

# PROSPECTUS

SEPTEMBER 2018 - AUGUST 2019

JEWISH YEAR 5779



WEST LONDON SYNAGOGUE  
**Religion School**

# WLS Religion School



## Our Educational Philosophy

At West London Synagogue, we believe in education that is based on Progressive Jewish values of equality, mutual respect, concern for others and caring for the environment. Education that is sensitive, flexible, creative and dynamic, like the world in which we live. We constantly strive to adjust our curriculum and methods to the children of today, who are the leaders of tomorrow.

After introducing our new curriculum last year (5778 / 2017-2018), we have taken the time to talk to our teachers, the parents, and most importantly, our students, in order to learn what are the strengths of our programme and what can be improved. For this year we have added more special day trips, unique events, engaging projects and fun activities, to make sure our students receive the most relevant and meaningful Jewish education.

Our educational programme combines lessons with our wonderful team of teachers, lessons with WLS's Rabbis, and guest lecturers - who are experts in their field and represent Jewish leadership in art, science, and politics.

## **Learning How to Be, Not Learning About**

We want our students to learn how to be. Instead of studying 'about' Judaism, we want them to learn to live a modern Jewish life, to celebrate sacred time, to love their history and to think seriously about their relationships with their fellow students. We want them to reflect on who they want to be, not just what they want to be, and we believe that our educational programme should give them the tools to make these decisions. Our curriculum evolves with the students as they grow up, each year confronting them with harder questions and wider topics and concepts.

We aim to be the cutting-edge synagogue for Jewish education and Hebrew studies. We put a lot of emphasis on using modern, enjoyable, engaging and innovative teaching methods and always trying to stimulate discussions, creative thinking and dialogue between Jewish ethics and modern living.

## **Learning Through Exploring**

We believe that modern education should ‘break the walls’ of the classroom, offering the students a chance to explore and experience as much as possible. This is why each class has several day trips during the year, which includes visits to Parliament, other synagogues, mosques and churches, museums and galleries.

We use technology to enrich our programme and to allow our students to learn about Jewish life around the world, for example by having joint Skype lessons with Reform Jewish children from the Leo Baeck Education Centre in Haifa, Israel. We encourage our teachers to use media, technology, games and art in order to ‘bring our programme to life’ in the most exciting way.

## **The Home**

The seeds that are being planted in our school are growing and evolving at home. We encourage the parents and families to be involved in the students’ experience at our school. For that reason, we have created the Parents Learning Project. A one-of-a-kind parents’ course during Sunday mornings several times a year, with a curriculum that touches some of the main topics the students are learning during their time with us. The course will also include parenthood lessons with topics like relationships, internet safety and children’s mental health.

This year we will introduce lessons for parents on specific classes, focusing on topics that are relevant to the specific age group and the parents of each class.

## **G’sharim – Building Bridges, Connecting Our Community**

One of our main focus points is to build and strengthen the connections and relationships between different parts of our community. Each class will have at least one project during the year that will be a collaboration between two classes of different ages or a project that will involve different parts of our community. These half-term-long projects will end with the students taking part in a special community event or in an Erev Shabbat / Shabbat Morning Service.

Our goal is to create strong relationships between the students and their classmates, between students from different classes and between the students’ families. We want to establish more interactions and better connections between Religion School families and the wider community.

### G'sharim Projects for 5779 (2018-2019):

- ▶ **Aleph and Bet: Family Erev Shabbat**- families will share a special Shabbat dinner led by Rabbi Neil. Each of the classes will learn about different aspects of Shabbat during the half term before their joint dinner.
- ▶ **Bet and WLS Contact the Elderly Tea Party** - Bet students and their families will share a very special lunch with the older members of WLS in a collaboration with Contact the Elderly and WLS's Social Care Team.
- ▶ **Gimmel and BM1: Kabbalat Siddur Service** - BM1 students will share lessons on the Siddur with Gimmel students and both classes will join a Shabbat Morning Service for 'Kabbalat Siddur Service'. During the Shabbat Service each child will receive a personal Siddur, a Kol Rinah for Gimmel and a regular Siddur for BM1 for the beginning of their BM programme. Each Siddur will have a personal dedication from the parents to their child.
- ▶ **Dalet and Hey: Israel Project Exhibition** - the students will create an exhibition on Israel, and each class will be focusing on different aspect as culture, cities, other religions land and nature. The exhibition will be part of the Israel Independence Day Service at WLS.
- ▶ **Dalet, Hey and Vav: Social Action** - students of all three classes will have a full half-term to learn about Social Action through the eyes of Reform Judaism. Each class will be focusing on learning and researching a different topic (Dalet - The Environment, Hey - Poverty and Homelessness, Vav - Refugees and Asylum Seekers). The students will be challenged to come up with ideas of how to make a change in these issues. At the end of the term, each class will create its covenant and a letter of questions and requests for their local MPs. This will be presented in front of the parents in a forum that will include government representatives to answer their questions.
- ▶ **Dalet, Hey and Vav: 'The Year We Had'** - an end of the year symposium, where the classes will share and teach each other what they have learnt this year, focusing on what was the most interesting, fun and meaningful for them. This 'Learning Through Teaching' will be a great opportunity for students to get to know students from other classes and share their knowledge.
- ▶ **Vav: The Czech Memorial Scrolls Project** - students will have a half-term-long project about the Czech Memorial Scrolls and will take part in our International Holocaust Memorial Day Service, sharing with the community what they have learnt during this term.
- ▶ **BM2 and WLS Contact the Elderly Tea Party** – similar to Kitah Bet, BM2 students and their families will share this very special lunch with the older members of WLS in a collaboration with Contact the Elderly and WLS's Social Care Team. In addition, the BM2 students will interview the members about their experiences at WLS throughout the years (for a class project).

