SHALOM & WELCOME

On behalf of the Synagogue and the teaching team, we are delighted to welcome you to Or Shabbat 2019/20.

Or Shabbat and Tots Shabbat are wonderful places to be for our 0-11 year olds. Not only are they spaces for families and children to come together - for fun, for Jewish learning and to connect to each other – but where we also take pride in the Jewish values that we teach. Not to mention the music, artwork, cooking, spending time in the Sanctuary, in Hyde Park, the library, the ping pong, the food - we are a Synagogue after all!

To help us reach these aims, we have a talented and experienced group of teachers and teenage help-teachers drawn from our community that represent excellent role models for our children. We are also blessed to have the generous support of committed parents who provide guidance through our PTA and Education Committee throughout the year.

We have a wonderful year planned, including: Mitzvah Day, trips, workshops, a series of Family/Community services, Lag B’Omer in the park, and many opportunities for us all to join the communal Kiddush. Our streamed Hebrew teaching means that children are able to learn and develop at a level and pace that is suitable for them.

We are most proud, however, of the Or Shabbat ‘buzz’ - the warm, inclusive environment that is created when we come together. If it’s something that you are not familiar with, then get in touch and join us for an assembly or a Kiddush, to which families are very welcome, or arrange another time to pop along to see what goes on.

As stated in our motto, “Study leads to Action” and everything we do at Or Shabbat, from our curriculum to our social action projects, is guided by Jewish values including that of Tikkun Olam (repairing the world). We aim to develop not only a progressive Jewish identity, but also for the children to be inspired for how they live their lives, and to take responsibility for helping the world that they live in.

We look forward to seeing you and working closely together in the coming year.
Or Shabbat – an overview

Each class spans two school years and studies a two year curriculum cycle.

- Kitah Aleph is for 3-5 year olds, (nursery, reception)
- Kitah Bet is for 5-7 year olds, (years 1 & 2/K & grade 1)
- Kitah Gimmel is for 7-9 year olds, (years 3 & 4/grades 2 & 3)
- Kitah Daled is for 9-11 year olds, (years 5 & 6/grades 4 & 5)

The children then graduate to our Friday night B’nei Mitzvah Programme, which is also a two year course: BM1, for 11-12s, and BM2, for 12-13s.

Shabbat Mornings - What do we do?

A typical morning schedule is below, beginning with assembly and ending with Kiddush, which families are invited to attend and share with us. Children’s learning, as you see, is divided into Jewish Studies and Hebrew Studies. We have also included adult education and the Shabbat service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Times</th>
<th>For Children</th>
<th>For Adults</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aleph and Bet</td>
<td>Gimel and Daled</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:45-10:00</td>
<td>Teachers and children arrive</td>
<td>Torah Breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(termly 9:30-10:15)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kiddush Preparation* /</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meet and Greeter*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(9:45-10:30)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00-10:15</td>
<td>Assembly (families welcome)</td>
<td>Shabbat Service</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(10:30-12:15)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:15-10:55</td>
<td>Jewish Studies</td>
<td>10:15-11.10</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jewish Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:55-11:10</td>
<td>Break-time</td>
<td>11.10-11.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:10-12:00</td>
<td>Activities incl. Hebrew</td>
<td>Break-time</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11.25-12.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hebrew Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00-12:30</td>
<td>Kiddush and sharing of work (Parents/carers/families welcome)</td>
<td>Shabbat Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:45-14:15</td>
<td>Children’s activities if required</td>
<td>Oneg Shabbat/Lunch and Learn</td>
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*To learn more about how you can be involved with Kiddush Preparation or being a Meet and Greeter, please contact Jon Zecharia in the Synagogue Office.
Our Curriculum

Jewish Values

Our two-year curriculum for all classes focuses on Jewish values, based in Torah, history and our connection with the lifecycle and festival year. The curriculum is based on the verse in Pirke Avot: "On three pillars the world stands; on Torah, on Avodah (study) and on Gemilut Chasadim (acts of loving kindness)" - we want our children to learn about each of these and every year focuses on new topics.

