

# Religious School

## SHOMREI TORAH RELIGIOUS SCHOOL HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

It is the obligation of the Religious School to educate the children of the members of Shomrei Torah to the **Jewish Way of Life**. The broad aims of this education may be summarized in the following, which is excerpted from “Objectives and Standards for the Congregational School”, from the United Synagogue Commission on Jewish Education:

1. To imbue the child with love of God and trust in God’s goodness.
2. To provide opportunity for the child to develop keen spiritual and ethical values and sensitivities.
3. To develop desire and convey the skills to practice the Mitzvot and the traditions of Jewish life in the Synagogue and the home.
4. To motivate the child to accept the study of Torah as a lifetime pursuit.
5. To enable the child to acquire increasing knowledge of the Hebrew language.
6. To broaden and deepen the child’s intellectual and spiritual life, through knowledge of Jewish history, literature and culture.
7. To strengthen the child’s pride in his Jewish identification with his local Jewish community, Eretz Israel and World Jewry.

To this end, the Principal with the approval of the Rabbi and the Education Committee has designed a curriculum to meet these stated aims.

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL, PARENTS AND STUDENTS

It is commonly understood that the success of education depends on the strength of the partnership between the school and the home. The commitment to a joint educational goal is indispensable as neither of the partners can accomplish the job without the support and cooperation of the other.

#### **School Responsibility**

1. To provide a comfortable, safe and wholesome environment.
2. To provide professional educators and a graded, sequential curriculum designed to meet the school’s stated educational goals; to make all necessary texts and materials available.
3. To maintain open communication with the home informing parents of regular and special events. To provide regular progress reports and inform parents in the event of misconduct or failure to maintain the school’s standard and requirements. To also notify parents of outstanding behaviors and achievements.
4. To assist in the students readiness and preparation for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

## Parents' Responsibility

1. To support the school's effort in educating their child to Judaism and to reinforce the Jewish values taught in the school.
2. To ensure the child's regular and punctual attendance.
3. To ensure that the child is prepared for class with all assignments, texts, and necessary materials.
4. To remember that a child's religious upbringing cannot be limited to the school alone. The degree of the parents' commitment to Judaism, as reflected in their lifestyle, will determine their child's own commitment.
5. To attend synagogue services as often as possible and to encourage the child to attend his/her Junior Congregation regularly, to come to Early Family Services and to participate in prayers at home.

## Student Responsibility:

1. To attend school on a regular basis.
2. To be prepared for class with all assignments, textbooks and necessary materials.
3. To uphold the aims and goals set forth in his handbook.
4. To treat my fellow classmates, teachers and faculty with respect.

## BOOKS AND MATERIALS:

All pupils are required to bring their Religious School books to each class session. Each student should have a Hebrew and English notebook and two writing implements. Lost books must be replaced as soon as possible. All supplies should be contained in a book bag.

## JUNIOR CONGREGATION / SHABBAT SERVICES

Students in *Kitah Aleph, Bet, Gimmel and Dalet* are required to attend a minimum of **ten (10) Shabbat morning** services and **three (3) Kabbalat Shabbat (Friday night)** services at **Shomrei Torah only** during the year. Junior Congregation services begin promptly at 10:30am. Children attending Shabbat morning services in the main sanctuary must be accompanied by an adult. Students in *Kitah Hey* are required to attend Shabbat morning services in the main sanctuary a minimum of ten (10) times and be there no later than 10:00am.

Attendance will be taken and credit **will not** be given to any child who is late. Junior Congregation services are designed to afford our children the opportunity to participate in and lead an abbreviated Shabbat Service geared to their level. It is the ideal vehicle to prepare the child for his/her Bar/Bat Mitzvah and is a necessary part of his/her Jewish education.

Enclosed please find a calendar ([www.shomreitorahwcc.org/services.html](http://www.shomreitorahwcc.org/services.html)) that will give you the Junior Congregation dates.

## **SCHOOL RULES AND REGULATIONS**

### **Attendance, Arrival and Dismissal**

#### **School Sessions**

Religious School classes are in session Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and on Sunday mornings. Classes for the 2004-2005 school year begin promptly at 4:10 pm and end at 6:00pm. Sunday sessions are from 10:30am to 12:30pm. **Kitah Hey will meet on Tuesdays from 6:00 to 8:30pm and on Sunday mornings from 10:30am to 12:30pm**

**Gan, Zeraim and Shorashim** will meet on Sunday mornings from 9:00 am to 10:25am. Students are to arrive 5 minutes prior to the start of class. The staff is available to supervise students fifteen (15) minutes prior to class. Your promptness and cooperation are appreciated. The school cannot be responsible for students' safety and supervision prior to these times. After a school session, students will only be dismissed into the care of a designated adult.

Please consult the school calendar for information regarding regular school holidays. L'Chaim and special notices will carry any change in the school schedule.

In the event that inclement weather forces the closing of the Wayne Public Schools on weekdays, our school will also be closed. If weather conditions force the school to be closed on Sunday and/or weekdays, we will try to inform you via telephone by appointed class mothers.

#### **Attendance**

The importance of regular attendance cannot be overemphasized. Children who are absent not only fall behind in their studies, but also slow the progress of the class. In the event of absence or lateness, a written note (phone calls are not a substitute) by the parent to the child's teacher explaining the tardiness or absence is mandatory. In the case of absence it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to obtain school work and homework assignments for their child. A "buddy" system is recommended between students. **The child will be expected to be accountable for all work.** If help is needed, assistance will be provided.