## Our Core Values

These three core values are at the heart of every WLS activity and a part of all classes' curriculum:

- ▶ **Jewish Ethics and Hebrew**
- ▶ **Social Action**
- ▶ **Interfaith**

Social Action is a significant part of each of the classes' curriculum and is a main focus point for our BM Programme through the BM Social Action Project.

All of our Social Action projects will be in collaboration with WLS's Head of Social Action, Nic Schlagman.

## Our Teachers

Each class has a teacher and an assistant. Our teachers have different qualifications in different areas of expertise. We have qualified teachers, qualified Jewish studies teachers (Leo Baeck College certificate/degree) and teachers with an M.A in Arts, Theatre, Music, History or other areas of expertise. We believe that a good teacher is one of the most important parts of a child's education and we take much pride in our team of teachers.

Our assistant teachers (16+) are students who have completed our Hadracha course (teaching/leadership course) supported by Leo Baeck College.

All our teachers, assistant teachers and admin team have Child Safeguarding training and DBS Certificates.

## Jewish Festivals

We have special activities for our students and families for all the Jewish Festivals. These include Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur Family Services, Sukkot (Family Sukkah decoration), Chanukah and Purim parties, Tu-B'Shvat celebration, Pesach Seder, Shavuot Limmud celebration, and much more.

The different festival activities are in collaboration with Rabbi David Mitchell who is in charge of the Festivals Planning Group, aiming to further strengthen the bonds between RS families and the rest of the community.

## Yom Tarbut - Theme Days and Special Kehillah

During the year we will have six Theme Days on changing topics. During these days all classes will be studying the same topic and will be sharing a special and longer than usual Kehillah Service at the beginning (and sometimes also at the end) of the day. The parents are invited to join the special Kehillah Service and will be informed in advance. The Theme Day topics will change from year to year.

### 5779 Yom Tarbut topics:

- ▶ The Jewish New Year: Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur
- ▶ Mitzvah Day: a special Mitzvah Day school project
- ▶ Ivrit (Hebrew)
- ▶ Pesach: Freedom and Leadership
- ▶ Israel
- ▶ Shavuot Limmud Celebration: celebrating Jewish Education & students' achievements

The first Yom Tarbut will also be the first day of the year and will include a short family gathering in the classrooms (with the students and the class teacher) after the special Kehillah. Parents are invited to join us at our special Kehillah on each Yom Tarbut, in addition to three more **Special Kehillah** for **Simchat Torah, Chanukah and Purim**.

## Hebrew

We believe that Hebrew is a key ingredient of our Jewish heritage and is a part of what connects us with Jews from different eras and different parts of the world.

Last year we introduced and implemented a new Hebrew teaching method (based on the Rosenwasser Method) that will help us raise the standard of Hebrew among our students. The method uses 'Memory Tags' for letters and vowels, making it easier to learn Hebrew from scratch.

We believe that when the students enjoy their time here they are more open to learn. This is why alongside this method and a specific Hebrew book for each class, the lessons are planned around creative games that enhance the class's Hebrew level.

In order to make sure no one is left behind, we have a team of Hebrew Tutors who will create a personal, time limited plan for new students or students that are struggling with Hebrew. The tutors will be using the same teaching method but in personal one-to-one lessons. This will give the students the skills they need to re-join their class's Hebrew lesson.

The Hebrew books will be provided to the students at the beginning of the year and are kept with us during the week. The books are then given to the students every Sunday before the lesson.

## **Tzedakah - Charity**

Each class has a Tzedakah box and the students are encouraged to donate during the year. At the end of the year the money they have collected will be donated to a charity of their choice. The charity is chosen solely by our students, with guidance from WLS's Rabbis, Teachers and Social Action Team.

## **Music and Singing**

Every Sunday, classes Gan-Vav will be joining our Community Musician, Maya Levy, for a 20-minute music lesson in which they will be learning Hebrew songs, prayers and tunes. We also have our Children's Choir led by Maya, every Sunday (12:30-13:00). Students of all classes (including BM1 & BM2) are welcome to join.

## **Security**

The security and safety of our students is our first priority. As in previous years, and on top of our professional security guards, all parents will be allocated a security duty (maximum once a term) which will be mandatory. A parent on security duty will be:

- ▶ Standing at the door in the beginning and end of school days
- ▶ Looking around the premises during the day

We believe it is vital for parents and members of the synagogue to take part in this crucial task. This year we will hold a security training for parents on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018. The training will be held by a representative of CST (The Community Security Trust - a British charity established in order to ensure the safety and security of the Jewish community in the UK), WLS's Head of Security, Mike Cutter, and WLS's Health and Safety Manager, David Greenbury.

## General Information

There are 10-24 students in each class from Gan - BM2. BM1 and BM2 classes are our Bar/Bat Mitzvah years and are a part of our BM Programme.

We open every Sunday at 10:00 with Kehillah (a joint gathering) for Aleph-Vav and a separate Kehillah for BM1 - BM2. On Tarbut Days, a special Kehillah will be held for all classes together.