This year we will also offer opportunities for parents, children and extended family to explore and celebrate Jewish learning together on occasions such as Westminster Chai, Mitzvah Day, a Museum trip, Bring a Friend Day, Lag B’Omer festivities in Hyde Park, Yom Ha’atzmaut activities, Grandparents Day, and a number of opportunities to join the community including our famous Purim Spiel in March.

Hebrew Studies Curriculum

We have an amazing team of teachers who are able to support children in their Hebrew at all ages. Don’t worry if your child is joining mid-year, we will work to help them catch up to their peers.

Our children start learning Hebrew letters and simple words from Kitah Aleph. They build up decoding the Aleph-Bet, learning to read from the siddur and being able to participate in services and Jewish rituals. Our main progress targets are set out in the table opposite, from Or Shabbat through to B’nei Mitzvah and beyond.

Our Or Shabbat children study Hebrew using two different curricula; the Eizeh Kef curriculum designed by Leo Baeck College and the American Zman Likro (Time to Read) programme. A new addition for this year is that we are looking to implement regular Modern Hebrew Conversation sessions with an Israeli native speaker teacher.
The following are our Hebrew targets at each stage of learning:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Hebrew Text Used</th>
<th>Aleph Bet</th>
<th>Blessings Known</th>
<th>Prayers known</th>
<th>Songs known</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age 5</td>
<td>Eizeh Kef</td>
<td>First 6 letters</td>
<td>Wine, challah</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mah Tovu, Mi Camocha, Veshamru, Oseh Shalom, Sim Shalom, Adon Olam</td>
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<tr>
<td>(end of Aleph)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 7</td>
<td>Zman Likro Books 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>Familiar with the majority of the Aleph Bet</td>
<td>Wine, challah, candles, Shechehyanu</td>
<td>Shema</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(end of Bet)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Age 9</td>
<td>Zman Likro and Zman l&quot;Tefilah</td>
<td>Able to read full Aleph-Bet, reading prayers</td>
<td>Wine, challah, candles, Shechehyanu</td>
<td>Shema</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(end of Gimel)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Age 11</td>
<td>Zman Likro/Zman l&quot;Tefilah</td>
<td>Reading Prayers from Siddur. Ready to read from the Torah for BM</td>
<td>Wine, challah, candles, Shechehyanu</td>
<td>Shema, Amidah</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(end of Daled)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Age 13</td>
<td>Siddur, Chumash</td>
<td>Reading Prayers from Siddur with fluency</td>
<td>Wine, challah, candles, Shechehyanu</td>
<td>Pesukei d'zimra, Shema and it's blessings, Amidah</td>
<td>Mah Tovu, Lecha Dodi, Tzadik Katamar, Mi Camocha, Veshamru, Oseh Shalom, Sim Shalom, Aleinu, Kaddish, Friday prayers</td>
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<tr>
<td>(BM)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 15</td>
<td>Siddur, Chumash</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pesukei d'zimra, Shema and it's blessings, Amidah, Aleinu, Kaddish, Friday prayers</td>
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<td>(KT)</td>
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For all but our youngest students in Kitah Aleph, we assess Hebrew knowledge at the start of the year and stream the children according to their progress so far. In this way the children can learn Hebrew in small, manageable groups working with children at a similar level.

The children also learn Hebrew prayers, starting with the blessings for wine and bread, but progressing to the prayers used in services as they advance in their ability. Our weekly singing of Hebrew songs further reinforces Hebrew learning and awareness.

There are several family services throughout the year where children will be able to use the Hebrew they are learning in context, singing or reading passages from the prayer book.
Kitah Aleph

A gentle introduction to our Or Shabbat community for 3-5 year olds

The children learn about the festivals, Jewish rituals and traditions such as Shabbat, and symbols, for example the Torah Scroll and the mezuzah. They also learn about the importance of Gemilut Chasadim - acts of loving kindness and the way that we are all responsible for being kind and helping one another, as well as looking after animals and the planet which takes such good care of us. In the third term, our students are introduced to famous characters from the Bible such as Adam and Eve, Noah and his Ark, Moses and his sister Miriam.

