

Chabad Hebrew School
Handbook
2009 – 2010



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B”H

Dear Parents,

Can one ever say enough about the value of education? Judaism has always taught and stressed the importance of study.

Through our Hebrew School we will try to instill in our students a love for Judaism, the Torah, the Jewish people and the Land of Israel; as well as an appreciation for our rich heritage, and confidence in our Jewish identity and Jewish literacy.

A home/school partnership is imperative in achieving our objectives. We need your cooperation and active participation. The old saying, “children learn what they live,” is particularly true with regard to Jewish education. We hope that you and your children will make Jewish education a priority.

This booklet is designed to inform you of our Hebrew School’s policies, as well as encourage your input and participation in our program.

Our Hebrew School is part of Chabad of Westboro. A fresh and positive approach and lots of enthusiasm is the hallmark of Chabad and will be prevalent in our school.

So much of what we do depends on you. Please view this booklet as an ongoing invitation to pursue actively the goals we share, at home and within your congregational setting.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Dvora Green
Director, Chabad Hebrew School

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School Program

We are enthusiastic about the beautiful lessons that Judaism has to offer, and we hope to transmit that excitement to the children through our excellent Hebrew School program.

The Chabad Hebrew School offers an outstanding program that will give your child a solid foundation in the fundamentals of Judaism, and will expose your child to the faith, beauty and values of our heritage.

All lessons aim to give the children a great appreciation of our rich Jewish heritage. Role-playing, arts and crafts and songs will be incorporated to help make the lessons enjoyable and meaningful.

We plan special programs during the year, such as Shabbat programs and Friday night children's services, Shofar Factory, Chanukah Rally, Purim Fun, Passover Matzah Baking, Model Seder, Lag B'Omer Community BBQ and more. We also feature ongoing activities throughout the year, to develop and maintain strong participation and enthusiasm from our students.

We believe that the joy and pride in Yiddishkeit (Judaism) that will be experienced at the Chabad Hebrew School will make an indelible impression upon the children.

Goals of our Program

- To provide and promote the highest quality Judaic education to a diverse community.
- To nurture your child's Jewish identity and Jewish literacy.
- To inspire a love for learning and a love for Judaism, the Land of Israel and the Hebrew language.
- To foster a feeling of pride, familiarity and ownership of their heritage
- To foster each student's sense of belonging in the Jewish community, to find their unique place in Jewish history, and to share in the destiny of the Jewish people.
- To encourage students to express their opinions and ask questions about the Torah in today's day and age.

Curriculum

History: Our History course will take the students from the times of Abraham – the first Jew – until the Era of the Temple. The older classes will also be discussing the periods of the Spanish Inquisition and the Holocaust, up to modern times.

Holidays: Lessons on each Jewish holiday will fill the calendar as we proceed from the High Holidays through the holiday of Shavuot. The students will gain a deeper understanding of each holiday and its traditions and customs. Chabad Hebrew School will also host holiday celebrations for our students and their families.

Jewish Values and Ethics: This course is intended to give our students an understanding of the values integrated into Jewish culture. It will include home discussions and extracurricular activities, using stories and scenarios that have practical applications to our everyday life.

Jewish Customs: Why Do We Do What We Do? – Why is Shabbat such a special day? Why is the Jewish wedding different? This class will teach basic mitzvot to the younger grades and provide insightful meaning of more complex mitzvot to the older grades.

Israel: Students will explore the significance and beauty of Israel past, present and future. In story and in song, our program emphasizes the inherent connection of every Jew to the Land of Israel.

Current Events: Students in the older grades will follow current events concerning Jewish issues and Israel. Students are encouraged to bring in newspaper clippings and discussions will follow, keeping our students well informed of the world and its relationship to the Jewish people.

Hebrew: Beginning with letter recognition for our beginners, our program leads them through phonetic decoding and grammar concepts until they attain sufficient Hebrew for Bar or Bat mitzvah. Your child's Hebrew vocabulary will grow through Jewish poetry and songs. The more advanced students will have textbooks to complete throughout the year.

Synagogue Culture: One of the goals of our program is to make sure that our students feel at ease in any synagogue. They should be comfortable with major parts of the services, recognizing the recited texts and rituals.

Extracurricular: Chabad Hebrew School will offer a variety of extracurricular activities such as Shabbatons, field trips, contests, etc. These events will allow our students to experience Jewish life in its entirety, both in and out of the classroom. More details will follow during the school year.

Bar and Bat Mitzvah: Students in older grades participate in a series of Bar/Bat Mitzvah workshops as an introduction to Jewish adulthood. This class also explores the thirteen principles of Judaism by R. Moses Maimonides and other important texts.

As a student nears the age of Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the family may choose to have a Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony at Chabad of Westboro. For more information please call our office.

Parent/School Communication

Communication between parents and school is very important to ensure that Hebrew School be an enjoyable and productive experience for every child.

School Calendar

A school year calendar listing dates for Hebrew School classes has been inserted into this booklet. Please be sure to use this calendar as your reference guide throughout the year.