### Classes:

Class (Kitah)	UK School	USA Grade	Age	Date of Birth
Gan	Reception	Preschool	4-5	1 Sep 2013 - 31 Aug 2014
Aleph	Year 1	Kindergarten	5-6	1 Sep 2012 - 31 Aug 2013
Bet	Year 2	1 <sup>st</sup>	6-7	1 Sep 2011 - 31 Aug 2012
Gimmel	Year 3	2 <sup>nd</sup>	7-8	1 Sep 2010 - 31 Aug 2011
Dalet	Year 4	3 <sup>rd</sup>	8-9	1 Sep 2009 - 31 Aug 2010
Hey	Year 5	4 <sup>th</sup>	9-10	1 Sep 2008 - 31 Aug 2009
Vav	Year 6	5 <sup>th</sup>	10-11	1 Sep 2007 - 31 Aug 2008
BM1	Year 7	6 <sup>th</sup>	11-12	1 Sep 2006 - 31 Aug 2007
BM2	Year 8	7 <sup>th</sup>	12-13	1 Sep 2005 - 31 Aug 2006
Tripod	Years 9-11	8 <sup>th</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup>	13-16	From 31 Aug 2005
Madrichim (Assistant Teachers)	Years 12-13	11 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>	16-18	

### Break Time and Café Boo

Break is a good time for making friends and the students can enjoy a variety of fun activities such as football, table tennis, and various giant games. We also offer a café with healthy snacks and drinks for the children to buy, or they are very welcome to bring their own food. **(Please note that no meat, shellfish or nut products may be brought on to the premises).**

### First and Last Day of School

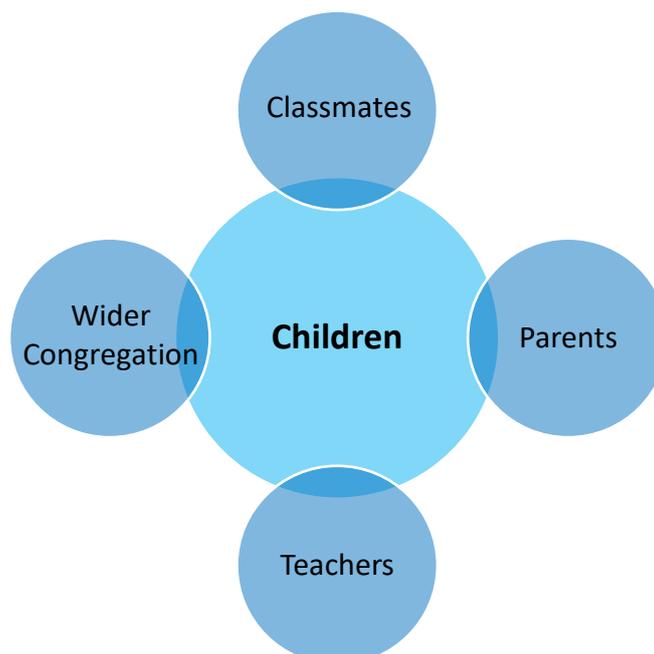
We start the year with an Introduction Day for students and families. During this day the students will have a chance to meet their classmates after the long summer break and their new teacher. It will also be an opportunity for the parents to get to know their child's teacher and to meet other parents in a short family gathering of each class. The last day of school will be a Celebration Day, and each student will receive a certificate of completion.

## Our Educational Thinking

Learning to be...



Focusing on Relationships in Our Synagogue



## Our Educational Programme

### **Gan - Reception Class**

The Gan programme has been designed around creative art, singing, music, drama and other creative and engaging experiences. It includes a gentle introduction to the Jewish Festivals, Bible Stories, Shabbat and key Hebrew words. This relaxed year of exploration is their first step in the Jewish Learning experience and we aspire to make it as interesting and enjoyable as possible so that they are excited to start Kitah Aleph the following September.

### **Our Goal**

Our main goal is to ensure the children feel welcome and enjoy their time here, making the synagogue a place that they want to come to. We focus on the personal growth of each child as well as the class as a whole. Each Sunday we have a variety of activities that target both the individual growth of the child and the bonds within the group, strengthening relationships and creating friendships.

### **Jewish Studies**

Sessions are designed to offer a gentle introduction to the rituals, stories, sounds, smells and tastes of the Jewish year. One of the key focus points is bible stories and important biblical characters such as Noah, Miriam and more, that the children are learning through puppets, acting, music and art. Simple prayers and basic Hebrew words are introduced through singing the blessings and songs with our dedicated Community Musician, Maya Levy. There is also a weekly Shabbat party at the end of the morning.

### **Hebrew**

Hebrew is taught using various methods such as painting, printing, jigsaws and play-dough. The children are introduced to a new letter every week and encouraged to explore how it looks and feels using a variety of hands-on media and materials.

### **The Environment**

Kitah Gan are taught in our beautiful Children's Synagogue, which will be familiar to those who have attended our ShabbaTots Services. The ratio of staff to children is higher so they can receive plenty of attention and support as they play and learn. They also spend some time each week singing together with Kitah Aleph students, led by Maya, our Community Musician.

## Kitah Aleph - Curriculum at a Glance:

Term	Educational Objective	Theme	Lesson Subject	Main Values or Goals
1.1	Learning to think about who I am	Me, my family and Religion School	Yom Tarbut: The Jewish New Year - Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur	
			Simchat Torah	'Invitation to Learn'
			Mi Ani - who am I	Getting to know each other
			My family	My family free
1.2	My Jewish experience of sacred time	Shabbat	Shabbat - the story of creation	Learning about Shabbat
			Kiddush - challah, candles & wine	The traditions of Shabbat
			Yom Tarbut: Mitzvah Day	
			Shabbat with my family	Creating invitations for Shabbat
			Chanukah	The story of the oil lamp
2.1	Being part of the Jewish people	The Jewish Year	Shanah with Shani	Sukkot
			Shanah with Shani	Tu Bish'vat
			Shanah with Shani	Purim
			Shanah with Shani	Shavuot
			Yom Tarbut: Ivrit	
2.2	Being a part of my community	West London Synagogue: Community and History	The story of the WLS dome	Generosity and helping others
			Creating a class mobile	Generosity and helping others
			Purim: making Mishloach Manot	Caring for others
			Pesach	Mah Nishtanah
			Yom Tarbut: Pesach - Freedom and Leadership	
3.1	My connection to the land of Israel	Tal the Tour Guide	Getting to know Israel	Israel - The Jewish State
			Yom Tarbut: Israel	
			Places in Israel	What is the Kotel
			Writing prayers in the wall	The holiness of Jerusalem
3.2	Being a part of my community	West London Synagogue: Community and History	Yom Tarbut: Shavuot's Limmud Celebration	
			Making a Tzedakah box	Tzedakah at home
			Making a Tzedakah box	Tzedakah at home
			End of year celebration and certificates	

