

Bar and Bat Mitzvah Policy

Last Review: June 2026

Next Review: July 2029

Committee: Teaching and Learning

Bar and Bat Mitzvah

JCoSS recognises Bar and Bat Mitzvah as an important milestone in the lives of many of our students and their families. As a pluralist Jewish school, we recognise that families mark this transition in a wide variety of ways, reflecting different traditions, denominations, communities and individual approaches to Jewish life.

Bar and Bat Mitzvah Preparation

JCoSS does not ordinarily provide individual Bar or Bat Mitzvah preparation or teaching. This includes tuition in Torah or Haftarah reading, synagogue skills or preparation for leading a synagogue service. We believe that this preparation is most appropriately undertaken within a family's own synagogue or Jewish community, where it can reflect the particular customs, liturgy and expectations of that community.

The school is very happy to support families in identifying appropriate synagogue or community provision and can direct families towards suitable opportunities across the different denominations and communities represented within the JCoSS community.

In exceptional circumstances, where a student would otherwise be unable to access appropriate Bar or Bat Mitzvah preparation, the school may consider whether additional support can be offered. Any such provision will be considered on an individual basis and will be subject to staff capacity and the particular circumstances of the student.

Recognising the Bar and Bat Mitzvah Year at JCoSS

Although the school does not ordinarily provide individual Bar or Bat Mitzvah teaching, JCoSS deliberately recognises Year 8 as the Bar and Bat Mitzvah year and seeks to give all students a meaningful experience of this stage of Jewish life, irrespective of whether or how they are celebrating a Bar or Bat Mitzvah outside school.

Central to this is the Year 8 Volunteering Programme, through which students are encouraged to understand becoming Bar or Bat Mitzvah not simply as a ceremony, but as a transition towards greater responsibility within the Jewish community and wider society.

Students have opportunities to put Jewish values into practice through volunteering and social action, including established partnerships with organisations such as Jewish Care and local community settings.

The Year 8 programme culminates in an end-of-year Bar and Bat Mitzvah celebration, bringing the year group together to recognise this important stage in their Jewish journey and to celebrate their contribution to others.

Through this approach, JCoSS seeks to ensure that Bar and Bat Mitzvah is understood as more than preparation for a single event. It is an opportunity for students to reflect on Jewish identity, responsibility, community, mitzvot and what it means to begin taking greater ownership of their own Jewish lives.