



Towards a Kodesh (Jewish Religious Studies) Curriculum Policy

This Kodesh curriculum is a working document in progress. It will be developed in stages over the next few years in conjunction with the Headteacher, the Head of Kodesh, the kodesh staff, the school Principal and the education committee. The Headteacher is the current Head of Kodesh. It is anticipated that the permanent Head of Kodesh will be appointed within the next two years. We will look at best practice in other schools, liaise with external educational organisations and consult reputable kodesh educational websites (eg www.e-chinuch.org, www.torahschool.co.uk). We will be developing a kodesh curriculum unique to the requirements of our school community. Our kodesh curriculum will include best kodesh and secular teaching practice.

General Principles

- We provide 40% kodesh teaching time. This includes the time allocated for davening (daily prayers) and Friday Oneg Shabbos assembly.
- Boys and girls learn kodesh together. We have not yet fully developed our Year 5 and 6 kodesh curriculum. When the curriculum involves studying Jewish texts that are traditionally not studied by girls, then we will offer the girls an equivalent textual alternative.
- We use the Ashkenazy Hebrew pronunciation. Children who are used to using a Sephardi pronunciation from home will not be overtly corrected as if they have made a mistake. However, they will be encouraged to use the school pronunciation.
- Kodesh teaching includes the study of traditional Hebrew texts. The language of instruction is English.
- Where possible, we employ fully qualified staff (teachers with QTS, Nursery Practitioners with a minimum NVQ2) to teach kodesh. Any unqualified staff are required to be able to join the GTP teacher training programme when appropriate.
- We teach Ivrit (Modern Hebrew) separate from the kodesh curriculum.
- All school policies (curricular, pupil and staff etc.) equally apply to kodesh and chol.
- We will be developing a skills-based curriculum whereby the children's cumulative acquisition of knowledge will be complemented by an equivalent growing skill base.
- Throughout the school, we prioritise Speaking & Listening and independent English writing across all the subject areas, including kodesh. The Speaking and Listening whole school curriculum will be developed year by year with the relevant staff so that some areas will be covered in secular lessons, whilst other areas will be covered in kodesh lessons.
- We will assess Speaking & Listening and English writing in both secular and kodesh lessons.
- We will be developing an integrated whole school curriculum map to include both kodesh (Jewish studies) and chol (secular studies). Topics in both kodesh and chol will be chosen to be taught at times to complement each other (for example Egyptians and Pesach, Tu B'Shvat and plant growth).
- We will adapt the JSCP (see below) level descriptors for assessing kodesh.
- We will develop our complete kodesh curriculum using the principles of best practice by liaising with other schools and organisations. This will include liaising with feeder schools and working towards their Year 7 kodesh requirements.

- We provide for the children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the various kodesh curriculum strands, in particular via the Mitzvah/Middoh intensive study in the weekly Sedra (Bible portion).
- We recognise the close link between kodesh and PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education) and will therefore be developing the school’s PSHCE curriculum in conjunction with the kodesh curriculum.
- The Head of Kodesh also has responsibility for whole school PSHCE.

Jewish Studies Curriculum Partnership (JSCP) and Agency for Jewish Education (AJE)

- **We are part of the Jewish Studies Curriculum Partnership (JSCP). As such we use their kodesh learning and teaching materials, adapting them and augmenting them for the needs of our school community.**
- **The JSCP develop curricular and assessment materials for Sedra, Yom Tov, Chumash and Hebrew Reading.**
- **The JSCP is an initiative of the Agency for Jewish Education (AJE).**
- **We work closely with the AJE especially with regard to teaching resources, staff training and staff recruitment.**

Curriculum Strands

Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1 (Y1 – Y2)	Key Stage 2 (Y3 – Y6)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Davening (daily prayer) • Sedra / Parashas Hashavua (weekly Bible portion) • Yom Tov (Jewish Festivals) • General Knowledge and Jewish Daily Living (halocho, practice and customs) • Hebrew Reading (Reception) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Davening (daily prayer) • Sedra /Parashas Hashavua (weekly Bible Portion) • Yom Tov (Jewish Festivals) • General Knowledge and Jewish Daily Living (halocho, practice and customs) • Hebrew Reading • Hebrew Writing inc script • Hebrew Script (Year 2) • Chumash Readiness (Y2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Davening (daily prayer) • Sedra / Parashas Hashavua (weekly Bible Portion) • Yom Tov (Jewish Festivals) • General Knowledge and Jewish Daily Living (halocho, practice and customs) • Hebrew Reading inc script • Hebrew Writing inc script • Chumash • Jewish History inc Nach • Mishnah/Gemorrah (Talmud)

Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception)

- We use the QCA document “Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage” to inform planning in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- We offer an integrated kodesh – chol (secular) curriculum in the Foundation Stage classes (Nursery and Reception).
 - The rhythm of the Jewish year and the weekly Sedra (Bible portion) influence the teaching topics chosen and the order in which they are taught.
 - As much as possible, there is seamless teaching and learning between kodesh and chol.
 - Our integrated kodesh / chol Foundation Stage curriculum follows the QCA Foundation Stage curriculum guidance.

- We employ Foundation Stage staff who have the knowledge and skills to deliver both the kodesh and chol curriculum.

Hebrew Reading and Writing

- We start to teach Alef-Beis reading in Reception, after the Succos/Simchas Torah holiday.
- We believe that the ultimate aim of teaching Hebrew reading is that the children should be able to read and daven with accuracy and fluency.
- We give the children enough time to gradually develop their Hebrew reading confidence, and therefore their fluency, without putting them under pressure to rush through the programme.
- We involve the children's families in their Hebrew reading development. We expect the children to be practising regularly at home.
- We start teaching the children in the following order:
 - learn the names of the letters Alef – Yud
 - learn the sounds of the initial vowels
 - learn the sounds of the letters Alef – Yud
 - blend consonant and vowel (CV) – use Alef-Beis circles as a resource
 - continue to learn the names and sounds of the rest of the letters whilst gaining CV and CVC blending fluency
 - move onto the Reishas Da'as (UK) reading programme
 - use Alef-Binoh as a further reading resource to develop consolidation and fluency
- We use a variety of teaching styles, strategies and resources in order to prevent Hebrew reading being perceived as 'boring' by the children.
- We adopt a largely phonic approach to Hebrew reading. However, we also build up the children's Hebrew Chumash and Siddur sight reading vocabulary through the curriculum.
- Children read 'key-words' associated with the weekly sedra and the topical chag.
- Where possible, we integrate the teaching of Hebrew reading skills with other kodesh learning for example comparing silent and voiced schwa by looking at the names of Yaakov's wives and children.
- We assess the children's Hebrew reading using learning outcomes. This framework of assessment will be developed in 2007/8 together with assistance from Binoh.
- We keep individual and whole class records of attainment in a similar manner as our secular pupil assessment and record keeping.
- We start to teach Alef Beis block writing in Year 1.
- We start to teach Hebrew script reading and writing in Year 2.
- We teach Rashi script reading from Year 4.
- We will look for examples of best practice from other schools regarding Hebrew reading resources and teaching programmes. Examples from the Kerem kodesh website (www.torahschool.co.uk) include:
 - <http://www.torahschool.co.uk/KeySkills/Rashi-Flashcards.htm>
(Rashi letters interactive flashcards)
 - <http://www.torahschool.co.uk/KeySkills/Rashi-Flashcards2.htm>
(Rashi words interactive flashcards)
 - <http://www.torahschool.co.uk/Reading%20Practice%20Record%20Cards.htm>
(Hebrew Reading homework cards)

Davening (Daily Prayer)

- We are developing a progressive skill acquisition davening and benching curriculum.
- Children are introduced into more areas of the davening and benching during the course of each year.
- Children daven Shacharis in Foundation Stage and KS1.

- Children daven Shacharis and Mincha in KS2.
- We strive to make davening both a spiritual and creative experience, introducing music where appropriate. This helps the children to enjoy the experience of davening and to daven with kavonoh (understanding, intent and emotion).
- Through the davening curriculum, it is our aim that the children will be able to:
 - become familiar and comfortable with basic tephillos (prayers)
 - daven with understanding
 - daven with kannonoh
 - navigate the siddur to find key tephillos (prayers)
 - participate actively and confidently in their synagogues' children's services
 - feel comfortable and able to follow and participate in a main synagogue service
- In KS2, we introduce the children to Tehillim (Psalms).
- Where necessary, we vary the tephillos (prayers) that the children daven in order that they cover a wide davening curriculum without having to rush their davening.
- We re-enforce the relevance of the children's davening by teaching them the meaning of tephillos (prayers) during kodesh teaching time.
- Anim Zmiros (Y3 and Y4) and leining (Y5 and Y6) will be offered as extra curricular 'clubs'.

