

School visits to Dundee synagogue

dundeeshul@scojec.org

9 St Mary Place
Dundee DD1 5RB
0141 638 6411



Scottish Charity No. SCO12108

Welcome to Dundee Synagogue. The Jewish community in Dundee uses the synagogue for prayer, meetings, education and community events. We hope your visit will help people better to understand what happens in a synagogue and what it means to be Jewish.

There are two parts to the visit. The first part is looking at the area used for prayer. Here we have the Torah scrolls, the Ark where the Torah is kept, the central place for reading the law, and the prayer books in Hebrew script. The second part is an explanation about Judaism in the home. There are several festivals throughout the year, and depending when the visit takes place, we will explain what is happening currently. We usually split larger groups into two, swapping the groups half way through, so that everyone has time to see both aspects.

In terms of your visit, the only thing we request is that boys cover their heads. (The girls do not need to cover theirs -- Jewish custom is only for married women to cover their hair -- but there is no problem if they want to). We can supply some *kippot* (head covers for the boys) but we don't have enough for everyone, so if some of the boys could bring their own, that would be great. In order to preserve street cred, we are happy for the boys to use baseball caps, hoodies or any other sort of hat or head covering that they like!

In terms of dress, we are quite relaxed -- normal school clothing is just fine. We have new heating in the building, but it can still be quite cold so we would advise that everyone brings some warm jackets or sweaters to

wear. We will try to get there early to put the heating on, but nevertheless, it is best to be well prepared!

We would also appreciate advance warning of any special needs which any children may have, so that we can be aware of these and be prepared for them. We sometimes make some foods available for tasting, so if any children have an intolerance to any food items it would be best to know this in advance. We do ask, though, that people should not bring food in with them, because the synagogue needs to observe *kashrut*, the dietary laws.

There is parking available in the car park across from the synagogue, and in the street. There is space for a bus in front on the street. There are two flights of stone steps leading up to the synagogue building, which unfortunately makes access difficult for wheelchair users, unless there is someone able carry the wheelchair up the steps.

We have found in the past that schools get much more out of their visits when they have done some preparation in the classroom first. This helps the children to think about the questions they may like to ask when they come. A good source of classroom material can be found on the SCOJEC (Scottish Council of Jewish Communities) website (<http://www.scojec.org>). Go to the "Resources" page on that website, and have a look especially at "Teaching Resource: Jewish Way of Life". They supply a CD ROM as well as an online teacher's guide. There are several other publications which can be downloaded from that web page as well.

