

THE HADERECH PROGRAMME

A unique programme for all young people at NNLS
from Year 5 to Year 11

- Values of becoming a Jewish adult

- Knowledge of Services
- Learning of Synagogue and home ritual skills

- Education which provides a broad preparation for Bar Mitzvah & Bat Mitzvah and beyond
- Understanding of a Masorti approach to studying text

HADERECH

An Integrated Programme for Barmitzvah, Batmitzvah and Beyond

The programme is aimed at young people in New North London Synagogue from National Curriculum Year 5 (aged 9/10) to National Curriculum Year 11 (aged 15/16).

It is a six and a half year programme at which attendance at Cheder, Cool'anu or GCSE class (except in the cases of those children who attend Jewish Day Schools) is part of the requirement.

GOALS

- To experience Barmitzvah and Batmitzvah as a transition into lifelong Jewish commitment and practice.
- To deepen and increase commitment to the Jewish people through Torah, Avodah (Service of God) and Gemilut Chasadim (good deeds).

AIMS

1. To provide an integrated six year teenage Masorti education programme during the course of which each student prepares for, marks and celebrates his or her becoming Barmitzvah or Batmitzvah.
2. To build on the knowledge and skills acquired at Cheder and Cool'anu to enable a young person to have the ability to lead and join in with ceremonies and prayers at home or in the community in whichever forum is most appropriate for that individual.
3. To recognise that Barmitzvah and Batmitzvah are as much family events as individual ones and to enable families to be involved with all aspects of the programme.
4. To give young people a deeper relationship with and knowledge of Torah.
5. To create a group experience in order to foster a sense of community.
6. To help young people to find a place within the Synagogue and wider community and to provide opportunities to become involved with them.
7. To provide the means by which young people can understand and take upon themselves the responsibilities of Jewish adulthood.

HOW

- Through the provision of a programme where most of the teaching, individual and group, takes place on Wednesday evenings in term time.
- About ten months individual tuition will take place prior to the ceremony for all boys and those girls who are leyning in HaKol Olin or Assif. Teachers for this will be suggested and families will be helped to find the right person for their child. Any further tuition required or requested can be organised through the programme. Individual tuition will prepare the child for Maftir and Haphtarah where appropriate.
- By fostering relationships with peers; older teens; members of the community and the Rabbi – including a close relationship with a key teacher.

CURRICULUM

The basic programme consists of four to eight week modules within existing term dates. Each child will have one module with Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg in his home.

Skills learned will include:

- The ability to read in Hebrew the major prayers accurately and fluently.
- The ability to lead Kiddush and either lead or join in with Birchat HaMazon (grace after meals).
- The ability to sing anim zemirot (and for some girls ashrei and selected psalms).
- The ability to relate several commentaries to their own sedra and to understand the whole in the context of the surrounding sedrot.
- The ability to understand the different aspects of the Torah Service and its history.
- The beginnings of ability to leyn and sing Haphtarah.
- The understanding of what it means to take on the responsibility of keeping Mitzvoth and being an adult Jew.
- The ability to utilise the appropriate skills for their own ceremony.

In addition to the above the curriculum will include reading of Jewish literature, voice projection, group discussions, writing a dvar Torah, exploration of their own spirituality and training for peer tutoring.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

The purpose of this aspect of the programme is to both support and educate families as well as involving you in your child's Barmitzvah or Batmitzvah learning.

The programme includes:

- Parents discussion groups and 'book club'
- Shabbat meals and events for parents, children and siblings in small groups
- Explained Services for families
- Skills workshops for parents and children
- Mother and daughter programme
- Father and son programme

We would appreciate parents' help and support in the following ways:

1. Contacting the teacher or the Director of Education if there is a concern regarding the programme or your child.
2. Ensuring that young people attend **every week** punctually.
3. Ensuring that all young people have their files, text books, writing equipment and kippot where appropriate.
4. Helping your child to practise Hebrew reading and singing on a regular and frequent basis at home.
5. Attending our extra curricular and Shabbat events
6. Coming to shul regularly and frequently both on Friday nights and Shabbat morning for the year prior to Barmitzvah and Batmitzvah.

We will help in every way that we can by:

1. Listening to your concerns and acting upon them.
2. Giving your child a high quality education programme which is fun and interesting.
3. Ensuring that all our materials are well presented and well prepared.
4. Giving you all the tools necessary for you to help your child.
5. Making sure that there are many opportunities for you to socialise with other families.
6. Providing opportunities for you to learn more about the Services and to feel comfortable in the Synagogue.

