

## **Jewish Studies Statement of Intent**

At BWJPS, Jewish Studies is integrated into all aspects of school life. We are committed to providing an inspiring Jewish education and to preparing our children to be active members of the Jewish and wider community. Our curriculum enables pupils to actively engage with Jewish texts and to experience and participate in Jewish practice. The use of ICT is a key part of our Jewish Studies curriculum. We aim to blend 21st century technology with Torah learning and to make Jewish learning exciting and engaging. We also focus strongly on social action and the importance of Tzedakah. We want our pupils to be able to confidently articulate their Jewish identity whilst being knowledgeable and respectful of others.

### **The aims of our curriculum:**

- To develop within the pupils a positive commitment and passion for Jewish and British Values
- To give pupils the skills and knowledge needed to be able to lead a full Jewish life
- To make Jewish Studies meaningful and relevant to the pupils through practical experiences and experiential learning
- To give pupils the confidence to explore their own personal relationship with Hashem and to express it in various ways
- To develop within the pupils exemplary character traits (middos) linked to the study of role models from the Torah
- To instil a sense of community in order to foster a lifelong incentive to be actively involved in Jewish and wider communal life

### **The aim of teaching Hebrew Reading:**

The Hebrew language is used for prayer and studying at all levels and ages, hence the reason to learn it in our school. Being able to learn the language and know the letters and vowels enables a Jew to connect with and participate in prayer and study. The letters and vowels are the foundation of our written texts in every area of the Kodesh curriculum.

## **Implementation: Curriculum Strands**

### **Tefillah**

All children have a daily davening session each morning, either as a class, Key Stage, or whole school. Benching takes place each day after lunch. During davening, children are guided & supported to make a personal connection to Hashem. Understanding the Tefillos is essential in making davening meaningful and relevant to the children. In Year 2 the children receive their first Siddur, at a special Siddur Ceremony.

### **Jewish Year**

The children celebrate and learn about the Yomim Tovim as they occur throughout the year. They learn about the history, laws and customs connected to the festival. Experiential learning forms a key part of the Jewish Year curriculum and our children enjoy lots of practical and hands on workshops, e.g. matzo baking/olive oil press. In EYFS, strands of our Jewish Year curriculum are integrated with the secular curriculum and children learn about the Yomim Tovim through Music, Art, Technology, English and Maths as well as through specific Jewish Studies sessions. Shabbos is celebrated with a lively weekly Shabbos party in each Key Stage. KS2 begin the week, with Havdalah and Krias HaTorah, led by guest Rabbonim.

### **Reading**

In Nursery, the children start to learn the aleph beis phonically as well as letter recognition. Our aleph beis curriculum is exciting, multi-sensory and linked with the EYFS curriculum. Hebrew words and numbers are introduced. From Reception onwards, the children develop their reading accuracy and fluency through the use of the highly motivating Aleph Champ programme and through the texts of the Siddur and Tehillim.

## **Writing**

In Reception and KS1, the writing of block letters is seen as a reading reinforcement and not as an end in itself. In Year 3, the children are introduced to Hebrew script and develop this skill throughout KS2.

## **Ivrit**

Ivrit is taught separately as a Modern Foreign Language. Where relevant, there are close links between the Ivrit lessons and Jewish Studies curriculum.

## **Sedra**

The children have a weekly Sedra lesson in which they become familiar with stories from the Torah. In addition they participate in discussions and activities about the ethical and moral values (middos and mitzvos) that they can learn from these events. We focus on helping children to see the relevance of the Torah, to our own lives. Singing, art and drama are incorporated into these lessons. Our children are encouraged to share their learning with their families during Shabbos, through the weekly Parsha sheet.

## **Chumash**

In Year 3 the children learn chumash readiness skills such as how to find the place in a chumash and how to use gematrias (numerical value of Hebrew letters). In Year 4, the children receive their first chumash at a special Chumash Ceremony. Throughout KS2, we use the JCP Chumash curriculum which provides a wide range of exciting resources.

## **Jewish Way of Life**

The children have the opportunity to explore and experience Judaism and understand the importance of middos, mitzvos and derech erez (respect). They learn about aspects of the Jewish Way of Life such as Shabbos, kashrus, brachos, the Jewish home etc. Practical workshops and real life experiences form an essential part of this strand of the curriculum, including a residential Shabbaton for upper KS2.

Tzedoko is a key focus at BWJPS. Children are encouraged to care for others from a young age. They bring in money for Tzedoko and take part in many charitable initiatives both within and outside the Jewish community e.g. Mitzvah Day, Camp Simcha Toy Drive, Children in Need and local initiatives.

We have links with Heathlands Residential Home and our children enjoy entertaining the residents and also to learn from their rich life experiences.

## **Impact of Jewish Studies**

On leaving Year 6, ideally pupils will:

- Have a strong connection to Hashem as creator and a belief in His involvement in the world.
- Value the Torah as a Divine gift and its practices as a guide to how we should live our lives.
- Be proud of their Jewish identity
- Understand that they are a crucial link in the chain of Jewish heritage
- Understand the value of every human being and be respectful to all, regardless of their beliefs, differences and life choices.
- Appreciate the significance of Israel as a land and as a state.
- Continue their Jewish education – either formally, or informally.
- Continue to contribute both to the Jewish community and to the wider community.
- Be able to read Hebrew fluently and accurately.
- Feel comfortable following a shul service.
- Perform mitzvos and minhagim, relating to Shabbos, Yom Tov, kashrus, the Jewish home and the life cycle.
- Be familiar with the lives of key Torah personalities.
- Have a basic knowledge of Hebrew vocabulary.