



Ansin Religious School
of Temple Ohabei Shalom

Family
Handbook

2019-20

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Contents

Philosophy	3
Responsive Classroom Approach	4
ARS Policies and Procedures	4
Activities Outside our Classroom Walls	8
Ohabei Shalom School Committee	9
School Calendar	9

Mission Statement

The Ansin Religious School of Temple Ohabei Shalom is dedicated to providing an environment in which each student can find a strong personal Jewish identity. ARS helps students build a foundation of Jewish values and thought which is intended to serve as a lifelong basis for independent Jewish thinking. Students are taught the skills necessary to achieve proficiency in the Hebrew language, to acquire Reform prayer literacy, to read and understand Torah and religious text, and to observe and practice Jewish rituals and customs. ARS students are expected to pursue excellence both academically and personally, and to show concern and respect for teachers, fellow students and the world in which they live. They are encouraged by a dedicated and caring faculty to develop confidence in all areas of Jewish study and practice. The Ansin Religious School is an extension of the Jewish education which children begin and continue in their homes. Therefore, parents, clergy, and school faculty are partners in the education of our children. The Ansin Religious School expects all of its members to share responsibility for the well-being of the school community, making a commitment to honesty, kindness, and respect.

PHILOSOPHY

At Temple Ohabei Shalom, we are striving to (re)imagine and create a fun, nurturing and dynamic center of living Judaism, with multiple opportunities for authentic Jewish study, practice and observance. Our unique program integration allows us to provide our students and families seamless connection points and entryways into our community and the Jewish world beyond our walls. The Ohabei Shalom clergy, teachers, and staff create positive Jewish learning experiences that make both children and adults alike wish for more. It is not our goal to complete your child's Jewish education but rather to awaken the fire that already exists inside your child. We want to give them a taste of a vibrant and complex Jewish experience that transforms them into life-long learners and lovers of Judaism. Our community firmly believes that a quality religious school education should include both the "how-to" and the "why" of Jewish living. These elements, in concert, will encourage a commitment to Judaism through lifelong learning, a sense of identity and connection to *Am Yisrael* the Jewish people.

TEMPLE OHABEI SHALOM'S CORE VALUES AND BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Derech Eretz, The Way to Be at TOS! *Derech Eretz*, the way of the world, is how we conduct ourselves as individuals and in communities.

Kavod – Respect

We are each made in God's image:

- We show respect for our self.
- We show respect for others.
- We show respect for our Rabbi, Cantor, teachers, friends, and classmates.
- We show respect for the synagogue's things, supplies, and materials.
- We always have safe hands and bodies.

B'Yachad - Together

We recognize we are a family, one people, and the importance of being together as a community:

- We build relationships through everything that we do.
- We have fun when we are together.
- We listen to others.
- We speak thoughtfully and kindly.
- We share in each other's joy and support each other in times of sadness.

- We find respectful ways to solve differences.
- We stay with the group and participate.

Makom - holy place

Our synagogue is a special and holy place:

- We respect and care for our school and synagogue.
- We speak with quiet voices, walk carefully and clean up after ourselves.
- We do not go on the stage in Penn/Spero hall unless we are invited by an adult.
- We recycle our trash and clean up after ourselves.
- We conserve our resources, including turning off lights when we leave a room.
- We do not waste food. We take only what we need.

RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM APPROACH

Responsive classroom is an approach to teaching and learning that fosters safe, challenging, and joyful classrooms and schools. The Responsive Classroom approach incorporates the students' social and emotional growth into their academic learning, stemming from the notion that children learn best through social interaction and when they are explicitly taught social and emotional skills along with their academic lessons. The goal is to enable optimal student learning, and through the implementation and refining of classroom and school-wide practices, the Responsive Classroom approach has been shown to increase academic achievement in elementary school students, decrease problem behaviors, improve social skills, and raise the quality of instruction. We have incorporated these practices into our learning at ARS as it serves as the foundation of our school philosophy and students are familiar with these practices from their other educational environments.

ARS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Student Attendance

Students are expected to attend as many classes as possible throughout the school year. While we are aware that some absences cannot be avoided, it is our belief that when students miss significant portions of their courses, they will not be prepared to progress to the next grade level with their peers. A single absence represents a significant loss of learning and puts students at risk of falling behind in the curriculum.