YEAR FIVE

This group together with year 6 have their lessons in the new shul building. If they arrive before 5.30pm there is a Youth Club provided by Noam in the Beit Kneset. The Strudel Café has a small branch in the Synagogue on Wednesday evenings where hot meals and snacks can be purchased.

The programme will provide the building blocks for the rest of the course. They will spend several weeks on the structure and content of the Shabbat Shacharit (morning) and Mincha (afternoon) Services followed by an in depth study of some of the main prayers. The programme will include a variety of media for learning: drama, cookery, art, craft and writing. We will be looking at various prayer books and comparing them to ours.

The main aim is for the young people to be able to know their way around the Siddur; always follow the Service when they are in shul and feel comfortable with the Shabbat morning service.

There will be a Friday night dinner for this group and their families, as well as Shabbatonim and sleepovers for the children.

YEAR SIX

This year begins with the study of how we learn Torah. Pupils will be familiar with the way that Tanach is divided; know the names of the Books of the Torah in Hebrew and English; explore the Masorti approach to the origin of Torah; understand the notation of chapter and verses and be able to look up a given 'pasuk' (verse); understand the layout and use of the Chumash; understand the concept of Haphtarah and its link to the Sedra and to be able to look at Torah in a 'Jewish way'.

The second module concentrates on teaching young people how to go about writing a dvar Torah or speech about the Torah portion. Using simplified commentaries and relating texts to everyday modern life this module creates a basis for future work.

The year ends with a module which looks at what it means to be an adult in Jewish terms: to take responsibility for keeping the mitzvot (commandments).

Boys and girls are taught together during the first lesson of the evening, the content of which is outlined above but they are taught separately for the second lesson. The children are divided into separate small groups of boys and girls according to the approximate date of their individual Barmitzvah and Batmitzvah. During the year we occasionally have to change groups when someone moves their date well outside the boundary of their current group. Emphasis is placed on improving Hebrew reading and comprehension of Torah and prayer Hebrew.

Four terms prior to the term in which the ceremony will be held each group begins the actual Barmitzvah or Batmitzvah tuition. Girls opting for a traditional Service ceremony will be taught all their songs and prayers as part of a group on Wednesday evenings. These girls will have individual extra lessons with their teacher in the time leading up to Bat Mitzvah. Boys and girls opting for a HaKol Olin or Assif ceremony are taught all the aspects in common and to read their own portion in preparation for the individual teacher to teach the musical notation.

All children study their Sedra in the context of others in their groups which helps in the writing of their dvar Torah.

YEAR SEVEN

During the course of this year all girls will have their individual Batmitzvah ceremonies. The first module of this year consists of an introduction to leyning for boys and girls. They will acquire an overall knowledge of cantillation for any Torah portion. They will then learn about Birchat HaMazon (grace after meals), kashrut and the relationship of these topics to homelessness and tzedakah.

The second term consists of a module called 'Marking Yourself as a Jew' and the groups learn about tallit, Tefillin and kippah as well as the Jewish response to body piercing and tattooing. The classes also study some of the Sedrot of the week to increase their Jewish study skills and practise what they need to write their dvar Torah.

The third term contains a whole module on the Amidah prayer. They learn the different kinds of Amidah and when they are said as well as the choreography of the prayer. The final module is about Haphtarah and Megillot: the students have an in depth study of the relationship of the prophets and writings to the weekly Sedra and have a overview of the Megillot.

In the second lesson all the girls go to Rabbi Wittenberg's home for his course, one term at a time. Parents are notified by email of these arrangements. Some girls will have their Batmitzvah early on in the course and some much later or even after the course is over. Each term a different group begins their Barmitzvah tuition; begins the Rabbi's course and starts the post-Barmitzvah and Batmitzvah challenge programme. During this term all extra lessons for girls are at the expense of the parents.

Boys are allocated a group according to the date of their ceremony and work with the teacher for three terms, learning about their Sedra and to read it; learning the berachot and anim zemirot and studying everyone else's Sedra in the context of their own. They are also helped to find an individual tutor at this time. Most of the Shabbat and family activities take place in small groups such as an explained Shabbat morning Service and family Friday night dinner.

Each girl and boy is allocated a peer tutor to help them through the entire process.

The term after attending the Rabbi's course, each young person begins the post-Batmitzvah and post-Barmitzvah challenge and mentor training programme. This programme is outlined at the end of the curriculum section.

