



Education Handbook

5778

2017/18

CONTACTS

Rabbi to the Cheder

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INTRODUCTION

Jewish teaching and learning have always been crucial components of Jewish tradition. The imperative to “teach your children” first appears in the book of *Deuteronomy* as part of what later became the *Shema* – the most central of Jewish prayers.

Northwood and Pinner Liberal Synagogue values the education of its members, and through our Cheder we wish to introduce and maintain the importance of Jewish learning in our youth.

The Cheder is a direct means by which we impart Judaism to this generation of Jewish youth. The Cheder, however, is charged not only with the task of providing information, but also has a responsibility to offer our students positive Jewish experiences which will support the development of their Jewish identity.

The purpose of this Handbook is to acquaint teachers and assistants with the strategies and guidelines principal to the conduct and maintenance of Northwood and Pinner Liberal Synagogue’s Cheder to ensure effective teaching and learning during the course of the year.

We are proud to have such a capable team of teachers and assistants working with us to inform, challenge and inspire our children. Please don’t hesitate to be in touch and we wish you good luck throughout the year.

AIMS OF NPLS’ CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROVISIONS

Our aim is to provide our young people with a vibrant community that positively strengthens their Jewish identity through:

- Developing a coordinated and dynamic approach to engaging children from toddler age to Bar/Bat Mitzvah, Kabbalat Torah and beyond;
- Offering quality youth, family and multi-generational learning, activities and services;
- Creating a Cheder, which provides professional education delivered in an informal and exciting manner;
- Offering regular tots, children and family services and children’s activities;
- Involving youth in Kabbalat Torah and as teaching assistants so that they stay involved post Bar/Bat Mitzvah;
- Creating a bridge between the synagogue and the home;

- Promoting LJI Netzer, the youth movement of Liberal Judaism, through our youth club and summer scheme;
- Generally getting young people involved in their Judaism, with each other and in the wider community.

THE CHEDER AT NPLS

1. Aims

We are proud of our lively and flourishing Cheder at NPLS and hope that we will succeed in the children *being aware of and enjoying their Jewish identity*. We further aim for pupils to:

- Develop an understanding of how Judaism, particularly Liberal Judaism, affects their beliefs, values and experiences;
- Wish to continue an active Jewish life after Cheder;
- Feel part of a caring and exciting community;
- Be introduced to the possibility of a spiritual and religious life.

2. Skills to Acquire

To achieve our aims, we believe that pupils need to acquire the following skills:

- A reasonable knowledge of Judaism;
- Competency in reading Hebrew ;
- The ability to take part in congregational life, including Synagogue and home services;
- The understanding that Judaism is a way of life and not just a set of facts.

STUDYING AT THE NPLS' CHEDER

1. Timetable

Reception

Classes for children of reception age take place twice a month. This group for children, who are at least four years old, is a very gentle introduction to Cheder. Please see the Cheder calendar for class dates in 2017-18.

Years 1 to 8

Classes are held every Saturday morning during term time from 9.45 am to 12.15 pm. For term dates please consult the cheder calendar, which can be found on the NPLS website.

On a regular Saturday morning, the timetable will look like this:

9.30 – 9.40	Staff meeting
9.45 – 10.00	Assembly
10.00 – 10.05	Checking-in (incl. registration)
10.05 – 11.00	Lesson 1
11.00 – 11.20	Break
11.20 – 12.15	Lesson 2

2. Our Curriculum

Children in the Cheder will study both Hebrew and Jewish Studies. On a regular Cheder morning, children will study one lesson of Hebrew and one lesson of Jewish Studies (with the exception of reception and year 1 who will learn Hebrew through music).

Reception and Year 1

Subjects covered throughout the year include Jewish Festivals, basic Bible stories and examples of home observance as well as an oral introduction to Hebrew.

Years 2 - 6

Hebrew

In year 2, we will continue to teach Hebrew orally. Beginning in year 3, children will learn to read and write in Hebrew. Full details of the Hebrew programme is available in the handbook.

Jewish Studies

Our Jewish Studies programme aims to provide each child with the knowledge and skills to understand what Judaism is all about and how to live a Jewish life. Below you will find an overview. If you are interested in seeing detailed lesson plans, please contact Rabbi Lea.

