

BERMAN

MELVIN J. BERMAN HEBREW ACADEMY

Kindergarten Snapshot



2020-2021

Welcome to BERMAN

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Begin with the end in mind. When you think of your child graduating high school, what skills, knowledge, spiritual connections do you hope they have? What kind of opportunities do you want available to them? What type of community do you hope they surround themselves with as they become adults?

At Berman Hebrew Academy, our graduates go on to be leaders in their chosen fields and engaged in their religious communities. Our students develop the habits of mind to be able to learn and the habits of heart to find joy in the learning process. Having been given voice and autonomy during their school years, our graduates are confident in their abilities, know where their passions lie and have access to the seminaries, yeshivot, colleges and universities of their choice. They have the character to work well with others and the compassion to care for their community.

As the entry point to Lower School, our Kindergarten program creates an environment where our students gain self-confidence as learners, while also embracing and encouraging their curiosity and love for learning. Our Kindergarten students learn the academic and social-emotional skills and tools needed to succeed in their futures. Kindergarten at Berman is a year of growth, joy, discovery and community.

This book was designed to help you discover how the Kindergarten curriculum and educational philosophy at Berman will prepare your child for a lifetime of learning.

We are dedicated to the physical, spiritual, emotional and academic growth of our Kindergarten children. This is our daily mission and we are privileged that you are considering entrusting your children to our care. We value partnership and communication with each of our Kindergarten families and see the success of each child as our shared goal.

Welcome to Kindergarten! We hope you enjoy the journey.

Rabbi Dr. Yossi Kastan, Head of School
Rachel Handloff, Lower School Principal
Suzu Israel, Lower School Principal

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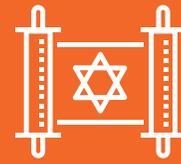
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Our Educational Program

Berman Hebrew Academy prepares students for life's journey as Modern Orthodox Jews. We believe students develop knowledge and confidence by working in an environment that promotes learning, self-expression, and creativity. Our school fosters each student's growing intellectual curiosity and emphasizes respect for the individual. We are committed to the balanced development of skill set areas, content knowledge, and positive values and affect. These are equally emphasized in our dual curriculum of General and Judaic Studies.

Our Kindergarten students split their day between Judaic and general studies, each with a separate teacher and assistant. The teachers collaborate to create a seamless connection between all aspects of their student's lives.



Judaic Studies

At Berman Hebrew Academy, our goal is to produce graduates who have the skills and knowledge to apply Torah and halacha to the world around them. The love of Torah, Jewish life, and community is instilled in our students from the moment they begin Kindergarten. In addition, from a young age, we cultivate a love for the people, land, and state of Israel.



The Jewish Calendar

The Jewish calendar is used as the structure for introducing and energizing Jewish life within our school and school community. Chagim, special days, and celebrations are brought to life through stories, songs, texts, acting out of rituals, creative arts, and drama. Students celebrate the holidays in addition to learning the basic terms and concepts associated with each calendar event. Students will learn about:

- Shabbat/Kabbalat Shabbat
- Rosh Chodesh
- Rosh Ha-Shanah
- Yom Kippur
- Sukkot/Simchat Torah
- Chanukah
- Tu Bi-Shevat
- Purim
- Pesach
- Yom Ha-Atzmaut
- Lag Ba-Omer
- Yom Yerushalayim
- Shavuot

Our Jewish community: The class focuses on the importance of a shul, including its meaning, its structure, different types and some differences between Ashkenazi and Sephardi congregations. Each Kindergarten builds its own shul.

Creation of the World (Beriat ha-Olam): A project-oriented unit which helps students understand the stages of creation and the Creator. This unit kicks off the study of Parashat ha-Shavua.



Parashat ha-Shavua: Select themes and/or stories are discussed each week to bring the parasha alive to each student. The use of song, story-telling, and projects helps to emphasize the lessons we can learn and happily incorporate to our lives from each parasha.