Confidential Information

Please provide information about any conditions that may affect your child's ability to learn in a classroom setting. Prior knowledge of any physical, social or psychological challenges can aid a teacher in planning instruction for each child. Such information should be submitted in writing to the director or discussed in private conference with the director or teacher.

Behavioral Expectations

At Chabad Hebrew School we strive to create an atmosphere that reflects Jewish values.

Therefore we expect:

1. Respect for teachers, for each other and each other's property, and respect for oneself. This is essential for a successful learning environment.
2. Classroom directions to be followed promptly and quietly.
3. Homework and assignments to be completed, signed and submitted when due.
4. All students to come to school prepared with folders, books, pen and notebook.
5. All students to act responsibly and with caution, e.g. no running or jumping in the halls or classrooms, exercising care in the parking lot, etc.

Parents' Responsibilities

1. Bring and pick up children on time.
2. Be positive about Hebrew School programming. Take an active part in your child's Jewish education. Contact the director or teacher regarding any classroom concern.
3. Make certain children come to school prepared. Regularly check children's homework notebook and school bags for homework and important notices.
4. Comply with all attendance, absence and make-up policy listed below. Whenever possible, notify the school 48 hours in advance if your child will be absent.
5. Choose two Shabbat services at Chabad of Westboro (one Friday night and one Shabbat morning) to attend with your child as part of the Hebrew School experience.

Hebrew School Responsibilities

1. Provide a positive and warm environment for your child.
2. Provide your child with a capable and knowledgeable teacher who is dedicated and concerned about your child's Jewish education.
3. Give your child knowledge of Hebrew, Torah, and Israel; expose them to Jewish holidays, history, customs and traditions; and teach them about Jewish heroes and heroines.
4. Keep you informed of your child's progress and class activities.
5. Provide your family with opportunities to learn, experience and enjoy our Jewish heritage.

Supplies

All textbooks and workbooks will be supplied by the school at the beginning of the school year. All books are to be treated with care and respect. If a book is lost, the parents will be charged the cost to replace it.

Tzedakah

Tzedakah (charity) is a concept which is basic to Judaism. Our school attempts to develop a commitment among our students to share with others less fortunate by donating a few pennies each day to charity. Parents are asked to provide young children with a coin for Tzedakah each Sunday. Older children should give Tzedakah from their allowance money.

Mitzvah Note

Teachers may ask parents of younger children to send in a **mitzvah note**. This is a note that relays **something special** that the child has done. Children look forward to hearing what their parents have to say. Please be sure to send in a Mitzvah Note if it is requested.

Homework

Students are encouraged to **practice** their **reading at home**. Parents should listen to their child's songs, stories, and Hebrew reading, as this will reinforce your involvement in your child's Jewish education. Try to make this a regular part of your ride home from Hebrew School or at other convenient times during the week, on a consistent basis.

At the beginning of the school year, students will receive a homework notebook. All assignments, projects, and any comments or requests the teacher wishes to pass on will be written in these notebooks. Parents are to **check** the **homework notebooks** weekly. These notebooks should be **signed** by a parent after the week's assignments are completed. Homework will consist of review, reinforcement, or completion of classroom assignments. Your positive reinforcement will help make the homework experience a positive one.

Attendance Policy:

Regular attendance is crucial to the success of your child's education.

There is a direct correlation between attendance and achievement, interest and attitude. Furthermore, coming late or leaving early disrupts the entire class and disrupts your child's classroom routine. Your support of our attendance policy is appreciated.

I. Student Absence

Parents should let the school know if their child will be missing school at least 48 hours in advance. In case of sudden injury or illness, G-d forbid, please call or email to notify the school. If it is already Sunday morning, please call Dvora on her cell phone: (646) 330-7772.

II. Make-up Work

Since time spent in Hebrew School is so limited, it is essential to keep up with work covered during class time. To help students get the most from their Hebrew School experience and to keep them on par with the rest of the class, Chabad Hebrew School expects students to make up any missed work.

It is the parent's responsibility to contact the teacher/director to make up the work missed. A list of teachers' contact information will be available at the beginning of the school year. The lesson can be completed via phone conference with the teacher and most worksheets will be available through email. Please make sure to contact the teacher/director by Tuesday to set up a make up session.

III. Late Drop-off/Early Pick up

Parents should notify the school 48 hours in advance if they are picking up their child early. When you arrive, please enter the building to get your child from his/her classroom. No child will be permitted to wait outside.

Illness

Please notify us in case of contagious sickness, G-d forbid, so that we may notify the parents of the other children in the class to be aware of the symptoms. Please also let us know of any changes in your child's health during the year e.g. vision, hearing etc. This will help us understand and cater to his/her needs.

First Aid

The teacher will attend to minor injuries. Should something more serious occur, G-d forbid, the parents will be contacted immediately. Should the parents be unavailable, the child will be taken to the nearest hospital.

Parent Absence

If, for any reason, parents will be away from home for any length of time, please advise the school. This is especially important if the absence is due to special conditions, such as hospitalization, which may be upsetting to the child.