	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Term 1	FESTIVALS 1	RITUALS 1	LIVING JUDAISM 3	SACRED TEXTS 1	FESTIVALS 3
	The High Holy Days	The Synagogue	The Jewish Life Cycle	Post-biblical heros: The rabbis	High Holy Days' texts
	FESTIVALS 2	LIVING JUDAISM 2	LIVING JUDAISM 4	SACRED TEXTS 2	FESTIVALS 4
	Shabbat, Chanukah, Pesach	The Jewish Home	Project: My Jewish Life	Post-biblical heros: The commentators	The Ethical Aspect of the Festivals

	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Term 2	BIBLE 1	BIBLE 3	JEWISH WORLD 2	JEWISH WORLD 4	SACRED TEXTS 3
	From creation to Babel	Biblical Heros	Israel - the country	Jews in Sepharad and Ashkenaz	The TaNaKh
	LIVING JUDAISM 1	BIBLE 4	JEWISH WORLD 3	JEWISH HISTORY 1	SACRED TEXTS 4
	Jewish food, Jewish music	Biblical Heroines	Israel - the people	Jewish life in the Middle Ages	The Talmud and Rabbinic Literature
Term 3	ETHICS & VALUES 1	ETHICS & VALUES 2	ETHICS & VALUES 3	ETHICS & VALUES 4	JEWISH HISTORY 3
	Jewish guidance for our lives	Let's Discover God	Ethical Mitzvot	History and Values of Liberal Judaism	The Holocaust
	BIBLE 2	JEWISH WORLD 1	RITUALS 2	JEWISH HISTORY 2	JEWISH HISTORY 4
	Patriarchs and Matriarchs	Jews around the World	Ritual Mitzvot	Modern Jewish Movements	The State of Israel

Bar/Bat Mitzvah and Kabbalat Torah

Full details of the programme are found in the BM and KT booklets respectively. They can be found on the NPLS website.

3. Assemblies

In order to reinforce the Jewish Studies programme, trigger the children's 'deeper lasting knowledge' of various subjects and celebrate festivals throughout the year in the Cheder, we begin each Cheder morning with an assembly. Assembly usually takes place in the main synagogue sanctuary and starts promptly at 9.45 am. Parents are encouraged to attend alongside their children.

4. Whole school activities

Once or twice a term, we will take a break from our regular curriculum and organise a whole school activity instead. These activities generally focus on things such as festivals, the Czech scrolls or Israel.

5. Role of the Teachers

Our teachers are essential to the fulfilment of our aims at NPLS Cheder. We hope that both teachers and assistants will work together with mutual respect to inspire the children at NPLS Cheder. It is important that our teachers and assistants are able to collaborate and communicate effectively with fellow teachers, administration and students.

6. Break Time

There will be one break each Saturday morning from 11:00 to 11:20. Teachers and assistants will be assigned break duty on a rotating basis. This rota will be available in the staff room and displayed in the back lobby for parents to see. Teachers and assistants on break duty will be expected to concern themselves with the following:

- The prevention of injury to children or damage to property
- General order in the halls and classrooms during breaks.
- To see that no students leave the building during the break.
- To see that students return to class punctually.

7. Services

Occasionally the Cheder will join the Shabbat morning service. We will try to ensure that parents are notified ahead of time and invite to join their children. Teachers and assistants will sit with their class during the service. It is the teachers and assistants' responsibility to make sure that the children are engaging with the service by helping them follow the service and joining in.

8. Tzedakah

Giving to charity has always been a major factor in Jewish life and it is important that we teach the children this tradition of giving. Last year our students gave almost £1000 to Tzedakah and individual class charities. Please encourage your child to bring a regular donation.

9. Safeguarding Children

NPLS takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to its care. NPLS is committed to:

- Listening to, relating effectively to and valuing children and young people whilst ensuring their protection during synagogue activities;
- Ensuring that all personnel are given relevant support and training;
- Having a system for dealing with concerns regarding possible abuse.

In line with government guidelines, NPLS carries out DBS checks on all personnel working with children and young people at NPLS who are over the age of 16 at the beginning of the Cheder year. Any questions concerning DBS checks should be addressed to Debbie Davies (debbie@npls.org.uk). A copy of the safeguarding policy can be obtained from Rabbi Lea, who is the designated safeguarding lead for NPLS.