



Bar & Bat Mitzvah Programme Prospectus 2022 – 2023

Welcome

Dear Parents,

Welcome to an amazing year for you and your child, as they celebrate their coming of age as a Bat Mitzvah Girl or a Bar Mitzvah Boy.

The Bat / Bar Mitzvah year is a special time in a family's life. It is also a very special time for the Shul, as we welcome new young 'adults' into our community in their own right.

While participation in the Shul's Bar and Bat Mitzvah programme is a requirement for those wishing to celebrate their simcha with the community, we hope you will see that it is also a fantastic opportunity for your child to develop a deeper connection to their community, traditions and faith.

It is also a chance for the whole family to connect with the community, as you share your experiences with other families who will be celebrating a simcha in the same year.

In the following pages we will outline the goals of the programme, what you can expect from it and, in our FAQ, some of the all-important logistical information you will need.

Please read on and feel free to reach out to us if you have any queries that are not answered here.

The Bar & Bat Mitzvah Programme Team
BBMProgramme@woodsidepark.org.uk

Rabbi Yitzi Blachman
Assistant Rabbi

Sorele Cohen
Youth Director

Gidon Ohana
Lay Programme Co-ordinator

Rosalind Zeffertt
Office Assistant

What You Can Expect:

The Bar & Bat Mitzvah programme is made up of approximately 20 sessions that will each connect to one of three main themes.

1. Festivals - sessions will include:

Sukkot – The programme kicks off with ‘shawarma in the Sukkah’ for parents & participants

Chanukah – ‘A light unto the nations’

Purim – Preparing food parcels for the needy with US Chesed, & Megillah reading

Pesach – Baking Matza ‘against the clock’

Yom HaAtzmaut – Communal Celebration

2. Jewish Society - sessions will include:

Gift Charity - Kosher shopping on a budget & packing food parcels for the needy

Stand With US – Israel Advocacy

Yad Vashem - Bar / Bat Mitzvah Twinning Project

3. Practical Judaism - sessions will include:

GPS through the Siddur – how to find your way through a service

Explanatory Service – demystifying the Shabbat service

The Torah – Answering 21st century questions with ancient texts

Girls Only Sessions – Challah Baking & Candles ... the deeper meaning of these traditions

Boys Only Sessions – Tefillin & Tzitzit ... the what, the why and the how

Friday Night – Special Friday night service & dinner for participants, parents & their siblings

We hope your child will gain a great deal from the programme and that their participation will also help you connect with the community in this special year for your family

Programme Goals

The Bar and Bat Mitzvah programme has three main aims:

Connecting to our History:

To provide your child with a deeper understanding of their place in a Jewish community that has endured for thousands of years and how its traditions remain relevant to them to this day.

Connecting to our Community:

To create a greater sense of connection between your child and their community, providing them with a friendship circle with whom they can share Shul life for years to come.

Connecting to our Traditions:

Bringing some of the most important Jewish traditions and practices to life, in a practical and engaging way, which will help your child feel at home in Shul and confident to participate in communal life.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Who is the Programme for?

The programme is for children who are due to celebrate their Bat or Bar Mitzvah between September 2022 and August 2023 – that is, Girls entering Year 7 and Boys entering year 8 in September 2022.

How many sessions will there be?

There will be approximately 20 sessions. Once a fortnight during school term time.

On which night of the week will sessions take place?

Thursday nights

What time will sessions start and end?

Start 7pm – End 8.30pm

Where will sessions take place?

Most sessions will take place on the Woodside Park Shul Campus. Some sessions run by outside organisations, such as those run by the Gift charity, may take place off site. Full details will be provided well in advance of these sessions.

Who will lead the programme?

The 2022-23 programme will be led by Rabbi Yitzi Blachman, Assistant Rabbi and Sorele Cohen, Youth Director. In addition, Rabbi & Gila Hackenbroch and a range of outside organisations / speakers will lead individual sessions.

How much will the programme cost?

The Community pays for the vast majority of costs associated with the programme, but we ask participants to pay a registration fee to cover the cost of materials and refreshments for the sessions. **Members Fee: £50 | Non-members Fee: £100**

Are there any other costs?

Some sessions or special events (such as the Friday night meal) will be charged for individually. Full details will be provided well in advance of these sessions.

Will my child still need a Bar or Bat Mitzvah teacher?

Yes. The programme does not replace the need for a teacher to help a boy prepare to read his portion or a girl to learn for a Dvar Torah in Shul.

Is the programme compulsory?

Yes. Our Rabbis and communal leaders believe it is vital that our younger members have the opportunity to connect with the community in this crucial year of their Jewish life. If you have special circumstances which will prevent your child from attending all of the sessions, please contact the Shul office to discuss these.

My child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah is early in the year – should they complete the programme after their simcha?

Yes. The programme is intended to complement their simcha year, rather than prepare them for the big day.

My child has special needs – is the programme still open to them?

Yes. We will work with you to make adjustments to facilitate their participation as far as possible.

How do I book my child's place on the programme?

Please book online via the United Synagogue events portal using [this link](#)

Is there a deadline to book?

To help us prepare, please book online by Sunday 31 July 2022.

When will the first session take place?

Thursday 13 October 2022 - the first session will be 'Shawarma in the Sukkah'. A session for parents and Bat / Bar Mitzvah children to learn more about the programme and the year ahead. Dates for all subsequent sessions will be shared following registration.

Any other questions?

If you have any other questions about the programme, please contact Rosalind Zeffertt via bbmprogramme@woodsidepark.org.uk and she will be happy to answer or redirect your query.