**Hebrew Book:** Let's Discover the Alef Bet

**G'sharim Project:** Family Shabbat Dinner

## Kitah Bet - Curriculum at a Glance:

Term	Educational Objective	Theme	Lesson Subject	Main Values or Goals
1.1	Learning to think about who I am	Biblical Characters: Josef, Jacob and Esau	Yom Tarbut: The Jewish New Year - Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur	
			Jacob wrestling with the angel	Why are we Israel
			Jacob and Esau	Jealousy and its outcome
			Josef and his brothers	Forgiveness
1.2	My Jewish experience of sacred time	My time off - me and my family	Havdalah - starting the week	Why and how
			Havdalah - starting the week	Spices, candle, wine
			Yom Tarbut: Mitzvah Day	
			Shabbat	Why and how
			Chanukah from candle to candle	What can I learn from Chanukah
2.1	Being a part of my community	Celebrating our community	My synagogue: stories & history	Learning about my community
			What is a community	The importance of community
			Preparing songs for the Tea Party with Contact the Elderly	
			Bet and Contact the Elderly Tea Party	
			Yom Tarbut: Ivrit	
2.2	Being part of the Jewish people	Pesach: celebrating freedom	The story of Pesach	Learning about Pesach
			Moses – taking responsibility	Responsibility and leadership
			Ester – the story of Purim	Taking responsibility
			The Seder Night	Seder plate and songs
			Yom Tarbut: Pesach – Freedom and Leadership	
3.1	My connection to the Land of Israel	Getting to know the State of Israel	Israel: Sacred and Secular cities	Israel: Past and present
			Yom Tarbut: Israel	
			Languages and flavours of Israel	Diversity in Israel
			Art of all Peoples in Israel	Art in Israel
3.2	My responsibilities	Friendship is a Jewish Value	Yom Tarbut: Shavuot's Limmud Celebration	
			David/Jonathan, Ruth/Naomi	Being a friend
			A gift to a friend	Making a gift to a classmate
			End of year celebration and certificates	

**Hebrew Book:** Derech Binah: The Hebrew Primer

**G'sharim Projects:** Family Shabbat Dinner | Contact the Elderly Tea Party

## Kitah Gimmel - Curriculum at a Glance:

Term	Educational Objective	Theme	Lesson Subject	Main Values or Goals
1.1	Learning to think about who I am	The Torah Scrolls	Yom Tarbut: The Jewish New Year – Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur	
			What is the Torah	The story of the Jewish people
			Meeting a Sofer	How the scrolls are made
			Making a Torah Scroll	Creativity
1.2	My Jewish experience of sacred time	Jewish Rituals and Ritual Objects	Ritual Objects: Tallit & Kippah	What and why Tallit & Kippah
			Families: Jewish traditions	Modern, diverse families
			Yom Tarbut: Mitzvah Day	
			Mezuzah & Siddur Kol Rinah	What and why
			Chanukah at home	The values of Chanukah
2.1	Being a part of my community	The Synagogue	My synagogue and my community	Reform Judaism: ask the Rabbi
			People in my community	Getting to know my community
			Meeting members of WLS	Respecting the elderly
			WLS: a building or a community?	Why do we need a synagogue?
			Yom Tarbut: Ivrit	
2.2	Being part of the Jewish people	Jewish lifecycle events - discovering my family	Intro to class album project	Lifecycle events in Judaism
			Baby naming, b'rit & BM	Jewish events - early years
			Wedding, death and mourning	Jewish events - later in life
			Presenting album to parents	Lifecycle - conclusion
			Yom Tarbut: Pesach – Freedom and Leadership	
3.1	My connection to the land of Israel	WLS and the connection to Israel	WLS and Israel	WLS's connection to Israel
			Yom Tarbut: Israel	
			E-postcards to Israel	Getting to know children in Israel
			E-postcards from Israel	Getting to know children in Israel
3.2	My responsibilities	Abraham, Sarah and the three guests	Yom Tarbut: Shavuot's Limmud Celebration	
			Abraham, Sarah and the guests	Hospitality and caring for other
			Abraham, Sarah and the guests	Rehearsals / preparations
			End of year celebration and certificates	

