

Temple Anshe Sholom Religious School

PARENTS' HANDBOOK

Dear Parents;

This handbook contains important information about our school's mission, our policies, procedures, tuition fees, and more. Please read it and feel free to contact us if you have any questions, concerns, or ideas to share with us! (rabbijc@anshesholom.ca , dacellison@anshesholom.ca OR 905-528-0121). We value parents' involvement in all aspects of what we do: your participation is welcome in t'fillot, in the classroom, at holiday celebrations and events, in family learning programs, and on the education & youth committee. We invite parents' input and feedback at all times.

This Parents' Handbook contains:

- Mission and Vision statements for our school
- Curriculum Outline
- Registration and Tuition information
- School hours
- School policies: Attendance, Behaviour, Snacks, Kashrut, Nut-free
- Students with Special Needs
- "Snow Day" cancellation information
- Camp George and camp scholarship applications

TAS RELIGIOUS SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The goal of Jewish education within the Reform Movement is the deepening of Jewish experience and knowledge, in order to strengthen faith in God, love of Torah, and identification with *Klal Yisrael*, the Jewish people. We believe that Judaism meaningfully addresses the challenges and questions confronting the human spirit. Only through knowledge can a Jew successfully seek these answers. Included in the body of knowledge which a Jewish student should be taught are: familiarity with Jewish sources, an appreciation of the Jewish calendar and life cycle, a deepened understanding of Jewish culture and heritage, and an awareness of our relationship with Israel and Jews around the world. Hebrew is also essential for enabling the student to understand and participate in communal prayer.

TAS RELIGIOUS SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT

Our school provides supplemental Jewish education from Junior Kindergarten (*Ganon*) through Grade 10. Our curriculum covers three basic areas:

- 1) The Jewish people (including Torah, the Prophets, Jewish history, Israel, the Holocaust, Jewish culture, current events and community responsibility);
- 2) The Jewish religion (including prayer, mitzvot, Jewish texts, the holidays, life cycle, ethics and values); and
- 3) Hebrew language (including basic conversational language, reading, and basic comprehension of the prayers and blessings).

Through creative and experiential learning activities, project-based learning, songs, stories, and family learning programs, prayer experiences, study and discussion, our students gain not only knowledge but also a sense of commitment to the Temple Anshe Sholom community and the Jewish people as a whole.

CURRICULUM OUTLINE

HEBREW: Our students learn Hebrew using the Hebrew Through Movement curriculum. (Feel free to check out the HTM website: www.hebrewthroughmovement.org). We have had GREAT initial success with this new fun and very active approach to learning. Their core learning is reinforced with Hebrew literacy centres (Hebrew letters & sounds games, prayer practice, “word attack”, vocabulary work, listening centres, and a variety of reading activities) on a weekly basis.

JEWISH LEARNING: Our students rotate through 4-8 week units on Torah Study, Shabbat and Jewish Holidays, Jewish Symbols, Jewish Ethics, Jewish Community, Jewish History, Jewish Life Cycle, and Israel. They learn Jewish music (songs and blessings) with our song-leader on a weekly basis. They participate in activity-based units on Jewish cooking, Jewish storytelling, Israeli dancing, global Jewish awareness, and exploring Jewish themes through visual arts and drama. They learn how to recite Jewish prayers (in both Hebrew and English) and have many opportunities to practice.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH PREPARATION: Our grade 7 students learn how to chant Torah and Haftarah (as well as the blessings for both), how to lead a service, how to navigate through Jewish text, study a Torah portion and write a d'var Torah, and more. They complete a 4-part mitzvah project in preparation for their b'nai mitzvah, and they also participate in four special family programs during the grade 7 year.

B'YACHAD: Grades 8 and 9 meet together on Saturday mornings. Hot topics in Judaism, current events, and Jewish themes in a variety of media form the basis of their discussions. B'yachad students also apply the Jewish values they have learned through fulfilling community projects and volunteer experiences. Students are invited to remain at the Temple throughout the morning, and work with our students and teachers as "Madrichim" (Teaching Assistants).