Understanding the Parasha is reinforced each week at the Lower School Friday Oneg...



Tefilah

All of our students, K-12th, begin their day with Tefilah. As students progress through Berman, they will take on more leadership in their daily Minyan and davening groups. Beginning in Kindergarten, as we teach the tefillot and discuss connecting with Hashem, we also start preparing our students for leadership in davening and ownership of their spiritual lives.

Daily tefillot include:

- Modeh Ani
- Reishit Chochmah
- Torah, Torah
- Birchot Tzitzit
- She-Asani Kirtzono
- Adon Olam
- Shma and ve-Ahavta
- Taking out of the Torah
- Ani Ma'amin
- La'asok be-Divrei Torah (added during the year)
- Asher Yatzar (added during the year)
- Lecha Dodi, Shalom Aleichem, and Kiddush (during the Kabbalat Shabbat program)

Judaic Studies:

Students will be introduced to the texts, stories and lore of our heritage as Jewish people living Jewish lives. Many of these studies will be integrated with, as well as inform our Social Studies curriculum.

- All units in Judaic studies will be integrated with the texts and practices of our Jewish lives;
- Chagim, Shabbat, and Rosh Chodesh will be observed and learned in sync with their occurrences;
- Cultivation of Middot Tovot will be reinforced through stories of Torah, personae studied, and all aspects of Jewish living;
- Learning of Tefillot and the meanings of the prayers;
- Lessons from Parashat HaShavuah will be chosen as they relate to students, their families, and the school community with a focus on stories, individuals, and developmentally appropriate plot lines (e.g. stories of the Avot, Imahot, Moshe, etc.);
- Jewish family and individual observances will be emphasized and this will parallel the Social Studies foci;
- Use of and active involvement in the school wide Middot program.



Hebrew Language



Our Kindergarten Judaic Studies classes are taught Ivrit B'Ivrit so that our students build their receptive and expressive language skills as they are also building their Hebrew literacy skills. The Migdal Ohr Hebrew Program builds Hebrew skills through visual, auditory and expressive demonstration of recognition. Students begin the year learning Hebrew alphabet letters and vowel sounds and progress to reading 2-3 syllable words by the end of the year. Students are taught print writing of letters and they develop the skills to speak, read and manipulate more than 200 Hebrew words. They also use and appreciate the Hebrew language as the means of communication with our Jewish texts, Tefilah, culture and daily Jewish life, as well as the language of the State of Israel.

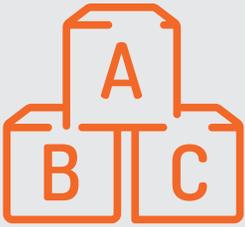
Kindergarten Hebrew Language Benchmarks:

- Development of fluency in reading, writing and recognizing all letters of the Aleph Bet and their sounds
- Building of a basic vocabulary of 200+ words
- Reading 2-3 syllable words
- Beginning conversational Hebrew skills
- Building of oral language development through discussions, use of wordless stories, pictures, objects, and other triggers to motivate oral expression
- Use of Hebrew in Tefillot and in all Jewish life cycle activities
- Use of vocabulary and study units on Briat HaOlam (Creation of the World), Shabbat, seasons, days of the week, family, colors, parts of the body and Chagim/Holidays; this parallels the focus on self and family
- Learning the Hebrew names of the months and calendar/daily life elements
- Learning the Hebrew names and places in Torah stories

Chavruta Learning

Beginning in Kindergarten, our students find the joy of sharing their knowledge and exploring text b'chavruta. Students begin by reading Hebrew letters and sounds to each other, pausing to appreciate how their partner engaged with the material, tried their hardest, and learned something new.