**Hebrew Book:** Alef Bet Quest

**G'sharim Projects:** Kabbalat Siddur Service

## Kitah Dalet - Curriculum at a Glance:

Term	Educational Objective	Theme	Lesson Subject	Main Values or Goals
1.1	My Jewish experience of sacred time	The Jewish Year through seasons and nature	Yom Tarbut: The Jewish New Year - Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur	
			Simchat Torah, seasons & nature	The storyline of the Jewish Year
			The Jewish Year through my eyes	Preparing film for parents
			The Jewish Year Show	Filming the show for parents
1.2	My responsibilities	Tikkun Olam - Social Action	Why do we care?	Tikkun Olam
			Environment and Animal Rights	The Jewish perspective
			Yom Tarbut: Mitzvah Day	
			What do I want to change?	Taking a stand
			Social Action Forum	Making a difference
2.1	Being part of the Jewish people	Jewish Life through time and place and Jewish life today	Moses Montefiore	Jewish history and culture
			Moses Montefiore	Jewish cultural background
			Visit to Bevis Marks Synagogue	Jewish history in London
			Moses Montefiore and Jerusalem	Jewish historical background
			Yom Tarbut: Ivrit	
2.2	My connection to the Land of Israel	Israel - Land and State	Israel - cities and culture	Introduction to the project
			Israel - cities and culture	Learning about Israel
			Israel - cities and culture	Researching about Israel
			Israel - cities and culture	Research and preparations
			Yom Tarbut: Pesach - Freedom and Leadership	
3.1	Being a part of my community	Our choices and responsibilities - Reform Judaism	Making choices as Reform Jews	B'rit: expression of responsibility
			Yom Tarbut: Israel	
			Kashrut	Kashrut and Reform Judaism
			Shabbat as Reform Jews	Making a choice as Reform Jews
3.2	Learning to think about who I am	The Jewish learning experience	Yom Tarbut: Shavuot's Limmud Celebration	
			What did I learn this year?	Learning through teaching
			Dalet, Hey, Vav Symposium	Learning through teaching
			End of year celebration and certificates	

**Hebrew Book:** Time to Read Hebrew Vol 1

**G'sharim Projects:** Israel Exhibition | Social Action Forum | The Year We Had Symposium

## Kitah Hey - Curriculum at a Glance:

Term	Educational Objective	Theme	Lesson Subject	Main Values or Goals
1.1	My Jewish experience of sacred time	Miriam, Joshua and Moses stories - Jewish guidelines for growing up	Yom Tarbut: The Jewish New Year - Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur	
			Simchat Torah - Moses's story	Humility, courage and patience
			Miriam and Joshua's stories	Leadership
			Growing up	Choosing to take responsibilities
1.2	My responsibilities	Tikkun Olam - Social Action	Why do we care?	Tikkun Olam
			Poverty and homelessness	The Jewish perspective
			Yom Tarbut: Mitzvah Day	
			What do I want to change?	Taking a stand
			Social Action Forum	Making a difference
2.1	Being part of the Jewish people	Jewish contribution to art and science	Albert Einstein	Jewish people in science
			Visit to Ben Uri Art Gallery	Jewish people in art
			Session with a Jewish poet	Creative writing: class poem
			Rachel the Poet	Jewish poetry
			Yom Tarbut: Ivrit	
2.2	My connection to the Land of Israel	Israel - Land and State	Israel - land and nature	Introduction to the project
			Israel - land and nature	Learning about Israel
			Israel - land and nature	Researching about Israel
			Israel - land and nature	Research and preparations
			Yom Tarbut: Pesach - Freedom and Leadership	
3.1	Being a part of my community	Mitzvot between people and between me and the world	Making choices as Reform Jews	B'rit: expression of responsibility
			Yom Tarbut: Israel	
			Gossiping about other people	Lashon Hara
			Gemilut Chasadim	Helping others
3.2	Learning to think about who I am	The Jewish learning experience	Yom Tarbut: Shavuot's Limmud Celebration	
			What did I learn this year?	Learning through teaching
			Dalet, Hey, Vav Symposium	Learning through teaching
			End of year celebration and certificates	

**Hebrew Book:** Time to Read Hebrew Vol 2

**G'sharim Projects:** Israel Exhibition | Social Action Forum | The Year We Had Symposium

## Kitah Vav - Curriculum at a Glance:

Term	Educational Objective	Theme	Lesson Subject	Main Values or Goals
1.1	My Jewish experience of sacred time	Shabbat - what can it mean to me	Yom Tarbut: The Jewish New Year - Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur	
			The sources of Shabbat	Why Shabbat?
			Shabbat: unplugging yourself	Shabbat rituals - how to
			Shabbat can save our planet?	Shabbat debate - more or less?
1.2	My responsibilities	Tikkun Olam - Social Action	Why do we care?	Tikkun Olam
			Refugees and asylum seekers	The Jewish perspective
			Yom Tarbut: Mitzvah Day	
			What do I want to change?	Taking a stand
			Social Action Forum	Making a difference
2.1	Being part of the Jewish people	The Czech Memorial Scrolls Project	Trip to Czech Scrolls Museum	Jewish life before the Shoah
			Preparing for HMD service	Rabbi's session
			Creating class scrolls as a memory	Planning and preparations
			Creating class scrolls as a memory	Creating and presenting
			Yom Tarbut: Ivrit	
2.2	Being a part of my community	Ethical dilemmas - privacy, money, charity and life	Ethics - are they like mitzvot?	Reform view on Jewish ethics
			My privacy - is it an ethical issue	Privacy
			Bullying	How do we treat others?
			Saving a life	Life from Jewish perspective
			Yom Tarbut: Pesach - Freedom and Leadership	
3.1	My connection to the Land of Israel	Reform Zionism	Important Reform Rabbis	History of Reform Zionism
			Yom Tarbut: Israel	
			Reform Zionism: postcards to...	Talking to young Jews From Israel
			Reform Zionism: Postcards from...	Talking to young Jews From Israel
3.2	Learning to think about who I am	The Jewish learning experience	Yom Tarbut: Shavuot's Limmud Celebration	
			What did I learn this year?	Learning through teaching
			Dalet, Hey, Vav Symposium	Learning through teaching
			End of year celebration and certificates	

**Hebrew Book:** Let's Talk! Modern Hebrew for Teens

**G'sharim Projects:** The Czech Scrolls | Social Action Forum | The Year We Had Symposium

# BM Programme

## Our Bar/Bat Mitzvah Programme

At WLS, our Religion School is not just about preparing our students for their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. It's about the bigger and more important experience of being a part of a community, of being a part of a group with shared values and culture, and about having Jewish friends. When a child is having his/her BM, we would like them to be surrounded by friends who share this experience, this process, with them. This is why, in addition to Jewish Studies and Hebrew, we are focusing on the social aspect, and working throughout the year to strengthen their friendships and build their identity as a group.