The Kitah Aleph experience is built around the areas of learning of the Early Years Foundation Stage, much as our young students encounter at nursery and reception at school. The students learn through play and discovery and all of our activities are hands-on, interactive and take advantage of the space and facilities of our purpose built nursery classrooms. Topics are always introduced through story time in the reading corner at the beginning of each lesson.

The students learn Hebrew through the Eizeh Kef system. In Kitah Aleph the focus is on learning basic greetings and the vocabulary for family and Shabbat as well as recognising whole word shapes. Hebrew is learned informally through interactive, fun and inclusive games, and our teachers are able to incorporate children who are more familiar with the vocabulary alongside complete beginners.

Our outcome for Kitah Aleph is that the children become confident and happy in our Or Shabbat setting and in the synagogue building. They meet the Rabbi, and they have basic knowledge of traditions, symbols and important Jewish stories - all the while developing their linguistic, reasoning, physical, creative, numerical and problem solving skills, as well as their social and emotional intelligence.
By this stage our students are already learning to read and write at school and are at an age to understand more about Judaism and Hebrew.

The students follow a curriculum of lessons based on the 3 pillars of Judaism (according to the Sayings of the Fathers): Torah, Avodah (study/ritual) and Gemilut Chasadim (acts of loving kindness). We use the Chai curriculum in order to explore these topics in an age appropriate way. By this stage the students have a growing awareness of the natural and physical world, and are increasingly articulate and curious. In Kitah Bet we seek to give expression to their curiosity and desire to shape the world around them, and in particular the Jewish concepts that they encounter here, through their developing grasp of language.

Topics are frequently approached through arts, crafts, drama and games although there may also be pieces of writing, for those able to do so, and of course discussion. Kitah Bet also love to cook and, like Aleph, usually begin their sessions with a story which is the launch pad for the week's topic. Other annual highlights for Kitah Bet include a class Tzedakah project, participating in Mitzvah Day, and participating in Family and community services in the sanctuary.

Our desired outcome for Kitah Bet is that the students emerge with a clear sense of Jewish rituals, traditions, values as well as a basic understanding of the importance of the State of Israel. They also know their Kiddush blessings, are familiar with a number of Jewish songs and have studied all of the patriarchs and matriarchs as well as knowing the stories and origins behind the major festivals.
A forum for lively debate, discussion, drama and exploration of the Jewish world from the point of view of our 7-9 year olds (school years 3&4/grades 2&3).

The year is built around the festivals and our Jewish pillars of Torah, Avodah (ritual) and Gemilut Chasadim (acts of loving kindness). Kitah Gimel also spend half a term in each two year cycle focusing on Israel, and take on a Jewish history project each year, which over past years has included King David, King Solomon and a drama production about the Golem of Prague.

Sessions seek to challenge the students to express and explain their thoughts and opinions, while also abiding by an agreed set of rules for their discussions, including turn-taking, respecting contrary opinions and listening to each other. Each session will enable students to produce a piece of work based on their thoughts around the topic. This has included constructing the Western Wall in their own classroom (including prayers to be placed within the cracks), designing a menu for a kosher restaurant, and designing their own kibbutz.

Religious concepts are explored in greater depth than in Kitah Bet, looking at the sources of Jewish laws and traditions and grappling with the dilemmas faced by biblical characters like Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Esau as well as post Torah characters such as Isaiah and Elijah.

Our desired outcome for Kitah Gimel is that they gain a broader understanding of what it is to be Jewish; their connection to history and to the wider Jewish community. They also have a more in depth knowledge of the festivals and of the components of the Torah including halachah and Jewish ethics. They are able to identify with the characters in the Torah and appreciate the ethical dilemmas that they faced which are often similar to our own in everyday life. The students emerge having had ample experience of participating in the service in the sanctuary, and would also have had the opportunity to perform mitzvoth such as dressing and undressing the Torah. Above all, our Kitah Gimel students would have the backbone of a vibrant, informed Jewish identity shared with a group of peers with whom they have formed friendships through all of the projects and explorations that they will have undertaken in class.
Kitah Daled - B’nei Mitzvah Preparation

The final class of the Or Shabbat before B’nei Mitzvah for 9-11 year olds

Kitah Daled is for our students aged 9-11 or in years 5/6 (grades 4/5) and the main theme is preparation for the B’nei Mitzvah programme and the transitions that occur at that stage of life, including the pressures of entrance exams and changing schools.

