



Sha'arei Shalom

Jewish Congregation of Ashland

Hebrew School Handbook

For

Parents and Students

5770-5771
2010-2011

Sha'arei Shalom Hebrew School

SCHOOL MISSION

To educate our children in the customs, practices and rituals of Judaism, and to instill a life-long commitment to Judaism through a partnership between parents, teachers and students.

SCHOOL GOALS

To educate our children in the customs, practices, rituals, and holidays of Judaism

- To promote the development of a strong Jewish identity
- To instill a life-long commitment to Judaism
- To ensure quality Hebrew School experience which is rooted in a partnership between parents, teachers and students
- To develop a sense of Jewish community
- To create a nurturing environment that makes learning fun
- To celebrate Shabbat, festivals/festivities, and occasions significant to Jewish life
- To be exposed to Hebrew alphabet, to learn to read and write in Hebrew
- To become involved in the traditions of Mitzvot and Tzedakah
- To provide understanding and knowledge of our Jewish heritage and culture
- To provide a sense of one's role in the American Jewish community, world Jewry, and Israel

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Children are required to arrive at classes at least five (5) minutes before class so that we can begin our classes on time. For educational continuity and knowledge, students are expected to attend all scheduled classes, the semi-annual Hebrew School Friday Evening Services, and Sunday Morning Services (Ketah Gimel-Zayin). In addition, students in Ketah Gimel-Zayin are required to attend additional Sha'arei Shalom Friday Evening Services equal to their grade level (i.e. Ketah Gimel students attend three additional services). Half of the additional service requirements may be satisfied by attending B'nai Mitzvah services at a different synagogue. Attendance will be taken at services conducted by our Temple. The School Administrator or the student's teacher should be notified if the student will be absent. Excessive absences may result in academic probation, private tutoring at additional cost, or in the student not being promoted to the next grade.

Grade	Number of Friday night services to attend per year
Aleph (grade 1)	1
Bet (grade 2)	2
Gimel (grade 3)	3
Dalet (grade 4)	4
Hey (grade 5)	5
Vov (grade 6)	8
Zayin (grade 7)	8

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

It is expected that students attend through the end of their seventh grade year in order to receive their diploma regardless of their bar/bat mitzvah date. To have a system to evaluate and monitor student progress by establishing defined expectations

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Pre-Kindergarden

These monthly classes give the children age 4-5 and their parents the opportunity to experience some of the fun and excitement of hands on Judaism in an informal setting, while at the same time introducing them to the Sha'arei Shalom community. Parental attendance is required.

Gan Yaladeem (Kindergarten)

Offers a bi-monthly Sunday morning program for children 5 and 6 years old. This program focuses on introducing the children to Shabbat and the cycle of Jewish holidays through stories, songs, and arts and crafts. The goal of the kindergarten year is to expose the children to the **Holidays** through experiential sensory activities. The **Torah curriculum** begins with creation and goes through the Joseph narratives. **Hebrew words** and Hebrew songs expose students to the modern Hebrew language. Students learn **prayers** such as the Sh'ma, blessings over candles, bread and wine, and the blessings associated with special days such as Shabbat, Chanukah, and Passover. Students participate in **zedakah projects** such as food drives and other acts of giving and caring. Our approach is very interactive and experiential and students begin to develop a special and positive identity around what it means to be Jewish.

Ketah Alef and Ketah Bet (Grades 1 & 2)

Offers a two-hour class period every Sunday for children 6-8 years old. The curriculum includes Hebrew, Shabbat and festivals, Jewish identity, covenant, prayer, synagogue, Jewish family life, social action and Israel. These are dealt with through story, song, experiential activities, and crafts in a manner that is challenging and age-appropriate. The Hebrew program teaches the Hebrew alphabet (Aleph-Bet) and reading skills. It also introduces the student to common Hebrew prayers and songs. Parents are encouraged to reinforce the curriculum through home discussion and activities. The goal of the 1st and 2nd grade is to learn and to recognize all of the **Hebrew** letters, and by the end of the second year, to master the 22 basic aleph bet letters and basic vowel sounds. Students work on being able to read 2 syllable words through a reading readiness program using a phonetic approach. This is accomplished through songs, worksheets and key vocabulary associated with each letter. They learn about their Hebrew names as an important symbol of Jewish identity and identify their names with family members or members of the Jewish people. **Holidays** are reinforced through hands-on projects, songs, and games. Through **Bible stories**, students identify with families in the Bible such as Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekkah, Jacob, Leah and Rachel, Students continue to learn **new blessings** over fruit, over cakes and cookies, and Shabbat songs and prayers in preparation for their class celebration. Students decide on special **zedakah projects** throughout the year to help others in need.

