School Office at 621-8212 for further information about the Religious School.