

WJC RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Parent Handbook



Woodbury Jewish Center Religious School
200 South Woods Road
Woodbury, NY 11797

516-496-9100

Ellen Marcus, Principal x102
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Felice Linder, Administrator x101
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Religious School Office Hours

Sunday	8:00am-12:00pm
Monday	12:00pm-7:00pm
Wednesday	3:00pm-7:00pm
Friday	12:00pm-3:00pm

HANDBOOK

Our Philosophy

We provide every student with the ability to read Hebrew fluently and use Hebrew in synagogue worship and during Sabbath and festival celebrations at home. We excite your youngster about the land of Israel, religious roots and Conservative Judaism. We sensitize your child to the ethical code of our people and to our moral responsibility to reach out to the needy and less fortunate. We make religious education meaningful and relevant to your child.

Hebrew Instruction

The Hebrew program is a five-year progressive cycle of Hebrew studies leading to Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The major goal is to prepare a child for full participation at Sabbath and holiday worship services, holiday celebrations at home and Bar/Bat Mitzvah services. Each grade is assigned a set curriculum of teffilot (prayers) to study.

It is not possible for a child to learn Hebrew without practice at home. Students are encouraged to practice ten minutes every day. Attendance at Shabbat services also allows your child to practice the skills learned in the classroom. More Hebrew reading practice will reduce your child's stress and anxiety and will develop confidence and pride.

Students who require additional instruction will be provided with extra help outside of the classroom. Parents/guardians will be notified if the student is receiving extra help.

Allergies/Snacks/Kashrut

Let us know immediately if your child has any food allergies. We serve snacks throughout the school year and will accommodate your child's dietary needs. WE ARE A NUT-FREE SCHOOL. Students must not bring snacks to school containing any nuts.

All food brought into the synagogue must be kosher. Parents should check that snacks brought to school by their children conform to dietary laws. Look for the kashrut symbol on the label.



Attendance

Kindergarten, 1 st & 2 nd Grade	Sundays 9:00-11:30am
Alef, Bet, Gimel & Daled	Sundays 9:00-11:30am & Wednesdays 4:15-6:30pm
Hey	Wednesdays 4:15-6:30pm

Regular attendance is essential to your child's success. Let the religious school office know if your child will be absent more than two consecutive sessions so that make-up work can be assigned. If extended absences are anticipated (out-of-town, extended illness), a conference can be arranged with the principal and teacher to plan a study program. Excessive, undocumented absenteeism may necessitate a private tutor for the student at the family's expense.

Arrival

Students may arrive for religious school between 4:00-4:15pm on Wednesdays and 8:45-9:00am on Sundays. Students who arrive early should go to the Youth Lounge where ping pong, nok hockey and board games are set up and supervised by teachers. Students may not go to the classrooms before 4:15pm on Wednesdays or 9:00am on Sundays, nor may students congregate in the hall. Children in kindergarten and 1st grade may be escorted by parents/guardians directly to their classroom; these students are not required to report to the game room when arriving.

PLEASE AVOID LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY PICK UP. It is disruptive in the classroom for the teachers as well as the other students and could cause your child to miss important material.

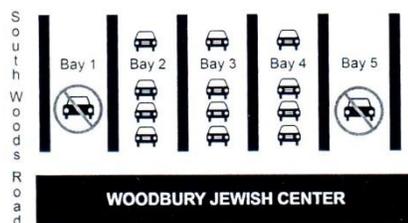
Dismissal

Children are dismissed at 11:30am on Sundays and 6:30pm on Wednesdays. Teachers will escort their classes to the parking lot and dismiss them.

Parents must line their cars up in parking bays 2, 3 and 4.

We encourage parents to:

- Line up 5-10 minutes before dismissal and turn motors off.
- Start cars when the signal is given that all children are safely in cars.
- Allow Mrs. Marcus and the teachers to direct the flow of traffic
- Be patient.



Parents are also invited to park their cars and come into the school to hear announcements and join us in singing Hatikvah, which we do at the end of every school day.

If you are late, your child will be either waiting on the sidewalk in front of the religious school entrance or downstairs in the school office. We ask that parents who anticipate a delay at dismissal call in advance.

Early Dismissal

PLEASE AVOID EARLY PICK UP. Parents/guardians should make every effort to allow their children to finish a complete school day. Early pick-up causes children to miss important instruction, interrupts the lesson and disturbs student concentration.