Sedra

- We teach Sedra from Nursery to Year 6 within the framework of a spiral curriculum. We are adapting the JSCP sedra teaching materials, adapting them and augmenting them for the needs of our school community.
 - We identify key content learning points for each Sedra for each year group. This means that the children learn progressively more information about each Sedra as they progress through the school.
 - Where appropriate, we will be utilising the JSCP topic grids which identify specific episodes to study in greater depth in the different year groups.
 - Where appropriate, we will be utilising the JSCP mitzvoh/middoh grids which identify a specific mitzvoh/middoh/value to be learnt through the Sedra learning in each year group. This will form an integral part of our PSHCE teaching.

Sedra Teaching

- We encourage teachers to use creative and imaginative teaching styles and strategies (props, role play, hot seating, conscience alley etc) whilst teaching Sedra, in particular those that reflect the National Curriculum Speaking and Listening objectives.
- When available, we hire the *Bible Sack* Sedra teaching resources from the AJE.
- We adopt good teaching practice principles from National Curriculum History teaching.
- All sedra teaching incorporates a mitzvoh or middoh that is part of the school's PSHCE curriculum.
- Foundation Stage Sedra teaching always involves a Sedra take home craft project.
 - This Sedra craft reflects at least one of the key content learning points for that week.
 - We design the Sedra craft activities to include Foundation Stage / National Curriculum objectives. The Sedra craft is designed so that it can be used as a prop for family Shabbos discussion. Where appropriate and relevant, this Sedra activity integrates English writing.
 - We don't give the children colouring pictures for their Sedra craft.
- Foundation Stage and KS1 children take home Sedra questions each week. These questions are set towards the end of the week and reflect the general content of the class discussion during the week.

- Children in KS1 participate in Sedra activities, many of which are completed in their Sedra exercise books. This activity reflects at least one of the key content learning points for that week. Where appropriate and relevant, this Sedra activity integrates English writing using NLS writing objectives. Children take their Sedra exercise books home for family Shabbos discussion.
- KS1 sedra teaching includes related Hebrew reading skills and Chumash key word reading. The key words are displayed in the classroom all week & are also sent home.
- We cover specific and identified objectives of the Speaking and Listening curriculum via the whole school Sedra curriculum. The equivalent kodesh and chol staff liaise together when drawing up their long term and medium term plans for Speaking and Listening. This curricular mapping will be fully developed by the staff concerned.
- KS2 children take home material suitable for delivering a short family Dvar Torah. This material will have been discussed and developed as part of the week's teaching.
- We never ask KS2 children to copy out a Dvar Torah as a school or home exercise.
- KS2 Sedra teaching always includes some original source text work, including at least one *Rashi* from Year 4 onwards.
- We set a written Sedra homework assignment each week in KS2. This is not limited to questions and answers. We set a variety of written assignments over the year that cover the National Curriculum writing objectives. Where practical and possible, this will include the current class writing objectives eg writing dialogue; writing poetry; writing short plays; writing newspaper articles etc.
- In Sedra teaching, as much as possible, we teach the *p'shat* (simple explanation of the text, according to Rashi). We always make it clear to the children when we are not teaching *p'shat*.

Assessment of Sedra Learning

- We assess the children's Sedra learning using expected learning outcomes for the study of Torah. We will modify and augment the JSCP expected learning outcomes according to the requirements of the school community.

Chumash

- We will be developing a Chumash readiness programme to start in Year 2.
 - This will introduce the children to core Chumash vocabulary and grammar in order to aid their confidence when reading & translating authentic Chumash text.
 - Excellent resources include the P'tach Chumash Vocabulary programme (<http://www.torahschool.co.uk/288%20Chumash%20Vocabulary%20Flashcards.htm>); Milim MiSefer Beraishis (available at www.e-chinuch.org), the JSCP Chumash Curriculum Framework (AJE) and the Lashon Hatorah workbooks.
 - Teaching Chumash skills before starting direct Chumash translation will also help the children to learn Chumash whilst at the same time, understanding and appreciating the events about which they are reading.
 - We anticipate that children will start learning Chumash in the Year 2 summer term (after Pesach).