In addition to our core curriculum based on the 3 pillars of Judaism; Torah, Avodah (ritual) and Gemilut Chasadim (acts of loving kindness). Kitah Daled spend half a term in each two year cycle focusing on Israel and take on a Jewish history project each year which, over past years, has included studying Albert Einstein, Golda Meir and the Jews who stood up to fascism in the Battle of Cable Street - excellent Jewish role models as our students approach Jewish adulthood.

Kitah Daled tackle concepts on a deeper and more abstract level with a particular focus on Jewish ethics including Maimonides’ ladder, and pikuach nefesh. They focus on post-Torah people including Deborah and Samuel. The students have several opportunities to participate in services in the sanctuary and become familiar with the service, the roles that people play in the service, its structure and many of the melodies and prayers. Other features of Kitah Daled are sessions with external organisations such as Streetwise - who run a workshop on secondary school transition, and sessions on mindfulness, as well as workshops with the progressive youth movements LJY and RSY Netzer. The group also have visits to the Jewish Museum and the Czech Scrolls Museum that help to further their understanding of the Jewish world and its history. The students work on their Hebrew proficiency and at the end of Kitah Daled we hope that our students are competent readers of the Aleph-Bet, familiar using Hebrew orally, as well as some of the key prayers of service including the Shema and Amidah.

Our goal is for the students to have a strong sense that - as explained in our motto, study does, and must lead to action. That we in the Jewish world have a responsibility towards tirdof (justice), and through the ethics taught in the Torah, through the messages of our festivals and the way in which we interact with each other, we all have it in us to make a positive difference in the world. The class Tzedakah project is a way in which this aim is realised, and it helps to set the students up for their individual social action project, as well as tackling broader global themes in the B’nei Mitzvah years.
How to really make it work
A partnership between us and you

The concept of shutafut (partnership) is inherent in Judaism and certainly at Or Shabbat. For this reason we love to say hello to family members bringing or picking up children. We invite parents and siblings to assemblies (before classes) and Kiddush (after classes), we have various events that involve families and we do what we can to maintain regular and open channels of communication with parents.

Community Shabbat Services (Shabbat B’Yachad)

Our Shabbat B’Yachad Services, launched last year, were a real highlight as they brought together the different generations of our community into the Sanctuary to sing, to pray and to share Shabbat. B’Yachad means together, and these special Shabbat services, led by Rabbi Benji and Yael Roberts, are specially created for children, families and other members of our community, bringing us all together. The children attend and participate in the services, and are blessed under the Tallit at the end of the service before we make Kiddush together.

Parents are invited to participate, and we count on parents joining their children in these services to make them into real shared, community experiences.

We will not be holding a B’Yachad Service in the Chanukah term; however, we look forward to sharing these Shabbat Services with you in the Pesach and Shavuot terms.

Family Friday Night Service

Another initiative launched last year was our Family Fridays: early Friday night Shabbat Services and Chavurah Dinners for our Or Shabbat families and children. The service, held from 5:30-6:00pm, features our favourite Or Shabbat tunes and offers the opportunity for us to share a Shabbat meal together afterwards from 6:00-7:00pm.

Keep an eye out in our weekly e-letter and monthly newsletters for dates of these fantastic Kabbalat Shabbat Services.
Homework and supporting your child’s Jewish education at home

The most crucial way of supporting your child’s Jewish education is by showing interest in what the children have been learning and doing at Or Shabbat. These are ways that you can keep your child engaged with Or Shabbat outside of the Westminster Synagogue walls:

1) We provide a weekly Jewish Studies homework sheet for students in Gimel and Daled. The homework sheet can be picked up from the marked tray in the kitchen area. The sheets are designed to be marked by parents.

2) Children will be able to take home their Hebrew textbook, which they may work on at home. The exercises in the book are fairly straightforward and will build upon what the children have been practicing in class.

