

JEWISH PRACTICE IN KING DAVID SCHOOLS

This document serves to capture the practice of Judaism within the King David Schools. The Constitution of the South African Board of Jewish Education [SABJE] deems the King David Schools to be responsible for “establishing schools which promote Jewish Education”. Jewish Education, as defined by the Constitution means “the continuation of Jewish and Zionist Education based on traditional and customary Orthodox lines and the recognition of the centrality of the State of Israel to the Jewish People”.

In translating these objectives of the South African Board of Jewish Education into practice, one must be cognizant of the dynamic nature of the schools. As the schools strive to raise the bar in education, so too, over the years, the schools have enhanced the Judaism learnt and the practice there of, while at all times striving to adhere to Orthodox Halacha and take guidance in this regard from the Beth Din. The purpose of this document is to avoid any misconceptions when parents enroll their children in the schools. The Admissions Form states that learners will have to keep to all curriculum requirements and this includes the study of Hebrew and Jewish Studies, as well as the practices described in this document.

1. THE YEARLY CYCLE

All festivals and commemorative days form an integral part of the school ambiance. The Primary School curriculum strives to teach to this cycle and all the schools put the theory into practice in different ways in an age-appropriate manner. The following days are celebrated and commemorated. More details about each will be communicated by the school before the particular day.

1. Tu B'shvat: is normally early in the year. A time when nature is celebrated with the planting of trees or other activities that connect us to nature and our Land.
2. Purim: Very little formal schooling takes place on this day as all celebrations and activities focus on Purim.
3. Pesach: The schools are always closed for Pesach. This includes Chol Hamoed, the intermediate days.
4. Sefirat HaOmer: The school keeps the mourning period from Rosh Chodesh Iyar until 3 days before Shavuot as per the South African custom. This affects the playing of music, musicals or other events which use music, in the schools.
5. Yom Hashoa, Yom Hazikaron, Yom Ha'atzmaut and Yom Yerushalayim: Ceremonies or assemblies are held for all and Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's day of Independence, is celebrated during the entire or most of a school day.
6. Shavuot: This is a Yom Tov, no school is conducted on these two days.

7. The 3 weeks: This is a period of mourning during the 3rd term. There is no music, dance or plays during this time. Tuckshops do not serve meat in the 9 days before Tisha B'Av.
8. Tisha B'Av : Tuckshops close on a fast day.
9. Rosh Hashana / Yom Kippur : School is closed.
10. Sukkot: The schools do sometimes open during the Chol Hamoed (intermediate days) period.

2. SHABBAT

1. No school activities take place on Shabbat, nor do learners or members of staff represent the School on Shabbat (from Friday sundown until Saturday night, stars out).
2. Sport and activities end early enough on a Friday for learners to get home before Shabbat.
3. A Shabbaton is held for each Grade from Grade 6 to 11 each year. These are run by the DIJE (Department of Information Jewish Education). Encounter in Grade 11 is over an entire week.
4. Any school tour which is over a Shabbat will have Shabbat observance as part of the trip.
5. Pupils are encouraged not to have any parties or other social events on Shabbat.

3. KASHRUT

1. All Tuckshops and staffrooms are to be kept strictly kosher.
2. All school activities are required to only provide kosher food, i.e. food under the supervision of the Beth Din, or made in the school kitchens. (This includes parties held at school). This is also a requirement for any tours in South Africa or overseas, which are school tours.

4. TEFILLAH (Prayer)

1. There is Tefillah at the start of the day throughout the schools, from Grade 1 upwards.
2. All Boys require Kippot for Tefillah.
3. All Boys and Girls require siddurim.
4. Boys over Barmitzvah are required to bring Tefillin to school and put them on during prayers.
5. Behaviour during prayers should be of an exemplary standard.

5. CURRICULUM

1. All learners are required to do both Hebrew and Jewish Studies until the end of Grade 9.

2. All learners have to offer either Hebrew or Jewish Studies for matric. The choice is made at the end of Grade 9.
3. Jews of all denominations are accepted to the school and different views are respected but all lessons follow an Orthodox understanding of Judaism.

NOTE: Schools may insist on other practices - these will be made known to you from time to time.