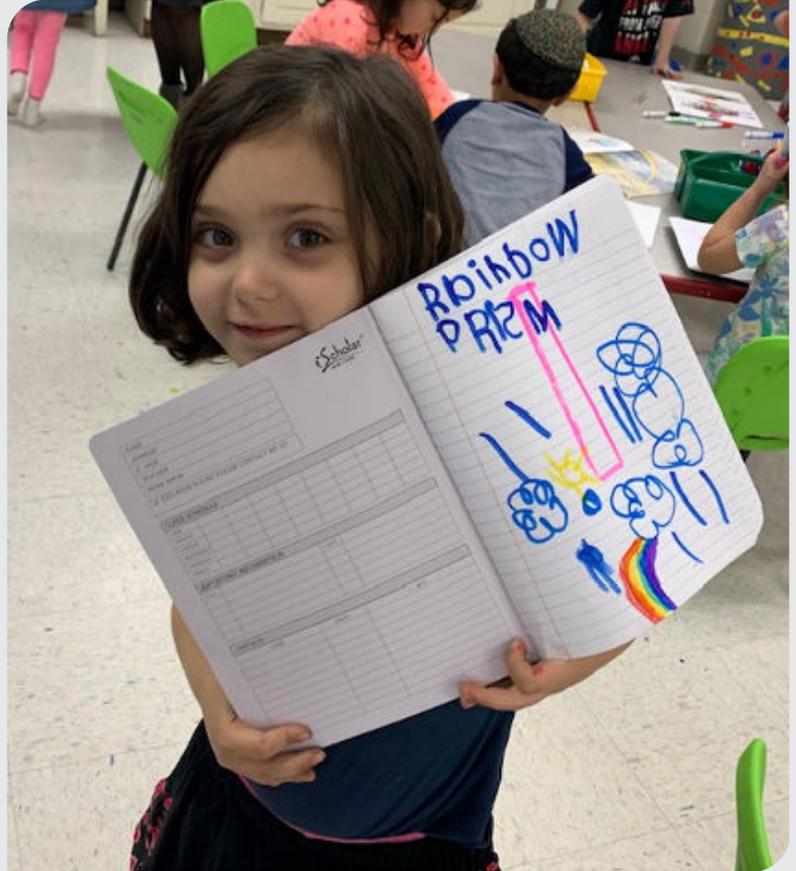


Language Arts

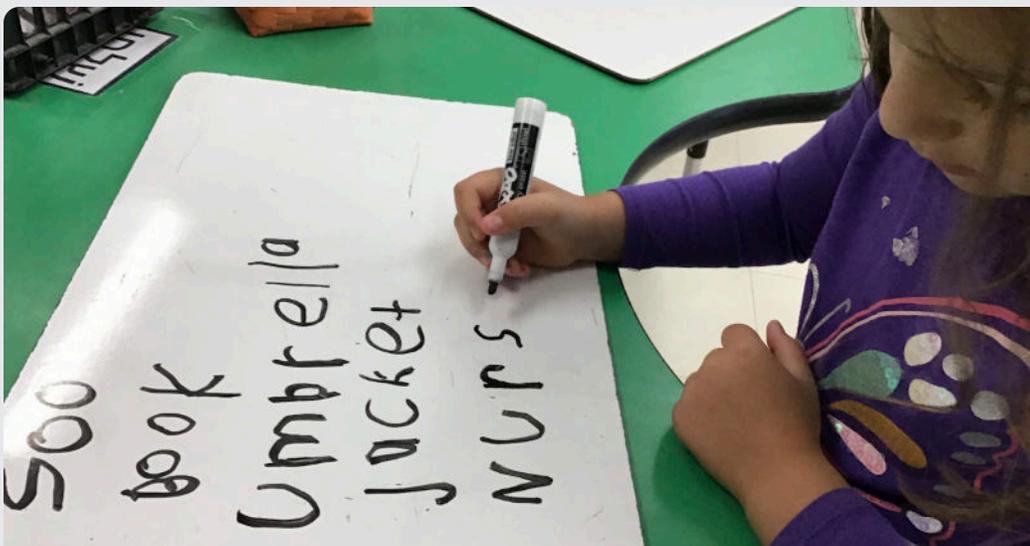
By the end of Kindergarten, our students will become excited readers, writers, and speakers who enjoy various forms of expression, and take initiative in exploring them. Each day our Kindergarteners have a mix of group work, one-on-one reading with their teachers and an opportunity to build their skills working independently.