In addition to the above, our weekly e-letter will continue to provide links to material that parents can use with their children to review, reinforce or further explore a topic. We will be setting up a page on our website that will contain a collection of the links that we set up throughout the year, as an ongoing resource to draw from.

Another option is borrowing a book to share from our Junior Library, or celebrating Shabbat and Jewish festivals at home and attending events within the synagogue community, such as our Chanukah and Purim parties or Simchat Torah.

Parents - We need your help!

We also encourage parental involvement in what we do at Or Shabbat. We have a very active group of parents who help us to run our activities; volunteer to provide support when we need it and who help to provide our welcoming atmosphere. We thank all our parents past and present who have played key roles, and if you would like to know more about how to be involved, do contact the Synagogue Office.

Please see pages 18-19 for more ideas on getting involved; including our Education Committee, chaired by Dudi Appleton, Parent Coffee Morning groups and being a Meeter and Greeter on Shabbat Mornings.

It’s great when our children overtake us in knowledge and interest, but it’s good to know how to catch up too! We offer adult learning at the same time as the Or Shabbat classes. Please see our notice boards for information on the programmes currently offered, including Hebrew and Torah discussion, and also feel free to make requests for topics if there is something you want to study.
Working with Youth Movements: 
LJY and RSY Netzer

We work closely with the youth movements of the two major progressive denominations in the UK, both of whom do wonderful work bringing children together from throughout the country for residential and day camps, Israel tours and other dynamic programmes.

We encourage our families to be aware of the movements and the opportunities that they present. Many of our teachers came from these movements and we will be inviting the groups during both the Or Shabbat and B’nei Mitzvah programme. This year will be the turn of LJY-Netzer

Your weekly information and resource hub
The Education E-letter

Every week during term-time, we send an e-letter that contains the following:

- news and notices such as B’nei Mitzvah and festivals
- term dates
- weekly and termly themes
- the schedule for Or Shabbat that week
- photographs
- links to resources to help parents to support their child’s learning or simply to articles, recipes and other items of interest or relevance to the weekly theme.

Please do read the weekly updates to stay informed, and as they invariably hold the answers to most questions that people tend to ask.

PJ Library - Jewish storybooks delivered monthly to your own home!

We have been working with the PJ Library organisation over the past two years. All you need to do is to register online, and they then send a quality Jewish themed book, or on occasion a CD, to your child every month from the ages of 6 months and 8 years old. Our children all know about Elmer the Elephant and the Gruffalo, but PJ brings Jewish characters and themes to bedtimes and parents have commented that it really does help them and their children to make Jewish connections together. In order to sign up, or to support the PJ Library organisation who rely on donations, please go to their website: [https://pjlibrary.org.uk/home](https://pjlibrary.org.uk/home)
Online Registration
Each year parents need to fill out a registration form for each of their children. The registration process includes information we need by law for medical issues, such as allergies, learning disabilities and emergency contact details, whilst young people are in our care. Please note that we are not able to be fully responsible for your child if they are not properly registered for classes. We therefore insist that registration is completed prior to attending, to ensure that we are as prepared as we need to be to keep them safe and secure.

We require other permissions such as sharing your contact details with other parents and for photos to be taken. As you can imagine, photos of our learning programmes in our communications bring what we do to life and enthuse other members to bring their children. We understand that this is a sensitive issue with some parents and we ask that you Opt-Out if you prefer that your children are not included in photos.

Or Shabbat Tuition Fees and Donations
The Or Shabbat programme is substantially subsidised by the Synagogue each year, which we are happy to do, as the children are the future of the community. Payment of fees can be done via bank transfer or an online payment. If payments are to be made by bank transfer, we appreciate the transfer to be made within 7 days, which saves any awkwardness or administrative time spent sending reminders.

Having said this, we would never want finances to be an obstacle to anybody participating in our programmes at the Synagogue, and if this may be the case, we invite you to speak in strict confidence to Yael Roberts or Rabbi Benji, as we are happy to help those who need.

