

Welcome to ATOI

JFS is really excited to be taking your children on this trip and staff have been working very hard to ensure that it is a wonderful experience for them.

As discussed in initial launch meeting, we do have **high expectations** of our students in terms of behaviour and conduct. 'A Taste of Israel' is a privilege, and we must reiterate that behaviour levels must be maintained in order for students to join the visit. These will be fully explained to your children in their preparatory sessions and during the online meeting, but please take time to go through the code of conduct again with your child so that the trip can be enjoyed by all.



Below are some reminders and more information about the logistics of the trip. If you have any specific questions please be in touch.

Safety & Security - Your children's safety and security are our top priority.

- Group leads will be in daily contact with the 'Cheder Matzav' (Situation Room), Israel's security team who constantly review where it's safe to travel
- Within each bus will have a satellite phone and the groups are tracked by the cheder matzav so they know where we are and can tell us to change the itinerary if required.
- All programmes and itineraries are subject to change based on weather, safety and security reports.
- There is a guard/medic on each coach – they are with the group at all times.
- **There is no unsupervised free time** for students out and about (students will always be with a group and have boundaries where they're allowed to travel)
- A reminder that **ABSOLUTELY no family visits to programme** are permitted. It is very disruptive and presents a security risk.
- Mrs Keene and Miss Grobler are going on the trip as SLT leads, along with 12 JFS teachers, your children will be in safe hands at all times.

Travel

- Please note that on the departure day, we have two different group flights.
 - Groups 1 and 2 will arrive to JFS at 14:00 and fly from Luton Airport
 - Groups 3 and 4 will arrive to JFS at 14:00 and fly from Heathrow Airport
- All students will arrive at JFS to check in, hand in medications, passports, and money envelopes for group leaders to hold; from there they will board a coach to the airport.
- Students should wear their ATOI shirts.
- Parents will be able to drop children off and check in, but they must leave as soon as this is done. The timings of the coaches, JFS finishing times, school busses and Sinai parents means that it is very important that parents leave the school after check in so to not cause disruptions.
- In terms of the flights, tickets are allocated by airlines, not JFS, and students will need to sit where their seat is assigned rather than switch to be near friends. Please tell your child!
- On Thursday 20th July, parents will pick students up directly from the airports, please ensure you know which airport your child is flying back to - Luton or Heathrow.
- Students are not expected in school on Friday 21st July - so they can start their Summer Holiday a day early!

Staff

On each bus there are:

- Three JFS Staff
- Two UK Madrichim - all have a lot of experience with youth groups, such as Bnei Akiva, Tribe etc. Most are ex-JFS students as well, and some Madrichim returning for their second or third JFS ATOI trip.
- Three Israeli Madrichim (1 tour guide, 1 logistics coordinator, 1 security guard/medic)

Two additional JFS staff members will float between the groups – Mrs Keene & Mrs Grobler

Outline of Programme

- We have four coaches this year, and all groups will be spending time in three main areas; Jerusalem, South, North
- The programme for the four groups is slightly different, but all groups will visit the key sites over the course of the two weeks (Kotel, Yad Vashem, Har Herzl, Dead Sea, Masada, Ein Gedi, Tzfat, Tel Aviv) as well as tiyulim/hiking, group bonding and Jewish experiences.
- One of the goals of ATOI is for every student to be able to develop a relationship with Israel in their own way. One highlight of the programme is the volunteering days. We are pleased to have secured this again for this year - such as packing boxes of groceries for less fortunate, vegetable picking for food bank, volunteering with JNF or old age homes.
- You will be sent an itinerary so that you can see details of where the students will be.

Accommodation

- All accommodation is good standard youth hostels and hotels. Clean, practical and well-maintained, but will not be luxury 5 star hotels. Students should remember that they are going on a school visit and will be staying in places that are happy to accommodate large school groups.
- Each place we will stay will usually accommodate 3-4 people per room, but this will change throughout the trip. Just like with the coach groupings- we will try our best to make everyone happy, but work with many different factors.