As our school meets only one day a week, an integral part of the curriculum are our Shabbat experiences. We hold monthly Shabbat B'yachad services, both on Friday evenings and on Saturday mornings. It is expected that ARS students will attend Shabbat B'yachad monthly and also at least the number of Shabbat services equal to their grade (i.e. one additional service for first grade, two for second grade, etc). In the 2019-2020 year, we are piloting a service attendance project in which students will be able to mark how often they've attended Shabbat services, with prizes for those who have achieved the expectation for their year.

We have learned that if our students can see that there is a greater purpose for what they are learning, they actually become better students and learn about the importance of belonging to a Jewish community.

- The maximum number of ARS absences for the school year is **seven** class sessions.
- Each time a student is absent s/he is required to make up the missed work. This will ensure that the student is familiar with material that was covered when s/he was absent. Teachers will reach out to families or families can contact teachers for information.

- If students leave early and miss *tefilah* (our weekly prayer service), they can make it up by attending Shabbat services.

School Hours

Team Chaverim (Pre-K) & ARS (K-7): Tuesdays, 3:15-5:45 PM

Chai 5 (our teen program): variety of times and places; see ohabei.org for more details

Arrival and Departure Procedures

ARS opens at 3:00 pm. If your child will be earlier than 3:00 pm, please let us know.

We use the school entrance (located closest to the parking lot) as our only school entrance on Tuesdays. A staff member will be at the school entrance to help children get into the building on Tuesdays (from 3:00 - 3:30pm). Upon arrival, a key card will be located in the elevator for students and caregivers to get to their classroom spaces.

Dismissal: If you **drive to ARS, you will pick up your child from the back door/Marshal St/parking lot exit.** However, if you **walk to ARS--please enter the building through the front doors on Beacon Street at the Rosenfield/glass door** entrance, and exit with your child that way as well. We are hoping to move some of the foot traffic onto Beacon Street and out of the hectic, overcrowded, back hallway.

Marshal Street is a one-way street during school hours. Do not turn onto Marshal Street from Beacon. Please continue eastbound on Beacon, turn right at Kent, right on Sewall, and right on Marshal Street until you enter the parking lot to pick up your student(s).

Departure/ Pick-up:

- Parents should make two lines of cars in the parking lot to the school door.
- Be careful when coming down Marshal Street; keep a close watch for families crossing the street.
- Do not back up on Marshal Street at any time.
- Children WILL NOT be allowed to enter or exit cars on Marshal Street.

Please be patient and take your time.

Early Dismissal

- Parents/caregivers should email teachers and the school office (ars@ohabei.org or educationoffice@ohabei.org) to let us know if a child needs to be dismissed early.
- Parents should make arrangements to pick up their child at the school office or school door (please call the office 617.739-9200 when you arrive and we will bring your child to the school door).
- For your child's safety, all students must **check out** in the School Office before leaving the building.
- We appreciate the many activities that busy children have; however leaving early every Tuesday means that students miss a critical component of ARS every week. Please be in touch with Amy or your child's teacher about how to make up for missed class time or *tefilah* time.

Shabbat Attendance

Our curriculum was designed to work in concert with the cycle of Jewish worship with Shabbat as an opportunity for community observance and celebration. This allows students to apply the lessons learned in the classroom to a genuine Shabbat experience. Our monthly Friday night Shabbat B'yachad services are a chance for families to come together to pray, celebrate, and eat together. The dates for 2019-2020 are:

☆ September 6

☆ October 20 (Sunday, Simchat Torah)

☆ November 1
☆ December 6
☆ January 10

☆ February 7
☆ March 27
☆ May 8: Teacher Appreciation

Another option for service attendance is **Shabbat Morning B'yachad**, a chance to celebrate Shabbat together on a Saturday morning. These monthly gatherings are a great way for students to learn more about the Torah portion and the structure of a Saturday morning service, especially in advance of bar/bat mitzvah.

The dates for 2019-2020 are:

☆ September 14
☆ November 23
☆ January 4
☆ February 29

☆ March 21
☆ April 18
☆ May 23

We understand that sometimes you may not be able to participate in our Shabbat programming, but we encourage you to join us when you can.