In addition, we are extremely grateful for any donations that we receive towards children’s education, which helps us to provide for those who cannot pay for themselves, as well as to meet rising costs. Please speak to Yael Roberts if you have any questions about this. Donations can be made by cheque, bank transfer, or through our PayPal account - but please let the Synagogue office know when you do this.
Or Shabbat Hours

Children should arrive promptly by **10.00am** for assembly on Saturdays. A mini breakfast snack is available for the early ones, which is always appreciated by children, parents and even teachers! In a change from previous years, we plan to spend more time joining the end of the service in the sanctuary and participating in the communal Kiddush.

We therefore have two types of Kiddush at the end of the morning:

1) **Or Shabbat attending the end of the service and communal Kiddush** - On these weeks, classes will finish by **12:00pm**, and we invite parents at that time to join their children for the final blessing in the service and for the community Kiddush.

2) **Or Shabbat Kiddush and sharing assembly** - We invite parents to join us in the North Basement classroom for **12.15pm**; where we sing, share the work that the children have done that week, any further news, and make Kiddush together.

Look out for information in the weekly e-letter which will tell you whether this week will be an Or Shabbat or communal Kiddush. In both cases, the final pick-up time is **12.30pm**.

The Importance of Regular Attendance

Regular attendance is essential for success at Or Shabbat. It allows for continuity and avoids classroom disruption. Most importantly, it enables the children to gain maximum benefit from their Or Shabbat experience, as it helps them take meaning from that what is taught at Or Shabbat and ensures that they keep up and feel invested in class activities. The children who come regularly love it here, and make real and lasting friendships. Of course we understand that you may have to be away occasionally, but please let us know beforehand.

Absences

Please notify by phone or e-mail (see back of brochure) if your child will be absent. We request that you do not take children out before the end of the morning as this can be very disruptive for the class or for the group that they are with.

Nuts and Allergies

It is forbidden to bring any foods or snacks containing nuts into Or Shabbat, as we have many children who are allergic. A copy of the Education and Nut Policies is available from the Synagogue office on request.
Parking
We regret that there is no parking inside Rutland Gardens. Parents/guardians are respectfully asked not to drive through the security barrier unless there is an emergency. Parking is available on the streets adjacent to the Synagogue and in Hyde Park, all of which are within walking distance.

For security reason, parents must come in to collect their children.

Mobile Telephones
Mobile telephones are not permitted at Or Shabbat classes. If your child brings a telephone with them it must be switched off during lessons and not be brought out, unless with specific permission of the teacher. If it is not switched off, it can be taken by the teacher and returned at the end of the morning. In case of emergency, if you need to contact the Synagogue, please call the front desk on 0207 052 9703.

Our Library
We have benefited from very generous donations from parents and the kind folks at PJ Library in building our ever-growing children’s library, which has become one of our centre-pieces, particularly thanks to our librarian, Julie Feiler. We encourage our children at Or Shabbat to borrow books to take home and read with their parents. If you have Jewish books or toys which you no longer use and wish to donate, please let us know.

Dress Code for Or Shabbat and for services
We want our young people to be relaxed at the synagogue. However we ask that they dress appropriately for services in the sanctuary. Jeans should not be ripped, trainers should be clean, skirts should not be too short, tops should not be low cut and shoulders covered.
Safeguarding

Safeguarding the welfare of children in the community is our uppermost priority and everyone’s responsibility at Westminster Synagogue. All of our staff working with children have been subject to enhanced DBS checks, and have had Child Protection Training. Our Safeguarding Team (as named below) oversee our child protection provision and are the first port of call in the event that you have concerns regarding the safety of any child. Robust procedures are in place to ensure that concerns are dealt with correctly.

Copies of our Child Protection, Safeguarding and all other policies relevant to our children’s education programmes are available on the Westminster Synagogue website and also in our religion school area. Please speak to Gary Sakol or a member staff in order to obtain and view the policies.

In the event of concerns about the wellbeing of a child, please speak to a member of our Safeguarding Team in strictest confidence as soon as possible. Alternatively, you may go directly to the Westminster Access Team.