Communication

- Reminder that students will have limited access to phones during the trip, as they will be collected and held by staff. Phones will be distributed a few times a week during specific free time for students to call home. Although this may be a change from normal routine, we find it helps students be present and enjoy the experience.
- Parents are invited to purchase an Israeli SIM in London prior to the trip that can be inserted into your child's own phone (there are a number of shops in Golders Green that sell these). Remember that students will only be on their phones for limited times, so we wouldn't recommend an expensive unlimited packages.
- As access to phones is limited, if your child would like to take photos, please send them with a basic camera that they can use.
- Parents were invited to join a closed facebook group for your child's group. This is only for parents, and not for students, or extended family. The coach leaders will post updates, students' reflections, and pictures throughout the trip
- Please keep in mind that the coach leader's primary job is to keep your children safe, healthy, and happy. They will also try the best they can to get all of the students in photos/writing in the blogs.

If you don't see your child posted in pictures on a specific day please don't be disappointed as they are probably too busy having a great time and enjoying themselves to stop and pose for a picture!

Clothing and what to pack

- The dress code for the trip has been sent out, as part of the packing list, please read this carefully and ensure that you send appropriate clothing for the various different sites/activities.
- We have already received a few questions- to clarify on a specific point- boys and girls alike are welcome to wear active hiking wear on our hikes, but any shorts/trousers must be close to the knee. Any student with shorts that are too short or too tight will be sent back to change or will need to purchase new clothing in Israel at their expense. The expectations are clear and there really should never be a time where we need to ask students to change because any clothes are too short/tight/or revealing. This is especially true when we visit religious sites, please make sure to pack accordingly.
- Per El Al requirements:
 - Luggage allowance, strictly no more than 23 Kg
 - Hand Luggage 8 Kg

Medical, Health & Wellbeing

- Any medication your child take regularly:
 - Must be in its original packaging
 - Must be in a clear bag, preferably a zip lock bag, with your child's name written on it
 - Included in the bag is: information about when and how to administer, what to do in an emergency, and your contact details
- During the trip, group leaders will distribute medication as required. This usually happens during breakfast and dinner, unless requested otherwise.
- Make sure to bring seasonal **medication** and any painkillers e.g. hayfever pills, paracetamol, these should also be handed in to the group leader.
- ATOI will be full-on days. If your child usually takes certain medication at school, we recommend they stay on the same course during the trip.
- We have taken note of all allergy and other needs written on ATOI forms, please feel free to contact your group leader directly if you would like a conversation about anything you have written.
- All students will be expected to eat 3 proper meals a day, especially bearing in mind the intense programme of activities.
- Students may bring **extra snacks along, these must be Kosher and nut free** – please refer to the London Beth Din food guide for the list of what is suitable.
- Ensure there are **no nuts** as there are a number of students with severe nut allergies
- Drinking **water** will be essential – again, students need to be prepared that they will be expected to drink large amounts of water each day, this is critical to stay hydrated in such hot weather.
- Tap water in Israel is fine to drink, and there will usually be cold bottled water for sale from coach drivers
- **Students will receive a water carrier that fits a large 1.5L bottle of water**
- Please do let us know if anything has changed in terms of medications/health from your applications. Group leaders may be in touch in advance of the trip to follow up on anything written in your applications.

Insurance

- The school has full medical insurance that covers the students.
- The school **insurance does not cover personal items**; please ensure that you have taken out your own insurance to cover personal belongings. In any case, we strongly advise against bringing any expensive items on the trip.
- Awareness of theft and loss, students must not leave things lying around – there will not be parents there to pick things up behind them

Spending Money

- All meals are provided, but there will be some opportunities for shopping and spending for snacks and gifts. Current rate is about 4.5 Shekels to the pound.
- At check-in the day of the flight, parents/students can hand group leaders labelled envelopes of spending money. The group leaders will hold on to this money and distribute half for the first week and half for the second week. Please provide the money in shekalim for your child in two envelopes with their name and amount on.
- If you are sending your child with a Revolut card please ensure they have a small amount of shekalim in case we are not by a cash point early on
- We recommend a **maximum** of 800 Shekalim (Approx £177)

Housekeeping – Key reminders!

- Bring both passports if your child has more than one.
- Medicines in a ziplock/clear bag with your child's name and information as to when to take it
- Money (Shekalim) in two envelopes with child's name on and amount on front.
- Wear ATOI Tshirt