

**Congregation Beth Shalom
Rabbi Michael Beals
Cantor Elisa Abrams
1801 Baynard Blvd.
Wilmington, DE 19802
(302) 654-4462**

Parent Handbook

5777/2016-2017

**Cantor Elisa Abrams
Education Director**

www.bethshalomwilmington.org

“Oh how good it is when brothers and sisters
can dwell together in harmony.” – *Tehillim* (Psalms) 133:1

August 4, 2016

Dear Parents and CBS Community Members,

This Parent Handbook is designed to give you insight into the vision of Congregation Beth Shalom's Hebrew School. As you will see, this guide outlines the goals and policies of our school and emphasizes the value of life-long learning.

CBS's Hebrew School is one that seeks to reach out to every aspect of our dynamic synagogue population. Our high quality school enriches the lives of growing families in our community and encourages a life-long commitment to Jewish values and customs. Many of our graduates choose to come back to serve as *ozrim* (teaching assistants) and serve as role models for those younger than them.

As the Director of Education, I will strive to maintain and surpass the high educational standards of our school, serve as a resource to our teaching staff, and always remain open to new ideas and feedback. Our Hebrew School will continue to offer an inclusive, high quality, and advanced approach to Jewish education that helps foster a deep love, appreciation, and commitment to our tradition. Our inspiring faculty prides itself on creating a top-notch experiential, interactive, and nurturing Jewish education that inspires students to lead meaningful Jewish lives.

I am very excited to start what promises to be another great year filled with learning, song, and prayer!

Warmly,

Cantor Elisa Abrams
Cantor and Education Director
Congregation Beth Shalom
Wilmington, Delaware

Congregation Beth Shalom Mission Statement

Congregation Beth Shalom is an egalitarian, Conservative synagogue committed to the worship of God, to the ideals and precepts of Torah, and to lifelong education. We are a welcoming Jewish community that promotes the observance of sacred times, the celebration of life cycle events, and acts of loving kindness. We are committed to social justice, interfaith dialogue, and the perpetuation of the State of Israel.

Family Education Programs

Family education sessions are scheduled two-three times each year to bring together parents and children for joint learning. This is an opportunity to teach to both generations together, and to complement some aspect of the grade curriculum. Children from the same grade at AEA, and their parents, are invited to each session. In previous years, some teachers have taught lessons on a wide variety of topics including Hebrew names, blessings, family recipes, the Jewish calendar, Massada, Kristallnacht, Bedouins in Israel, etc., in addition to many that focused on holiday customs and traditions.

A Note about the Hebrew School Calendar

The most current version of our Hebrew School Calendar can always be found on the Beth Shalom website. We try to follow the calendar as written and keep changes to a minimum, but inevitably there will be some changes as the year progresses. Often these occur because of other conflicts within the synagogue or community, sometimes because of planned teacher absences. We will always try to notify you of changes in a timely manner.

School Policies and Procedures

Communicable illness, including head lice

If a child shows signs of any communicable disease, including but not limited to fever, pinkeye, head lice, vomiting or flu, the child will be removed from the classroom and isolated, and parents will be called to pick up their child. Children will be allowed back into class when they are free of the symptoms, or in the case of head lice, after they have been treated.

Books and other school supplies

It is very important that children bring their folders and books with them to school each day. We generally do not have a lot of extra texts on hand. Some books remain in the classrooms and are not sent home. Although we include the cost of texts in the tuition for each grade, parents may purchase an additional set of text for their child if they wish to.

Snacks

We serve snack to children at around 5:15pm on Tuesday and around 10:40am on Sunday. We suggest providing your own snack for your child(ren) in carpool on Tuesday afternoons.

Food in the classrooms

Normally we do not allow eating in the classrooms, only water bottles. The only exception is when the food is part of a class activity. Gum chewing is not allowed.

Food and Medicine Allergies and Sensitivities

For your child's safety, information that you have supplied to us on the registration form regarding allergies or sensitivities will be posted in a public location unless you request otherwise.