**Designated Safeguarding Lead for Westminster Synagogue:**
Gary Sakol (Executive Director). Tel 020 7584 3953
Email: gary@westminstersynagogue.org

**Westminster Access Team** – Tel: 020 7641 4000
(Out of hours – 020 7641 6000)
Email: AccessToChildrensServices@westminster.gov.uk

In the event of concerns about the conduct of a member of synagogue staff, please speak to our Safeguarding Team in strictest confidence as soon as possible, or you may go directly to the Westminster Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) as set out below:

**Westminster LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)**
Please call 0207 641 7668 and ask to speak to the Duty Child Protection Advisor or email lado@westminster.gov.uk

**Behaviour and Anti-Bullying**

We expect and teach our children to treat each other, the staff and the building with respect and care. This is set out in our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies.
**Dates for 2019/20**

**Chanukah Term**

*Sessions:*
14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> September;
5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> October;
2<sup>nd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup><sup>*</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> November;
7<sup>th</sup> December;

**NB 10<sup>th</sup> November is a Sunday; Or Shabbat Students are expected to join us for Westminster Chai on this day in place of their Saturday Class;**

**Half Term:**
19<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> October

**Pesach Term**

*Sessions:*
11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> January;
1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> February;
7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> March;

**Half Term:**
15<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> February

**Shavuot Term**

*Sessions:*
25<sup>th</sup> April;
2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> May;
6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> June
4<sup>th</sup> July

**Half Term:**
23<sup>rd</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> May

**Festival Services:** Students are expected to attend Festival Services – see our Education Calendar, or go onto our website for full dates.
Getting involved with Or Shabbat & wider community

We understand the pressures of modern life, but hope you will make the time to give some of your time to one of the many opportunities available in the community, which will help you to connect to other members and sets an example for your children. Here are a few suggestions:

**Adult and Family Education**

**Modern Hebrew Ulpan** - Want to speak Hebrew like an Israeli? Year-long Ulpan courses for Beginners and Intermediate students will be held on Thursday nights subject to enrolment numbers.

**Hebrew Learning classes** on Wednesday evenings during term time for parents and community members after the Or Chadash classes from **7:45-8:30pm**. We will try to accommodate you whatever your level.

**Torah Breakfasts** and **Torah in the City** are lively discussion groups that focus on the weekly Torah portion. Torah Breakfasts are held termly on Shabbat mornings at the Synagogue, while Torah in the City sessions take place on a Wednesday morning once per month at a location in the city, perfectly situated for a number of our members working in the area.

**Shabbat Lunch & Learn** sessions run throughout the year on Saturdays following the service from **12:45-2:15pm**. These sessions are held as a short series of three, as members explore the weekly Torah portion – we do ask for members to attend at least two of the three sessions.

**Oneg Shabbat Lunches** take place monthly after Shabbat services. They offer the chance to explore prayers, readings, rituals, Torah or some other interesting aspect of Jewish culture. The community shares a potluck Shabbat meal and engage in learning, led by Rabbi Benji, Yael Roberts or guest speakers.

**Or Chadash (Access to Judaism)** is a class which covers all of the essentials of Judaism - a sort of Judaism 101. Topics include festivals, history, customs and Israel. Classes run from **6.30-7:45pm** on Wednesday evenings and are open to all members as well as conversion candidates. Members can attend for a one-off topic or all year round. Contact the Synagogue Office for a copy of this year’s syllabus.

**Museum Guide Training** - On the third floor of Kent House you can experience the dramatic story of the Czech Memorial Scrolls. The current exhibition opened in September 2008 and it has now been more than 50 years since the scrolls arrived at Westminster Synagogue. If you would like to train to be a guide for the museum, please let us know.

**Westminster Chai** – Our annual learning day! Held this year on Sunday, 10th November to mark the start of Interfaith Week, we invite you to join us as we welcome 16 amazing educators into the building for a day you won’t forget! For more information, or to volunteer on the day, contact the Synagogue Office.

**Friday Night Services** – Our Kabbalat Shabbat services begin at 6:30pm. In place of a sermon, we do Chavruta (text study) in the service, with members participating together from their seats.