#### **Early Dismissal and Missed Classes**

Whenever a child misses religious School or leaves early, the work missed **MUST** be made up by the child. The teacher will assign the child the work missed and it must be completed and returned to the teacher. The amount of work missed is proportional to the amount of time missed. **If a child is leaving school early, he/she must be signed out by a parent/guardian at the school office. Please: DO NOT GO DIRECTLY TO THE CHILD'S CLASSROOM.**

#### **Steps for Notification of Absences**

1. After 2 unexcused absences, the teacher will call the parent/guardian.
2. After 4 unexcused absences, the Principal will call the parent/guardian.
3. After 10 unexcused absences, a registered letter will be sent notifying parents that their child is in danger of not completing the school year.
4. After 15 unexcused absences, a registered letter will confirm that the child will not graduate or be promoted to the next grade.

### **Bar/Bat Mitzvah Policy**

Students who have completed or are in the process of completing five years of Religious school are eligible for a Shabbat Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This is a milestone in the life of every Jewish boy and girl and should not be considered the termination of their commitment or education. IT should rather, be considered as the beginning of taking on the responsibilities as a full-fledged Jew. Children are encouraged to continue their Jewish education by attending our Hebrew High School and joining our Kadima and USY chapter.

To qualify for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, a family must be a full member in good standing of Shomrei Torah, the Wayne Conservative Congregation. The child must attend Shomrei Torah Religious School or have written approval for any other alternative. The child's Religious School attendance must be in accordance with the established School attendance policy. Special needs situations or equivalent programs will be evaluated and acted upon by the Religious School Principal and the Rabbi.

The above policy does not apply to a Monday or a Thursday Bar/Bat Mitzvah. No one will be denied a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Some elements of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah program have been incorporated into the Dalet and Hey curriculum. Individual instructions will be scheduled approximately six months before the event and will be given at a time other than regularly scheduled school sessions.

Becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah means that you are old enough to take on Jewish obligations. One of the obligations, commandments, is the privilege of fulfilling the Mitzvah of wearing Tiffilin. To this end, parents/guardians of boys must provide Tefillin. Although not required, we encourage girls to take part in this important Mitzvah.

### **Parent Contact and Assistance**

The school endeavors to be true partners with the home in order to ensure your child's continuing progress in Religious School. The school will make appointments for parent visits and consultations with teachers. Appointments with the Principal, if needed, should be scheduled in advance. Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled during the year and parents are urged to attend.

Parents should demonstrate an active interest in their child's religious schooling by being active in PTO and other synagogue activities. Parent participation in PTO and as class parents is essential for an effective Religious School. Class trips, holiday celebrations,

and parties all require parental assistance to be successful. By sharing the religious School experience with your child, everyone involved benefits. This becomes a wonderful bonding experience as well as Jewish family education.

## **DISCIPLINE**

One of the primary principles of Jewish law teaches us respect for others, specifically our parents, teachers and peers. These values will be explained in detail to our children and many different means will be used to encourage the children to exhibit these values as they conduct themselves in Religious School and in all social situations. Every effort will be made to each all children respect for themselves, their friends, and authority within the framework of Judaism. It is hoped that through education, positive reinforcement and encouragement from the School , as well as the home, we can accomplish our objectives.

## **CODE OF BEHAVIOR**

All students have a right to learn

All teachers have a right to teach

We believe that all people have the right to a safe and comfortable environment. Our school reflects our Jewish values. We believe that this can be accomplished when we treat each other with courtesy and respect. **THE FOLLOWING BEHAVIORS ARE CONSIDERED TO BE IN VIOLATION OF SCHOOL RULES:**

- Fighting and rough play
- Loud, obscene or abusive language
- Treating others in a disrespectful or demeaning manner (teachers and peers alike)
- Vandalizing or destroying property
- Interfering with other students opportunity to learn

Fortunately, most of the children of Shomrei Torah are well behaved. Occasionally, however, we have to notify parents of behavior or specific incidents. In the unusual event that a student cannot maintain his/herself during class, the following consequences shall occur:

- (1) The student will be sent to the Principal's office and at the Principal's discretion, the parent will be contacted to take the child home.
- (2) The student's parents will receive a Parent Report Form, which **MUST** be signed and returned. A child will not be allowed to re-enter his/her class without this signed form
- (3) Three (3) report forms during the course of the school year will result in suspension for three (3) class sessions. The student is responsible for all missed work.
- (4) Following a second suspension, any report form will result in **EXPULSION** from the Religious School.

Your cooperation in supporting our **Code of Behavior** is greatly appreciated.

## **CHAIN OF COMMAND**

Your cooperating in following the chain of command is needed for the continuation of a productive relationship between home and school.

Should parents have a question relating to classroom dynamics, he or she should approach the issue in the following manner:

(1) Contact the child's teacher

(2) Should the problem remain unsolved, the parents can then contact the Principal. The principal is the ultimate authority.

(3) Parents who feel that their needs have not adequately been addressed, may contact the Education Committee Chairperson. Only questions of overall policy should be brought to the attention of the Chairperson. If you wish to speak at an education meeting, you must contact the chairperson, prior to the meeting.

## **SCHOOL FOOD POLICY AND DRESS CODE**

### **Food Policy**

Food will be offered to our children on special occasions (Shabbat parties, Jewish holidays and special events). The school will provide these treats. In the event that our child has not had his/her snack before entering the building, he/she will be asked to eat it near the entrance. A trash can will be made available. **ONLY KOSHER FOOD MAY BE BROUGHT INTO THE SYNAGOGUE.** Chewing gum must be disposed of before entering the building.

### **Dress Code**

Parents should make sure that children dress appropriately. Proper dress is important in creating the proper atmosphere for study. Special school occasions may require Shabbat dress. Children leaving for sport activities at the end of a school session may come to school in uniform. **HOWEVER NO CHILD MAY COME TO SCHOOL IN CLEATS.** A kippah must be worn at all times when in the synagogue. Any other type of hat/cap is unacceptable.