Parents/guardians who need to pick up children early must come to the office and sign the child out. Parents/guardians **MAY NOT** go directly to the classroom; a staff member will be sent to retrieve students. If a child will be picked up early by an adult other than those listed in their file, a note must be sent to school giving permission. You may also email the information to the office. This system has been established for the safety of our children.

Security

The religious school office is located at the entrance to the school. A buzzer system has been put in place to enhance the synagogue's security. Upon arrival, everyone is required to identify himself/herself before being admitted to the school. A full-time plain-clothes security guard is on the grounds for continued security.

Shabbat Service Attendance

Students in Alef, Bet, Gimel and Daled classes must attend ten Shabbat services during the year in either the Family Service or the Main Sanctuary, Daled students are expected to attend in the Main Sanctuary. Students in K-2 are encouraged to attend a minimum of seven Shabbat services. Students may receive credit for up to two Friday night services at Woodbury Jewish Center and two Saturday morning services at other synagogues. Credit will be given for attending services on Simchat Torah. No other holiday services will be counted.

Family Services are held most Shabbat mornings (see the WJC calendar) from 10:00-11:30am. Children in grades Kindergarten through Gimel participate in an age appropriate service that includes Hebrew and English prayers, a Torah service and a story sermon. Parents, grandparents and siblings are encouraged to attend and participate.

Tzedakah

Students are asked to contribute Tzedakah, or charity. The money collected daily is donated to announced charities that invoke compassion in our students. Showing empathy for the less fortunate and giving tzedakah are important values that we wish to instill.

Email Communication

Woodbury Jewish Center and the Religious School disseminate important information to parents/guardians via email. It is imperative that each household provide at least one email address that will be checked often for email communication from the school regarding requirements, programs, closings and more.

Homework

Homework is assigned to reinforce classroom lessons and to provide students with the opportunity to practice Hebrew reading skills. If a student is absent, he/she is expected to complete the homework assignment.

Progress Reports and Parent-Teacher Conference

Progress Reports are distributed twice a year: in late January and at the conclusion of the school year. Parent-teacher conferences will take place in late January (see calendar).

A dialogue between parents and teacher may be initiated at any point during the school year. Please contact the school office if you would like to request a conference.

Honor Roll

At the end of the year, teachers recommend students in grades Alef-Daled for placement on the Honor Roll. The requirements include:

- Academic excellence;
- Meeting the Shabbat Service attendance requirement;
- Proper behavior; and
- Good school attendance (minimum 90%).

Certificates are presented to the students and the Honor Roll list is published in the *Shofar*, the synagogue bulletin.

IEP or 504/Special Needs

Parents/guardians of students who have special learning needs are requested to notify the Principal and submit a copy of their child's IEP or 504 at the beginning of each school year. Students with an IEP receive additional instruction when preparing for Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Also notify the principal of any visual, auditory or physical problems, or special situations at home, which might affect your child's work, behavior or attendance.

Fire drill

During the school year, two drills are conducted to ensure a safe and orderly exodus from the building should an actual immediate evacuation of the building be required.

School Closings

If severe and hazardous weather conditions exist, the following steps are taken:

WEDNESDAY

1. If the public schools close, WJC will close.
2. If it begins to snow heavily or storm in the morning or early afternoon:
 - We'll call the public schools to request they announce our closing over the PA.
 - An email will be sent to announce the closing.
3. If the public schools cancel after-school activities, WJC classes will not be held.

SUNDAY

If inclement weather creates dangerous traveling conditions, an announcement of school closing will be made by email between 7:30 and 8:30am.

Hey Graduation

Students participate in the Graduation Ceremony by successfully completing the five-year program of consecutive instruction. During the Hey year, students must attend a minimum of 85% of the classes. Excessive absences will preclude attending graduation and earning a diploma.

Hatami, Akiba and Keter Torah Awards

The Hatami Award is presented by the WJC Men's Club to an outstanding Hey student who has distinguished himself/herself through academic achievement, school involvement, service to school and/or community and shows a commitment to the synagogue and greater Jewish community. A plaque is presented at graduation and a bronze plate with the child's name is added to the plaque in the school hallway.

The Akiba Award is presented at the Hey Grade Graduation to a graduating religious school student who has gone above and beyond the requirements of the school, works diligently to achieve a "personal best," does community service and participates in all aspects of synagogue life. A plaque is presented at graduation.

The Keter Torah is presented by the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism in a county-wide celebration to all students in the Hey classes who have completed four out of five years of excellent academic achievement and attendance.