**Shabbat Unplugged** – Held monthly, our Friday Night Unplugged services include a half hour of learning the melodies before the service from 6:00pm with Yoav Oved.
Committees and Clubs throughout the year

Kiddush Preparation

Providing the Ritual side of the Kiddush or acting as a partner for Kiddush for a BM family – the complement will be returned when you are the celebrating B’nei Mitzvah family. Alternatively, prepare the Communal Side of Kiddush alongside some Or Shabbat families, it’s a wonderful way to meet other parents and support our community.

Meeter and Greeter

After you’ve dropped your child off at Or Shabbat, why not be a warm and welcoming face for members and visitors as they enter our building. It can be daunting to come into Kent House, especially if you don’t know anyone, so why not offer a smile, a hello and a cup of coffee before heading up to the service. We ask that Meeter and Greeters are present from 10:00-10:45am

Education Committee

Join the Education Committee, which meets quarterly to discuss the wider educational strategy for the synagogue.

Or Shabbat PTA/Coffee Morning Group

This is a new group which meets termly during classes on a Saturday morning. The group serves as an excellent link between our staff and the families and helps us to organise events as well as to fund-raise and to focus on matters pertinent to Or Shabbat. Please speak to Yael if interested.

Westminster Czech Scrolls Committee

The Synagogue is fortunate to possess two Torah Scrolls from the collection of 1564 scrolls received by the Scrolls Trust in 1964. One of them is on loan to Or Shabbat and is from the town of Přeštice in what was formerly Czechoslovakia. This year, the Commemorative Service for those who perished from the towns of Přeštice and Horažďovice will be held on Friday 22nd November and we invite all members to attend.

Westminster Young Professionals

This committee has recently formed to provide events and education for the Young Professional market. If you feel you would be able to lend a hand in marketing, logistics, coordination, finance or just as a volunteer, please get in touch.

Westminster Purim Players

Every year we hold a Purim Spiel; telling the Purim story through different genres (Harry Potter, Beatles, ABBA, Grease, Star Wars, Fiddler on the Roof) and if you are theatrical in any way – be it writing, directing, acting or costumes - please contact the Synagogue Office to lend your talents.
Dates for your Diary

Friday 13th September - B’nei Mitzvah Chavurah Supper
Saturday 21st September - Selichot Supper, Study and Service
Sunday 29th & Monday 30th September - Erev Rosh Hashanah & Rosh Hashanah
Tuesday 8th & Wednesday 9th October - Kol Nidre & Yom Kippur
Sunday 13th & Monday 14th October - Erev Sukkot Shira & Sukkot First Day
Sunday 20th & Monday 21st October - Erev Simchat Torah & Simchat Torah
Friday 8th - Sunday 10th November - BM Westminster Residential Trip
Sunday 10th November - Westminster Chai
Sunday 17th November - Mitzvah Day
Sunday 17th - 24th November - Peace of Mind
Friday 22nd November - WS Czech Scrolls Commemorative Service
Friday 27th December - Westminster Chanukah Celebrations
Sunday 23rd February - Westminster Questions?
Friday 6th - Sunday 8th March - BM European Residential Trip
Monday 9th March - Purim Spiel and Celebrations
Wednesday 8th April - First Night Seder
Monday 20th April - Erev Yom HaShoah with WLS
Thursday 28th May - Erev Shavuot Service and Supper
Friday 19th June - B’nei Mitzvah Graduation

Useful Contacts

Our Rabbis
Rabbi Benji Stanley - rabbi@westminstersynagogue.org
Rabbi Dr Thomas Salamon, Rabbi Emeritus - thomas@westminstersynagogue.org

Education Enquiries
Yael Roberts, Director of Community and Education - yael@westminstersynagogue.org
Nivi Chatterjee Duari, Office Administrator - admin@westminstersynagogue.org

Lifecycle Enquiries
Ben Shaw, PA to Rabbinic Team - ben@westminstersynagogue.org

Festival and Cultural Event Enquiries
Jon Zecharia, Events and Communications Manager - jon@westminstersynagogue.org
Louise Wendel, Events Coordinator - louise@westminstersynagogue.org

Membership Enquiries
Hilary Ashleigh, Membership Administrator - hilary@westminstersynagogue.org

Executive Director
Gary Sakol - gary@westminstersynagogue.org