Kindergarten Language Arts Benchmarks:

- Competency in reading, writing, recognizing all letters of the alphabet and their sounds, individually and in relation to each other;
- Development and appreciation of multiple learning modalities including the ways we learn through sight, sound, language, and more;
- Comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, sentence structure, and grammar;
- Balance of writing skill sets, including shared, modeled, guided, interactive & independent; Building of written language skills by using writing to express ideas, plan, and record important information;
- Development and enhancement of oral language through discussion, use of wordless stories, use of pictures, objects and other prompts;
- Writing skill sets, including proper formation & directionality of letters, encouragement of neatness;
- Development of skills of communication, including speaking properly, listening attentively and responding to comments made by other members of the group;



- Development of creativity through journal writing and the creation of original books & stories.



Differentiated Learning

Each child is able to grow and reach their full potential through differentiated instruction. Our teachers are trained in methods to support and enrich students within each lesson so that the needs of each and every student are met.

Mathematics



Throughout the year, our Kindergarteners learn the meaning of numbers and their many uses and roles in our lives. We start with concrete experiences in using numbers and progress to more conceptual and abstract concepts. We encourage our students to be conscious of the strategies they use to accomplish a task and often ask them to think of alternative means of solving a particular problem, giving them practice in approaching problem solving from different perspectives. In Kindergarten, and throughout the Lower School, we use manipulatives to give students a hands-on sense of how numbers work together and practice computational skills.



Kindergarten Mathematics Benchmarks:

- Sort & categorize objects;
- Understand and use terms of different forms of measurement (full/empty, temperature, length height, size, weight);
- Learn & apply problem solving strategies;
- Use of numeration and counting of objects forwards & backwards from 0 - 31 or beyond; Counting orally & reading numbers up to 100;
- Number skills including skip counting by 2's, 5's and 10's, counting on from any number, giving next number, tally counts, use of ordinal numbers, construction of number stories, adding & subtracting;
- Recognizing the role of numbers in our everyday lives and understanding their value;
- Collection and recording of data using tallies, sets, etc.;
- Construction and use of graphs, pictographs and bar graphs for information in everyday life; Familiarity with shapes and their characteristics;
- Ability to use geoboards and templates to construct & trace shapes;
- Recognize, understand, copy and continue patterns;
- Understand and use terms and instruments that mark time & time periods;
- Understand money exchanges with pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters.

Educational Support Services (ESS)

Our ESS team of educators support and enrich our Lower School students by providing both push-in and pull-out services based on the learning needs of students. Our ESS team provides support and enrichment to students in both General and Judaic studies.





Social Studies

This subject is so much a part of our daily life that it is incorporated into the curriculum in an integrated manner throughout the year. The skills and knowledge gained will enable our students to become engaged, active, informed and responsible citizens.

Kindergarten Social Studies Benchmarks:

- Study of secular and national holidays;
- Exploration of ourselves, our families and our school community;
- Study of Jewish holidays, their messages and lessons for our lives; specifically as they are celebrated by us, our families, and our school community;
- Comparisons between Jewish and national holidays as appropriate & feasible (ex. Thanksgiving and Sukkot, Yom HaAtzmaut and Independence Day, Yom HaZikaron and Memorial Day, contrasting the celebration of New Years, etc.);
- Learning to use and appreciate how Middot Tovot enable us to be our best and to build happy, healthy families & school communities;
- Use of personae from the Torah as role models for our actions and behavior;
- Mini-units on Presidents, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., our school helpers, butterflies, the solar system, etc.;
- Familiarity with map reading and skills, including map of Israel;
- Participation in school wide Middot program.