High School Program

Our high school program for students in grades 8-11 is taught by Rabbi Fruithandler and explores Leadership from a Jewish perspective. The class includes practical skill development using text study, games and exercises with an individual approach to developing leadership. It includes real-world opportunities to test our theories and skills.

Confirmation

Confirmation is a life cycle event that occurs following three years of post-Bar/Bat Mitzvah study in the synagogue High School program. Students participate in a special service, offer speeches confirming their faith and are awarded certificates of Confirmation.

Birthday Shabbat

Parents/guardians and children, along with extended family and friends, are encouraged to attend the Birthday Shabbat during the month of their child's birthday. Families are called to the Torah for an aliyah and offer a blessing for their child. Children are presented with a birthday gift and birthday cake is served after the service.

Dress Code

All students are expected to dress appropriately for Religious School and Religious School functions, bearing in mind that the Woodbury Jewish Center is a House of Worship. Boys and men are to wear kipot while on the premises. Students may not wear short shorts or clothing which reveals bare shoulders or midriffs. Cleats may not be worn on synagogue premises.

Code of Conduct

Woodbury Jewish Center is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment. To this end, WJC has adopted certain expectations for acceptable conduct on the Religious School premises. Appropriate school behavior is expected of all students. Students must be respectful of school personnel and property. Unless otherwise indicated, the Code applies to all WJC Religious School students, parents/guardians, instructors, and visitors when on WJC property, or while attending a Religious School program or function, including Shabbat Services.

PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT

The following rules of conduct are intended to focus on safety and respect for the rights of others. Students who fail to accept responsibility for their behavior and violate these rules will be required to accept the penalties for their conduct. Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from Religious School, when they:

- A. Engage in conduct that is disorderly. Examples of such conduct include:
 - a. The use of gestures or language that are profane, lewd, vulgar, or abusive;
 - b. The performance of any willful act which disrupts the normal operation of school;
 - c. The unauthorized use of cellular phones while class is in session;
 - d. The unauthorized possession of food, candy, gum, and drinks in the classroom;
 - e. The unauthorized possession of electronic games on the premises.
- B. Engage in conduct that is insubordinate. Examples of such conduct include:
 - a. The failure to comply with reasonable directions of teachers or other Religious School personnel;
 - b. Leaving school without permission.

- C. Engage in conduct that is disruptive. Examples of such conduct include:
 - a. The interference with an instructor's authority over the classroom or the interruption of the educational process;
 - b. The failure to comply with reasonable directions of instructors or other Religious School personnel.
- D. Engage in conduct that is violent. Examples of such conduct include:
 - a. Committing or attempting to commit an act of violence such as hitting, kicking or scratching a student, instructor, or other School personnel;
 - b. Possessing a weapon;
 - c. Intentionally damaging the personal property of another student, instructor or other School personnel;
 - d. Intentionally damaging Religious School or other WJC property.
- E. Engage in conduct that endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others. Examples of such conduct include:
 - a. Discrimination, which includes treating another in a negative manner based on race, color, gender, sexual orientation or disability;
 - b. Harassment, which includes a severe action or persistent pattern of actions or statements directed at an identifiable individual or group which a reasonable person would perceive as demeaning or ridiculing;
 - c. Intimidation, which includes actions or statements which put an individual in fear of bodily harm;
 - d. Using abusive or vulgar language, cursing or swearing;
 - e. Possessing or distributing cigarettes, alcoholic beverages or illegal substances, or being under the influence of either.

DISCIPLINARY PENALTIES

Disciplinary action, when necessary, will be firm, fair, consistent and appropriate. Consideration will be given to the student's previous disciplinary record. Disruptive behavior may require the teacher or Mrs. Marcus to notify parents/guardians. A conference may be deemed necessary before the child may return to the classroom.

Any staff member observing a violation of this policy shall report the incident immediately to Mrs. Marcus, who shall then take immediate action to stop any further prohibited conduct. If the student is found to have committed the violation of which he/she is accused, Mrs. Marcus will impose any one or a combination of the following penalties:

1. Verbal warning;
2. Written warning;
3. Written notification to parents/guardians;
4. Probation;
5. Removal from a particular class;
6. Suspension.

The purpose of the above Code is to prevent abuse of the rights of others and to maintain an orderly Religious School atmosphere where Jewish education may flourish. Any action by an individual or group aimed at disrupting or interfering with the educational process is hereby declared a violation of this Code of Conduct.