### **Individual Social Action Project**

As part of our Bar/Bat Mitzvah Programme we aim to make our students reflect on their lives, appreciate what they have, and to accept their adulthood by taking on a personal Social Action project.

We believe that being a Jewish adult is being a caring, responsible and socially aware human being. During the BM Programme the students are volunteering, raising money and awareness for a charity of their choice (including the many Social Action projects we run here at WLS).

During the first year of the programme, the students are encouraged to research and find a cause they can relate to and feel passionate about. With the help of the Rabbis, their teachers, and WLS Head of Social Action, Nic Schlagman, they decide on what and how they are going to support their chosen charity. The project can be finished before, during or after the actual BM date, and we encourage the students to continue volunteering at the different projects at WLS as part of our post BM, Teen Programme - Tripod.

### **Religion School and Service Attendance**

Attending the Synagogue enough times before a student becomes Bar/Bat Mitzvah is crucial. It helps them become familiar with the structure and rituals of the service and gives them confidence to be able to lead the prayers and take part in the service.

In addition to regularly attending Religion School, we require students to attend at least 18 services over the course of the programme, and before their own Bat/Bar Mitzvah (at least 9 of which must be Shabbat Mornings).

All BM students will receive a service attendance booklet in which they put stickers they collect from the wardens when attending a service.

## **BM Family Supper & Study**

An evening for all the families of BM students who will celebrate their Bar/Bat Mitzvah within one academic year. Each session will take place on a Friday night following the Service. Sessions will follow a Bring & Share supper where BM families come together to socialise, to get to know each other and we hope, will form friendships and offer support to each other.

In the year leading up to a student's Bar/Bat Mitzvah, they will take part in three BM Family Supper & Study sessions. The purpose of the BM Family Supper & Study is to think together and discuss anything from serious religious issues to lighter matters such as the Kiddush or even photography on the day of the BM.

Each session will be on a different topic such as: Why 13? Progressive Jewish Ethics, Jewish Leadership, Social Action, growing up, and other changing topics. The sessions are delivered by Rabbi Neil Janes (who is the Rabbinic Lead for Education) and the Head of Education, Gil Reshef.

At the end of the evening, the students and families with the closest BM date will have an extra 15-minute session, going through the choreography of a BM service and what happens on the day itself.

Families are expected to attend all three sessions in the year leading to the student's BM.

## **The New Generation World Game**

A seven week long innovative game, part of the BM1 curriculum, as an introduction to the BM Project.

This unique experience will confront the students with dilemmas, conflicts and problems we are experiencing in our world today. In this giant board strategy game, students in different roles, representing different fictitious countries, the UN and the World Bank, will be required to solve 10 real-world crises. The crises include: territory disputes, refugees, water shortage, endangered species, disease, war, rebellion, poverty, natural disasters and global warming.

The negotiations, dilemmas and the need for long-term thinking and group collaboration, will not only enhance their leadership skills and friendships, but also their awareness to world problems and politics.

By encouraging creative thinking and following the guidelines of Progressive Judaism, we hope the students will embrace their role as the leaders of tomorrow. This game will lead to the 'Social Action BM Project' term which will focus on Tikkun Olam (Repairing the World).

## Residentials

The residentials are an important part of our BM Programme and combine learning in a fun and unique atmosphere outside the walls of the classroom, and social activities to build friendships between the students, and form a group identity.

During the two-year Programme, the students will have two residentials, one for each year:

- BM1 residential focuses on their BM Social Action Project Social awareness and Jewish Leadership.
- BM2 residential focuses on 'growing up' and 'choosing Jewish life as an adult'. This will also include an introduction to our post BM programme.

The residentials are a part of the programme and all students are expected to participate.

## Closer to the BM Date

### Supporting Rabbi

Around ten months before their BM, the students will be allocated a Supporting Rabbi and will be given their Torah Portion.

The Rabbis will be meeting with each student and family around six months, three months and three weeks before the BM date, to make sure they have all the support they need, and to answer any question they might have about the portion, the day itself or even hard questions about God and Judaism in our day to day life.

### MP3

An MP3 recording of the Torah portion will be given to the student or the tutor within a week of requesting it. This is very helpful aid for the students practicing at home, giving them support with both the correct pronunciation and with the correct notes if they are learning to chant the portion, which we do encourage.

### BM Tutors

WLS has a list of recommended tutors who were approved by our Rabbis and know our service rituals and will help the student learn his/her BM Torah portion. WLS provides rooms at the synagogue to meet for these sessions if needed, these can be used on Sundays after/before Religion School or during the week. From past experience, we've learnt that students need approximately 20 lessons to be ready for their Bar/Bat Mitzvah, depending on their Hebrew level and on how much time they spend practicing on their own.