STEM



At Berman, our STEM curriculum is designed to prepare our learners for the future in which knowledge and understanding of STEM will become ever more important regardless of their chosen fields. STEM skills are built in a non-linear fashion: Students fiddle, try, make mistakes, try again, refine. Our goal is for Kindergarteners to recognize themes and topics from our units and apply to their daily lives. This process of discovery is part and parcel of what makes STEM learning so different and so critical to their overall learning.



Science

Children are natural scientists with the capacity to observe, explore, and discover the world around them. Kindergarten Science introduces students to the scientific process through exploration, hypotheses and hands-on experiments. It also provides a basis for thinking about the forces and structures of our physical world and teaches students how to ask questions about what they observe every day. Units are integrated into and supplement the Jewish and General Studies curriculum. Students learn about the following:

- The science of sound, music and hearing
- Light, colors and shadows
- Living organisms—plants, leaves and photosynthesis, flowers, adapting to seasons
- The water cycle
- Heat and Cold
- Living organisms—animals in winter, butterflies and life cycles
- Chemical reactions
- Forces in nature: gravity and buoyancy; friction and momentum; equal and opposite reactions; levers
- Senses of smell and touch
- Yeast and chametz
- Our solar system—planets, the moon, earth

Social Emotional Learning



We recognize the important role that relationships play in the academic and social success of our children. Open Circle, our Social Emotional Learning Curriculum, works to support caring, respectful school communities with high expectations for all students. Open Circle is a comprehensive, grade differentiated, program for grades K-5 that integrates research and evidence-based practices in child development with best teaching practices.

Open Circle's primary goals are:

1. To develop children's social and emotional skills, including communication, self control and problem solving.
2. To support the development of safe, caring, and highly engaging classroom and school communities, creating the best possible environment for learning.

Students in Kindergarten through 5th grade participate in a teacher-led Open Circle lesson twice a week. Children sit in an "open circle" always leaving one chair empty as a symbol that there is always room for another person and perspective. The lessons cover skills around self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. Mr. Zak, the Lower School Guidance Counselor, works with the faculty to provide additional supplemental Open Circle lessons throughout the year. The Media Center Director, Mrs. Ruchel Green, maintains an Open Circle book cart with recommended children's stories that support the curriculum and can be used

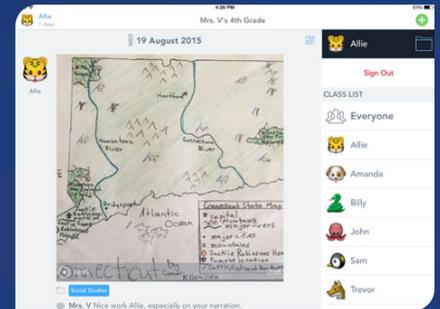


Big Berman Family builds on the foundation of love and closeness already present in the Lower School by creating a more formal program that fosters relationships between students of different ages. Students from 3rd to 5th grade serve as "Bigs" to their "Littles" in Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grades. One of the most beautiful aspects of this program is that students stay paired over their time at Berman. Their relationship builds over the years until Bigs graduate to Middle School, and Littles become Bigs to younger students.

Technology



Integrating technology into our lower school involves a balance between good instructional design and conscientious curricular design. Our Kindergarteners use the Reading A to Z app to supplement our Scott Foresman reading curriculum and Starfall for phonics, leveled readers, and math games. They are introduced to Pebble Go through their Library special for independent learning and technology practice such as finding and recording answers on a device.



Communication

Our Kindergarten teachers utilize Seesaw to share student work and updates from the classroom. Teachers post pictures and projects, allowing parents an inside glimpse into their child's classroom. The teacher updates offer parents prompts to ask their children about their week. Parent/Teacher partnership is very important. Parents can expect to receive weekly email updates as well.