Monthly Parent Letters and Progress Reports

Each month you will receive an email update from the teachers. Twice each year, in January and in May, you will receive your child's progress reports.

Shabbat attendance

We encourage Shabbat service attendance on Friday nights and on Saturday morning. On Sunday mornings, the teachers will check for attendance that weekend. Please be sure to have your child let the classroom teacher know if he/she attended services at Beth Shalom or any other synagogue. If you attend with your child, you will be showing by your own example how important this is!

Many synagogues have requirements for children to attend Shabbat services each year, usually beginning around second grade. This requirement builds up to the pre-B'nei Mitzvah year, when children are required to attend a large number of Shabbat services. Below is the Shabbat service requirement for CBS Hebrew School students:

2 nd grade	4 Shabbat services
3 rd grade	6 Shabbat services
4 th grade	8 Shabbat services
5 th grade	10 Shabbat services
6 th grade	12 Shabbat services
Kehillah (7 th Grade)	18 Shabbat Services

This standard can be met by attending Hebrew School on Shabbat days or any other Friday night or Saturday morning service. Attendance will be taken on Sunday mornings.

Adult Volunteers

Parents, we need your help as volunteers in our school, and we ask that each of you sign up to assist us at least once during the year. Here's how you will be helping us and your children.

The Parent Teacher Advisory Committee
Being a Shabbat Buddy
Setting up/Clearing up at the Model Seder
Setting up/Clearing up at the Charoset Contest
Setting up/Clearing up at Shabbaton Luncheons
Setting up/Clearing up at the Tu B'Shvat Seder
Fund-raising
Tutoring a student in Hebrew
Chaperoning a field trip

When your children see that you are giving your own time to support the school and the synagogue, it tells them that you consider their Jewish education a priority for your family.

I guarantee that this will be a rewarding experience!

Todah rabbah, thank you so very much!

BEHAVIOR AND SAFETY FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

There is a Jewish value called *Dereh Eretz*, which literally means the path or way of the land. It usually refers to proper behavior, something much more than just manners. In the Beth Shalom Hebrew School, we believe that by teaching our children a way in which they are expected to behave we will all have a much more positive experience. In addition, this behavior will promote the safety of all of our children.

Children at Beth Shalom Hebrew School are expected to behave in a manner which shows respect to other children, teachers and all staff members, and others in the Congregation. Children are also expected to respect our newly renovated building and property.

Rules for Students

Respect the bodies and belongings of others.

Follow safety rules and instructions.

Be polite. Teasing and bullying will not be tolerated.

Do not leave a class or school activity without permission of a staff person.

Running and wild horseplay within the building or in the garden are not allowed.

Children may not wander in the building unsupervised.

Cellphones are not allowed, nor is gum-chewing.

Rules for Dismissal

Wait inside the building until a staff person is outside.

Remain on the sidewalk until given permission to leave. Children will only be allowed to go to one of the first 3 cars (up to the post). Children may also play in the garden, but jumping off the rocks is not allowed. Children will not be dismissed from the 18th St. door.

Parents, you may wait in the carpool line, or you may park your car and go in to get your child(ren). Do not instruct your children to go beyond the post. If you are in carpool line and need to wait for a child, you may be directed to move your car up so as not to hold up the line.

If you need to pick your child up early, please send a note, email, or call Cantor Elisa. Please come in to pick up your child and sign your child out on the clipboard at the Education Office. Children must wait in their classrooms for early pick up.

September, 2016

Child

Parent

Contacting the School

Main Synagogue Number: 302-654-4462

Cantor Elisa – extension 19

Matthia McCracken – extension 15

Note that the main synagogue number will go directly to voice mail after 5:00 on weekdays and for the entire weekend.

Cantor Elisa- eabrams@cbswilmde.org

Matthia McCracken – mmccracken@cbswilmde.org

In case of inclement weather please tune to WDEL 1150AM or WSTW 93.7 for “Snowatch” updates and closure information. We will also make every effort to send closure information via text or using our Hebrew School email list.