## BM Programme Year 1 (Kitah BM1) - Curriculum at a Glance:

Term	Educational Objective	Theme	Lesson Subject	Main Values or Goals		
1.1	Becoming a BM	Stories of Moses	Yom Tarbut: The Jewish New Year - Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur			
			BM class responsibilities	Our commitments as a class		
			Moses and the burning bush	Leadership and commitments		
			Induction to the BM Programme	Students and parents		
1.2	Becoming a BM	Kippah, Tallit, Siddur and God	Tallit and Tzitzit	Rabbi's session - Jewish ritual		
			Does God command me?	Rabbi's session - Who is my God		
			Yom Tarbut: Mitzvah Day			
			Siddur, Tefilin & Kippah Debate	Rituals in a modern world		
			Chanukah: rituals and traditions	Being Jewish in a multicultural world		
2.1	The world of today - the leaders of tomorrow	The New Generation World Game - becoming the leaders of tomorrow	Introduction to the game	Leadership and Progressive Judaism perspective on modern world crises		
			Group planning and Game day 1			
			Game day 2			
			Game day 3			
Yom Tarbut: Ivrit						
2.2					Game day 4	War and peace, borders and peoples
					Game day 5	
					Game day 6	
	BM1 Residential including last game day + conclusion and outcomes					
Yom Tarbut: Pesach - Freedom and Leadership						
3.1	Working towards a better world	Pay it forward	Tzedakah and helping others	Charity begins at home		
			Yom Tarbut: Israel			
			Researching ideas for BM Project	BM mitzvah project fair		
			Presenting project ideas to class	Our impact as a class		
3.2	Working towards a better world	Reform Judaism - current affairs	Yom Tarbut: Shavuot's Limmud Celebration			
			Reform Judaism and history of WLS	Reform Judaism – Rabbi sessions		
			Torah from Sini - God's words?	Jewish theology – Rabbi sessions		
			End of year celebration and certificates			

**Hebrew Book:** Shalom Ivrit 1 + Prayer Companion

**G'sharim Project:** Kabbalat Siddur Service

## BM Programme Year 2 (Kitah BM2) - Curriculum at a Glance:

Term	Educational Objective	Theme	Lesson Subject	Main Values or Goals
1.1	Thinking about who I am and who I want to be	Growing up and being 13 - Jewish view of adulthood	Yom Tarbut: The Jewish New Year - Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur	
			Yehuda Ben Teima vs Shakespeare	Jewish views of adulthood
			Yehuda Ben Teima vs Shakespeare	Jewish views of adulthood
			Why 13?	Understanding my choices
1.2	Thinking about who I am and who I want to be	Growing up dilemmas and chasing my dreams	Gender and equality	Reform Judaism point of view
			Love and diversity of relationships	Reform Judaism point of view
			Yom Tarbut: Mitzvah Day	
			Friendships and peer pressure	Standing for what I believe in
			Chasing my dreams	Becoming what/who I want to be
2.1	Changing - me and the world	The world stands on three things: Torah, Avodah and Gemilut Chasadim	What is a mitzvah?	WLS core values - Rabbi's Session
			Moses time-travels to Rabbi Akiva	Torah - Rabbi's session
			Gemilut Chasadim: clothing the naked	Human relationships beyond laws
			Gemilut Chasadim: burying the dead	Human relationships beyond laws
			Yom Tarbut: Ivrit	
			Gemilut Chasadim: Chesed Shel Emet	Tour at Balls Pond Road Cemetery
			Avodah: Who are we serving and why?	Questions about God - Rabbi's session
			Avodah: the mysteries of the service	Structure of a service - Rabbi's session
			Tour: From Bevis Marks to Fen Court Abolition of slavery sculpture	Moses Montefiore and Rothschilds. Slavery today and our story
			Yom Tarbut: Pesach - Freedom and Leadership	
3.1	The future and the world I want to live in	The world endures through three things: Justice, Truth and Peace	Jewish views of Human Rights	Justice as a universal idea for all
			Yom Tarbut: Israel	
			BM2 and Contact the Elderly Tea Party	
			BM2 Residential: being Jewish after my BM - what's next?	
			Yom Tarbut: Shavuot's Limmud Celebration	
3.2			Peace: things are never easy	Peace: a Jewish value
			Tripod induction morning	Preparing for next year
			End of year celebration and certificates	

**Hebrew book:** Let's Talk Now! More Modern Hebrew for Teens

**G'sharim Project:** Contact the Elderly Tea Party

# Teen Programme



## After BM2

At WLS we believe that education should be modern, flexible, creative and dynamic, especially when it comes to teenagers. We know that in order to reach our students after they have had their Bar/Bat Mitzvah we have to constantly update our curriculum and methods and to offer them the most interesting Jewish educational programmes while being relevant to their lives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Our goal is to make Tripod a leading Jewish educational programme, based on the needs and characteristics of our youth and our community.

## Combining our Tripod programme with GCSE in Religious Studies

Students who take part in our new teen programme will have a chance of taking a GCSE in Religious Studies, led by Rabbi Sybil Sheridan.

The program includes three main parts:

- ▶ **Jewish Studies** (history, Judaism & the Jewish people, tradition, Israel etc.)
- ▶ **Interfaith** (25% Islam in collaboration with Wembley Madrasah)
- ▶ **Social Action** (in collaboration with WLS's Head of Social Action Nic Schlagman)

The programme also includes a Hadracha (leadership) course and a certificate from Leo Baeck College. After the end of the course the students can start working at WLS as Assistant Teachers and receive a reference letter for their university applications.

We put a lot of emphasis on the social part of the programme and we want to make sure that this programme is enjoyable and significant to our students.

## International Trips

One of the highlights of our course are the international trips. Each course year includes an international trip that summarises a different part of the programme, starting with a unique **Amsterdam trip** in the first half of the first year (relates to the Jewish Studies part of the course). The Amsterdam trip includes a visit to Anne Frank House, the Resistance Museum, the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue and a Friday night service at the Amsterdam Liberal Synagogue. The trip will give the students an insight into the lives of Dutch Jews in Amsterdam's most splendid heyday as well as see the effect of Nazi occupation. There will be challenging discussions, a film and lots of fun things too like seeing the Nemo exhibition, eating pancakes and chips, and much more!