Inclement Weather

- The Ansin Religious School will always be closed if the Brookline Public schools have closed for a snow day. When the after-school programs close, ARS will also close.
- In the case of closure, we will post a closure message on the homepage of our TOS website (www.ohabei.org) and send an email to all families.

Food Allergies

Ansin Religious School is sensitive to the fact that some of our students have severe food allergies. While we do not promote ourselves as a "Peanut/Nut Free" environment, we take precautions to ensure that all of our students are safe while in the school building. Because of this, all teachers and students are not to bring food into the building that contains peanuts, nuts, or is processed on equipment that comes in contact with peanuts or nuts. Please check all labels carefully before bringing any food into the building. If you have any questions regarding snacks or treats for your children, please check with the Education Director.

Teachers will be informed by the school office if they have a student that has a food allergy. Students with food allergies MUST have written Emergency Action Plans and Epi-Pens in the school office.

Health Policy

All students attending the Ansin Religious School of Temple Ohabei Shalom must have received all up to date immunizations as recommended in the immunization schedules published by the Centers for Disease Control and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Snack

Snack (always nut-free) is provided by ARS on Tuesday afternoons for students in grades K – 7. We ask that students refrain from eating, drinking and chewing gum during classes when it interferes with the learning process. As mentioned above, to protect the health of many of our students, if you send your child to school food, please be sure that it does not contain nuts.

Homework

Practice at home is a critical component of our one-day-a-week programs. In order to progress, students really need to practice their Hebrew reading skills more than once a week. Homework is important for providing continuity from one class session to the next. Homework will be assigned consistently and in moderation. Homework assignments are always given to students in writing. Homework for Jewish Studies classes often includes creative work and we encourage family involvement. Students are expected to practice reading Hebrew at home for 5 to 10 minutes daily, and may also have some weekly Hebrew reinforcement work. Teachers will communicate make-up assignments when a student misses a class so students don't fall behind.

Tefilah (Prayer)

Our tefilah program is designed to build community and be an engaging way to make prayer feel relevant to each child. Students in K – 6 are assigned buddies with whom they sit every week. Buddies work together to answer a “tefilah question” about a prayer, and the older buddies help guide the younger buddies through the prayerbook. It's truly a special experience. Each student in grades 3 – 6 has their own prayerbook which they personalize through drawings to help make meaning on each page as they learn about specific prayers. The binders stay with the students from year to year. Our goal is that students feel that the words on the page have meaning that is relevant to their lives, even as it was relevant to the lives of their ancestors. Prayer is universal for all Jews, and a strong base of prayer knowledge will help our students to feel connected to Judaism wherever they are.

Parents are welcome to join us at *tefilah* every week! We begin around 5:20 pm. Please feel free to grab an extra *tefilah* binder so that you can participate as well and set an example for your children.

Inclusion and Special Education Support

We are pleased to have Joanna Lieberman returning to our staff this year as our Inclusion and Support Specialist. Joanna is a teacher in the Brookline Public Schools and she has a unique skill set to help support students, teachers, and our whole ARS community. She'll work with individual students and small groups, as well as serve as a consultant to teachers as they craft curriculum and activities for their classes. If you have questions for Joanna, you can reach her at ars@ohabei.org.

TECHNOLOGY & SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

At ARS we use computers, the Internet and other technology on a regular basis as part of our curriculum and methodology. Electronic information research skills are now necessary to prepare students for the future. The ARS leadership is excited to integrate and incorporate such information throughout the curriculum, as well as provide guidance and instruction to students and families regarding the appropriate use of such resources. Internet safety needs to be a vital part of every household and parents should set rules, stay involved and place themselves in control of home broadband as well as mobile phone usage.

Student/parent/family online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that you use face-to-face. School employees and students are responsible for appropriate conduct on school computers and networks. Since any information on the network can be viewed by others at all times, general school rules for behavior and communications apply.

Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones are not allowed at ARS; they cannot be out during class, during snack, or any break times. Many teachers choose to collect cell phones in a box at the beginning of class, returning them at the end of class. There may be occasions where teachers ask their students to use their phones to do research for a project, or

allow them to be used in a specific manner. If you need to contact their child, please do it via the school office, not on your child's cell phone. The school office number is 617-739-9200.