School Records

Parents should notify the school promptly in writing of any change in address, telephone number, e-mail address, or other pertinent emergency contact information. Promptness and accuracy are necessary to keep records up to date and to communicate with parents.

Refund Policy

Registration fees are non-refundable. Should you decide to withdraw your child from Hebrew School before Nov. 1, you will receive a pro-rated refund of tuition, with each week prior to the withdrawal date being charged at \$35 per week. After Nov. 1, tuition will not be refunded.

There are no refunds or credits for days missed due to illness, holidays or family vacations.

Visitors

Parents wishing to visit the classrooms must make prior arrangements with the teacher. Teachers are not permitted to converse with parents while the class is in progress. However, they will be pleased to arrange an appointment or telephone conference. Students who wish to bring a guest to school should obtain permission from the teacher ahead of time.

How to Help Your Child

In order for our Hebrew School program to be most effective, the home and school must work hand in hand and promote a close partnership. The following are a few suggestions.

1. A growing child needs plenty of rest. Teachers report that often a sluggish, indifferent child in the classroom on Sunday will have been up late the night before. Please set a reasonable bedtime for Saturday night and be consistent.
2. Please provide your child with breakfast and/or a light snack before Hebrew School begins.
3. We appreciate that many of our students are involved in a variety of activities that may conflict, not only with one another, but also with Hebrew School. All aspects of your child's life are important, but we hope you will encourage them to truly value and prioritize their Jewish education.
4. Participation in synagogue services and celebration of Jewish holidays will greatly enhance your child's interest in Judaism and strengthen Jewish identity.
5. Regularly show your interest in your children's Jewish education by asking about their day at Hebrew School, what they have learned, whether they have any homework, and checking and signing their homework notebooks. This will greatly encourage a strong and positive attitude

CHABAD HEBREW SCHOOL 2009-2010 CALENDAR

SUNDAYS FROM 9:30-12:00

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	
September 13	First day of Hebrew School	Hebrew School in session – High Holiday Fair
September 20	Rosh Hashanah	High Holiday Children’s Program* 11:00 am – 12:00 pm
September 27	Erev (Pre) Yom Kippur	Special Yom Kippur Program 9:30 am – 10:30 am
October 4	Sukkot	Special Holiday Program* 11:00 am – 12:00 pm
October 11	Simchat Torah	Special Holiday Program* 11:00 am – 12:00 pm
October 18	Back to regular classes!	Hebrew School in session
October 25		Hebrew School in session
November 1		Hebrew School in session
November 8		Hebrew School in session
November 15		Hebrew School in session
November 22		Hebrew School in session
November 29	Thanksgiving Weekend	No Hebrew School
December 6		Hebrew School in session
December 13	Chanukah	Hebrew School in session
December 20		Hebrew School in session
December 27	Winter Break	No Hebrew School
January 3	Winter Break	No Hebrew School
January 10		Hebrew School in session
January 17		Hebrew School in session
January 24		Hebrew School in session
January 31		Hebrew School in session
February 7	Teachers’ Conference	No Hebrew School
February 14	President’s Week Break	No Hebrew School
February 21		Hebrew School in session
February 28	Purim	Hebrew School in session – Purim Carnival
March 7		Hebrew School in session
March 14		Hebrew School in session
March 21		Hebrew School in session
March 28	2 days before Passover	Pre-Passover Workshop 9:30 am – 11:00 am
April 4	Passover	No Hebrew School
April 11		Hebrew School in session
April 18	Spring Break	No Hebrew School
April 25		Hebrew School in session
May 2	Lag B’Omer	Hebrew School in session
May 9	Mother’s Day	Hebrew School in session
May 16		Hebrew School in session
May 23		Hebrew School in session
May 30	Memorial Day Weekend	No Hebrew School
June 6	Last day of school	Hebrew School Commencement

* Place to be announced, not at the regular Hebrew School location

2009-2010 CALENDAR OF SHABBAT SERVICES

Friday Evening Shabbat Services

On the dates listed below, the following Hebrew School classes will be leading the service at Chabad, 54 South Street, Westborough, at 6:30pm*.

October 2
 November 6
 December 4
 January 8
 March 5
 April 9
 May 7
 June 4

Shabbat Morning (Saturday) Services

Shabbat (Saturday) morning services will run from 10:30 am -12:00 pm. The children will become comfortable in a synagogue setting, will participate in a children’s program, and will have a chance to kiss the Torah and follow along while it is read.

On the dates listed below there will be a formal program for Hebrew School students at the Shabbat service.*

October 24
 November 14
 December 19
 January 30
 March 13
 April 24
 May 15
 June 5

*If you cannot attend when your child’s class is leading the service, you can join one of the other classes on a different week. The minimum requirement for Hebrew School is two services, one Friday night service and one Shabbat (Saturday) morning service, but you are always welcome to join us at any time! Chabad has Friday Night services on the first Friday of each month at 6:30 p.m., and Shabbat morning services every Saturday starting at 10 a.m.