Ketah Gimel through Ketah Vov (Grades 3 to 6)

Offers a two-day per week program for students 8-13 years old. Every Sunday, a two-hour class period is conducted. An additional one hour prayer service is conducted every other Sunday prior to the scheduled classes. A 90-minute class period is conducted every Tuesday afternoon. The curriculum includes Hebrew, Torah, Shabbat and festivals, Jewish identity, covenant, prayer,

history, ethics, synagogue, Jewish family life, social action, Israel, and B'nai Mitzvah preparation. These are dealt with through academic learning, story and song, experiential activities and crafts in a manner that is challenging and age-appropriate. Parents are encouraged to reinforce the curriculum through home discussion and activities. The goal of grades 3-6 is begin to ready the children for bar/bat mitzvah with heavier emphasis on Hebrew reading, writing and prayer study. In second half of the year for grades 4-6, the Holocaust is introduced through stories of survival and courage. The horrors and atrocities of that time are not emphasized here, but rather the historical significance and ties to our heritage are encouraged. Further, our curriculum expands in these grades to cover the topic of Israel, its past and current culture. Jewish ethics and stories of morality are also covered in a more expansive way throughout these higher grade levels.

In the 6th grade, a mitzvah project is also expected to be completed. Further details will be provided about this project once the school year begins.

Ketah Zayin (Grade 7)

The 7th grade year is a pivotal transformative year in that this is typically the year for bar/bat mitvah preparation. In order to receive a diploma from Sha 'arei Shalom's Hebrew School, completion of the 7th grade curriculum is required.

The 7th grade class will meet once a month from 10:00a-11:00a with the Rabbi to discuss the parsha for their bar/bat mitzvah with the Rabbi and each other. This is a very important aspect of the 7th grade curriculum where a deeper understanding of their bar/bat mitzvah parsha will occur. This will support the student's bar/bat mitzvah preparation and enrich the experience for other 7th grade students as they gain from the learnings of their classmates' parshas.

7th grade students are also expected to continue to attend our Sunday learner services from 9:00a-10:00a as scheduled, most essential in the year during which bar/bat mitzvah preparation is occurring. The focus of this participation will be on mastering the skills necessary to lead Shabbat morning services and deepening their understanding of the prayers.

In addition to the above requirements, 7th grade students are also expected to attend the following Hebrew School events as their Hebrew school schedule allows:

- ~ Family education sessions
- ~ Friday night services (attendance to 8 Friday night services is required during the calendar year prior to the bar/bat mitzvah)
- ~ Hebrew School holiday celebrations

A mitzvah project during the 7th grade year is also expected to be completed. Further details will be provided about this project once the school year begins.

8th grade through High School

Students are encouraged to attend Prozdor, a vibrant community Hebrew High School with about 1000 Jewish teenagers from across the greater Boston area and New Hampshire. Students study everything from philosophy and Hebrew to dance and drama and participate in class trips and retreats. Operating out of Hebrew College in Newton, MA, there is also a branch at Temple Israel in Natick. For more information, visit the website www.prozdor.org.

Other

As one of our school's goals is the eventual bar/bat mitzvah of each of the children attending the school, parents of grade 4-6 students will be invited to a Bar/Bat Mitzvah orientation session in the fall to discuss the details of bar/bat mitzvah preparation and to address questions about this exciting event in the life of a Jewish child.

Family education is the current trend in synagogues. Further, during the year, we will be conducting family education sessions to tie Jewish education more closely the family as a whole. These family education sessions promise to be enlightening and a worthwhile experience for all and a chance for you to be involved in your children's education. We strongly encourage all parents to participate in these programs during the year.

HOMEWORK REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to complete homework assignments and to be prepared for their classes with the appropriate books and school materials. Students are expected to record their homework assignments in a notebook prior to the end of class. In addition, teachers will post their homework assignments on the synagogue web site, <http://www.shaareishalom.org/hebrewschool.html>.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Please let the teachers know of anything in your child's life which may affect his/her school experience, e.g. death of a relative, divorce, illness, new sibling, death of a pet, etc.
- Sunday Classes: Students are expected to be at the Hebrew School and seated in class at 10:00 a.m. Classes end at noon. Prompt pick-up is expected.
- Sunday Morning Services: Students are expected to be seated and ready to begin class by 9:00 a.m.
- Tuesday Classes: Classes begin promptly at 4:30 p.m and students are expected to be in their seats at this time. Classes end at 6:00 p.m. Prompt pick-up is expected.
- For families of students **Preschool through Grade 2**, please plan to park your car and come into your child's class to pick up your child. Children at these grade levels are not allowed to leave with their older siblings.
- Please provide the School Administrator with a written list of the people who have permission to pick-up your child at school. Also, please notify us if there is a person(s) who is not allowed to pick up your child at school.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child is prepared for class (homework done, materials for next class ready, etc.).
- Parents are responsible to make certain that they bring their children to the required number of Friday night services at each grade level in addition to the required Friday night Children's' Services.