This year we will introduce two new trips: a trip to **Prague** during Tripod Year 2, and a concluding Interfaith trip to **Spain**, to explore and learn about the golden era of both Jewish and Muslim life in Europe (joint trip for Tripod 1+2).

## Why Tripod?

The number one focus for us is the social experience for the young people and therefore there will be special activities and outings during the year that will create friendships and bonds which we hope will last for many years. In addition to having knowledge of one's own faith, we know that the two biggest factors in a strong Jewish identity are the home and friendships.

In the first year, 50% of this learning is about Islam and 50% Judaism, with the following year wholly focussed on Judaism. The GCSE provides an excellent framework for learning and it should be possible for the students to sit the exam if they choose to. However, if they do not want to sit for the GCSE exam, we believe that they will get an incredible amount out of the learning experience.

A couple of really unique aspects of our course are that the students will be taught by a range of guest teachers, including the teacher of the GCSE in Islam at the Wembley Madrasah. Throughout the course of the programme the Students and their families will also have a range of Interfaith activities. These activities fall under our 'Peace by Piece' programme - a unique initiative founded to provide interfaith community opportunities to young people.

The first two years of the programme will prepare the students well for the third year of Tripod which includes the Hadracha Course (leadership and teaching course) and a certificate from the Leo Baeck College. After the students have completed the Hadracha Course they will be able to be paid Assistant Teachers in our school.

# Parents Learning Project



## Sunday Sessions for Parents

Last year we introduced, for the first time, the Parents Learning Project- sessions for parents during Sunday mornings on different topics such as: Shabbat, parenthood & Net Safety, or Ask the Rabbi - for the really hard questions you have always wanted to ask.

After the success of the first year we would like to invite all parents for another year of the Parents Learning Project. We invite you to engage with your own learning, skill you up for questions your children may be asking at home and also emphasise the importance of implementing at home what your children are learning at Religion School.

This year we will also introduce lessons for parents of specific classes, focusing on topics that are relevant to the specific age group and the parents of each class.

### Our Parents Learning Project includes these four main themes:

- ▶ **Judaism 101** - How to, Ask the Rabbi, Jewish Festivals and more (11:15am-12:15pm)
- ▶ **Class Specific** - for parents of specific classes (11:15am-12:15pm)
- ▶ **Parenthood** - Parenting Issues from a Jewish Perspective (11:15-12:15)
- ▶ **Hebrew** - Crash Course for Parents (10:00-11:00)

## Why Parents Learning Project?

One of the things that we know from our conversations with parents is that they can also feel like they need to learn. We also know that parents want to be able to support their children with their Hebrew reading and in Jewish life at home. There are some really important issues that we all face as parents with children growing up in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century - we think it is important not only to talk about the issues but think about a Jewish perspective on them too.

All of the research into the development of young people is that an enduring love and commitment to Judaism begins with the home. It is the most important place for your children as they grow up. It makes sense, as our children grow up, that our homes are the living classroom for them to experience the values that we hold to be important as adults. Making those values real in tangible ways is how our children identify what is important - whether it is the regular practice of giving to charity and identifying it as something Jewish or lighting Shabbat candles on Friday night or anything else.

At West London Synagogue, we want to work in partnership with you, the parents, in creating a seamless bridge between your home environment and Religion School. Religion School can complement what the children are experiencing at home but cannot be a substitute! We want to offer parents the time to learn about this whilst recognising that Sundays are a precious time-out from busy schedules. For that reason we have designed a programme that is not every week but is nonetheless regular. We hope the sanctuary of time to learn with us will be a routine parents come to see as enriching and meaningful.

For the second year, we are working with the Lyons Learning Project to create a series of sessions that will enrich your own learning, give you tools to practice Judaism at home and offer space to think through challenging issues around parenting.

The sessions will be friendly, informal and an opportunity to meet other parents too. They will be taught by our rabbinic team. The programme is led by Rabbi Neil Janes who is the rabbinic lead for Education at the synagogue and Executive Director of the Lyons Learning Project, which is a charity offering Adult Jewish Learning and Conversations in Central London. The programme is free, though a donation would be gratefully received to deepen the impact of our work.

**Parents Learning Project 5779:**

Month	Date
October	7 <sup>th</sup> , 14 <sup>th</sup>
November	4 <sup>th</sup> , 11 <sup>th</sup>
January	13 <sup>th</sup> , 20 <sup>th</sup> , 27 <sup>th</sup>
March	3 <sup>rd</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup> , 17 <sup>th</sup>
April	28 <sup>th</sup>
May	5 <sup>th</sup>
June	16 <sup>th</sup> , 23 <sup>rd</sup>

All dates are Sundays during term time. Some lesson dates might change during the year.

To register your interest please contact Rabbi Neil Janes, Gil Reshef or Adi Ben-Naim, or go to: <http://lyonslearning.org.uk>



## Contact Details

Rabbinic Lead for Education, **Rabbi Neil Janes**

E: [neil.janes@wls.org.uk](mailto:neil.janes@wls.org.uk) | T: 020 7535 0253

Head of Education, **Gil Reshef**

E: [gil.reshef@wls.org.uk](mailto:gil.reshef@wls.org.uk) | T: 020 7535 0260

Education Administrator, **Adi Ben-Naim**

E: [adi.ben-naim@wls.org.uk](mailto:adi.ben-naim@wls.org.uk) | T: 020 7535 0275



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