Communication with Parents

Almost all communication from ARS will come via email rather than traditional mail. Teachers will be communicating with parents on a regular basis to keep them updated about classroom curriculum, events, student anecdotes, and more. Please feel free to reach out to your teacher or the ARS Director, Amy Deutsch, at adeutsch@ohabei.org. We are here to help you!

ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OUR CLASSROOM WALLS

Youth Groups

Youth groups are a special and exciting part of the Ansin Religious School program. Youth groups allow our students to interact in an informal setting. All students are encouraged to participate in youth activities and especially their annual shul-in! The shul-in dates are below.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Shul-In Date</u>
MOSTY - Middle OSTY, grade 3 & 4	November 23-24, 2019
BOSTY - Bigger OSTY, grades 5 & 6	November 23-24, 2019
TOSTY – Tiny OSTY, grades K-2	January 25-26, 2020

Chai 5: Our Innovative Teen Program

TOS offers a variety of programs to our teens (grades 8-12) that are designed to give variety of opportunities to learn, create community, and give back to the world. Chai 5 is flexible; teens can opt in and out of programs as they choose. Our programs combine traditional and experiential Jewish education, providing a welcoming and inclusive community for Jewish teens. Below are our Chai 5 program options – teens can opt in to one or many of the choices. More details at: <https://www.ohabei.org/ars-high-school.html>.

TELEM (grades 8-12)

- We will continue to participate in this service learning program sponsored by the Jewish Community Relations Council. Teens will learn about social justice and values, and volunteer at a site to enact those values. We anticipate that this will continue on Wednesday nights, but please stay tuned for details.

Confirmation (grades 10-12)

- Rabbi Schaefer is offering a small-group learning experience for 10th-12th graders. Teens will meet weekly from December – March, with the Confirmation service taking place on Friday, March 27 at Shabbat B'yachad. Classes will take place on Tuesday nights from 6-8 pm, dinner included.

Rabbis' Hangouts (grades 8-12)

- Our clergy want to spend time with the teens. Join them once a month to hang out. Sessions will include social justice projects, eating ice cream, and more. Dates TBD, but please save October 15, at 7 pm, for Sundaes in the Sukkah!

Weekly Classes at The Tent at Temple Israel (grades 8-12)



- TOS partners with other local synagogues to support teen learning at The Tent. TOS generously subsidizes the cost of this program. The first day of The Tent is Monday October 15. For more details, email us.

HomeBASE (Brookline After School Enrichment)

Temple Ohabei Shalom is proud of our initiative, HomeBASE, an out-of-school-time program that combines afterschool childcare and enrichment programs for children from Kindergarten through 4th grade. HomeBASE offers integrated programming based on modern values, teaching children to care for themselves, each other, and the world around them. Our staff provides a safe and fun-filled environment where children can always feel like they are at home. Children can attend two to five days per week. Programs are organized by grade level. Our curriculum is based on a program model that focuses on learning enhancement, health, and recreation, while also building competence and confidence in children. HomeBASE gives all children the opportunity to form long-lasting friendships that enhance their development, growth, and self-confidence. For more information, check out <http://www.ohabei.org/education/homebase/> or contact Alexa Roos in the school office (aroos@ohabei.org).

Additionally, HomeBASE administers our ARS Walking Buddies program; a supervised walk from Pierce, Lawrence, and Coolidge Corner schools to ARS on Tuesday afternoons. There is an additional fee for this program; please contact Alexa Roos with questions.

OHABEI SHALOM PARENT TASK FORCE/SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The School Committee is made up of parent representatives from ARS and TCEE who work together to ensure that our school runs smoothly and is well supported by our community. Our school committee plays an important role in building the kind of supportive school environment where teachers and students alike can do their best work. The school committee coordinates room parents for each class, who help teachers and administration with special programming, announcements, and community-building. If you would like to be involved with the school committee, please contact Amy Deutsch at adeutsch@ohabei.org, or be in touch with Joshua Paradise or Sarah Bookbinder, parent co-chairs.

School Calendar 2019 - 2020

The calendar can be found on our website at: <https://www.ohabei.org/arscalendar> and is regularly updated, so it's best to check it on our website.

The first day of ARS is September 17, and the last day is May 12.

Please note that we DO NOT have regular ARS on Tuesday October 1, as it's the second day of Rosh Hashanah. We will be offering an alternative program, but you do need to sign up, so please go here to register: <https://www.ohabei.org/form/tashlich2019.html>