

Places of Worship, Information for School Visits

Name of Building Congregation of Jacob Synagogue

Religion or Belief Judaism (Orthodox)

Address 351 – 353 Commercial Road

London E1 2PS

Name (s) of contact (s) David Russell / Rev. David Brandes

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Web site www.congregationofjacob.org

Suitable for age groups / key stages (please tick box as appropriate)

Ages 5 to 7 / Key Stage 1 Ages 11 to 13 / Key Stage 3

Ages 8 to 11 / Key Stage 2 Ages 14 to 16 / Key Stage 4

Ages 17 to 18 / Key Stage 5

Any special requirement e.g. dress code applicable to students (e.g. coverings, removal of shoes)

Boys will be requested to wear a head covering (provided on arrival)

Times available for visits By arrangement

Typical Length of Visit 30 minutes to 1 hour

Are the toilets available for visitors to use? YES/~~NO~~ (delete as applicable)

Charge/Donation (if applicable) No charge (but donation will be gratefully received!)

What facilities are available for disabled visitors? e.g wheelchair ramp, disabled toilets, inductive loop etc

Access to the building is at ground level, and thus disabled access into the synagogue (though there is no disabled toilet)

Description of typical visit including any learning activities

Previous visits have started with an introductory talk on the history of the building, the history of the Jewish community in the East End, and about Judaism in general (practice, festivals, worship, rites of passage etc). This is complemented by a set of Jewish artefacts that are shown and passed around the students (such as a shofar and mezuzah). The students have the opportunity to ask questions, and then are given a tour of the synagogue – so that they can see inside the ark (and the Torah scrolls). We try to make the visit as interactive as possible – guided by the interests of the students.

Brief statement (less than 100 words of the history of the building):

The Congregation of Jacob Synagogue was officially opened in 1921 as an Orthodox Synagogue, though the congregation was founded in 1903 of East European origin. The sanctuary is converted out of a former bootmaker's premises, and has many unique historical features including a classical frontage, glass roof and well-preserved interior. The congregation still meets regularly for prayer services every Friday night, Saturday morning and all festivals. Dr Sharman Kadish (Director of Jewish Heritage UK) describes the synagogue as a "most valuable and vulnerable relic of Anglo-Jewish history" and "England's last intimate folk-art East European synagogue."

Please attach a maximum of 6 images of the building if possible. If not will you please give permission for our photographer to photograph the building?



Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks addresses the assembled at the Centenary of the Congregation of Jacob Synagogue (2003)



The newly restored classical frontage of the Congregation of Jacob Synagogue, made possible through funding from members of the synagogue and the Veolia Charitable Trust (2010)



Rev. David Brandes (front right) addresses an audience at a special event to mark the European Day of Jewish Heritage and Culture staged that Congregation of Jacob Synagogue (2007)