



BAR & BAT MITZVAH POLICY

Purpose

1. To ensure that all Bnei and B'not Mitzvah celebrated in the ACT Jewish Community are done with the understanding that this is not a celebration that marks a one-off occasion but, rather, impresses the skills and education in our Bnei Mitzvah so that they may take responsibilities in our community as Jewish adults.

Procedure

2. Families of Bar and Bat Mitzvah candidates must be financial members of the ACT Jewish Community Inc in accordance with the policies ratified by the Board.
3. A year prior to the date of the Bar or Bat Mitzvah (when the boy is 12 and the girl is 11) the family should meet with the Rabbi of the ACT Jewish Community to discuss the date of the celebration and the necessary requirements.
4. In the year before the Bar or Bat Mitzvah and the remaining time during the calendar year of the celebration, Bar or Bat Mitzvah candidates are expected to be regular attendants at services with their parents. Regular means at least three times a month including at least one Saturday morning service. For example, a child who is having his Bar Mitzvah in June 2015 would be expected to join services from June 2014 and continue to attend services until the end of 2015.

Educational Components of the Bar or Bat Mitzvah

5. Bar and Bat Mitzvah candidates wanting to read from the Torah (including all-female services for the Orthodox Congregation) must source a teacher for this component at least 10-12 months before the celebration. Prospective candidates are asked to speak to the Rabbi to begin this process.
6. Any candidate who chooses not to read from the Torah will be asked to undertake a text-based learning project of their choosing to be done with the Rabbi.
7. The Rabbi of the ACT Jewish Community would like each candidate to prepare a drasha to be given for the entire community. The Rabbi will be involved in this process and in a learning project for each candidate to be discussed at the initial meeting.
8. In the calendar year of the celebration, the Bar or Bat Mitzvah candidate must attend Bar and Bat Mitzvah classes from February until December. Once a month these classes will offer mother-daughter or father-son programs, and once a month there will be group classes with all the candidates attending together.



The ACT Jewish Community is a member of the JCA family of organisations

9. There will be a completion celebration at the end of the year of the bar or bat mitzvah.

The Rabbi's Involvement with the Bar or Bat Mitzvah

10. The Rabbi will be involved in the following areas:

- (a) Meeting with the family to explain the process of the Bar or Bat Mitzvah;
- (b) Helping to source a Bar or Bat Mitzvah Teacher;
- (c) Create a learning project for each candidate;
- (d) Help with each candidate's drasha to be delivered to the entire community (in cases where there is both a Progressive and an Orthodox service on one weekend, the drasha will be delivered prior to Kiddush);
- (e) Deliver a drasha to the community and to the Bar or Bat Mitzvah candidate, and provide the traditional priestly blessing (in cases where there is both a Progressive and an Orthodox service on one weekend, the drasha will be delivered prior to Kiddush); and
- (f) Teach or facilitate the Bar and Bat Mitzvah educational program.

Education after Bar or Bat Mitzvah

11. It is imperative that the education of our children does not cease when the Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebrations are over. Therefore candidates are expected to continue Bar and Bat Mitzvah classes as detailed in paragraph 8, but should also be encouraged to join the teen education program that will be run during the school-year.

Authorisation

Merrilyn Sernack
Secretary
ACT Jewish Community Inc

3 September 2014

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Responsible person	The Rabbi	Scheduled review date	3 September 2015