CONFIRMATION: Grade 10 students have the wonderful opportunity to learn on Shabbat mornings with our Rabbi, and, following their studies, are invited to join a class as Madrichim. "Why I will confirm my Jewishness" is the underlying theme of the classes. The year culminates in a moving Confirmation ceremony, just prior to Shavuot.

REGISTRATION AND TUITION FEES

Registration forms are sent out to parents in the late summer and **must be returned to the Temple office by the first day of classes**. School fees are payable at the time of registration. In cases of financial difficulty, confidential requests for subsidy may be brought to the attention of our Temple Educator, who will give consideration to each individual request prior to registration. Families must be current Temple Members in "*good-standing*" to be considered for subsidy.

Fees: No refunds will be given after October 31st

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| Junior Kindergarten through Grade 1 | \$300 for Temple members (\$600 for non-members) |
| Grades 2 - Grade 7 | \$900 for members (\$1200 for non-members) |
| Grades 8 - 10 | \$450 for Temple members (\$500 for non-members) |
| B'nai Mitzvah Fees: | |
| Admin | \$150 |
| Tutoring | \$600 |
| Music | \$450 |

SCHOOL HOURS

Kindergarten to Grade 7:

Shabbat mornings:

Learning Sessions - 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

and

Wednesday afternoons:

Snack and supervision - 4:15 p.m.,

Learning sessions - 4:30 to 6:15 p.m.,

B'Yachad & Confirmation:

Shabbat Morning only:

Class 9:15-10:30

Optional Volunteer opportunities with JK-7 10:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

UPDATED ATTENDANCE POLICY

Temple Anshe Sholom Religious School strives to offer our students valuable and worthwhile opportunities for Jewish learning and Jewish identity development. If you desire for your children to value Judaism and remain active members of the Jewish community throughout their lives, we encourage parents to make Jewish education a priority. Promoting regular attendance at Religious School makes an important statement about the importance of Judaism and Jewish education and is vital to your child's growth and the progress of their class.

Time is precious and there is much to learn. While occasional absences due to illness or unforeseen circumstances are expected, we ask that parents inform the school in advance of planned absences so that arrangements can be made to keep the student up to date. Please notify the school at 905-528-0121 or dacellison@anshesholom.ca if your child is ill or otherwise unable to attend class. After an unexpected absence, the teacher will contact the parents to inquire about the student. After four (4) unexpected absences, the family will be asked to attend a conference with the Director of Religious Education to discuss arrangements for the student's positive continuation in the Jewish education program. We want our students to succeed and feel good about their Jewish educational experience. Every effort will be made to facilitate problem solving in order to increase the student's attendance.

SESSION TIMES: K-Grade 7; Saturday 9:15-12:15 & Wednesday 4:15-6:15

CALENDAR AT A GLANCE:

SEPTEMBER: 16, 23, 26, 30

OCTOBER: 7, 14, 17, 21, 24, 28, 31

NOVEMBER: 4, 7, 9, 11, 13, 18, 21, 25, 27

DECEMBER: 2, 5, 9, 12, 16

JANUARY: 6, 9, 13, 16, 20, 23, 27, 30

FEBRUARY: 3, 6, 10, 13, 17, 20, 24, 27

MARCH: 3, 6, 10, 24, 27, 31

APRIL: 7, 10, 14, 17, 21, 24, 28

MAY: 1, 5, 8, 12 May 15 LAST DAY of SCHOOL

Late Arrival/Early Dismissal

Students are expected to be on time for their classes. If it is known that they will need to be late on occasion, parents are requested to notify the school in advance. Parents intending to pick up their child(ren) before the end of class are required to send a signed note for the child to hand to the teacher at the beginning of class. At the requested dismissal time, parents must pick up their child(ren) in person, in the classroom.

In case of illness, parents are requested to inform the school office or the teacher by telephone or e-mail, or through the website.

Late Pick-Up Policy

Because your child's safety is very important to us there is a new pick-up policy. Parents may pick up their students at curbside in front of the Temple on Wednesdays from 6:10pm – 6:15pm. A teacher will be outside to supervise. If you are not able to pick up your children by 6:15 on Wednesday, please be advised that they will be escorted back into the Temple building to wait for you. Please notify the Temple office or the School Director if you have been delayed by an emergency.