We will always teach Chumash knowledge alongside Chumash skills. The children will learn 'where they are' in Chumash as well as how to translate the pesukim. One model (Kerem School) of teaching Chumash is well described and evaluated at the following websites:

http://www.torahschool.co.uk/KeySkills/Our_method.htm

http://www.torahschool.co.uk/ChumashCurriculum_Points.htm

http://www.torahschool.co.uk/KeySkills/teachers_notes.htm

This model reflects a style of teaching that allows for children's different learning styles and abilities and allows for an inclusion of a constant variety of activities in addition to straight translation. It will be the responsibility of the Head of Kodesh, in conjunction with the Headteacher, school Principal and education committee, to develop and implement an appropriate philosophy and model of a Chumash teaching programme for Edgware Jewish Primary School.

- Good Key Stage 2 Chumash vocabulary and grammar programmes and resources include:
 - The Kerem School Jewish Literacy Programme (<http://www.torahschool.co.uk/The%20Kerem%20School%20Jewish%20Literacy%20Programme.htm>)
 - The Avigdor Primary School Kodesh Curriculum
 - The Lashon HaTorah workbooks
 - The JSCP Chumash Curriculum Framework (AJE)
- We will develop our Chumash curriculum over the next few years, based on the JSSM Avigdor Primary School curriculum and in liaison with the JSCP who wish to assist us in modifying their published Chumash Curriculum Framework to meet the needs of our school community. The development of the chumash curriculum will be the responsibility of the Head of Kodesh.

Yom Tov / Chagim (Jewish Festivals)

- For each Yom Tov, we identify information regarding laws, customs, festival names, history, dates, tephillos (prayers) etc that the children should learn in each year group.
- This is a spiral accumulation of knowledge as the children progress through the school.
- We always revise and consolidate previously learnt knowledge before introducing new information.
- We assess individual and whole class learning using a variety of assessment techniques and strategies.
- We assess the children's Yom Tov learning using expected learning outcomes for the study of the Chagim.
- We have already identified that we will need to modify and augment the JSCP expected learning outcomes according to the requirements of the school community. This will be the responsibility of the Head of Kodesh (when appointed).

General Knowledge and Jewish Daily Living

- We will develop a Nursery – Year 6 programme of Jewish General Knowledge and Daily Living (halocho, custom and practice) that will allow the children to become literate, knowledgeable and proud of their culture and heritage.
- This will take the form of topic study (from Year One) as well as incidental learning.
- Where appropriate, the General Knowledge and Jewish Daily Living curriculum will be integrated into the Sedra and Chumash teaching programme in order to contextualise the learning.
- The General Knowledge and Jewish Daily Living curriculum will be put together with the assistance of the school's Principal as well as using information from the Avigdor Primary School kodesh curriculum.

Kodesh and inclusion

- At our school, we teach kodesh to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. Kodesh forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our kodesh teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the

needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. Further details about our learning and teaching are detailed in our see separate policies: Learning and Teaching; Special Educational Needs; Gifted and Talented; English as an Additional Language (EAL).

- When a child's progress falls significantly outside the expected range, a child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation etc – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. Assessment against our agreed kodesh learning outcomes allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.
- Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to kodesh.
- When children join the school in a later year group, in conjunction with the child's parents, we offer additional support to help the child catch up with the level of the class.
- We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning kodesh.
- Where children are to participate in off-site activities, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.
- Teaching assistants provide help by using:
 - texts that children can more easily read and understand;
 - visual and written materials in different formats;
 - ICT and other technological aids;
 - alternative communication, such as signs and symbols;
 - translators and amanuenses.

10. Equal Opportunities (please refer further to our Equal Opportunities / Racial Equality policy)

- We believe that every pupil should have the opportunity to achieve the highest possible standards.
- We ensure that all children, irrespective of their ethnicity, attainment and ability, age, disability, gender or background, have equality of access to learning.
- The curriculum we offer in the school encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as to people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.
- We recognise that children have different learning styles, making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities.
- We ensure that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning.

Signed: *Sara J. Harris* (Headteacher) *Eddy Breuer-Weil* (Chair of Governors)

Date: October 2007