YEAR EIGHT

This year consists of two short courses, each one lasting half a year:

1. Social issues of our time: this includes visits to a Home for the Elderly
2. A programme about Israel run by Noam, our Youth Movement.

In the second lesson all the girls participate in the post-Batmitzvah challenge programme whilst all the boys participate in their Barmitzvah work then attend the Rabbi's course and then begin their challenge programme.

YEAR NINE

In these years all pupils have celebrated their individual Barmitzvah and Batmitzvah. Students have the choice of several different classes, each of which lasts for half the year. Some of the choices overlap with the next year's courses.

1. Talmud with Rabbi Wittenberg
2. Social Activism with Rabbi Weiner
3. What social issues bother us? A text based course.

Course choices change from year to year according to pupil's suggestions and interests as well as teacher availability.

YEAR TEN

The students have a choice of several different classes, each of which lasts for half the year. In some cases students may opt for the same class for the whole year:

As above – see Year Nine

Course choices change from year to year according to pupil's suggestions and interests as well as teacher availability.

YEAR ELEVEN

These students choose one topic to study which lasts from September until the end of February half term. They include the topics available for year 10 together with:

1. Youth leadership
2. Leyning and davening skills

At the end of the Pesach Term in year 11 the group participates in a graduation weekend whereby the Synagogue honours their commitment to Jewish education and the HaDerech programme. There is a Friday night family dinner in their honour. Each pupil is presented with a certificate and a small gift.

In the second session all the young people are involved either in mentoring pre-Barmitzvah and pre-Batmitzvah pupils, in helping with the post-Barmitzvah and post-Batmitzvah challenge programme, teaching Hebrew to 10 year olds or organising and running shabbatonim for younger groups.

OUTSIDE OF CLASSROOM TIME WE OFFER

- Theatre and cinema outings
- Visit to Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre in Nottingham
- Bowling outings
- Pizza evenings
- Shabbatonim
- Friday night dinners
- Interfaith programmes

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER BAR MITZVAH AND BAT MITZVAH?

POST BARMITZVAH AND POST BATMITZVAH CHALLENGE PROGRAMME

Groups will reach this part of the programme at different times. Each group of boys and girls will begin this challenge programme the term after they participate in Rabbi Wittenberg's course.

The purpose of the programme is to help the young people to find their place in the Synagogue as 'adult' Jews. We want to teach them that the Jewish community needs their input all through their lives and that they have a responsibility to provide this for the Synagogue and the wider community. We ask them to volunteer, participate and make decisions for the Synagogue alongside the Council, management and professional staff.

FUNDRAISING

They decide as a group which charity they wish to support. The teacher brings them various information sheets and they go and research on the Internet either at HaDerech or at home. Once the decision is made the whole group learns something of the work of the charity. Then they decide what they are going to do to raise some money. Events have been varied, consisting of cake sales, sponsored silence, football match and concert to name a few. Each group has advertised their event, organised it and run it. They have then written to the charity and sent the money.

COMMUNITY

This challenge is the widest in that we encourage our young people to give back something to the community in whichever way they wish. Some groups have organised an event for small children; others have offered time in the office during the holidays; others have produced a cookbook for the community; others have arranged a sports afternoon whilst others have found other ways to volunteer in the community.

PEER MENTORING PROGRAMME

Each group participates in a training programme for peer mentoring. They learn feedback skills; one to one teaching skills; brush up on their Hebrew; discuss the importance of Barmitzvah and Batmitzvah and learn about positive reinforcement. At the end of the training they are allocated a pupil and work each week teaching this younger child. Every few weeks they meet with their teacher to discuss issues that arise or concerns that they have regarding their pupils.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This programme is extremely exciting and we are proud of it. We hope that all children will enjoy their time in HaDerech and are always pleased to have feedback. Below is a list of useful telephone numbers. Another booklet, which outlines the practical details of Barmitzvah and Batmitzvah in our community, will be given to you approximately two years prior to your child's individual ceremony or can be found on our website at www.nnls-masorti.org.uk/page.php?ID=38

Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg	0208 343 3927
Barbara Stern (Director of Education)	0203 182 0115
	07931 501 516
Denise Bonham (Administrative Assistant)	0203 182 0119
David Raff (Synagogue Co-Chair)	0208 371 0050
Tamara Isaacs (Synagogue Co-Chair)	tamara@isaacs.tv
Carli Lessof (Education Portfolio)	0208 343 3837
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