SCHOOL POLICIES: BEHAVIOUR

In the spirit of Jewish tradition, which acknowledges that every person is created *b'tzelem elohim* (in God's image), all students, parents, and school staff are expected to treat each other with respect.

For students this includes:

- punctual attendance
- coming to class prepared
- positive participation in classroom activities
- courteous, kind and helpful behaviour
- use of appropriate language
- respect for personal, community and school property
- full cooperation with classroom rules
- bringing a note if leaving early and waiting in the school office at the appointed time to be picked up

For parents this includes:

- promoting regular, punctual attendance
- phoning if you know your child will be absent or late
- ensuring all books and required supplies are brought to class
- supporting school policies
- providing a note before school if your child(ren) will require early dismissal
- picking your child(ren) up on time after school
- conferring with the teacher to support your child(ren)'s learning

For school staff this includes:

- fair, courteous and consistent treatment of all students and parents
- clear communication of expectations
- welcoming parents as partners in education
- contacting parents regularly to review progress and share concerns
- giving plenty of notice re: special functions and events
- providing a safe, secure learning environment

In the case of a student behaving in a difficult or disruptive manner, the following procedure will be used:

1) The teacher will first attempt to resolve the difficulty through a private meeting with the student.

If this does not resolve the difficulty, then

2) The teacher will inform the School Director, who will meet with the student (parents may or may not be contacted at this time, depending on the circumstances).

If this does not resolve the difficulty, then

3) The teacher or School Director will contact parents to inform them of the difficulty and seek their assistance.

If this does not resolve the difficulty, then

4) The School Director will call a meeting with the student, the parents and the teacher.

If this does not resolve the difficulty, then

5) The Education Committee chairperson will be asked to mediate the situation until an agreed upon solution is found.

We consider it an obligation to provide a Jewish education for all children in our community, including those for whom special support is necessary. A trained teaching assistant will be provided when necessary for special needs students, in a cost-sharing arrangement with parents, in order that these students may participate to the greatest extent possible in our program. However any student whose behaviour consistently prevents other students from learning or puts other students at risk of harm may not be able to participate in our school.

SCHOOL POLICIES: FOOD

Kashrut: The school follows the general kashrut policies of the Temple. There is no shellfish or pork served, no mixing of dairy and meat products. During Passover, only Kosher-For-Passover foods will be served for snacks and no leavened food items may be brought into the Temple.

Snacks - nut free: Students who so desire may bring their own snacks to school. However, all food is to be consumed at a time when and place designated by the teacher. **Please – no nuts or nut products!** We have students with severe nut allergies, and your child's snack could endanger them.

STUDENT INCLUSIVITY

We are a congregational school, and it is important to us to include all our congregation's children in our program. If a student requires an educational assistant in order to be able to attend our classes, we will make it a priority to find a suitable person to do that job. Parents are asked to discuss their child's specific needs with the School Director prior to the start of the school year in order to facilitate our teachers' planning for a successful school year for all students.

"SNOW DAY" CANCELLATION INFORMATION

In the event of severe inclement weather, parents are asked to listen to radio station CHML (AM 900) on Saturday mornings between 7:00 and 9:00 a.m. or on Wednesday afternoons between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m. regarding school closure. The school's policy is to cancel school if the public schools in Hamilton announce cancellation. When hazardous weather occurs in the late afternoon and you are not sure, we ask you to call the school office before driving your child/children. Whenever possible we will attempt to contact parents by email or phone.

SUMMER CAMP AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Temple Anshe Sholom encourages families to consider sending their children to the Reform Movement's very own Camp George, which is located near Parry Sound. Acclaimed as the most transformative Jewish experience of childhood, camp offers students an exciting summer and a Reform Jewish experience that will last a lifetime. Camp applications should be sent by early fall to ensure a spot for your child.

For those families for whom cost may be a barrier, camp scholarships are available. Applications are available on the Temple website (click on Education, click on Religious School, then click on Forms, and you will find it!)