- Parents should make a concerted effort to attend family education sessions provided by the Hebrew School
- A concern in a classroom should be discussed first with the teacher directly, then with the School Administrator if necessary. Unresolved issues will be addressed by the School Committee.
- If your child is going to miss a class, the teacher or the School Administrator should be notified in advance if possible. Parents are encouraged to use email or by telephone.
- Please note that food and drink are not allowed in classrooms. Please do not send your children to Hebrew School with these items.
- Ipods, cell phones and other distractions to the class are not to be used in Hebrew School classes.

PARENTAL VISITS

Parents who are interested in observing their child's class should contact the school administrator to arrange a mutually agreeable date. However, please allow time in the beginning of the school year for the teachers and children to establish a successful relationship.

TUITION

Unless other arrangements have been made with the Treasurer, the balance of tuition is due before School begins.

HEALTH CARE

1. A Parent/Student Information form must be filled out and placed on file with the School Administrator by the beginning of school year.
2. Please do not send sick children to class.
3. If a child becomes ill during class, the parents must provide transportation home as soon as possible.
4. If your child has an allergy, please give complete details in writing. If your child is being medicated, please provide the treatment before class. We are unable to administer medication under any circumstances; parents are invited in to school to meet a child's need for medication.

ACCIDENT/EMERGENCY

In the event of an accident or sudden illness, the School Administrator or classroom teacher may take any of the following steps:

1. Contact the parents to arrange for treatment or transportation.
2. If parents cannot be reached, the person listed on the Parent/Student Information form will be contacted.
3. Contact the local ambulance service for transportation to Metrowest Medical Center, Framingham. A staff member, with any pertinent health information will accompany the child.
4. In case of emergency, parents can phone either the cell phones of Bill Ames or Barbara Klein. Bill's cell phone is 508-740-0652 and Barbara's cell phone is 617-513-9695.

LOCATION AND TIMES OF CLASSES

All classes are held at the Ashland Middle School, at 87 West Union Street, Ashland, MA.

Classes meet according to the following schedule, a full schedule is posted on the web site at <http://www.shaareishalom.org/hebrewschool.html>. Please note that our calendar follows both the Jewish Holiday calendar and the public school calendar for holidays and vacations because our classes are held in a public school building.

Preschool

One Sunday morning each month from 10:00a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Gan Yaladeem (Kindergarten)

Every other Sunday from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Ketah Alef and Ketah Bet (Grades 1 and 2)

Every Sunday morning 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Ketah Gimel to Ketah Vov (Grades 3 to 6)

Two Sundays per month 9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m. – Sunday morning services (per the school calendar)

Every Sunday morning 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Tuesday afternoon from 4:30 p.m.– 6:00 p.m.

Ketah Zayin (Grade 7)

Two Sundays per month 9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m. – Sunday morning services (per the school calendar)

One Sunday morning per month 10:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m.

NOTICE OF SCHOOL CANCELLATION

If classes are canceled on a Sunday due to inclement weather, the School Administrator will make the decision by 7:30 a.m. and parents will be notified by telephone by their classroom teacher. Whenever Ashland Public School evening classes are canceled because of inclement weather, Hebrew School is also canceled. Make-up sessions will be announced at a later date.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All children are expected to be respectful of other people and property. Occasionally, a student will have difficulties adjusting to the school environment. Students who show consistent patterns of not conforming will be subject to a parent-teacher conference. If the problems continue, a meeting with the parents, teacher and School Committee will be held with the possible ultimate suspension. The following practices are forbidden: corporal punishment (including spanking), cruel or severe punishment/humiliation/verbal abuse and denial of food.

CONTACTS

Rabbi

Rabbi Sonia Saltzman
Email: rabbi@shaareishalom.org

School Administrator

Lucy Tannen
Email: lucytannen@gmail.com

School Chair

Barbara Klein: (617) 513-9695
Email: school@shaareishalom.org

Treasurer

Cindi Muller: (508) 626-2870
Email: treasurer@shaareishalom.org

Teachers:

Preschool:

Sharon Ames: email: billsha@aol.com

Kindergarden:

Ari Kaufman : email : arikaufman@comcast.net

Second (Bet):

Lucy Tannen : email : lucytannen@gmail.com

Third (Gimel):

Toni Spitzer: email: tonispitzer@comcast.net

Fourth (Dalet):

Phyllis Bergman: email: pbergman-mb@comcast.net

Fifth (Hey):

Abby Leibel: email: ab4me@yahoo.com

Sixth (Vov)

Steve Kraus: email: pskraus0716@aol.com

Seventh (Zayin)

Rabbi Sonia Saltzman: rabbi@shaareishalom.org

Handbook Acknowledgement

We have read the Sha'arei Shalom Hebrew School handbook and agree to follow its guidelines.

Parent's signature_____

Parent's signature_____

Student's signature_____

Date_____

Please return this acknowledgement to your classroom teacher or the school administrator.