Lunch



We offer daily hot lunch to our students. We serve meat on Mondays and Wednesdays where families can also send a meat lunch from home on those days. You are welcome to send a dairy or parve lunch any day of the week. Hot lunch can be purchased for the entire year or on a day to day basis. Kindergarteners eat in their classrooms or outside to promote good table manners, conversation and build the classroom community. We are a peanut free school.

Busing



We offer morning and afternoon busing from Kemp Mill, Potomac, Woodside/Shepherd Park and other areas depending on ridership interest. You are welcome to sign up for morning or afternoon only if that works best for your family.

Sample Kindergarten Daily Schedule

A student's day is split into two sections, Judaic Studies and General Studies. The below is a sample daily schedule for a Kindergarten student that has Judaics in the AM and General Studies in the PM. Learning often overlaps between the two sections, weaving ideas from Judaism into our everyday learning, and vice versa. Students with General Studies in the morning still start their day with תפילה.

8:15 – 9:00am: Morning work, exploration and one on one student work with teachers.

9:00 – 9:30am: תפילה as a class and morning circle time, Topics include reading the morning message, Jewish calendar month and date, Hebrew vocabulary related to the days of the week, counting the days of school, the weather and any upcoming holidays or special events. On Fridays during Kabbalat Shabbat, Kindergarteners learn Lecha Dodi, Shalom Aleichem, and Friday night Kiddush.

9:30 - 10:00am: Morning snack and Hebrew story time

10:00 – 10:30am: Outdoor recess

10:30 – 11:30am: Centers with guided and independent work. This is a time for teachers to work in small groups with the students on areas such as Hebrew letter recognition, chagim and parashat ha-shavua, Hebrew letter writing, and curricular projects while also having students build their ability to work independently on projects. Chavruta learning often occurs during this learning block and is used to build letter and sound recognition, reading fluency as well as collaborative working skills.



11:45 - 12:45pm: Lunch in the classroom followed by outdoor recess

12:45 - 1:15pm: Class Meeting time, Topics include the English calendar, weather, graphing, counting, days of school. Open Circle, our social-emotional curriculum, has two lessons a week that happens during this block.

1:15 - 2:00pm: Language Arts Centers with guided and independent work. Teachers work in small groups, one on one with students and students work independently on reading skills, handwriting, writing, social studies through hands-on projects related to each subject.

2:00 - 2:30pm: Outdoor recess and snack

2:30 - 3:20pm: Math is taught through whole class, small group and one on one instruction. Students are encouraged to try different strategies, problem solve and use manipulatives where helpful. Topics include: number skills, skip counting, addition, subtraction, graphing and data collection patterns, time and money.

3:25pm: Students pack up to leave and are walked to their carpool, bus or after-school activity by a teacher.

Weekly specials include: Physical Education twice a week and Science, Music, Art and Library/Media Center once per week.

Application Dates

Applications Due:

January 29, 2021

Financial aid deadline for new families:

None

Financial Aid Award decisions:

February 17, 2021

Admissions decision:

March 5, 2021

Enrollment deadline:

March 19, 2021

For tours and more information please contact our Admissions Director,
Ellie Levine, levinee@mjbha.org

Financial aid

Berman Hebrew Academy is committed to providing an excellent Jewish and secular education to each of its students regardless of their family's ability to pay tuition. We use a third party financial aid tool (TADS) to analyze financial data and determine awards. Financial aid for new families is always open with no deadline to file. Once an academic application is submitted, the financial aid committee will review a family's financial aid application. Awards are shared in mid-February, before admissions decisions are made. Our goal is to provide families with full information about their financial commitments before the enrollment deadline.

**Berman students develop an appreciation of learning
as a lifelong journey and knowledge that we should constantly
ask questions and seek out answers.**



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All photos from 2019-2020 school year.